

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT  
SELECT BOARD SPECIAL MEETING  
Minutes of September 3, 2020**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Julie H. Goodrich, Nathaniel Miller, Charles Morse, and John Stevens. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Ron Lyon PE (DuBois & King), Mark Fournier, Jeffrey Ott, Dave Hanna, Bonnie Hanna, and Steve Davis.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. In keeping with Governor Phil Scott's COVID-19 "stay at home" directive, the meeting was held remotely.

- II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Scheduled):** None.

**III. DISCUSSION**

**a. Contract Award for Union Brook Road Reconstruction Project.**

Manager Schulz said the purpose for tonight's special meeting is review the bid proposals received for this project and (hopefully) award the contract this evening. The two (2) bids were from Pike Industries and J. Hutchins, Inc. Both are good companies and each followed the bid specifications to the letter. The Pike Industries proposal has a base bid price of \$1,632,641 and a total bid price of \$2,081,891 if all the six (6) bid alternatives are included. The J. Hutchins proposal has a base price of \$1,265,936 and a total of \$1,748,336 with all the alternatives. Since he feels both companies are capable of completing this project in a competent and timely manner, Manager Schulz recommends awarding the contract to low bidder J. Hutchins, Inc. He also recommends only including the first two alternative add-ons, which would add an additional two inches (2") of "bituminous concrete pavement" to the road. This brings the total amount for the J. Hutchins bid to \$1,658,636. He noted this is just under the approved bond amount (\$1,700,000). Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Miller, to award the Union Brook Road Reconstruction contract to J. Hutchins, Inc. for a total cost of \$1,658,636, which includes the bid base amount and contract alternatives 1 and 2. The Select Board also authorizes Manager Schulz to execute the project contract and any other required documentation. Project Engineer Ron Lyon (DuBois & King) confirmed these are both reputable construction firms so he would be comfortable going with the lower bid, especially since it would allow for the extra pavement.

Board member Morse also would like to get the construction moving as soon as possible. He noted the Town Highway crew already has done some drainage work in the Bear Farm Road area in preparation. Board member Morse then thanked everyone's hard work on this to date. Board member Stevens also would like to go forward but he asked why Alternatives 3 through 6, which would add durable and/or temporary road lines along Union Brook Road, were not included in the contract award motion. Board member Morse felt it was a matter of cost. This work can be subcontracted at a later time. In fact, Union Broon Road hasn't had the middle lines for some time. Board member Miller likes the J. Hutchins' bid particularly because the lower base bid amount allows for the additional two inches (2") of pavement. He also would like to go forward as soon as possible.

Board member Goodrich's only concern is that the bid price is so close to the bond amount that it doesn't leave much room in the project budget for cost overruns. She asked where any additional funds would come from. Manager Schulz said it would come from the Town Highway Department's operations and maintenance (O&M) budget. This is the main reason he would like to hold off on the road striping for now.

Chair Maxwell asked if the municipality has previously employed J. Hutchins, Inc. Manager Schulz said they performed the King Street project, which involved the installation of new waterlines and road repaving afterwards. The work was done very well and has held up since then. Chair Maxwell believes they also installed new waterlines on Vermont Route 12 several years ago. His only concern is the timeline and whether the bulk of the work can be completed before the snow flies. Manager Schulz spoke to a J. Hutchins representative and was told if there were no delays the with the bid award documents their equipment would be on the worksite no later than the week of September 21, 2020. Should the Select Board members authorize him to execute the contact, Manager Schulz said all required documentation should be completed by the end of next week.

Mark Fournier asked how much of the project would be done this year. Manager Schulz said the contract requires that the base paving be completed this year with no exposed road over the winter. The contract does allow for the final layers of pavement to be put down next spring if it can't be done before this winter. Steve Davis thinks people in the area would prefer to have the job done right rather than rushed. If this means some spring paving, he is all right with that. He then thanked all those who have worked to get the road reconstruction project to this point.

Bonnie Hanna wanted to thank the Town Highway crew and Snapping Turtle Tree Works for the roadside clearing done recently. They did an excellent job. She also noted during recent roadwork in Moretown, there were weekly project updates on Front Porch Forum. Could that be done here? Chair Maxwell said it would be done. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Unscheduled).** There was none.

**V. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Board member Morse, seconded by Board member Stevens, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 6:24 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth L. McCann*

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were approved at the regular Select Board meeting of September 8, 2020.