

MaineDOT Utility Task Force Meeting
September 26, 2013
MaineDOT Conference Room 216
Chair: Mike Moreau

Attendees: See list at end of document.

Agenda: Follow up on 2013/14/15 Work Plan provided in spreadsheet format – Shared 4/2/13; Utility Betterment/Construction Plans Data Form Shared 4/2/13/ update on form and process.

New items: 2014 Project Advertise Schedule and 2015/16 information; Tree Trimming Responsibilities; Revision of Utility Accommodation Rules – Update; Gas Facilities Constructed Too Close To Aerial Utility Poles; Mobilization, Traffic Control, Etc. Fees in Receivable Utility Agreements.

Mike welcoming all to the meeting, thanked everybody for coming and introductions were made.

Follow Up Items –

2013/14/15 Work Plan Spreadsheet format - provided in spreadsheet format with the group in April. All are good with the format – just what they wanted to cover their needs.

Utility Betterment/Construction Plans Data Form – New form/process which will be in place the spring of 2014. Received about a dozen responses from April solicitation; once established, MaineDOT would like to solicit betterment/construction plans semi-annually; May and November. Mike hopes to place information in MapViewer; currently in the process of checking to see if it is possible.

- Comment – MapViewer is a very handy tool and helpful on schedules.

New Items –

2014 Project Advertise Schedule and 2015/16 Information – Expected Dates of Publication - 2014 lock down date is the beginning of December and the schedule will be published on the Web in early January. The entire 2014/15/16 Work Plan will be published to Web in March. We are finalizing and locking in dates now to meet the 2014 project deadline date.

Tree Trimming Responsibilities – after a discussion with Region Manager's regarding Maintenance Tree Trimming Work by Utilities, the feeling is the Utility's should be making every effort to clear the wood away from the roadside. The issue is compounded by the type of ROW; if easement, wood belongs to land owner; if it's "fee" ownership, wood belongs to the state, but MaineDOT doesn't want it.

Comments:

- large task to ask the Utilities
- Utilities work to keep off the road side and out of the way of traffic; usually in the ditch line
- Some cases where the work is being done because of a storm or emergency situation

- Utilities have had the discussion with Bob Moosmann.

Aerial utilities must also respect the transportation facilities while maintaining their aerial facilities. MaineDOT is asking Utilities to contact adjacent land owners to take the wood or remove it from ROW. **At a minimum it should be placed at the edge of ROW.** The wood is a safety hazard on the in-slope and impedes drainage and creates maintenance problems in the ditch line.

Revision of Utility Accommodation Rules – update –

Highlights of the changes include:

- Updating the Standard Corridor Offsets to reflect new highway corridor priority designations and respective offset
- Bringing Permit-By-Rule Regulations into the Accommodation Rules
- Bringing Highway opening Regulations into the rules
- Defining Joint Use of Poles for Traffic Signalization Structures and Equipment to eliminate the need to draft agreements in every case
- Clarify and update a number of other conditions

MaineDOT plans to have the Final Draft Rules available to share with utilities for comments before the end of the year.

Gas Facilities Constructed Too Close To Aerial Utility Poles –

Mike received call from FairPoint and CMP about gas lines constructed 1 foot away from pole bases. This creates a hand-dig situation if this pole needs to be replaced and could cause a major safety issue.

If that pole has 911 equipment on it and it's the middle of winter with 4 feet of frost in the ground, the replacement will be significantly slowed down because of the hand dig requirement and coordination with gas companies.

- Utility Accommodation Policy (UAP) governs on State and State-Aid Roads and in Compact areas where the municipality has no written rules
- Offset from poles is 3 feet; They are hearing Gas company reps say they don't need to follow UAP
- MaineDOT requires the gas companies to inform their contractors to use the min 3 ft offset from outside of pipe and to contact all utilities including aerial utilities.
- A call to Dig Safe is not coordination with the other utilities.
- Permits issued by MaineDOT require the gas companies to coordinate their construction with all adjacent utilities
- MaineDOT is also urging all aerial, water sewer utilities to contact the gas companies to open up communication regarding accommodation

Comments:

- Attempts were made to contact the Gas Company Contractor regarding the concern but they have not returned their call. They seem to be by-passing as much as they can to get the job done.
- MPUC chapter 420 only 1-foot separation required –

MIKE: These rules do not apply to state or state-aid highways.

MaineDOT ACCOMMODATION RULES REQUIRE 3-foot SEPARATION IN STATE AND STATE-AID ROADS AND IN COMPACT AREAS THAT DON'T HAVE WRITTEN RULES ON STATE AND STATE-AID HIGHWAYS

MPUC supports the implementation and recognizes the authority of the MaineDOT Utility Accommodation Rules where they govern.

- Some Portland areas don't have more than a 3' area available - pipeline is going on top of the water line.
- Communication is not happening between the Gas Company and the City in the Portland Area. Bangor Gas Company has been good on following guidelines in Bucksport area. Others have had difficulty Bangor Gas in the Bangor/Old Town area.
- Not seeing the Gas Companies doing Utility Coordination?? They are not providing notice to other utilities of their activity – very poor communication at this point.

Mobilization, Traffic Control, Etc. Pay Items in Receivable Utility Agreements – In 2007, MaineDOT established a policy of including pay items in Utility Receivable Agreements for utility construction work in our contracts. Due to attrition of personnel, there has been a period of several years where that policy has not been consistently implemented.

Bureau Management has recognized this in recent agreements and, as a result, the Utility Section has been asked to re-establish the use of pay items in receivable agreements. Pay items include mobilization, traffic control, rock excavation, and other items as appropriate in the utility agreements, consistent with past policy. Mobilization will be estimated as 10% of the value of the utility construction items in agreements.

We are bringing attention to this because you will see these in future utility agreements. Any issues with policy please share so management can discuss the concern.

Recurring Items –

Construction Lessons Learned

Comment – observed in a work zone recently where contractor used stakes with flagging between them immediately below electric lines to remind operator of the presence of the electric line location; a great reminder to the operator of the lines above.

Comment – Sometimes where lines cross a highway, contractor places a sign stating “Overhead Lines.” Another great reminder for all the of the truck and equipment operators.

Open Forum

Comment - Railroad Clearance Code – not able to locate for Railroad

- The National Electrical Code requires 23.5 ft for cable on strand and 25 ft for wire over top of rail. But Pan Am is requiring 27 ft for any FairPoint wires over top of rail.

Update after meeting: I contacted Nate Moulton, MaineDOT Rail Program Director (phone: 624-3563). MaineDOT requirement is 22.5 ft for structures and 23.5 ft for wires. Clearance for double-stack is 22.5 ft. He said they may be concerned about sag or movement as time passes or being able to raise the track as they surface it and maintain it.

Q – 2014 schedule, work ongoing/additional projects. What are the chances these will go? It is helpful to know of any schedule changes happening with a Project. The earlier the better.

A – Same process as last year: Once projects go into work plan, they stay in the pipeline and will be constructed before adding new projects. We are in final decision stage for 2014 project lockdown. PMs lockdown projects in November and upper management does final review/decision in December, publish to web in early January. Entire 2014/15/16 work plan will be published to web in March, sooner if possible.

Update since meeting – See attached Dashboard Printout. At this stage, I would assign an **85% to 90% confidence** level for the **2014 project lockdown dates**.

Q – Will Bond issue effect the schedule?

A - Do not know at this point. Whatever additional money will simply increase the number of projects in 2014/15/16 work plan. If anything, some of the projects from the 2013/14/15 work plan may be pushed up to complete sooner.

Comment - Gas Utility will be a concern – they are under the gun to get work done; working under a 5-year completion date. Project Manager is very aggressive with his schedule.

Comment - Would like to see representatives from Summit at the next meeting. Mike has invited Summit, but no one came. They will be invited to all future meetings as well.

Training Session for Utilities with DOT – anything happening? Jeff indicated Maine Water Utilities Association can coordinate the training; can the Utility Coordinators attend?

Update since meeting – Gordon Johnson, PWD, contacted MaineDOT to set up water utility workshop. Mike has shared with coordinators and PMs and will get back to Gordon with number of people interested and plan accordingly.

Adjourned

10/24/13
Minutes by
MMoreau

ATTACH: Attendance List
Latest Dashboard Project Delivery Schedule

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Attendance List**

NAME	ORGANIZATION	TELEPHONE	EMAIL
Jefferson Longfellow	Kennebec Water District	872-2763	Jefferson@kennebecwater.org
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Mark Lambertson	Bangor Hydro/MPS	973-2582	mlambert@bhe.com
Terry Blair Jr.	MaineDOT	592-3865	Terry.blairjr@maine.gov
Mike Barden	MaineDOT	446-1196	Mike.Barden@maine.gov
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