

Wolcott Selectboard Special Meeting Minutes September 26, 2018

All Minutes are draft until approved by the Selectboard.
Please see future Minutes for approval of these Minutes.

Members Present: Eric Furs, Kimberly Gravel, Michael Davidson, Jennifer-Holton Clapp,
Richard Lee
Town Employees: Skip Patten
Guests: Tyler Billingsley, East Engineering
Public: Ryan Bjerke, Jim Holton

Eric called the meeting to order at 6:08 p.m.

School Street Bridge Closure - Review proposals for engineering assistance:

Tyler Billingsley had been asked to provide the Board with cost estimates for various options for addressing the School Street bridge issue. Tyler was also asked to provide information on the cost of an accelerated bridge. [August 22, 2018]

Tyler's initial analysis considered either a temporary bridge replacement, or improving Flat Iron Road. Now that it has been confirmed that VTrans has a temporary bridge available, Tyler feels further analysis of options would point more towards getting a temporary bridge rather than focusing on improvement of Flat Iron Road. Ryan pointed out that Flat Iron Road has flooded several times in the past requiring citizens be rescued.

Tyler discussed getting temporary abutments designed and other prep work to get the temporary bridge in as soon as possible. Although the work can be done year round, the contractor would likely be more expensive in mid-winter.

Although the current bridge does not have to be removed prior to installation of the temporary bridge, Tyler's recommendation is that the bridge be removed now for several reasons. If the current bridge remains, a temporary bridge would then be a tight fit. Since the current bridge will have to be removed at some point, it is more cost effective to have the bridge removed while the cranes and excavator are there any way to install the temporary bridge. Removal of the bridge now would likely make it easier for the contractor to install the temporary bridge, and would eliminate the possibility of the old bridge falling in on itself. Skip pointed out that if the temporary bridge were to be placed over the current bridge it would require a three-foot rise, which would be difficult to do given the short distance, and the angle vehicles take when coming from VT Rt. 15 to cross the bridge. Bids can ask for a quote for removal of the bridge prior to installation of the temporary bridge, as well as a quote for installation of the bridge over the old bridge. The Town can then decide which way to go.

The life expectancy of a temporary bridge is 15 to 20 years. The bridge can either be rented or purchased. It is hoped that the Town would qualify for State or Federal funds for a permanent bridge within that time period. Tyler reported that an accelerated, or pre-fab, bridge would be built specifically for the Town and the cost could run about one million dollars. Since that would be a permanent solution, the Town would not qualify for State or Federal funding.

As for timing, the best case scenario is the design would be completed in October, bids would be received in November, and installation of the temporary bridge would occur in November and December.

Jim reported that for fire equipment to head towards Morrisville, response time has been increased by seven minutes. Jim also pointed out that spring-time ice from the river closes Flat Iron Road every year, which would force fire equipment to go another way.

Motion by Michael for the Town to retain Tyler Billingsly of East Engineering to serve as Project Manager for the School Street Bridge Project, and to go forward with the design, permitting and construction of an extra-large temporary bridge to be rented from VTrans. Seconded by Richard. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed. Bids will go out.

Ryan requested a member of the Selectboard speak to the School Board about the likely time line for installation of the temporary bridge, so plans can be made for transporting students. Michael will follow-up.

Motion to Adjourn: Motion by Eric to adjourn the meeting at 6:38 p.m. Seconded by Kim. Voting: 5 in favor, 0 opposed.

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Klein.

The next Selectboard meeting is scheduled for October 3, 2018