

Road Commissioner's Report 2013

2013 was a year of catching up and completing several projects started previously.

The larger projects were the completion of: phase 3 of the sea wall on West Shore Road, remediation of the land slide at the former glass dump (McGregor) site south of Woodman's Camp on West Shore Road and the paving of Shrine Road and a portion of West Shore Road. On going: Maintenance of culverts and the replacement of one main cross culvert on West Shore Road, removal of swamp turnaround and ditching. In addition we created a parking access for winter fishing on the Town owned property at the south end of West Shore Road.

For 2014 we are not contemplating any major paving projects as we will not be eligible for grants in this calendar year. We still have several culvert projects to complete as well as the shoring up of some areas on the Lake where the road is threatened on both the east shore and west shore. Road striping is contemplated for Shrine Road and parts of School Street and Main Street. We hope to add white striping on some sections to protect school and bicycle traffic. The funding will be partially by the State and Town.

Our most pressing project is to construct a larger salt shed. This past winter (2013-2014) has been a challenge to meet the salt/sand needs of our winter roads. The size of our present shed is inadequate and forces us to purchase our salt/sand premixed from contractors who not only mark up the material, charge us for mixing but will only deliver when the roads are to their liking i.e.: not during snow storms. In anticipation of the early January ice storm we filled the shed to capacity. During the storm we realized that we were about to run out but the contractor refused to deliver fearing a risk to his truck. To preserve a one last spreading after the snow had turned to rain and black ice, we were forced to alter the normal plowing process. Fortunately only a few souls were on the roads as the governor had appealed people to stay home.

The new shed would be built on the present site and next to the existing one. The old shed will be used to hold salt only and the sand will be held in the new one where it can be mixed. In this way we will save the cost of off site mixing and we can order our salt and sand from the same sources as the State and other towns thus taking advantage of their volume discounts. This savings according to our calculations would be about \$7,500.00 in an average year. This season (2013-2014 winter) we would have saved almost \$6,000.00 before mid January 2014 with the bulk of 2014 still before us.

We estimate the cost of a 40X50 shed to be not more than \$90,000. At this writing we are leaning toward a steel structure with a concrete floor and side wall foundation but are considering one of the fabric structures common to other municipalities as well. We are sensitive to protecting the surrounding lands and anticipate foundation design and drainage to contain the salt.

We feel the least impact on the 2014 and future budgets is to finance the estimated \$90,000.00 with a bank loan. These loans typically do not exceed a 10 year payout and require an approval by the voters. The savings from going from pre mixed material to our own would help defray a portion of the yearly cost by close to \$7,500.00. At this writing we have not been provided with complete loan terms and must make application in order to receive them. We do know that payment can be made once yearly or monthly. The final interest would be calculated at the time of application and as is the practice of Merchants, our bank, offered to municipalities at a fixed rate.

For 8 or more years we have been discussing the need to increase our capacity to store and mix our salt/sand. We have also been unable to safely store summer road stone/gravel (yes people take it) thus increasing the cost of trucking due to small, frequent deliveries. The cost of this procrastination is conservatively estimated at perhaps more than \$60,000....which would have gone a long way toward replacement. (8 years ago this would have cost less as well).

Please consider a yes vote on the new salt shed. In the long run we save material cost and increase the effectiveness of winter road maintenance and resulting road safety.

Selby Turner
ILM Road Commissioner