

Pownal board clarifies Wiki post

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POWNAL — Select Board member Stephen Kauppi said during a meeting Thursday that he wished to clarify statements made by town resident Ray Shields on the Pownal Wiki.

The wiki is a Web site where registered users can publish information, photos and opinions about Pownal, similar to Wikipedia.com.

Kauppi: Information incorrect

Board Chairman Nelson Brownell said the wiki is not owned or maintained by the town. It was created by the Communication and Image Committee, which formed two years ago with the implementation of the townwide plan.

On Tuesday, Shields posted to the wiki that the town had settled a lawsuit with a business for \$10,000. Kauppi said the town has not been sued by a business and that the settlement Shields was referring to is the total cost to the town's insurance from a settlement with Shields over the placement of a church steeple that Shields claimed blocked access to his property.

Wills Insurance settled out of court with Shields for \$3,500 last year, but with attorney fees the total claim came to just under \$10,000.

Shields clarified his comments on the wiki shortly after the Pownal meeting adjourned.

"I have actually stopped reading the wiki because there have been so many half-truths and non-truths in it," Kauppi said, adding that he thinks the idea behind the wiki was good, but it has not panned out well.

Brownell said people need to be aware that information posted to the wiki reflects the views of those who put it there and is little different from traditional gossip between people.

In other business, the Select Board voted Thursday to accept a bid for black-topping a section of Barber's Pond Road from Peckham Materials Corp. for \$59.35 per ton of asphalt.

The board also voted to put a proposed 40- by 60-foot sand storage shed out to bid. The building is a simplified version of a previous proposal for which the board rejected all bids for earlier in June. Road Foreman Casey Mattison said the new plan calls for a gable-roofed structure that will house sand and equipment.

In his monthly road report, Mattison said the recent heavy rains have caused less damage than expected to the town's roads, but parts of Skiparee Road washed out and a culvert on the road will need replacing. He said that on Tuesday he received a call from Vermont State Police saying that there were boulders on Skiparee Road.

Mattison said the rain was powerful enough to move boulders that had been used to support banks from along the roadside into the roadway.

Mattison suggested two culverts with 2-foot openings be put in place rather than a culvert with a 3-foot opening. He said a 3-foot culvert would require special permits from the Vermont Agency of Transportation.

He told the board he is also not happy with the surfacing job that was done on the Northwest Hill Road as part of the sewer project that ran water lines beneath the road.

He said the surfacing is starting to deteriorate and the project should still be under warranty. He said he has scheduled a meeting with the project's engineers, Aldrich & Associates.