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Selectboard Meeting 10/17/2023 Special Meeting

Present at the meeting were Ricky Morin, Clayton Whittemore, Melissa Whitcomb.
Also present were Willie Valladares from Decisive Communications, Mark Krajewski from Evergreen Landscape Inc., Conrad Ritchie and Melissa Pierce from Comcast, and Jeff Avery from Eustis Cable

This meeting was to address concerns regarding the installation of fiber optic cable, wires, and such for Comcast in the Town Right of Way. Comcast was asked to halt all work in the Right of Way as of September 29, 2023. This did not apply to work outside of the Right of Way.

Tim opened the meeting at 6:00pm

Comcast has hired 3rd party contractor Eustis Cable as well as Decisive Communications to install underground cable. Decisive Communications hired Evergreen Landscape for some of their work.

Tim expressed concerns with the work not being done to town specifications and lack of required permits. There have been multiple locations where the cable is not deep enough and has been exposed or damaged roads. He also discussed the lack of communication with the Town as well as individual residents where contractors were either working on or crossing someone's property with equipment and had not asked for permission or given notice. Tim stated that communication goes a long way.

Conrad explained that proper licensing was obtained through the utility companies to run the overhead wires on the poles.

Mark stated that the area on Cooper Hill that was exposed had been temporarily fixed as of this past Thursday. Material was brought in and compacted to stabilize the road. He said Evergreen will return in the Spring to redo the work to town specifications.

Pike Industries furnished a quote to fix the damaged pavement on Knowles Flat Road caused when Eustis Cable bore under the road at too shallow of a depth. Jeff says Eustis will bear the cost and they will redo the work to the proper specifications as to not cause the same issues. Pike will have to wait until Spring to do their work.

Permitting was discussed as well as reasons for needing to follow town specifications. Mark asked Ricky what would be acceptable if they encountered ledge before getting to the required 4 ft depth if it was beyond the telephone pole but still within the Town Right of Way. The board agreed that if that was the case and it was necessary, a minimum of 24 in. depth and also encased in concrete would be the requirement but that they should inform Ricky, or Melissa if Ricky isn't available.

There were concerns about the depth of cable already installed. Conrad stated that they have a tool that locates the cable and gives the depth within an inch. Willie said there are 5 locations he will check, get back to Ricky with the depths, and address any concerns with those areas.

The Board was satisfied that work may resume once these concerns are resolved and the proper permits are acquired going forward. Mark and Willie will also fill out the permits for work already done. Conrad asked for something in writing stating that they may resume, but it is not necessary as the permits will give them permission to do so. Any work outside of the Right of Way is up to Comcast to have the proper permissions regarding easements and such from utilities or property owners.

Tim motioned to allow work to resume on private property with proper permissions, and any work in the Town Right of Way needing the required permit approval before being done. Clayton seconded, so approved.

Melissa did inform all that the Selectboard only meets every two weeks and to have permitting requests in as early as possible so as not to be delayed.

Clayton motioned to adjourn at 6:52pm, Tim seconded, so approved.

Melissa Whitcomb, Town Clerk and Treasurer