

Select Board Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, January 31, 2023
Zoom Only

Present via Zoom: Megan Birch-McMichael, Ellen Sturgis, Cortni Frecha, Ingeborg Hegemann Clark, Hector Constantzos, and Town Administrator Denise Demboski

Chair Birch-McMichael called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

The Chair said this special meeting was convened to listen to a presentation by the engineering firm, Weston & Sampson, which was hired in early 2022 for the reconstruction of the Lake Boon Dam. This meeting is not a public hearing. After the presentation, there will be a Q&A for the Select Board, the Highway Superintendent, the Police Chief, and the Fire Chief. Questions submitted before the meeting will be answered if they have not already been addressed in the presentation. Other participants may use the Zoom chat feature, which is part of the public record. The meeting is being recorded and live-streamed and recorded by Stow TV.

Presentation from Weston & Sampson – Lake Boon Dam Rehabilitation Project

Stephen Spink, TJ Blair, and Tulin Fuselier of Weston & Sampson were present via Zoom.

The dam was constructed in the 1870s with a size classification of ‘large’, and now has a hazard classification of ‘significant’. Inspections showed deficiencies and resulted in a notification of non-compliance in 2017. Deficiencies include: an overly steep slope, seepage through the embankment, the spillway is in disrepair, embankment instability, tree growth along the toe of the dam, and inadequate spillage capacity based on the design flood event. In 1999 there were limited repairs done but they did not include structural or hydrologic upgrades. In 2021 a void in the bottom of the spillway culvert caused a sinkhole incident.

The project path is as follows: preliminary design, environmental permitting, final design and dam safety permitting, Phase I construction, and Phase II construction. There have been a number of inspections and the creation of an Emergency Action Plan in 2019. The current phase is preliminary design, which includes informational meetings with the public.

The design process consists of many components including preliminary site investigations and analyses, grant applications, consideration of design alternatives, preliminary design of dam safety improvements (current phase), environmental permitting, final design, and construction contract and bidding assistance. The Town has received a \$1 million grant towards construction and will be applying for a second year of the grant. There is not a final cost yet and funding may go to a fall town meeting.

The presentation described a two-phase construction approach. Phase I is targeted to begin in December and is the installation of approximately 490 feet of interlocking steel sheet piling to form a continuous watertight barrier through the upstream side of the embankment. Phase I would require the closing of Barton Road for approximately 4 weeks. Phase II is targeted for the summer of 2024 and would be dewatering and drying out the area for construction of a new spillway culvert. The embankment would then be regraded, the roadway realigned, and safety measures installed (non-timber guardrails, signs, in-water safety devices). Phase II would require the closing of Barton Road for

4 to 6 months. The road closures include no pedestrian traffic. The typical hours of construction are 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Lake Boon water level will be maintained, and boat access will be restricted in the area of construction. There may be a limited time when there will be a “no wake” zone.

Police Chief Michael Sallesse said that during the road closures, there is a mutual aid agreement with Hudson for emergencies. Fire Chief JP Benoit said that Barton Road is typically not a high call area, and they will have plans in place to ensure public safety.

There was a Q&A session with participants, who were able to ask questions via Zoom. Many of the questions had been addressed in the presentation and additional clarification was provided. It was asked if the entire length of Barton Road could be repaved. The road is a private road, and this would require approval through town meeting. Interim Superintendent of Streets Brian Hatch said the road would have to be brought up to compliance to the town bylaws before it can get accepted as a public way, which could be costly. It would require a citizen’s petition with a percentage of the residents on the street participating.

At the request of Chair Birch-McMichael, Mr. Spink ended the presentation with a recap of the immediate next steps.

Adjournment

At 8:52 p.m. Board member Sturgis moved to adjourn. Board member Constantzos seconded the motion and it passed unanimously by a roll call vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Joyce Sampson

Executive Assistant

Documents used at this meeting:

Documents can be found in the Select Board’s Office in the meeting folder.