

February 14, 2018

Dear Honorable Board of Selectmen,

This letter is to recommend that you place an article for the FY 2019 Annual Town Meeting Warrant to change the **elected** Road Commissioner position to an **appointed** Highway Superintendent position, to be filled by appointment of the Board of Selectmen. We have three primary reasons for this recommendation:

1. **Sound Financial Management:** At \$715,572 appropriated for FY2018, the Highway Department budget is the second highest department budget in town. Additionally, last year's Snow and Ice expense reached \$109,976 over this budget. Changing the head of the Highway Department to appointed would ensure that this department can be held to the financial management policies already in place for similarly sized department budgets.
2. **Accountability:** Currently, the Road Commissioner is an elected official and as such, he/she does not report to the Board of Selectmen and, further, does not have to hold public hours to meet with members of public, address concerns and/or respond to complaints. It is completely at the discretion of the Road Commissioner to decide whether he/she wishes to meet with the Board of Selectmen and/or publicly respond to our citizens. Thus, the managers of our town, the Board of Selectmen, have no oversight over this very important position.
3. **Expertise:** The job of the Road Commissioner continues to grow in responsibility and complexity. The Highway Superintendent must have the necessary training and background to understand municipal finance, state funds such as chapter 90 as well as state grants, interface with state officials on work that is done within our town on state highways, and other important topics. The election process provides very limited opportunities for the voters of the town to gain access to the training, education and background knowledge of individuals who decide to run for this crucial position. Changing this position to appointed would ensure that the town could choose the most qualified individual for this job from the pool of applicants.

For these reasons, we feel it is imperative that Groveland's Board of Selectmen have the responsibility to appoint the most qualified person possible for this position. Our Board did interview our long time current Road Commissioner, Robert Arakelian, and he is fully in support of this change. At our meeting on January 31, 2018, the Finance Board reviewed this letter and voted unanimously to send it to you.

We are available to meet with the Board of Selectmen to discuss this proposal further if requested.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Kastrinelis, Chairman  
Groveland Finance Board