

Bremen Holds Pre-Construction Meeting on Heath Road Bridge Project

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The Bremen Board of Selectmen, with representatives of Calderwood Engineering and Hagar Enterprises Inc., held a pre-construction meeting regarding the Heath Road bridge project Wednesday, Dec. 13.

Meeting at the town office, town officials discussed the goals and timeline of the project to replace Chaney Bridge, which carries Heath Road over Smelts Brook, with the town's engineering firm and contractor. Construction is scheduled to take place in spring 2018.

Eric Calderwood, of the Richmond-based engineering firm Calderwood Engineering, led the meeting.

The parties reviewed the scope of the project, permitting, construction safety, the construction schedule, and communication strategies.

Calderwood said the completion date for the project is June 30, 2018, and he does not anticipate a problem with meeting the deadline.

Selectman Hank Nevins said the town's contract with the state regarding grant funding expires March 31, 2018, and he asked if that would be an issue. A \$95,000 grant from the Maine Department of Environmental Protection will help fund the project.

Calderwood said he doesn't anticipate any issues, citing the grant's association with in-water work, which will be completed before the project is fully wrapped up.

During the discussion on project safety, Calderwood said it is up to the contractor to provide a safety plan.

"We have to make sure we have adequate traffic-control devices so people can see what is going on," Calderwood said.

Nevins agreed and said he wants to make sure signage is provided to mark the construction zone.

Nevins said that because work will take place in the spring, it would make sense to exempt Heath Road from weight limits to ensure construction vehicles can continue to access the project area.

However, Nevins said that if the road is exempted, he would like to see the speed reduced to protect the road.

Calderwood recommended getting before and after photos of the road to ensure no damage occurs during construction.

Calderwood said ambulance access to Heath Road would need to be maintained during the course of the project and any road closures or blockages would have to be reported to the Central Lincoln County Ambulance Service and Bremen Fire Department.

Calderwood recommended notifying the town office and residents before busy days to give the public a heads-up.

Seth Hagar, vice president of Hagar Enterprises Inc., of Damariscotta, said the company would work to ensure the road stays open.

“As long as people have a certain degree of patience, it will be all right,” Hagar said.

Nevins said that though plans call for work to start in March, he hopes it will start earlier if weather conditions cooperate.

Bremen Administrative Assistant Kelly Clancy inquired about the current state of the bridge.

Calderwood said the bridge is deteriorating, but will make it to spring.

“The bridge will make it through the winter. When we excavate next to the existing abutments we need to be very careful. We want to be pretty cautious there,” Calderwood said.

Nevins urged the contractors to keep the residential nature of the neighborhood in mind during construction.

“If you need extra hours or if it becomes a night work thing, it still is a residential neighborhood and we would like you to keep the noise down to a minimum,” Nevins said.

Nevins said he wants the contractor to provide a dumpster or some kind of trash control to keep the area clean.

Calderwood concurred with Nevins’ suggestion.

“It makes sense to put a dumpster down there. It’s important to present a neat appearance during the project,” Calderwood said.

Nevins urged the contractors to keep an eye on the tides and ensure local shellfish harvesters are able to access the mud flats by the bridge.

“When it is low tide, they are going to go out, and it’s important to not interfere with their livelihoods,” Nevins said.

Selectman Wendy Pieh asked how the town should answer questions from the public regarding the project to ensure the contractor is able to complete the project without worrying about residents showing up on the job site.

Calderwood suggested that questions should be referred to the town office or the engineering firm.

The old bridge will remain standing and open to traffic as the new bridge is installed.

In a second round of bidding, after the bids in a first round were deemed too high, the Bremen Board of Selectmen voted to award the project to Hagar Enterprises, which submitted the low bid of \$474,995, in August.

Calderwood said he is optimistic about the project.

“I think once it’s all done the folks who have been hesitant will really like it,” Calderwood said.

Hagar described the project as an opportunity for the town to preserve its history.

“It’s a great (public relations) event. You can take photos of the new and old bridge together and you can take before and after shots,” Hagar said.