



2016-04-22 / Front Page /

Local

## Belmont Selectmen make road decisions this week

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BELMONT — The status of town roads again took up a major portion of this week's meeting of the Belmont Board of Selectmen.

The board approved the awarding of a bid for Phase 2 of the Ladd Hill Road project to G.W. Brooks of Freedom in the amount of \$496,378. The money comes from the town's Road Construction Capital Reserve Fund. According to Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, the project will involve mostly drainage work.

In March, town voters approved a warrant article for the Hoadley Road culvert project, and the issuance of bonds in the amount of \$375,000. At Monday night's meeting, selectmen approved the issuance of those bonds to be financed by Northway Bank of Berlin, which has a branch in Belmont. Beaudin said the bond issue is for 10 years at an interest rate of 2.9 percent.

Public Works Director Jim Fortin informed selectmen on the town's ongoing pavement preservation program. One project involves the shimming, leveling and paved overlay of about 18,000 feet of Union Road at a cost of about \$328,000. The money for the project comes from the existing Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. Work is expected to start later this summer.

Also planned are the patch and repair of smaller culverts on Hoadley Road, and a project on Brown Hill Road involving sealing cracks with a double-chip seal.

Following a report by Beaudin, the board deferred taking action on the planned construction of a bath house at Sargeant Park, behind the town police department building. It is estimated that construction of the bath house will run about \$27,000, with electrical work running \$1,380.

The recently approved Wareing Road construction and paving project was again the subject

of intense discussion with Kevin Sturgeon and former Selectman Brian Watterson in the audience voicing concerns and objections.

At its April 4 meeting, selectmen voted to award a bid of \$316,020 to the firm of D.B.U. Construction of Epsom for the road project. Board Chairman Ruth Mooney and Selectman Jon Pike voted in favor of awarding the project to D.B.U., while Selectman Ronald Cormier voted against.

The project involves construction and paving of all but two-tenths of a mile of Wareing Road, from Route 106 to the crest of the hill by the entrance to Parent Sand and Gravel.

Sturgeon has voiced objections in the past about various aspects of the Wareing Road project and voiced objections again on Monday night, sometimes to the irritation and dismay of selectmen.

Parent Sand and Gravel currently conducts its business from a site on Shaker Road. It purchased adjacent property from Nutter Enterprises, which accesses Wareing Road. Parent Sand and Gravel intends to use Wareing Road as its main entry point, and also will transfer its scaling operations there.

The improvements to Wareing Road are meant to facilitate truck traffic, including vehicles coming out of the Parent Sand and Gravel site onto Route 106, and to lessen the frequency of all trucks using Main Street from Shaker Road in order to access Route 140 West to I-93. Heavy truck traffic on Main Street has been cited by selectmen as a safety danger, particularly to children, as well as the damage that heavy truck tonage causes to the roadway.

Sturgeon's objections and those of a few other residents concern the lack of a written agreement with Parent Sand and Gravel regarding its future use of Wareing Road, why the road should be paved in the first place, and then why a decision was made to pave all but two-tenths of the road.

Sturgeon said that if the town can negotiate a binding agreement with Parent Sand and Gravel committing it to using Wareing Road exclusively, then the project should move forward. However, he maintains that while the Wareing Road paving project may relieve some of the traffic pressure on Main Street from Shaker Road, the expenditure is not a permanent fix to the traffic problem in the center of town.

Sturgeon believes that Wareing Road should remain a dirt road. He also maintains that if the road is to be paved, then Parent Sand and Gravel should foot the cost and not the town. Sturgeon said there are other projects in which the appropriated money could be better spent

than paving Wareing Road.

Belmont residents are invited to participate in a Draft Citizen Survey, which asks them various questions about town life and civic issues. The survey can be accessed through a link on the Belmont town website, or by going directly to [www./surveymonkey.com/r/9T7NJ5X](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/9T7NJ5X). Survey responses will be collected through June 30, and the results will be tabulated and released in July.

The Belmont Good Citizen Award was announced this week at a reception held at the Corner Meeting House. Belmont High School student Cory Yelle was presented the award, with Sarah Thayer and Veronica Harris as runners-up.

The award is presented each year by the Old Home Day Committee. Nominees must be a resident of the town, and someone who displays good citizenship qualities through academic excellence, civic and volunteer work and through other aspects of personal achievement.

**[Return to top](#)**

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