

**ROXBURY SELECTBOARD SPECIAL MEETING**  
**MINUTES OF MARCH 20, 2025**  
**7:02PM – 7:39PM**  
**COMMUNITY HALL**

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chair Rene Bouchard, Vice-Chair Jeremy Reed, Road Commissioner Tim Martin, Nathan Donahue and Donna French

STAFF PRESENT: None

PUBLIC PRESENT: Allen & Joy Lasell

- 1) The meeting was called to order at 7:02 p.m.
- 2) Review Quotes for a New Truck

Tim led the discussion amongst the Board on whether to move ahead with purchasing a new truck. At issue were the pros/cons of a single vs a double axled vehicle, of a manual vs an automated transmission and of the brand International vs Western Star.

It is thought a double axle or tandem truck has the following benefits over a single axle:

- commands a higher resale value
- a tandem carries more material which means
  - o less trips required for multiple trucks when hauling. The town recently bought and hauled gravel using a 3<sup>rd</sup> party and two town trucks. The town's single axle trucks carried 7 & 8 yards respectively while the 3<sup>rd</sup> party tandem truck carried 16 yards.
  - o less fuel used running multiple trips when hauling
  - o less manpower when hauling not having multiple trucks do that job
  - o less wear and tear on trucks eventually will mean savings on repairs
- tandem with it's locking rear-end means better handling on soft roads
- larger truck will handle the snow plow wing better
- not a huge upcharge to go from a Single axle automated transmission to a tandem
  - o International = \$21,735
  - o Western Star = \$20,750

An automated transmission was described to us as a manual transmission that with the push of a button will operate like an automatic. This is said to come in handy when the operator is trying to do tasks and maneuvers like plowing.

It is thought an automated transmission has the following benefits over a manual:

- a truck outfitted with an automated transmission does cost more, but it also commands a much higher resale value

- the pool of drivers/operators is greater for an automated transmission as fewer people know how to operate a manual transmission
- the automated transmission was tested on Warren Mountain Road using a Western Star and passed all tests such that Warren ordered a new truck outfitted with this transmission
- Braintree recently bought a new truck with an automated transmission

It is thought a Western Star is a better purchase over the International because:

- Roxbury owns 3 Internationals and a recent analysis has shown our oldest of the three has the lowest repair % and our newest, 4 year old truck, has the highest repair %
- the trend in the analysis above could point to perhaps declining quality with Internationals. Differences in # of trips, miles/hours per year or drivers could also factor in as well.
- Walter French noted in a previous meeting that he sees more Internationals in the shop than Western Stars
- Warren, Berlin, Northfield and Braintree have all recently opted for Western Stars. Northfield bought two.
- The Western Star dealer is said to have a much larger on-hand parts inventory. We have had trucks just sitting at Allegiance waiting on parts for days & weeks.

After discussions amongst the Board, Tim moved to approve going with a Tandem Western Star with an automated transmission. The motion was seconded by Nate and passed 5-0-0.

### 3) Applying for an Ash Tree grant

Before discussions on the ash trees commenced the Lasell's were asked what they wished to speak about. Mr. Lasell said they were there to discuss ash trees and that they property bordered Drown Rd and Steele Hill Road. Loren had spoken to him about his ash trees saying the Town could take them down and take them away. He was wondering what the Town was doing.

It was mentioned in discussions that past studies have found not all ash trees are attacked and that perhaps younger trees are more resistant to attack. It was explained that we are educating ourselves on the topic. That we would be working with our forester and landowners when looking to cut ash trees on a given street. Our approach may be to identify and cut dead, dying or leaning/problem trees first rather than just clear cutting ash trees. It was also mentioned that we may ask homeowners to share some wood with a program we would like to start to get wood to people who need it for heat in the winter. They thought that was a good idea.

We explained the grant was \$24k being split amongst 2-4 recipients in 3 counties. As such, the likelihood of being selected is low and the amount of the award is thought to be low too. Mr. Lasell pointed out that he walked his property boundary and identified 52 ash trees. So the scale of the problem is quite large. We mentioned the work done for Central Vt Regional Planning to identify trees in the right-of-way and that the results are documented online. Suggested they google VT ash tree maps.

With that Tim made a motion to apply for a grant which was seconded by Donna and passed 5-0-0.

With no further business to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

---

Rene Bouchard, Selectboard Chair

Approved on April 7, 2025