

Andover Road Agent

By Jon Champagne
Andover Road Agent

One of the things I have discovered as road agent is that, despite the best attempts of me and the selectman, very few people understand or want to understand the Highway Department budget or payroll process. So that everyone understands this, and to end rumors that road agents get paid for just signing on the line, I will outline how the Town's current pay structure works.

Currently, I get paid by the Town \$15 per hour for when I work for the Town, which does not include going to meetings, of which there are numerous, or checking on things for people, which happens often. I draw a paycheck only when I am checking the condition of roads on winter mornings to decide when to send out the crew to plow or sand, or if I have a tool in hand.

Currently the only person who is an employee of the Town is the grader operator, who is only part-time. All other help are either independent subcontractors or employees of my company. Depending on the scope of the work needing to be done, I either get a price to have a sub do the work or send my employees to do it. When subs do work for the Town, there is usually a set price for the job, or they work based on a series of hourly rates that the selectmen have established for equipment and labor.

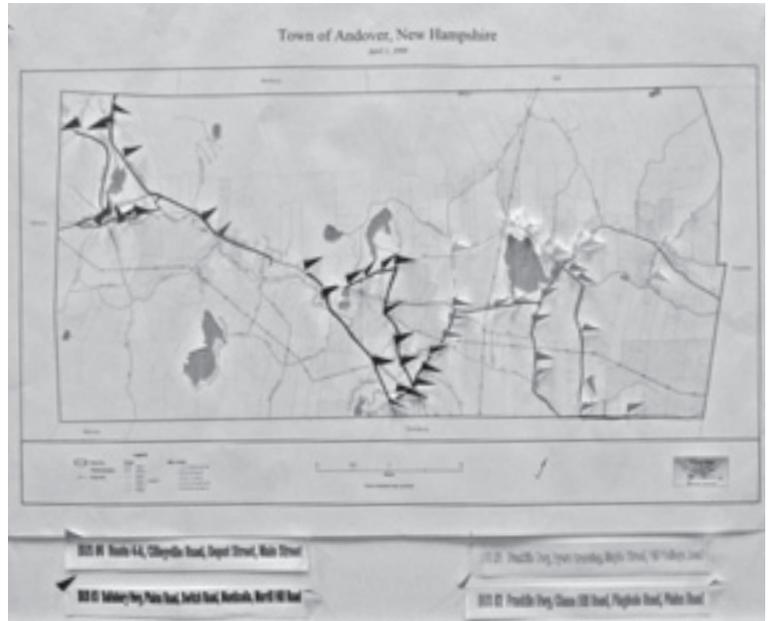
Equipment rental rates are set by the selectmen. They are loosely based on rates that the state and other towns currently pay. I say "loosely" in that we do not pay monthly rental on sanders as the state does, nor does the Town have a fuel stipend or supply tire chains and cutting edges.

In addition, we do not pay subcontractors to be on-call for the season or storm. We do pay them from the time I call them to the time they arrive on their route or at the pit, as long as it does not exceed half an hour, and for one hour after the storm for the purpose of filling out detailed payroll paperwork. We ask the subcontractors to make a detailed list of where and when each has plowed and with what.

This task is performed daily and submitted weekly to the Town Office. This system has been gradually implemented since 2004, when we phased out the fuel stipend and increased equipment rates to more closely match those of the state.

In 2010, we again increased rates to compensate for the fact that the Town decided to no longer supply subs with cutting edges or tire chains. How much this increased the rates varies. On average, most small trucks use two to three cutting edges a year. The most common cutting edges now sell for anywhere be-

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The map shows the new arrangement of bus stops on the four AE/MS bus routes. Photo: Charlie Darling

New AE/MS Bus Routes Minimize Ride Time

By Don Gould
Andover School Board

School bus routes are currently under study by the Andover School Board per contract agreement. Our transportation provider, First Student, has thoroughly investigated all present routes and individual stops, with the assistance of the Andover Elementary/Middle School (AE/MS) school administration, to provide proposed changes for the AE/MS and Merrimack Valley High School (MVHS) students. These routes will use the six 77-passenger busses specified in the original contract.

There will be only minor changes to the trips for students going to MVHS. These routes employ Busses 4 and 5.

Each of the four AE/MS school busses will operate in an area designed to eliminate all overlap of routes and provide for minimal student ride time and fuel savings. These routes have been determined around satellite bus stops to last for years with minimal change for student population shifts.

The Board, with the assistance of administrators, SAU 46 staff, and First

Student, will be considering all applicable regulations, district policies, decreasing fuel charges, and the safety of AE/MS students – first, last, and always.

Bus zones, shown on the accompanying map of Andover, are generally as follows:

- Bus 1 – East Andover Village, Maple Street, and Old College Road area
- Bus 2 – Flaghole Road, Boston Hill Road, and Route 11 east of town
- Bus 3 – Salisbury Highway, Plains Road, and Monticello Drive
- Bus 6 – Potter Place, Depot Street, and Route 11 west of town

The proposed bus routes are currently under study by the Board. The revised routes will be available and communicated to all students and their families over the coming weeks.

Please join us at the regularly scheduled School Board meeting on Tuesday, May 1, at AE/MS. The Public Participation item on the agenda at 7 PM will provide an informational opportunity for those requiring additional detail.

Andover School Board

The Andover School Board has recently discovered that meeting minutes have been published prior to being approved by the Board. The Board understands that what is published needs to be accurate.

The biggest regret is the misquotation of Erik Anderson published in min-

utes of the 2011 School District Meeting in the 2011 Andover Town Report. The minutes published were a draft and not the approved minutes of the Board. We would like to apologize to Erik.

We are working hard to be sure any future minutes published will be identified as draft or approved.

Wonderful updated home with detached barn, brook, stone-walls, walking distance to school, and more!



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