

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*October 7, 2021*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, October 7, 2021, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:04 a.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the reporters.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Bera Dunau (reporter, Gazette), Dennis Hackett (reporter, Reminder), Mary Jo Murphy (Snow Farm), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Snow Farm – Mary Jo Murphy, Director of Snow Farm, the New England Craft School, introduced herself and said that they have been hit hard by the shutdowns and fluctuations of Covid, and asked about the possibility of funds from the American Rescue Plan. She said they haven't received any financial support from the town, county or state. It was noted that since Snow Farm is a non-profit organization, it receives tax benefits from the town, and they received federal funding in the form of the Paycheck Protection Program as well. The Board responded that information about ARPA funding is just coming in and they will look at it down the road.

2. Community Compact grants – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that the town was awarded the two grants for best practices that it had applied for, at \$20,000 each.

Wage and classification plan – Nick explained that the vendor would go through all positions in town, do interviews with employees looking at the scope of work, do a market analysis of the region, and come back with recommendations. It is just a study and it is up to the town to decide what to do with it. It was noted that wages tend to stay flat and raises have tended to come in the form of cost-of-living increases. He recommended hiring the Collins Institute, part of UMass, a reputable organization with a lot of experience in this work. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the grant agreement and standard contract as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

Economic development assessment – Nick recommended working with the Donahue Institute, which does this kind of project. They can tailor it to the town; he would negotiate the scope of work with them and bring it back to the board. The study would look at existing conditions, do interviews, and identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT). It would focus not just on the number of jobs but on quality of life including open space. The study does not commit the town to anything. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Community Compact grant to develop an economic development assessment. **So voted** (3-0).

Town Administrator's authority – The Select Board chair is the chief elected officer and normally all grants come before the Board. If speed is needed, the Board can authorize the Town Administrator to sign a particular document.

3. Depot Road culvert – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo gave an update on the culvert. Work is starting to remove the existing culvert; the new precast culvert is scheduled to be finished next week and the manufacturer will store it until it is needed. Contractor Maxymillian

is optimistic that it can all be finished by mid-November. Nick has made calls to residents and they are generally supportive. It was noted that the new culvert will not be pinned to bedrock but that the footings start at bedrock.

Hill Engineers contract addendum – Nick reported that Hill Engineers has requested an addendum to the contract, adding \$13,000 to the original contract price of \$24,500. There have been some changes in the design of the culvert, from replacement of existing pipe to a box culvert design, and there have been internal changes in the company. Board members were concerned about the price increase and the fact that Nick has been doing some of the work that Hill was supposed to do. They would like Nick to resolve the issues with Hill. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the contract addendum after negotiation, clarification and resolution of the issues discussed. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Appointments – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of Jim Ayres from the Public Safety Building Committee with deep regret and thanks for all his hard work. **So voted** (3-0). There was a brief discussion about the number of people on the committee.

5. 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that the \$10,000 earmark from the state must be spent, including deliverables, by June 30, 2022, which is before the planned time for the celebration. There was discussion about how this money could be used. The Board would like to hear about the scope and plans for the celebration by the end of this month. Nick will talk to Brenda Lessard, the former secretary, and Dan Nye, the Chair.

6. Vacant positions –

Building Supervisor – Dan Hathaway has resigned as Building Supervisor. Suggestions were made of individuals who might be appropriate, organizations to ask and places for publicizing. A position shared with other towns is a possibility. In the meantime, individual departments are handling things for themselves or Highway is doing things.

Animal Control Officer – Shayla Howe, who is also Northampton's Animal Control Officer, has continued to work for the town, though she would like to move on. A person had been suggested but asked more than the town could afford; the town may want to review this at budget time. Other suggestions were made. Nick will follow up with both positions.

7. Mountain Street – Some information has been received from MassDOT and will be reviewed at the next meeting and then an information session will be set up as a larger forum including the Mountain Street residents. It was also noted that the town should attend the PVPC TIP meetings and advocate for the project to be on the TIP for 2025, or else ask that Whately's part of the project be moved to 2026.

8. Short-term rentals – It was reported that Town Clerk Brenda Lessard is handling the process for applying for permits. Inspection fees will need to be determined. She has looked up properties that have registered with the state; none have registered with the town. She will publicize the need for permits. Enforcement is by the Zoning Enforcement department, starting with notification letters.

9. Halloween – The Board of Health will be asked for their recommendation about a parade and trick or treating.

10. Personnel review process – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo described the process and presented his draft of the forms, using the forms from the past and adding some changes. Board members gave some feedback and asked that the process be simplified.

11. Fire Department budget – It was reported that the Fire Chief said that the labor budget is almost half gone because they have been very busy, especially with storms. Finance Committee will be informed about the budget issue. There was a question about whether the Fire Department has been doing work that belongs to the Highway Department. Police, Fire, Highway and Emergency Manager will be asked to submit a short document describing their mission during storms, and the Board will review and discuss them.

12. Town Administrator's report –

Covid and masks – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that generally compliance is high.

Anne T. Dunphy School HVAC – Nick has emailed KP Law and is waiting to hear back.

American Rescue Plan (ARPA) – Nick asked the Board how to go about determining how to spend the \$250,000, and what kind of public outreach process to use. Suggestions included doing a town-wide survey for priorities, sending the report with eligible categories to everyone including town employees, businesses and non-profits and asking for input, or setting up a working group. Nick will start with drafting a broad general survey. [The numbers were clarified and updated at the meeting on 10/21/21.]

13. Miscellaneous – Helen E. James – Water is flowing in where the sump pumps are. Various suggestions were made and Dave Mathers will talk with Highway Superintendent Dan Banister.

14. Correspondence – Correspondence included DEP's annual inspection of the Transfer Station.

15. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of September 23 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

16. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP22-08 for \$129,940.32 and expense warrant W22-08 for \$199,583.55, payable 10/13/21.

#### Documents used

Agenda and notes

Community Compact grant documents

Hill Engineers contract addendum

Resignation letter

List of ARPA expenditure categories

DEP inspection of Transfer Station

Minutes

Warrant

Adjourned at 12:13 p.m.

Approved:

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Clerk