

Report of the Highway Department

To the Residents of Fremont,

Once again thank you for all of your support that you have given to me serving as your Road Agent. This means a lot to me and I do not take this responsibility lightly, but with great appreciation to you all. I feel very good writing this letter to you about what got accomplished in 2017. The Highway Department had a good year maintaining your roads for public travel.

As I write this report to you, I will start from the beginning of 2017 and fill you in the best I can. We started the beginning of the year with many snow storms. The first two weeks of February there were six back to back storms, some small, some bigger. April came and the snowbanks were still high, but we made it through.

As Spring came and all the snow melted, the Highway Department budget was looking OK for the November and December snowfall. As with every year, Spring greets us with lots of work, many potholes to repair, cleaning up fallen trees and branches, sweeping up all the winter sand, repairing road signs, and whatever else needs to be done. Once we got somewhat caught up from the Winter, Summer maintenance projects began. Repairing shoulders and cleaning ditches for drainage is never ending.

Last year paving roads was a great success. We were able to put the finish coats of hot top on Sandown Road and Phase I of Whittier Drive, a total of 1.9 miles. This project came in under budget by \$19,364.25. The cost savings allowed for hot top repairs to be done on Scribner Road, Abbott Road, Tibbetts Road, Riverside Drive, Ann Lane, Wildwood Drive, Cooper Drive, Vetter Drive, and Poplin Drive. Thank you to The Board of Selectmen for allowing this budget line transfer of funds.



Also in 2017 Fremont voters approved a Warrant Article for much needed reconstruction of North Road. The Warrant Article was for \$147,960 to reconstruct 4,070 feet, consisting of the three worst sections of the road that were beyond shimming over. After this project was completed, the budgeted amount came in

\$33,000 lower than expected. Also, Fremont received an additional \$99,000 from the State of NH to be used for road projects. This was unexpected revenue, but perfect timing. After Selectmen's approval, holding a public hearing to spend these funds for paving and road

engineering, we were able to continue and finish base hot top a total of 10,450 feet. This year we hope to put down the finish 1 1/2" wearing course on North Road.

Total paving of roads in 2017 was 4,460 feet of Sandown Road, 5,520 feet of Whittier Drive and 10,450 of North Road. This is a total of 4.1 miles at cost of \$443,894.35, about \$108,000 per mile.

As Summer came to a close, we rented a large tractor with a side boom mower. This is done once every year to cut down the tall grass, weeds, and brush to keep the R.O.W. clear, saving chainsaw and brush chipping. This work generally starts the middle of August and goes through Labor Day. This is time and money well spent improving for visibility and drainage.

Also, last year we were able to do an extensive amount of crack sealing projects. This keeps water from entering into the road bed, preventing freezing and thawing and future deterioration.

Thank you for supporting the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund every year. This fund allowed for the purchase of a new drainage / grading bucket for the Town's backhoe. This is used for all drainage projects and preparing roads for re-paving.

Also, a new roller was purchased for shoulder gravel rolling and compacting. We now own this machine and no longer need to rent one every summer. Also, last year we were able to purchase the Town's first 6-wheeled dump truck, equipped with front plow, side wing, and sander, for plowing and sanding roads. This truck will also be used during the summer months to haul larger loads of materials. The total cost for these three pieces of equipment was \$45,531. All of this equipment saves on rental fees and is there when needed.



Looking ahead to 2018 we have put extensive road repaving projects on the ballot for your consideration in March. The North Road finish paving course will be completed if the Town budget passes. This amount is included in the operating budget.

Article #14 is for the total reconstruction of Beede Hill Road, from the NH DOT section to the Epping - Fremont town line, a total of 3,620 linear feet.

Article #15 is for extensive drainage work to Red Brook Road, installing new culverts and catch basins to three poorly drained sections that flood. Also, plans are to grind existing pavement, reclaim and regrade, and hot top a 2 1/2" binder course pavement. Finish hot top wearing

course would be proposed to be done in 2019. The total length of these improvements is 3,580 linear feet.

Both of these roads are in very poor condition and overdue for repairs. Should all repaving projects pass in March, the total will be 3.3 miles.

Article #12 asks you to continue saving for the two bridges that are on the State of NH “red list” bridge replacement list. Fremont is responsible for 20% of the cost and the State reimburses a total of 80% once we are confirmed to be in the State’s funding queue. We are still unsure on when replacement will be.

Article #13 asks to continue funding the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for new or replacement equipment which is needed to maintain roads. This savings account helps to fund larger purchases on a more planned basis.

The Fremont Highway Department budget and all Warrant Articles have been recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee. I ask for your support for the roads.

In closing, there are many, many people I need to thank for making my job easier. I’ll start with the entire Highway Department employees and their families. These men through the Winter months work long, grueling hours keeping our roads as safe as possible to drive. It is no easy job! They are all dedicated. Great Job!

Also, many thanks to our Board of Selectmen, Budget Committee, Police and Fire Departments, the entire Town Hall staff, our School Superintendent, and our Town Administrator Heidi Carlson who helps me all year long with budgeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Leon Holmes Jr
Road Agent

Photos Courtesy of Leon Holmes Jr



“Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much.”

~ Helen Keller