

What if we Cut Position 5?

Summary of Discussion with Highway Superintendent Buddy Rollins
September 16, 2020

Penny-Wise; Pound-Foolish?

In our 90-minute conversation this date, Superintendent Rollins indicated this is how Road maintenance and Highway Dept. equipment maintenance would be negatively impacted should the Town Board's 2021 Budget force him to reduce his manpower from five employees to four:

1. Snow Plow Routes:

- "The Northwest of the Town will take a hit."
- On snowy days, the Town now runs
 - 4 Big Trucks
 - 1 Smaller truck
 - Superintendent Rollins and his pickup doing minor plowing/cleanup
- If staffing is reduced by one, the Northwest quadrant (Buck Hill Road, Aiken Road, Tucker Road, Fish Road, and Rothermich Road (Fish Road to NY 79)) will be delayed until last.

2. No allowance would be made for illness or vacation time during emergencies, like snowstorms:

- Thus, with one man down, a 3 Big Truck/1 Smaller Truck combination would be reduced to 2 Big/1 Small or 3 Big/0 Small Truck combination.

3. More overtime would be incurred:

- To groom roads prior to morning commutes/School Bus runs, Buddy would need to call in his crew earlier; 3 AM instead of 5 AM. Overtime would be incurred.

4. No mechanic work will be performed in the shop:

- All repairs/maintenance would need to be farmed out to mechanics like Caskey's
- (Caskey's rate is \$95 per hour, compared to Town of Enfield employees' \$25 per hour.)
- Superintendent Rollins predicts "repair bills will triple."

5. If equipment breaks down, wreckers will be called:

- With no more in-shop repairs, trucks will not be limped back to the Highway Garage, but rather transported by wrecker to the mechanic,

6. Small discretionary snow plowing will end:

- Highway Dept. will stop plowing the Town Hall and Community Building Driveways.
- The Town will need to retain contract snow plowing

7. No clean-up days will be scheduled for next year.

The Ulysses Comparison:

In budget discussions September 9th, Enfield's Highway Department was compared to that of Ulysses, which allegedly operates with a three-person Highway Staff under Highway Superintendent Scott Stewart. The claim deserves clarification.

Ulysses Supervisor Nancy Zahler says that, in truth, Ulysses functions with a four-person Highway Staff. However, one of those four employees under Superintendent Stewart works only 25 Hours per week for Highway, his remaining 15 hours allocated as the water operator for Ulysses' public water supply in Jacksonville.

The assignment places Superintendent Stewart's staff at 3.62 FTE's.

Superintendent Rollins' says confusion may have arisen since the Ulysses Highway Department operated for a time with one position vacant.

Supervisor Zahler, in response to my query as to the adequacy of road maintenance in Ulysses, replied:

"We have invested consistently in our road program so the quality of our roads is relatively high."

Superintendent Rollins in our conversation, however, drew some distinctions between Ulysses' roads and Enfield's:

- Ulysses maintains 76 miles of roads, 10 miles less than Enfield. (Supervisor Zahler claims her Town's Department maintains "just under 40 miles of Town Road," so Rollins' comparison may consider total roads, not just those under Town maintenance.)
- Ulysses purportedly has no dirt roads, whose year-round maintenance is higher
- Ulysses uses more salt; not sand. (Sand accumulates over the winter, requiring spring shoulder maintenance.)