

PROPERTY VALUATION FOR ROAD ASSOCIATION ASSESSMENTS
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For private statutory road associations the enabling statute at 23 MRSA Section 3102 has a limitation for the amount of the annual maintenance assessment. It states that it “may not exceed 1% of an individual owner’s municipal property valuation”.

The key to understanding this provision is the term “municipal property valuation”. Under Maine law this is the “just value” or as the statutes also sometimes call it and as the courts have applied it this is the “fair market value”.

Under Maine law all property in Maine must have the “just value” determined as of April 1 each year. (Remember Doomsday and the Doomsday Book?) As a result, all property (the emphasis is on “all”) has a value assigned by the assessors for the land value and the buildings value. Added together you have the “just value” and the “municipal property valuation”. They are all listed in each municipality’s or unorganized township’s property tax record books and are public records. (The Doomsday Books) Add them all up and you get the municipal valuation that is used for many things such as assessment against the municipality. Yes, it also pays a property tax for example to the county. It is also used to determine state revenue sharing and other state and federal benefits which is why the Property Tax Division of the Maine Revenue Service monitors the process closely to be sure it is correctly applied and fair.

THIS IS NOT THE TAXABLE VALUE NOR IS IT THE VALUE USED TO ASSESS PROPERTY TAXES.

The property tax amount assessed against each property that is subject to assessment is determined AFTER all of the exemptions are deducted such as homestead exemptions, veteran’s, blind persons, tree growth, open space, farm, etc. which are deducted from the “municipal property valuation” which is the “just value” or the “fair market value”.

Therefore, when a road association goes to the municipal office to check the property records to see if the 1% limit of Section 3102 is exceeded by the annual road maintenance assessment, it needs to use the total amount of the land and building valuation before it is reduced by the various exemptions.

It is interesting that the private road statute subjects all benefited property to the road maintenance fee assessment from statutory road associations without any exemptions and the “municipal property valuation” is set yearly as discussed above for all property. This suggests that the land of a charitable organization such as a land trust, church and even government owned property must pay the road maintenance assessment fee from a statutory road association even though it is exempt from pay property tax. One question just leads to another!

Appendix E: Sample Registry Notice of Non-payment of Road Association Assessment

NOTICE OF NON-PAYMENT OF ROAD ASSOCIATION ASSESSMENT

NOW COMES _____, Road Commissioner of the _____ Association of _____, Maine and after being duly sworn and under oath, states that the following is true based upon his own personal knowledge and the records of the Association.

1. I am Road Commissioner of the _____ Association of _____, Maine.
2. The _____ Association is a road association created and existing pursuant to Maine law at 23 M.R.S.A. §3101 to 3106 and an annual meeting was properly called and held _____, 200__ for a twelve-month period from _____, 200__ to _____, 200__ for the purposes of maintaining _____ and _____ in _____, Maine and the assessment of maintenance fees on the property owners on said roads as provided for in said State law.
3. _____ and _____ are owners of land on _____ pursuant to a Deed to them dated _____ and which is recorded in the _____ County Registry of Deeds in Book _____, Page _____.
4. Said owners have refused, and continue to refuse, to pay the assessments of \$_____ for the year beginning _____, 200__ and ending _____, 200__, which was due to be paid by _____, 200__.
5. The _____ Association, pursuant to 23 M.R.S.A. §3103 and 3104, has the authority and standing to enforce the payment of and to collect the assessment plus interest and costs.
6. Notice is hereby given that the said current owners and any new owners of the lot, if said assessment, interest and costs are not paid are subject to the rights of the Association to seek full payment of the unpaid assessments, interest and costs, which is a debt that runs with the land.
7. Anyone interested in obtaining additional information or a release of this ^{claim} may contact _____, Road Commissioner, _____ Association, _____, _____, Maine _____ Telephone Number (207) _____; e-mail: _____.

Dated: _____, 200__

Road Commissioner

State of Maine
County of _____

_____, 200____

Personally appeared the above named _____ and made oath that the foregoing Affidavit is based upon his personal knowledge and is true and correct and that to the extent it is based on information and belief that he believes it to be true.

Before me,

Notary Public/Attorney-at-Law
Printed Name: _____
My Commission Expires: _____

Maine Revised Statutes
Title 23: TRANSPORTATION
Chapter 305: CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

§3101. CALL OF MEETINGS; MAINTENANCE; REPAIRS

1. Definitions. As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "Private way" means a public easement as defined in section 3021, subsection 2. [2007, c. 625, §1 (NEW) .]

B. "Repairs and maintenance" does not include paving, except in locations where limited paving is demonstrated to be a cost-effective approach for fixing an erosion problem or to repair and maintain pavement existing as of July 1, 2007. "Maintenance" includes, but is not limited to, snowplowing, snow removal, sanding and ice control; grading and adding gravel and surface material; installing, cleaning and replacing culverts; creating and maintaining ditches, drains and other storm water management infrastructure; creating and maintaining sight distances on curves and at intersections; and cutting brush, trees and vegetation in the right-of-way. [2013, c. 198, §1 (AMD) .]

[2013, c. 198, §1 (AMD) .]

2. Call of meeting. When 4 or more parcels of land are benefited by a private road, private way or bridge as an easement or by fee ownership of the private road, private way or bridge, the owners of any 3 or more of the parcels, as long as at least 3 of the parcels are owned by different persons, may make written application to a notary public to call a meeting. The notary may issue a warrant or similar written notice setting forth the time, place and purpose of the meeting. Copies of the warrant or similar written notice must be mailed by means of the United States Postal Service to the owners of all the parcels benefited by the private road, private way or bridge at the addresses set forth in the municipal tax records at least 30 days before the date of the meeting. The notice must inform the owners of the planned meeting's agenda and specify all items to be voted on, including, but not limited to, all proposed budget items or amendments that will determine the amount of money to be paid by each owner pursuant to subsection 5. Subsequent meetings may be called in the same manner or by a commissioner or board appointed at a previous meeting pursuant to subsection 5.

[2013, c. 198, §2 (AMD) .]

3. E-mail. E-mail may be used as an alternative to United States mail for sending notices and other materials under this section with the agreement of the receiving party as long as the communication includes the current address and telephone number of the sender for purposes of verification.

[2007, c. 625, §1 (NEW) .]

4. Voting. Each parcel of land benefited by a private road, private way or bridge represents one vote under this section; except that, if the bylaws of the association authorize more than one vote, then each parcel may represent no more than 2 votes under this subsection. The call to a meeting may state that an owner may elect in writing to appoint another owner to vote in the owner's stead. Owners voting by absentee ballot must be polled on all voting items that were not included in the agenda and the final tally must be reported to the owners.

[2013, c. 198, §3 (AMD) .]

4-A. Road associations. A road association under this subchapter through its commissioner or board may address present and future repair and maintenance of a private road, private way or bridge as authorized by the owners at meetings called and conducted pursuant to this section until the association is dissolved by a majority vote of its members.

[2013, c. 198, §4 (AMD) .]

5. Commissioner or board; assessment for repair, maintenance and other costs. The owners of parcels of land benefited by a private road, private way or bridge at a meeting called pursuant to subsection 2 may choose a commissioner or board, to be sworn. By a majority vote of the owners present and voting in person or by written proxy or absentee ballot, the owners may determine what repairs and maintenance are necessary and the materials to be furnished or amount of money to be paid by each owner for repairs and maintenance and may determine the amount of money to be paid by each owner for other costs, including, but not limited to, the cost of liability insurance for the officers, directors and owners and costs of administration. The determination of each owner's share of the total cost must be fair and equitable and based upon a formula provided for in the road association's bylaws or adopted by the owners at a meeting called and conducted pursuant to this section. The commissioner or board shall report the outcome of all votes to all the owners by United States mail within 30 days. Special assessments for emergency repairs and maintenance may be made at a duly held meeting called for that purpose. Emergency repairs and maintenance are those actions necessary to maintain or restore the functionality of the private road, private way or bridge.

[2013, c. 198, §5 (AMD) .]

5-A. Easements. A road association under this subchapter may negotiate an easement for the installation of a ditch, drain, culvert or other storm water management infrastructure to benefit the private road, private way or bridge. The easement must specify when a ditch, drain, culvert or other storm water management infrastructure must be maintained and include reasonable performance standards to guide the timing and extent of its upkeep and repair. The easement must also be recorded at the registry of deeds in the county in which the property subject to the easement is located. A ditch, drain, culvert or other storm water management infrastructure subject to an easement under this subsection must be under the control of and maintained by the road association.

[2013, c. 198, §6 (AMD) .]

6. Commercial or forest management purposes. This section does not apply to a private road, private way or bridge constructed or primarily used for commercial or forest management purposes.

[2007, c. 625, §1 (NEW) .]

7. Immunity from suit. A commissioner, board or owner of a parcel of land who undertakes activities of a road association under this subchapter is immune from civil liability in all actions by owners or lessees of other lots for the following activities:

- A. The determination of repairs and maintenance to be undertaken; [2009, c. 238, §1 (NEW) .]
- B. The determination of materials to be furnished or amount of money to be paid by each owner for repairs and maintenance; [2009, c. 238, §1 (NEW) .]
- C. The collection of the money from each owner; and [2009, c. 238, §1 (NEW) .]
- D. The awarding of a contract authorized under section 3103. [2009, c. 238, §1 (NEW) .]

[2009, c. 238, §1 (NEW) .]

8. Environmental violations. Notwithstanding subsection 7, a commissioner, board or owner of a parcel of land is not immune from an enforcement action for a violation of law under the jurisdiction of the Department of Environmental Protection or a municipality.

[2009, c. 238, §2 (NEW) .]

9. Insurance. A road association under this subchapter may purchase liability insurance to defend and indemnify the road association's officers, directors and owner members for any and all claims of liability or violation of law concerning the private road, private way or bridge and may include the costs of such insurance in the determination of each owner's share of the total cost under subsection 5.

[2013, c. 198, §7 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

1995, c. 227, §1 (AMD). 1997, c. 682, §1 (AMD). 1999, c. 552, §1 (AMD).
2007, c. 162, §1 (AMD). 2007, c. 625, §1 (RPR). 2009, c. 238, §§1, 2
(AMD). 2009, c. 239, §§1-3 (AMD). 2013, c. 198, §§1-7 (AMD).

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Maine Revised Statutes
Title 23: TRANSPORTATION
Chapter 305: CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

§3102. COMMISSIONER'S OR BOARD'S DUTIES; NEGLECT OF OWNERS TO PAY

The commissioner or board chosen under section 3101, with respect to the private road, private way or bridge, has the powers of a road commissioner. If any owner, on requirement of the commissioner or board, neglects to furnish that owner's proportion of labor, materials or money, the same may be furnished by the other owners and recovered of the owner neglecting to pay in a civil action, together with costs of suit and reasonable attorney's fees. Such civil action may be brought in the name of and by the road association created pursuant to this subchapter and the decision to bring that civil action may be made by the commissioner or board or as otherwise provided for in the road association's bylaws. The commissioner's or board's apportioning of the cost of repairs to the road undertaken pursuant to the provisions of section 3101 may not exceed 1% of an individual owner's municipal property valuation in any calendar year. [2013 , c. 198, §8 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

1997, c. 682, §2 (AMD). 1999, c. 552, §2 (AMD). 2007, c. 625, §2 (AMD). 2013, c. 198, §8 (AMD).

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§3103. CONTRACTS FOR REPAIR

The owners, at a meeting held under section 3101, may by a majority vote of the owners present and voting in person or by written proxy or absentee ballot authorize a contract to be made for making repairs to and maintaining the private road, private way or bridge by the year or for a lesser time and may raise money for that purpose pursuant to section 3101, subsection 5. [2013, c. 198, §9 (AMD).]

SECTION HISTORY

1997, c. 682, §2 (AMD). 2005, c. 479, §1 (AMD). 2007, c. 625, §3 (AMD).
2013, c. 198, §9 (AMD).

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Chapter 305: CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

§3104. PENALTIES AND PROCESS

Money recovered under sections 3102 and 3103 is for the use of the owners. In any notice of claim or process for the money's recovery, a description of the owners in general terms as owners of parcels of land benefited by the private road, private way or bridge, clearly describing each owner's parcel of land by the book and page number of the owner's deed as recorded in the county's registry of deeds and the private road, private way or bridge, is sufficient. If the private road, private way or bridge is shown on a plan recorded in the county's registry of deeds, the plan's recording reference is sufficient. Such process is not abated by the death of any owner or by the transfer of any owner's interest. Any money owed pursuant to section 3101, 3102 or 3103 is an obligation that is personal to the owners of the subject parcels, jointly or severally, and also burdens the parcel and runs with the land upon the transfer of any owner's interest. The commissioner or board may cause to be recorded in the county's registry of deeds a notice of claim for money owed pursuant to section 3101, 3102 or 3103 that is more than 90 days delinquent and may add to the amount owed the recording costs. The recording of such notice does not constitute slander of title. Before recording such notice or service of process of a complaint for collection in a civil action, the commissioner or board shall give the owner against whom such action is to be taken written notice, in the same manner as written notices of meetings are provided for in section 3101, of the intended action if the debt is not paid within 20 days of the date of the written notice. This written notice to cure must be sent at least 30 days before the recording of the notice of claim or the service of process of the complaint for collection in a civil action. [2013, c. 198, §10 (AMD) .]

SECTION HISTORY

1997, c. 682, §2 (AMD). 2007, c. 625, §4 (AMD). 2013, c. 198, §10 (AMD) .

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Title 23: TRANSPORTATION
Chapter 305: CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

§3105-A. USE OF TOWN EQUIPMENT

The inhabitants of any town or village corporation at a legal town or village corporation meeting may authorize the municipal officers of the town or assessors of the village corporation to use its highway equipment on private ways within such town or village corporation whenever such municipal officers or assessors consider it advisable in the best interest of the town or village corporation for fire and police protection. [2009, c. 501, §2 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

2009, c. 501, §2 (NEW).

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Maine Revised Statutes

Title 23: TRANSPORTATION

Chapter 305: CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR

§3106. MUNICIPAL ASSISTANCE FOR PURPOSES OF PROTECTING OR RESTORING A GREAT POND

1. Repairs to a private road. For the purpose of protecting or restoring a great pond, as defined in Title 38, section 480-B, subsection 5, a municipality may appropriate funds to repair a private road, way or bridge to prevent storm water runoff pollution from reaching a great pond if:

A. The private road, way or bridge is within the watershed of the great pond; [2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

B. The great pond:

(1) Is listed on the Department of Environmental Protection's list of bodies of water most at risk pursuant to Title 38, section 420-D, subsection 3;

(2) Has been listed as impaired in an integrated water quality monitoring and assessment report submitted by the Department of Environmental Protection to the United States Environmental Protection Agency pursuant to the federal Clean Water Act, 33 United States Code, Section 1315(b) at least once since 2002; or

(3) Is identified as having threats to water quality in a completed watershed survey that uses a protocol accepted by the Department of Environmental Protection; [2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

C. The Department of Environmental Protection or the municipality determines that the private road, way or bridge is contributing to the degradation of the water quality of the great pond based upon an evaluation of the road, way or bridge using a protocol accepted by the department; [2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

D. The repair complies with best management practices required by the Department of Environmental Protection; and [2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

E. The private road, way or bridge is maintained by a road association organized under this subchapter or Title 13-B. [2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

[2009, c. 501, §3 (AMD) .]

2. Rules. The Department of Environmental Protection may adopt rules to carry out the purposes of this section. Rules adopted pursuant to this subsection are routine technical rules pursuant to Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

[2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW) .]

SECTION HISTORY

2009, c. 225, §1 (NEW). 2009, c. 501, §3 (AMD).

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