

**Board of Selectmen
December 15, 2020**

Present: Mark P. Duffy, Chair; Richard C. Edwards; Kenneth G. Fifield; Dino A. Scala, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Also present were: Brock Mitchell, Director of Public Works; Jim Miller, Clearview Community TV; Officer Jendrock; those signed in on the Attendance Sheet, as well as others via Zoom.

Mr. Duffy called the posted meeting to order at 6 p.m. and led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. Scala provided an overview of the meeting expectations/procedures. The purpose of the meeting is to gather opinions from all regarding how best to address the issues related to Bonnyman and Towle Farm Roads. No decisions are anticipated this evening. Minutes will not be verbatim, rather they will be more point of fact. The meeting is being recorded, although it will not be aired live.

Mr. Duffy stated we are here to discuss options. He noted the presence of Brock Mitchell, who has developed estimated costs to address each of the roads in question, copies of which were available to the public. Mr. Mitchell stressed that these are estimates only. The estimated cost to address Bonnyman Road, without stabilizing the lake-side, is \$786,731. The estimated cost to bring Towle Farm Road up to Town specs (and reclaim Bonnyman Road) is \$361,100. Mr. Duffy noted that the Town has been dealing with long-standing issues with Bonnyman Road for years. We either need to fix the road or pursue other options. Tonight, he is seeking common ground. Mr. Duffy then read aloud letters received from Sandra Roach and Larry Moody.

When invited to comment, Mr. Kane (TFCC Vice President), accompanied by Mike LaDonne, TFCC President, stated that their position has not changed—they will not give up Towle Farm Road—and declined to comment further.

Mr. Edwards stressed that we are here to help everyone. If people are not willing to discuss the issues and make concessions, then this meeting is a waste of time. We all need to consider the best solution for all taxpayers. Discussed ramifications of upgrading Towle Farm Road. Mr. Kane believes it would cause more congestion and eliminate the quiet and solitude currently enjoyed.

Mr. Fifield would like to find common ground and make the best decision for the townspeople. Regardless, the Board must determine a path to take in the best interest of the Town. He advised that the Board expects to receive a petition warrant article that will poll voters as to what they would support. Mr. Edwards noted that the 6-8 properties on Towle Farm that would be directly affected all have access to both roads. Bonnyman Road property owners have always owned lakefront property (although it involves considerable slope); their properties were interrupted by the Town's easement across Bonnyman Road. Mr. Edwards stressed that upgrading Bonnyman Road will be a huge endeavor and would involve the State. Many taxpayers who don't utilize Province Lake would be forced to pay for those upgrades.

Mr. Kane is not convinced the Town would legally be able to assume ownership of Towle Farm Road. He noted that such a move would disallow use of bicycles, golf carts and 4-wheelers. Mr. Fifield suggested creation of a bike path could be considered, along with a traffic study. Considerable discussion followed regarding safety issues for those attempting to access the TFCC beach.

Mr. Kane noted that the section of Bonnyman Road that has been identified as adversely affecting water quality is only .2 mile, which is less than 2% of the total waterfront on Province Lake. He added that unimproved septic systems are a much bigger contributor to the problem. Mr. Duffy noted that the State road that runs along much of the shore is also a larger contributor.

Mr. Moody referred to the expense to improve Bonnyman Road, which could involve taking a portion of people's property. He believes eliminating Bonnyman Road would eliminate traffic in front of all the beaches. He also believes the Town would not need to take property if Towle Farm were upgraded. According to Mr. Moody, TFCC approached the Town in the past to take over their roads—to which Mr. Kane disagreed.

Mr. Duffy stated it comes down to what the Town can do legally. Mr. Edwards suggested discontinuing Bonnyman Road.

Ms. Romeo spoke to the community atmosphere of TFCC, which community she believes is getting younger. Mr. Kane stated addressing one safety issue causes one in another area.

Mr. Edwards referred to the 50' easement on Towle Farm Road, 28' of which would be needed to upgrade the road. There would be enough room to create a path for bikes, etc. Mr. Mitchell suggested that if such a path were created, perhaps the Bonnyman Road residents would be willing to establish a crossing for TFCC property owners to get to their beach. Brief discussion regarding eminent domain and compensating property owners.

Ms. Wolfe noted that years ago Bonnyman Road was a secluded dirt road—times change. The issue is safety—not the creation of waterfront property, which they already have. Ms. Wolfe stressed the need for everyone to be concerned for everyone else without fighting. Mr. Wolfe stated that an improved Towle Farm Road would be safer than an improved, narrow, Bonnyman Road. He referred to the erosion with no buffer on Bonnyman Road.

Mr. Moody suggested that TFCC could promote use of the field left to them by Mr. Ames so that the children don't have to be on the roads. Ms. Bona noted that the #1 issue is safety on both roads.

Via Zoom:

Ms. Lightizer stated that Bonnyman Road used to be grass, with dirt paths—residents would not be getting waterfront property. She believes the option of using Towle Farm Road would improve the corner. Ms. Lightizer added that she would like to hear from those on Towle Farm Road who would be directly affected. Mr. Lightizer advised that his well is only 10' from Bonnyman Road and the Town taking 12' for improvements would leave his vehicle in the road.

Mr. Proulx believes that increasing traffic in front of his home would decrease his property value. He purchased in a private community on purpose.

Mr. Gatto stated that Towle Farm Road is 40' wide in the section parallel to Bonnyman Road. He referred to wetlands on the left side that would need to be considered.

Ms. Chiasson referred to safety, as well as the run-off from Bonnyman Road. She referred to a number of area residents who are not opposed to the proposal, adding we should hear from everyone.

Mr. MacGregor referred to Bonnyman Road being dangerous, as well as the health of the lake.

Ms. Bakey noted there has been contention since 1957. She added that members of TFCC enjoy their peace and quiet. Ms. Bakey also referred to AWWA having identified the most dangerous areas of the lake for run-off.

Mr. Laverdure bought on Towle Farm Road for the serenity offered by a peaceful community. He believes the Town should address Bonnyman Road without affecting Towle Farm Road.

Mr. Duffy stated that the Board has now heard from a number of individuals on both sides. The Board will now need to pursue available options. He thanked all for participating and called for a recess at 7:55 p.m.

Mr. Duffy called the meeting back to order at 8p.m., and the Board briefly discussed the issues/suggestions raised earlier this evening regarding Bonnyman and Towle Farm Roads.

Mr. Edwards moved to approve AP #31 in the amount of \$98,731.85 and PR #26 in the amount of \$94,562.16, as presented. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Proposed 2021 Budget: Chief Ventura has requested that the Board consider moving the \$34,000 appropriation for a police vehicle from a separate warrant article to the operating budget, as he sees this as a yearly expenditure. Mr. Scala noted that such an expenditure would likely be listed in the Capital Outlay section of the budget, rather than the police operating budget. Currently, there are 2 warrant articles for the Police Cruiser CRF: one for the cruiser at \$34,000, another for the command/supervisor vehicle at \$20,000. After considerable consideration, the Board agreed by consensus to leave the cruiser appropriation in the warrant article rather than moving it to the operating budget.


Mr. Edwards moved to adjourn at 8:47 p.m. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:


Mark P. Duffy, Chair


Richard C. Edwards


Kenneth G. Fifield