

Town of Pomfret Selectboard
Special Meeting Minutes
May 13, 2025

Present: Benjamin Brickner, John Peters, Steve Chamberlin, Meg Emmons, Emily Grube

Public: Frank Rogers, Cynthia Hewitt, Jon Harrington, Jack Peters

1. Ben called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.
2. Agenda Review – Steve moved and John seconded that Item 5B (Review/Approval of Construction Proposal) be deleted from the agenda as there were no construction proposals to review or approve at that time. Unanimous.
3. Public Comment – None.
4. Road Foreman Report – Frank described the landslide that occurred the morning of Saturday, May 10 between Caper Street and Pomfret Road immediately north of the North Pomfret post office. The road crew cleared one lane for fire and emergency traffic on Saturday. Chris Bump (Vtrans), Mike Avery (construction contractor), Jon Harrington (civil engineer), and Green Mountain Power were brought in to assess the situation and determine the remaining embankment's stability. Due to subsidence of the traveled way, Caper Street has been reduced to one lane at the slide location until repairs can be made. Pomfret Road was reopened to all traffic midafternoon Monday, May 12.
5. Items for Discussion or Vote
 - a. Review/Approval of Engineering Proposal – Jon Harrington of Harrington Civil Engineers, Inc. prepared a Professional Engineering Services Agreement and was present to walk the Selectboard through his proposal and answer questions. The scope of work is set forth in four stages: (1) conceptual design and drainage remediation to begin immediately and enable qualified construction contractors to quickly prepare construction proposals that include quantity and unit price information needed by Vtrans for emergency aid purposes, (2) field data collection and concept design, also to begin immediately and to enable preparation of complete contact plans, (3) preparation of complete contract plans, and (4) construction engineering service while construction occurs.

Steve moved and John seconded that the Professional Engineering Services Agreement be approved as presented. Ben amended the motion to also waive the Purchasing Policy requirement to obtain at least two competitive, written quotations from qualified vendors, due to the ongoing emergency such that any delay would endanger persons or property or result in substantial impairment of the delivery of town services. Unanimous, as amended.

It is anticipated that Harrington's conceptual design work will be completed in about a week, and that an additional week will be needed to solicit construction contractor proposals. As such, the Selectboard expects to hold another special meeting the week of May 25 to approve the construction work.

In the meantime, the road crew will perform ditching and underdrain work to redirect additional water from Caper Street to reduce the risk of additional subsidence or slide in the event of additional heavy rain. Frank also will solicit one or more proposals from

qualified construction contractors to address the embankment uphill from Caper Street, which will enable reopening both lanes of Caper Street while full remediation of embankment continues. These proposals will be reviewed for approval at the May 21 regular Selectboard meeting. The adjacent landowner will be consulted before this work begins.

- b. Application for Town Highway Emergency Aid Funding – With Chris Bump’s guidance, Ben prepared a letter on letterhead to Vtrans formally requesting assistance from the state Emergency Aid Fund. John moved and Meg seconded approval the letter as presented. Unanimous. Ben will sign and submit to Vtrans.
6. Meeting Wrap Up
- a. Correspondence – Ben has been in communication with Senators Alison Clarkson and Becca White regarding pending legislation regarding municipalities’ authority to maintain legal trails. A comment letter supporting the pending legislation will be sent to the House Transportation Committee. Anthony and Charlotte Lanahan recently expressed appreciation for the efforts of the Selectboard and road crew.
 - b. Review of Assignments – Ben to sign and return the approved Professional Engineering Services Agreement to Harrington Civil Engineers; to sign and submit the request for emergency aid funding to Vtrans; to submit the legal trails comment letter to the House Transportation Committee.
 - c. Agenda for Next Meeting – See Section 6(c) of the May 7, 2025 meeting meetings, plus construction contract proposals to address the embankment uphill from Caper Street.
7. Adjournment – John moved and Emily seconded that the meeting be adjourned. Unanimous. The meeting was adjourned at 8:13 pm.