

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
May 12, 2016

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, May 12, 2016, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. The chair noted that the meeting was being recorded, at the request of the reporter.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Kim Boas (Energy), Tanya Campbell (Melanson Heath), Jason Connell (Fire Chief), Charles Dudek, Kathy McKeown), Stacey Mousseau (Accountant), Joyce Muka (Accountant), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Bonnie Roberge (Collector), Nathan Rosewarne (Treasurer), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Daryl Springman (Fire Department) Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Resident concern – Resident Kathy McKeown raised concerns about the Zoning Board of Appeals process. She said that not all Special Permit applications are posted online, only the ones deemed controversial; that everyone should be allowed to speak at the hearing; and that she was told that she should come to the Select Board meeting about zoning and what is allowed in the rural zone. Select Board chair David Mathers responded that the hearings are under the control of the ZBA and the Select Board does not have jurisdiction, that the process and the allowed uses are governed by Mass. Gen. Laws chapter 40A and the zoning bylaw, and that the zoning issue belongs to the ZBA. Charles Dudek, chair of the ZBA, who happened to be present, said that he agreed that all Special Permit applications should be posted and he would take care of it.

2. Audit for FY2015 – Tanya Campbell of Melanson Heath reviewed the financial statements and management letter for the FY15 audit. She explained that the auditors do not look at every transaction but spend their time in what are normally the higher risk departments; they look at the town's internal controls, and they test to be sure the numbers are supported. They issued an opinion for this audit for FY15 that the town is in compliance with generally accepted accounting standards, i.e., a clean report. She explained some of the entries and focused on the Net OPEB obligation, and the Net Pension Liability, a new item this year, which is the town's share of the retirement system's unfunded liability. The Stabilization Fund has a good balance. She said that Town Accountant Joyce Muka does a very good job. Going on to the management letter, she said that there were no major deficiencies and haven't been for a long time, but mentioned some current issues or recommendations. The tax title balance has grown, because of the economy, and they recommend establishing a policy to be more aggressive in pursuing delinquent taxes. The overlay balances are tracked in the general ledger but should be tracked separately and reconciled with the general ledger. Inactive accounts should be closed. School accounts should be reconciled to the general ledger. Letters should be sent to local banks to be sure there are no accounts in the Town's name that the treasurer isn't aware of. Excess accounts can be consolidated, just keeping them separate in the general ledger. Health insurance withholding account showed a deficit where it should have a surplus and needs to be reconciled monthly. Many of these issues have already been addressed. The Board thanked the auditor and praised the town's financial team.

3. Fire Department – Fire Chief Jason Connell gave his regular report, including the number of incidents, about the same as last year, the calls for mutual aid, recent notable incidents, and the status of Engines 1 and 2. Assistant Chief Don Turner will be retiring May 1. Chief Connell proposed that the salary of the Assistant Chief be reallocated to pay a Fire Department Administrative Assistant, 6½ hours per week at \$15 per hour, with \$5000 coming from the Assistant Chief salary and \$70 from the labor line. The position would be posted in-house first.

Motion was made and seconded (DB/WS) to create a new budget line for Fire Department Administrative Assistant and fund it at the rate of \$5070, with \$5000 to come out of the Fire Department salary line and \$70 out of the Fire Department labor line. **So voted** (3-0).

Hampshire County Emergency Communication System Oversight Committee – Daryl Springman reported as the town’s representative. The committee is interested in upgrading the system, adding additional towers so there is a better signal. There will also be maintenance fees for the towns to pay. They are looking for some outside funding. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi noted that the Emergency Manager and the Fire Chief recommended being part of this system.

4. Appointments –

Mill River Greenway Committee – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to appoint Jody Nishman and Francie Borden to positions on the Mill River Greenway Committee, terms to expire June 30, 2017. Since the current year is near its end the Board appointed for the remainder of the current year and for the coming year.

Planning Board – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of Steve Romanowski from the Planning Board with regret and thanks for his service. **So voted** (3-0).

Public Safety Complex – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of Peter Mahieu from the Public Safety Complex Committee with regret and with thanks for his service. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Chapter 61B Right of First Refusal – 66 Mountain Street – A letter was received from the Wilson family about their intention to sell their property at 66 Mountain Street and to take 1½ acres of the land out of Chapter 61B, because the buyer would like to build a single-family house. The rest of the land would stay in Chapter 61B. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) that the Board vote not to exercise the town’s right of first refusal on 1½ acres of Chapter 61B land at 66 Mountain Street. **So voted** (3-0). The Board authorized the Administrative Assistant to type up an excerpt of the minutes, the Board Clerk to sign, and the Town Clerk to certify.

6. Electricity aggregation – Energy Committee recommended that the Board move forward with Colonial Power and electricity aggregation but suggested that the Board hold off on signing a contract, as the committee would like to talk to residents about the program before the outside group comes in. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to support moving forward with Colonial Power electricity aggregation. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Mountain Street – It was suggested that another letter be sent to Transportation Secretary Pollack, because funding for the Mountain Street project is not included in the transportation bill. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the Town Administrator to draft another letter to Secretary Pollack requesting funding for the Mountain Street project and authorize the chair to sign it. **So voted** (3-0). On a related topic, the town has not heard anything about funding for the Bridge Street bridge.

8. Budget – Council on Aging – The Board was not in favor of the proposal to create a new position. Discussion included that they didn't support another paid position, that grants can dry up and the town may be expected to pick up the expense, that if space is tight it does not make sense to add in another person, that it is very late in the budget process to be proposing a change, that the work could be done by volunteers including tax work-off volunteers, and that the Finance Committee noted that the COA's budget has increased by 15% this year and that a couple of departments, including the COA, always ask for increases.

9. Town Meeting warrant – Board members reviewed and discussed the draft warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Town Counsel is doing a little more research for the Brassworks article about permissible use of the money. The 40-yard roll-off box is for the Transfer Station, not the Hilltown Resource Management Coop. If the article about the library steps passes and then a grant is received, any remaining funds will go back into the general fund. The Board was reluctant to approve \$1500 for flyers for the Agricultural Commission but supported \$750. The Stericycle Sharps Disposal is an important program according to the Health Agent and Board of Health, and the grant that has paid in the past will no longer be available. Transportation funds for homeless elementary school students may be reimbursed to the town but the funds are needed this year and the reimbursement would not come until next year; the students will attend school in another district next year. The two Brassworks funds have \$214,000 and \$28,000 and they would go into the Stabilization Fund. There was discussion of the appropriate use of free cash and how applying it directly to debt can affect the levy limit. The Finance Committee voted a 2% increase for town employees; teachers will get 2.5% under their contract. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the warrant for Town Meeting June 6 as amended. **So voted** (3-0). Later in the evening the Board signed the warrant.

10. Super-committee for Facilities Master Plan and DLTA work – Board members recommended a committee of nine, with a quorum of five. A number of possible people were discussed and a list was prepared. The Town Administrator will get in touch with them.

11. Public Safety Complex Committee – Bill Sayre, chair of the Public Safety Complex Committee, reported that the committee is basically down to one location for the Public Safety Complex and is ready to send its final report. Board members would like the committee to stay engaged and bring its plan forward and hope that committee members will be active in the upcoming public forums. Bill noted that the committee is willing for the town to go through the process proposed by PVPC before going to Town Meeting with a proposal.

12. Town Administrator's report –

Comcast – Comcast Advisory Committee held a public hearing and did a survey for the renewal process. The Board was comfortable with Jeff Ciuffreda and the Comcast Committee representing the town in the negotiation with Comcast.

Capital Plan update – Bill Sayre, former chair of the Capital Planning Committee, has updated the capital plan. It was suggested that the committee needs to be reenergized.

Town Offices basement – There is standing water in the basement, which is unusual. If the new gutters don't fix the problem, it may be due to blocked drains.

Town Offices weatherization – Windows have been sealed. Energy Committee did a walk around.

Town Offices gutters and other work – Gutters are being repaired. The Building Supervisor is ordering work done before the end of the year, including the Old Town Hall shed, Old Town Hall plumbing, electrical and gutter work at the Dunphy School, and a replacement refrigerator for the Meal Site.

Tax Collector report – The Tax Collector had reported that there are no new properties going into tax title for FY15, the last property payment agreement was paid in full and there will be no attorney expenses for that in the coming year.

Tree removal quotes – There are many dead trees. There is \$5500 left in the current budget; some will be done this year and some will wait until after July 1. It was noted that the town has a good relationship with National Grid but when they remove trees they leave stumps for the Highway Department to clean up.

Potholes – Charlene has told the Highway Superintendent that the Board would like him to drive around town from time to time. She noted that when she is notified of a pothole she immediately tells the Highway Superintendent and it is fixed within a day or two; the town is liable if it is aware of the problem.

Zoning Board of Appeals appointment question – A current board member would like to serve one more year and then retire, and not serve a whole new three-year term. The Select Board is reluctant to appoint for one year and prefers to appoint for a three-year term and the person can make the decision to resign. The alternate will then fill in. It was noted that it is good to use alternates, perhaps rotating with board members.

Reserve Fund transfers – Charlene mentioned budget lines that will be short and will need reserve fund transfers, including Town Counsel, Street Lighting and Computer Service.

13. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of March 31, 2016, as presented. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of April 14 as amended. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of May 3 as presented. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of May 3 executive session as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

14. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrant.

15. Public records request – Charlene has consulted Town Counsel about a public records request.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Audit financial statements and management report
- Letters of interest in Mill River Greenway
- Resignations
- Chapter 61B letter
- Town meeting warrant
- Minutes

Adjourned at 10:10 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk