

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 28, 2022

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Skellie, Rozell, Haff, O'Brien, Fedler - zoom, Shaw, Ferguson - zoom, Wilson, Fisher

PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: None

SUPERVISORS: Hall - zoom, Henke, Hicks, Nolan - zoom, Clary, Griffith - zoom

Debra Prehoda, Clerk

Roger Wickes, County Attorney

Al Nolette, County Treasurer

Melissa Fitch, County Administrator

AGENDA AS PRESENTED IN COMMITTEE NOTICE:

1. Call to Order
2. Accept Minutes – May 31, 2022
3. Department Reports/Requests:
 - A. Public Works
 - 1) Champlain Hudson Power Express Road Use Agreement
 - 2) AdkAction – Pledge to Reduce Road Salt/MOU
4. Other Business
5. Adjournment

Chairman Skellie called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. in the Supervisors' Classroom Room B214 and via zoom.

A motion to accept the minutes of the May 31, 2022 meeting was moved by Mr. Rozell, seconded by Mr. Fisher, and adopted.

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – Deborah Donohue, Superintendent of Public Works, addressed the following items with the committee:

- Champlain Hudson Power Express Road Use Agreement – Bringing power from Canada to New York City. The DPW Superintendent has been working with the County Attorney on this road use agreement. They plan to bury lines under roads and county roads. An agreement is needed to allow them to bury lines under county roads. They will work with the DPW Superintendent to keep her informed, try to keep the roads open and restored when finished. The lines will travel through Putnam, Dresden, village of Whitehall, and down to Fort Edward. Parts of the line will be under Lake Champlain and the Hudson River. Most of the conduit is sealed on concrete. A motion to allow the DPW Superintendent to sign an agreement for road use with Champlain Hudson Power Express was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. O'Brien, and adopted. (*Board Resolution*)
- AdkAction (Non-Profit Organization in the Adirondack Park) – Pledge to Reduce Road Salt/MOU – Adirondack Action reached out to the Superintendent of Public Works and asked if we would sign their pledge to reduce road salt. The DPW Superintendent stated we are already trying to reduce road salt. Mr. Haff stated this was a feel good resolution nothing binding the County so why are we doing this and should only do things that have action. He also mentioned that it states they want the County to accelerate our reduction. The DPW Superintendent stated they do provide education through SWiM (Sustainable Winter Management). DPW does collect data on their road salt usage through their computer software. AdkAction has received funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program to provide support to municipalities to reduce road salt in the Champlain Basin. This organization provides education and the DPW Superintendent is trying to work towards as much education as we can get to give to the guys to better support our plan. DPW is reducing the use of road salt usage currently without an MOU. The County Attorney stated there is no enforcement mechanism in this MOU. This organization has pledges from 30% of the towns and villages in the basin right

now. Signature of this MOU might enhance the organization's leveraging power to get more grant funding. The DPW Superintendent plans to budget for some more education programs and this MOU seemed like an opportunity for some training. The Treasurer believes AdkAction probably received a grant and now they are probably doing what they stated in the grant proposal. A motion to authorize signature of the agreement with AdkAction, a pledge to reduce road salt, and forward to the full Board for consideration was moved by Mr. Shaw and seconded by Mr. Rozell. Discussion. Mr. O'Brien will get with the Executive Director of the Lake Champlain Lake George Regional Planning Board to get more information. The motion to authorize signature of the agreement with AdkAction, a pledge to reduce road salt, and forward to the full Board for consideration was moved by Mr. Shaw, seconded by Mr. Rozell, and adopted. Mr. Haff opposed. (*Board Resolution*)

OTHER BUSINESS:

- Safety Days went well.
- Bridge Projects:
 - Church Street Bridge – hope to get restarted in late July because of supply issues.
 - Shushan Bridge – is going to close on July 18th.
 - In-house bridges – Hickory Hill – waiting for beams, 74 – is progressing, Ferguson Road in the Town of Greenwich was part of the NYS culvert program and there have been a lot of issues with trying to move that project forward and plan to close the road two times during daylight hours so they can use the crane to move the culvert and there are detour routes.
- Paving Projects:
 - Granville – finished paving in Granville on Rt. 24 and Rt. 25.
 - Whitehall – paved Rt. 12
 - Salem – now working on Rt. 61 in Salem to the Jackson town line.
 - Fort Ann – Rt. 16 is next.
- County Highway Association picnic at the Cambridge American Legion on August 4th.
- NYSAC – The DPW Superintendent is co-chair for the transportation committee and they have a conference in September in Buffalo. This was not on her travel plan but would like to attend. A motion to approve conference attendance, NYSAC conference in Buffalo in September, was moved by Mr. O'Brien, seconded by Mr. Wilson and adopted.
- Sand Gate, Vermont that borders Salem and Jackson has FEMA funding for a project related to roads washed out during a storm last summer but they do not have a truck to use and asked DPW if there was anything they could do. The DPW Superintendent stated DPW has the last army truck that they purchased which they do not use in the summer and would like to offer it to them to use for their FEMA project if they pay the rental fee. A motion to offer Sand Gate, Vermont the use of DPW army truck for their FEMA project and charge them the rental rate was moved by Mr. Wilson, seconded by Mr. Shaw, and adopted. The DPW Superintendent will work with the County Attorney on an agreement.
- Chairman Skellie asked if the State is going to do anything on Rt. 29 in Greenwich because people are asking; ruts and potholes. The DPW Superintendent will check on this.
- Easton – Mr. Shaw stated two vehicles were damaged in an area where they were working on replacing a culvert. Would like to ensure the proper signage is in place when doing work and asked if the DPW shop could have the proper signage recommended by the Safety Officer for what they are working on. The DPW Superintendent stated there is a manual on uniform traffic control devices and possibly they should have had a pavement ends sign erected at the site. He suggested the County could make these signs and have them available to the highway

superintendents. The DPW Superintendent will bring this up at the next Town Highway Association meeting.

- Co. Rt. 19 Shine Hill Road – A property on 336 Shine Hill Road has a dumpster that is too close to the road not in a safe place. Mr. Haff would like this issue addressed with the landowner. The DPW Superintendent will look into this safety issue on a county road.

Meeting adjourned at 10:45 A.M.

Debra Prehoda, Clerk
Washington County Board of Supervisors



Board of Directors

April 6, 2022

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Ruth Smith
Dave Wolff
Diana Zais

Advisory Council

Julie Garcia
Travis Gordon
Lee Keet
Bruce McLanahan
Mea Rosner
Jim Schoff
Marsha Stanley

Dear Deborah,

I am writing on behalf of AdkAction, a nonprofit organization here in the Adirondack Park, that focuses on projects that address unmet needs, promote vibrant communities, and preserve the natural beauty of the Adirondacks for all. My name is Ruth Smith and I am the Chair of AdkAction's Road Salt Project. I am reaching out today to introduce myself and ask for your support by signing our Pledge to Reduce Road Salt Memorandum of Understanding for your town or village. This is not a binding commitment, but rather a pledge of intent of the municipalities signing this document to work in good faith to create an effective program to reduce the levels of road salt application while maintaining safe roads in your community.

For over 10 years, AdkAction has been involved in road salt reduction efforts across the Adirondack region. Today, I would like to invite you to join us and many other Adirondack communities in this effort. Your voice is incredibly important as over 190,000 tons of road salt are applied to roadways in the Adirondacks each year. This poses a threat to aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems, water quality, and the safety of drinking water.

AdkAction has received funding from the Lake Champlain Basin Program for our Clean Waters, Safe Roads Partnership project to provide support to municipalities who express interest in working to implement salt reduction best practices. Municipalities that have signed the Memorandum of Understanding will be invited to join this Partnership. This funding will support your crew with the resources, training, and contacts you need to accelerate your salt reduction strategy. We will provide detailed water quality reports to highlight the impact of road salt contamination in the lakes, streams, and drinking water within your municipality. We will connect you with a group of peer municipalities who are also working to reduce road salt, maintain safe roads and save money. Your progress toward developing a best practices plan will be guided by a winter road maintenance professional who has broad experience in the field.

P.O. Box 64
Keeseville, NY 12944
info@adkaction.org
(518) 856-3233

We create projects that
address unmet needs,
promote vibrant
communities, and preserve
the natural beauty of the
Adirondacks for all.

Included with this letter is a copy of our Pledge to Reduce Road Salt Memorandum of Understanding that we invite you to sign and return to us to show your support in working to reduce road salt pollution in the Adirondacks.

With this pledge signed, we also encourage you to join the Clean Waters, Safe Roads Partnership so together we can reach our goals: more informed community leaders who will have a positive impact on sustainable management of the natural resources in the region; measurable changes in effective winter road maintenance practices and reduced road salt use in the Lake Champlain Basin; a cleaner and healthier freshwater ecosystem that provides clean and safe water for people and natural communities. Please contact me at smithruthm22@gmail.com to learn more about this important project.

Thank you again for your partnership in this critical effort.
Sincerely,

Ruth Smith

AdkAction Board Member Chair, Road Salt Project

This project has been funded by an agreement awarded by the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to NEIWPC in partnership with the Lake Champlain Basin Program.



Pledge to Reduce Road Salt

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING OF MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE ADIRONDACKS REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF ROAD SALT FOR WINTER MAINTENANCE AND DE-ICING

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is to describe an agreement among the municipal governments in the Adirondack Park regarding a program to address the levels of chlorides in Adirondack ground and surface waters by reducing the application of road salt for winter road maintenance and de-icing practices. This MOU is not a binding commitment, but is rather a pledge of intent of the municipalities signing this document to work in good faith to create an effective program to reduce the levels of road salt application in recognition of the following:

- WHEREAS, there has been a measureable increase in the use of road salts in the Adirondacks to assist in winter road maintenance and de-icing; and,
 - WHEREAS, within the Adirondacks there are a total of approximately 10,555 lane miles of local, county, state and federal roads and an estimated 192,700 metric tons of salt is used per year; and,
 - WHEREAS, there are numerous studies documenting the significant increases in road salt in Adirondack surface waters resulting from road runoff; and,
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- WHEREAS, median lake chloride concentrations in watersheds without paved roads were nearly identical to background (natural, untouched) concentrations and lakes in watershed with paved roads show chloride concentrations that are, on average, 14 times higher than watersheds without paved roads; and,
 - WHEREAS, recent concentrations of chlorides in many Adirondack lakes are at thresholds that can alter the composition of the phytoplankton, periphyton and macroinvertebrate communities altering the food web and hence potentially changing the biological productivity; and,
 - WHEREAS, continued increases in salt loading in the watershed may also affect the physical circulation of the lake by increasing vertical density gradients that are more difficult to mix; and,

- WHEREAS, elevated salt concentrations in potable water is a health concern to individuals who drink water from private wells in some parts of the Adirondacks because increased sodium consumption is linked to high blood pressure and if salt levels are allowed to continue rising at the current rate, within the next one to two decades, the lake's water will become a health hazard; and,
- WHEREAS, road salt application is linked to leaching of calcium and magnesium from soil, which makes Adirondack lakes more hospitable for aquatic invasive species colonization; and,
- WHEREAS, some of the most obvious toxic effects of road salt are observed in roadside vegetation where high concentrations of salt accumulates and persists and damage is observed with the browning of foliage, premature defoliation, suppression of flowers and die back of terminal roots and the erosion problems that occur when vegetation is affected; and,
- WHEREAS, road salt is responsible for the increased corrosion of road infrastructure and vehicles.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties recognize the significant adverse impacts of excessive application of road salt for winter maintenance and de-icing; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties intend to reduce the salt loading into Adirondack Lakes through the reduced application of road salt; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will curtail the increase of road salt through proven methods of road salt application (as demonstrated in New Hampshire and Vermont) and through utilizing Best Management Practices); and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will, subject to research supporting their use, consider alternative de-icing materials that minimize the application of road salt; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties help to document the effectiveness of alternative road salt materials and/or substitutes; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will investigate and consider equipment to better manage and monitor the application of road salt; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will have highway department superintendents, collect data using consistent methods on the quantities and application rates of road salts within their jurisdictions, as well as truck loading and route distribution information in using this data for improved application methods and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will have highway department supervisors assess and tailor road salt application rates based on level of surface, road grades and proximity to water bodies and runoff systems; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will establish an education and training program for all highway department employees on the impacts of road salt in the Adirondacks and proven methods to reduce road salt application; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties intend to designate sections of public roads as "Priority Abatement Areas" where roads are located along or in close proximity to Adirondack Lakes and/or tributaries that are determined to be critical runoff areas impacting water quality; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will participate in an annual "Road Salt Summit" to discuss new technologies, application methods, best management practices and research aimed at minimizing the usage of road salt for winter maintenance and de-icing; and it is further

AGREED that the undersigned Towns, Village and Counties will together achieve road salt reductions that through ongoing scientific monitoring; and it is further

AGREED that this Memorandum of Understanding may be signed in counterparts.

By: _____

Date: _____



Part of AdkAction's Adirondack Road Salt Working Group, an effort to reduce road salt in the Adirondack Park.



* Funding provided by the Environmental Protection Fund as administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Any opinions, findings, and/or interpretations of data contained herein are the responsibility of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the opinions, interpretations or policy of Rochester Institute of Technology and its NYS Pollution Prevention Institute or the State.