

2018 AWA Annual Meeting Minutes

Thursday, October 25, 2018

Welcome and Election of Officers

The 2018 Annual Meeting was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by AWA President, Sigurd Nilsen, with over 43 residents attending. The reading of last year's Minutes were waived, approved and submitted. Minutes are posted on the AWA website (www.amherstwoods.org).

President Sigurd Nilsen, Vice President Peggy Matthews-Nilsen and Secretary Terry S. Johnson are not up for re-election until 2019. Nigar Kahn, Treasurer, resigned earlier in the year. Kendall (Kip) Doble, became Acting Treasurer following Nigar's resignation, and was unanimously elected Treasurer for a two-year term.

Financial Report

Newly elected Treasurer, Kip Doble was not able to attend the Annual Meeting. Steve Abdow, AWA Property Manager presented the Financial Report. Last year's revenue was \$26,500 with a \$2,000 surplus. Reserves are about \$14,000. AWA is in good financial condition.

Steve Abdow also reported that collection of Annual Dues has been very successful with only two households not paying. A collection agency has been contacted to collect the unpaid dues.

Property Manager's Report

Landscaping fees were less than last year thanks to coordinated work between Spring Valley Landscaping and resident Denise Gagnon. Thanks, Denise! The goal is to use low maintenance perennials once sewer-construction related street paving is completed. No new plantings have been made due to sewer construction. Some plantings are over 30 years old and eventually will need to be replaced. Peggy added that, since there are no longer deed restrictions, that private overgrown landscaping covering sidewalks, etc., must be dealt with on a neighbor-to-neighbor basis and is no longer the responsibility of AWA.

Sewer Extension Project Phase 2A

Jason Skeels, Town Engineer, and Amherst Woods resident, provided an update on the final stages of the Sewer Extension Project. Jason noted the Wildflower Drive pump station has been installed and is waiting electrical connection by Eversource and final inspection from the Town. Bids are being sought for a screening fence around the pump station. Landscaping will take place next spring. Once the pump station is operational, homeowners will be able to connect to the new sewer line as long as the ground is not frozen. Cleanup of the sewer project staging

area as well as planting new trees at the entrance to the staging area will not be done until the entire project is completed next year.

Street & Sidewalk Paving Updates

Jason Skeels, Town Engineer, noted that Larkspur Drive is now repaved except for driveway aprons, which the Town DPW will complete (not the sewer contractor). Trillium Way, Alyssum Drive, Foxglove Lane, Indian Pipe Lane and Wildflower Drive will all be final paved in 2019.

Unfortunately, repaving existing sidewalks will NOT be included as part of Phase 2 of the Sewer Extension Project. There is a new town Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), which is responsible for prioritizing all sidewalk repaving. The new standard for sidewalks is five feet wide. The Teaberry Lane sidewalk was repaved according to these new standards during Phase 1 of the Sewer Project. The Town will not honor the Amherst Woods Sidewalk Petition submitted to the Town in 2015, but Amherst Woods sidewalks are on the TAC list.

Station Road Bridge Closing

Residents expressed concern about the recent closing of Station Road Bridge, particularly for commuting and ambulance runs. Because of the 6-year delay with the Puffers Pond Bridge, homeowners expressed concern that the Town will not pursue the installation of a temporary bridge in a timely manner. Jason fielded heated questions from residents on the bridge closing.

Due to state requirements regarding wetlands protection and endangered species protection, a temporary bridge may require extensive permitting. Since the bridge abutments have failed, no structure may be placed into the water until impact studies are completed. Hop Brook also includes two endangered species (the dwarf-wedged mussel and a turtle species).

The new permanent bridge must be two lanes with sidewalks and a bicycle lane. The Town Manager and Superintendent of the DPW, Guilford Mooring, have called a public meeting on Tuesday, October 30th. Residents questioned the \$2.6 million price tag quoted by the Town.

Amy Vickers, an Amherst Woods resident and a water management consultant, reported on her contact with a national company, Acrow, that installs permanent and temporary bridges. A representative from Acrow visited the Station Road Bridge site and provided an estimate for a temporary bridge at \$56,000 which could be installed in less than a week. A motion was passed to form an AWAH Bridge Committee to be heading by Amy Vickers.

Gypsy Moth Study

Joe Elkington, a UMass professor, who was scheduled to speak about the potential of conducting a Gypsy Moth Study in Amherst Woods, had to cancel due to a health emergency. Peggy noted that AWAH will keep the neighborhood informed if the Gypsy Moth Study goes forward.

Neighborhood Signs

There was a brief discussion of whether or not to replace the Amherst Woods signs at two entrances to the neighborhood. With all the deferred maintenance needs related to sewer construction, it was decided this issue will be deferred until next year's Annual Meeting.

Formation of a Celebration Committee

A sign-up sheet was made available for a possible neighborhood End-of-Construction Celebration in Fall of 2019. Peggy noted she will help coordinate this effort if others are willing to take the lead. No one stepped forward at the meeting.

Website Updates

The AWAHA website is being transferred to a more user-friendly platform this year, and Peggy would like to have a resident willing to take over the AWAHA website next year.

Neighborhood Directory

The AWAHA Neighborhood Directory is updated regularly and updated copies will be sent to residents at least twice a year or upon request. Attendees were asked to check their contact information in the Master Copy of the Directory on the back table.

Other Concerns

A resident noted frustration that a street light on Wildflower Drive near Alyssum Drive has still not been repaired after two years of requests. It was noted that street light repairs must be scheduled by Eversource and the Town electrician.

Katy van Geel circulated a petition to pave Mill Lane in order to make commuting east easier.

Residents expressed concern about speed and turns on several neighborhood streets. A resident contacted the Town about speeding cars on the newly paved Larkspur Drive. The police are more closely monitoring the stop sign at the corner of Larkspur and Wildflower Drive.

Some residents expressed concern about safety with the intersection of Old Farm Road and Wildflower Drive, noting impaired sightlines due to a homeowner's front yard embankment. If a stop sign is desired, the town's Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) would need to be contacted.

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.