



Emerald Lake Village District

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Board Attendees

Sara Auger, *Commissioner (Chair)*
Brett Taber *Commissioner*
Katie Page, *Commissioner*
Rick Rose, *Clerk*

Residents

Melissa Taber, Denise DeForest, Deb Kardaseski, Tony Merlino, Richard Searles, Corey Larson, Sandra Calder, Bill Castelot, Sharon Bibeau, Guy Bibeau, Louie Lucio, Paul Tondreault, Thomas Joy, Sarah Blackman, Jordan Murphy, Kevin Halvorsen, Ed Coulter, Ray Cowham and Soren Wills.

Non Resident: Bow Smith

Meeting called to order by Commissioner Auger at 6:30pm.

Agenda

ELVD Workshop meeting
Thursday October 7, 2021 @ 6:30 PM

Pledge of Allegiance

Roll Call & Quorum of Commissioners

Public Comment and Board response: Debbie Kardaseski brought up a concern about the culvert at the end of her driveway and shared a concern with the board about Vin Adams and his contract for incidental plowing this year. She thought the board should've contacted him to advise him that this plowing job is now part of the contract with the new road agent.

Denise DeForest asked about the fund established for residential meters. Commissioner Taber advised there was approximately \$50K in the fund and last year \$10K was put in there and for the past several years no money was placed. She also stated she believed that the residents should have received a more advanced warning of how much the water bill (to \$719) would increase. Those who attended the last annual meeting (30 residents) were told that the water bills (\$680K budget approved by residents at annual meeting) could be in excess of \$1000 for this year and that a 10-year plan suggests that an annual 5% increase would most likely occur and information is being put on the website, kiosks and the FB all the time. Commissioner Taber along with Commissioner Auger did realize that an opportunity was missed to get this notice out. The \$719 bill is an adjustment for this year's budget ONLY. The drought, pandemic, well system failures and paying \$150K to truck in water last year contributed to this increase. The amount of these bills depend upon the budget and what the residents approve at the annual meeting. He also stated that the first payment of the year is 50% of the prior year's budget and the second one is the adjustment. April's bill could drop to around \$550 for 6 months, pending budget planning. Rates have not changed much in recent years because no significant improvements have been made. The road's piping system hasn't been touched in 60 years and is failing and needs to be replaced.

The commissioners back in 2006 and 2015 developed the storage tank and had perimeter piping replaced in 2014/2015 and nothing has been done since then.

Denise DeForest asked about the commissioner's stipends and Commissioner Auger responded by saying she gets paid \$500 per month and the other commissioners get \$400. All increases are brought up and voted on at annual meetings. The board has saved money by not having to pay the \$1750 a month for an administrator (duties which the commissioners have taken on) as well as not having to pay \$400 for an office assistant. We do have a file clerk getting \$300 a month.

A resident brought up the quality of the water in regards to arsenic. Commissioner Auger advised that DES has

lowered the threshold (maximum contamination level) on arsenic and we are slightly above that at this time. Prior to July 2021 the threshold was 10 parts per billion and was lowered to 5 parts per billion and the district has recently tested at 6 parts per billion. It was shared by Debbie Kardaseski that when the State lowered the threshold it also increased the difficulty of treating the water in this regard and they have not provided any monetary assistance in meeting these requirements, but the board is always looking to obtain grant (the district got a \$315K grant to assist in the upcoming road project*) money for these issues.

A notice will be going out regarding the arsenic as we just received this violation this week. Commissioner Auger also commented that the fluoride (at a secondary level of 3.0 but below the 4.0 that the state has set) level is a little elevated and has been for years. This mainly affects younger children and their teeth and with older people issues could happen over many years. Commissioner Taber commented that the water is safe to drink and we comply with DES and all their testing (monthly, quarterly and annually) requirements. He stated that residents also have access to this information on NH OneStop on the DES website.

Arsenic and fluoride are natural occurrences within the bedrock in NH and we do treat and filter the water for both of these. Ray Cowham suggested that this information should've been shared on the website and on FB. FB is not an approved means of communication on this matter and notices are sent by mail (per DES regulations) whenever we receive a notice of violation.

*The road project that the residents approved at the last annual meeting was to replace piping at the cost \$1.26 million dollars. The roads (with 534 hookups for the entire district) that have been categorized as needing repair sooner rather than later are Bobolink, Deerpoint, Old Lantern, Raccoon Alley, Skyview and Turtle Bridge. However, Not all these roads will be included in this first project.

Business Agenda:

Eugene "Skippy" Edwards Memorial Bridge Sign Dedication Date Set for 10/9/21 at 11am - All Welcome

To Attend: A small dedication ceremony will be held at the Red Fox Crossing bridge. The sign has been installed and covered and will be unveiled this Saturday. His family will be there to honor him for what Skippy did and meant to the ELVD. Skippy was our road agent for over 20 years and helped lend a hand and built some of the district's roads and houses. Melissa Taber purchased a bouquet to be given to Mrs. Edwards at the ceremony. For those wishing to attend, if you cannot walk you may park your car at the sand pit.

Income Survey: These surveys are continuing to come in but we need a 75% participation rate (currently 40%) to qualify for any grants and/or loan forgiveness. RCAP has received 159 of the 396 surveys mailed. The commissioners would like to see a second effort pushed out to the residents. No personal information is shared with the board and not are not associated with any specific address. The barcode only indicates that the survey came from someone from the ELVD. This survey managed by RCAP cost the district NO money.

With the recent responses received, the median household income is about \$50K. Currently, as we are being treated equally to the Town, their average household income is \$82K. Renters in the community are being included, but not seasonal property owners. The survey will also take into account our current water rate. Having a higher water rate will also enable us to be in line to receive funding. The survey results will be kept on record and could be beneficial to the community for the next 3 years. The lower the average income the greater the possibility of receiving assistance. If the district, as a whole, chooses not to participate then other communities (about 70) will receive this funding. For those residents that have not received the income survey and want to obtain one, contact info@elvdnh.com and one of the commissioners will get one out to you.

Road Agent Update: Bow Smith was here to let the residents know he started working on the roads two days ago. He did some touch-up work on the potholes around the mailbox area and started some grading/raking work at Mocassin, Turtle Bridge, Rabbit Path and Sunrise. His goal for the Fall is to get all the roads graded and safe for Winter passage. Last night, he started working on Red Fox Crossing.

Bow (he has 2 full time workers) will be in the district a minimum of 3 days a week to keep the roads safe and passable. He has a 6-wheeler with a front and wing plow which is the same equipment the State of NH plowers use. He also has a hydraulic equipped sander and has a 6-wheeler dump truck for back-up and a back-up plow. He will show up to the district, in the Winter, at 2am if needed.

If any residents have any questions/concerns for the road agent, please contact the board directly and they will communicate with Bow directly.

Fireworks use on district Beaches: Commissioner Auger stated that the board is leaning towards banning fireworks on district property and those residents who choose to light off fireworks in their own yards will be held responsible for any/all liability through their homeowner's insurance. The board wants to protect residents from the possibility of having to pay on a settlement and have insurance costs increase which would result in residents having to pay more on that policy.

One of the reasons the board is leaning towards this ban is that over the Summer a trash barrel was burned to the ground and ignited the tree (in the middle of the night) next to it and if it had not been for recent rains that tree would've gone up in flames and caused a forest fire. The previous year there was a personal injury incident. Our insurance company and legal counsel have suggested/told us that the district should ban fireworks because of this liability issue. Commissioner Taber contacted other towns on this issue and found none of them allow town owned

property to be the place to display fireworks unless a certified/insured company is brought in to do a fireworks show. Legal counsel has suggested, per guidelines, that the board hold a public meeting (with a 10 day notice) on this issue and notifications would be sent to inform the residents when this would occur. This meeting will be scheduled for November 4th during the board's regular workshop meeting. Commissioner Taber made the motion to place an ad in the October 22nd issue of the Messenger for the public hearing for the removal of the permissible use of fireworks on district property. Commissioner Page seconded, all approved, motion passed.

If fireworks are banned and someone does display fireworks on district property, it would become a criminal violation and law enforcement would become involved.

Water Rate Increase: This agenda item was covered in the public comment section. Commissioner Auger has taken/responded to many calls. She found that the most common concern was the increase of the rate followed by outdoor water usage. The district is still under a water ban because we are under a source water capacity violation (which includes the need to truck in water) through the State and they need to see that we do have a water ban in place. Until this violation is lifted the water ban will remain in effect.

A question was asked if we could use lake water. NHDES has stated that drawing off the lake is NOT permissible as we do not have the infrastructure or treatment facility to do so and also because the lake is publicly used for swimming and boating.

Hooking up to the Town's water is NOT an option now. This would cost about 3-5 million dollars (as of 2 years ago) and the Town is not willing to take on our aging infrastructure and its numerous leaks.

Our well pumps run 18-24 hours a day just for the current water usage and we are down to 6 active wells. Every time we have a well failure or a leak, depending on the extent, there's a potential need to truck in water to maintain water supply. The installation of well transducers will give us a better idea of how quickly the wells can replenish themselves. Bedrock wells can take months or years to replenish to their full capacity.

A resident brought up a question about our fire hydrants. The hydrants in the district are for flushing purposes only and not for firefighting because the water needed to fight a fire would deplete the water tank (150K gallons) very quickly and water would need to be trucked in to replenish the tank. However, we do have 2 dry hydrants in the district. One is at Emerald Beach and the other at Red Fox Crossing and the fire department flushes those to make sure they are usable for firefighting. They also have the ability to suction water from the lake.

2021 Water Main Replacement Project: Last Friday our engineer/water operator walked (more are scheduled) through the southeast side of the district. There had been a discussion where some septic lines (2) would be too close to the new proposed water lines.

Commissioner Auger spoke with Wright-Pierce about installing meter pits/meters (preliminary stage) at the time the new piping is put in the ground. These would not be used for billing purposes initially (residents would be able to view their water usage) and won't be until all houses have meters installed. Even with meters, residents would still have to pay a flat fee and then their usage fee.

We are awaiting a presentation from Wright-Pierce that is scheduled to be completed at the end of this month.

The original plan was to break ground this year, however, as it stands now this may not happen until Spring 2022. The board wants to make sure all details are completely documented. The costs of materials remain a concern as they keep rising and may affect the overall project when put out to bid.

Eastman Well Update: Aquamen is in the process of doing the final pilot testing and we will then receive an update from them on a treatment plan.

The fencing in this area (and Meetinghouse) did NOT cost the district any money. This was funded by the Source Water Protection Grant that we received. The fencing was installed (back 8') to account for the overgrowth that occurred since the last time they visited the site and to not incur any additional costs.

Fall 2021 Projects Discussion: Commissioner Taber has a quote for a fire-rated steel entry door for Meetinghouse for \$569. Commissioner Auger is also expecting quotes.

Commissioner Taber has been looking to see how much it would cost to do more maintenance to Meetinghouse. Making repairs to the exterior (including flashing and nails), painting (including painting supplies), the new door, purchasing wood for the park benches and signage for the culverts all total approximately \$2400. Volunteers will be welcome once these projects are ready to be started.

Commissioner Page has been working on getting the additional sand for Emerald Beach. She has not heard back on the pricing. She also has been in touch with the State regarding the sand permit. They needed the Clerk's signature and that was obtained tonight and can now be forwarded to the State.

5th Annual ELVD Trunk or Treat: This will be held on Saturday, October 23rd. Activities will include decorating your trunk, trick or treating, games for the kids and a photo booth. Commissioner Auger will be there early to decorate.

Approve 9/22 meeting minutes: On page 2, road agent update, second sentence where it was stated the amount the board will put in the budget for this expense next year will not affect the tax rate should have read "this year's rate" as budgeting for next year has not yet started. Commissioner Auger made a motion to approve these minutes as

amended, Commissioner Taber seconded, all approved, motion passed.

Late agenda items: Commissioner Auger brought up obtaining another ongoing engineering agreement with Wright-Pierce. Commissioner Auger made a motion to enter into an on-call services agreement with Wright-Pierce in the amount of \$5K. Commissioner Taber seconded, all approved, motion passed.

Commissioner Taber made a motion to enter into an agreement with submitting an application for the State of NH Drinking Water Trust fund with the Chairman as agent, seconded by Commissioner Page, all approved, motion passed.

Sign any necessary bills

Adjournment of Meeting: Commissioner Auger made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:37, Commissioner Page seconded, all in favor, motion passed.

Rick Rose, *ELVD Clerk*

Approved by:

Sara Auger, *Commissioner (Chair)*

Brett Taber, *Commissioner*

Katie Page, *Commissioner*

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