

FALMOUTH TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES March 10, 2022

Present: Ed DeWitt, Ralph Herbst, Alison Leschen, Paul Dreyer, Rhona Carlton-Foss (joined 7:17 PM).

Absent: Chris McGuire

Attendees (panel): Select Board Chair Doug Brown, Town Engineer Jim McLoughlin

1. Mr. DeWitt read the remote meeting procedures and took the roll at 7:01 PM.
2. Stormwater management: After a brief introduction of the Committee's interest in stormwater and its impacts on the transportation system, Town Engineer Jim McLoughlin described the DPW perspective and challenges in stormwater management. He outlined the regulatory requirements imposed by the EPA under the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit program. The DPW carries out the plan to the best of its resources but the scale and scope is daunting. He noted that the Town lacks resources to properly maintain the existing stormwater system including street sweeping, outfalls and catch basins (e.g. both equipment and personnel for the thousand plus basins), but also administrative staff to help handle the required recordkeeping. The majority of recordkeeping is currently contracted out to private engineering firms. He noted that through a DPW review of other community audits, EPA recommends a dedicated stormwater manager or stormwater division. Falmouth has neither. Mr. McLoughlin stated that he believes the Town is doing a good job with overseeing and regulating new development but lacks the means and authority to address older development. He also believes the Town is doing a good job on public outreach. In a dry run of stormwater audit by EPA performed by a consultant, the consultant noted a number of likely low grades and possible violations. In response to a question by Ms. Leschen about the interface between public and private stormwater, Mr. McLoughlin noted that while we do a good job permitting/conditioning private development to keep stormwater self-contained, the Town lacks the resources for meaningful enforcement. In response to a question from Ms. Carlton-Foss whether Mr. McLoughlin thought the EPA regulations made sense for the Town, he responded that while he thought the regulations made sense, the EPA places too much emphasis on administrative compliance as opposed to the practical management of stormwater. Mr. Dreyer noted the Planning Board has been requiring stormwater management as part of site plan review responsibilities for many years. In response to a question from Mr. DeWitt, Mr. McLoughlin stated that the Town has not pursued grant funding for stormwater projects largely because of staff constraints. He added that NRCS has funded some stormwater projects particularly impacting shellfish. In a discussion on funding/budget, The Committee learned the Town currently funds stormwater with approximately \$100K. Stormwater maintenance related activities were also identified as requiring additional resources. Ms. Leschen noted that our stormwater system was not designed for climate change and that more money will be needed to manage more serious storms and more frequent storms. Ms. Carlton-Foss noted increased flooding is already impacting the private insurance market. The Committee agreed to pursue actions/recommendations for appropriate stormwater management.

3. Wayfinding: In January, the Town Manager promised to research and advise the Committee on the vote of the Select Board to create an ad hoc working group to create a wayfinding signage system for the Town. Having not heard back from the Town Manager was invited to attend the meeting. The Town Manager sent an email declining to attend the meeting to discuss wayfinding and CCRTA signage. Mr. DeWitt suggested forwarding the Town Manager's email to the Chamber of Commerce. Mr. Dreyer objected and requested to place the relationship of the Committee with the Town Manager on a future agenda. Ms. Rhona Carlton Foss made a motion to forward the email to the Chamber group noting the wayfinding plan as discussed was not proceeding. Mr. Herbst seconded the motion. Voted: Herbst, Carlton- Foss DeWitt in favor and Leschen and Dreyer opposed. The discussion of the Committee's relationship with the Town Manager to be placed on the agenda for March 24.
4. CCRTA Signage: Mr. DeWitt reported that despite the Committee's request to the Town Manager for both updates and concerns on the Committee's recommendation to install CCRTA informational electronic signage, neither was provided. The Committee was advised of both concerns and the upcoming Select Board discussion from the CCRTA and not the Town Manager. This will be further discussed at the next meeting when the relationship with the Town Manager is to be reviewed The Select Board will discuss this signage at its March 14th meeting. No one volunteered to attend the Select Board meeting on behalf of the Committee.
5. In-Person Meetings: After a discussion, Mr. Herbst moved that if required by law, beginning in April, the Committee will meet the first and third Tuesdays at 7 PM in the old water department offices on the first floor of Town Hall. Ms. Carlton-Foss seconded. Voted unanimous.
6. Updates and future agenda items:
 - a. Bridges: Mr. Herbst reported on the article circulated to the Committee about funding and a start date within 5 years.
 - b. EDIC – Station project: No new developments relevant to the Committee.
 - c. SSA RFP – Mr. DeWitt reported on small changes to the RFP considered/approved by the Port Council. He also reported on a comparison of the 2000 RFP with the current draft by Nat Trumbull which found little difference. The 2000 RFP was criticized as designed to fail. Mr. Dreyer noted the Port Council also voted to recommend the hiring of a chief operating officer (COO). Mr. Herbst noted the Port Council also recommended the SSA hire a grant manager. This is believed to be in part related to this Committee's recommendation on freight related grants.
 - d. Excise Tax: At the recommendation of the Committee to the Select Board, the Steamship Authority now includes a notice about properly reporting the location a vehicle is garaged. Over 1,350 vehicles are "garaged" on SSA lots under the long-term parking permit system. Mr. DeWitt reported on a request to the Assessor to see as a result if there has been an uptick in excise bills from out-of-town addresses. The Assessor reported that she is unable to determine this information from her records. Next steps will be discussed at the next meeting.

- e. IG/Embarkation Fee Fund: Mr. DeWitt reported that he had reached out to the IG but had not received a call back. Mr. Brown reported that he had been contacted by the IG and learned that the Town Manager had yet to respond to the IG despite more than a month since the Town was advised of the complaint. The Town Manger is reportedly working with Town Counsel and the Finance Director on a response.
 - f. Areas of Concern: Mr. Herbst noted that each member has an area of special focus, his being the Local Comprehensive Plan. He felt it was time to start discussing these areas.
7. Minutes: After discussion and a deletion of a sentence from the draft minutes recommended by Mr. Dreyer, and a motion by Ms. Carlton-Foss, seconded by Mr. Herbst. the minutes for February 24th were approved unanimously.

Motion to adjourn by Ms. Carlton-Foss and seconded by Mr. Herbst to adjourn at 8:25PM. Voted unanimous.

Next meeting is March 24, 2022 at 7 PM via Zoom.

Recorder: Ed DeWitt