

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
November 4, 2021

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, November 4, 2021, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:03 a.m.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Dan Banister (Highway Superintendent), Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Steve Connor (Veterans' Services), Paul Kennedy (Zoning Board of Appeals), Caitlin Marquis (Collaborative for Educational Services), Robert Ross, Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Highway Department – Highway Superintendent Dan Banister made his regular report. They have been very busy, including roadside mowing, paving and patching, and dealing with trees. The long list of tasks accomplished included replacing road signs, placing radar signs, ongoing sewer sampling, fixing the water infiltration in the salt shed, moving the residents' sand shed, removing the old school shed and preparing the pad for the new shed, moving material at Depot Road, fixing the sign at Village Hill Cemetery, reclaiming and paving Nash Hill Road, draining water at Helen E. James School, digging out the library sidewalk in preparation for the new walk, helping with the water tie-in at Cichy's, doing truck repairs, and setting up the tent behind the Town Offices. Crew members have taken classes in asbestos pipe and de-icing. Garage doors are in process. There is no word yet on the new truck. Personnel matters are good; one person may retire next summer. Budget is good. Dan's comp time keeps increasing and he hasn't been able to take vacation. Mechanically they are in good shape. The chipper will need to be replaced, and the roller is tired. Board members appreciate the work of the department and also the good working relationship among Highway, Police and Fire. The department would like to have the annual Christmas party this year; the Town Administrator will check with the Board of Health. Dave will ask Jim Moran for his thoughts about taking down the tree at the Public Safety Complex. Dan has been going to a lot of meetings including PVPC and MassDOT. The Mountain Street project is competing with a huge project on Riverdale Road in Springfield. The Bridge Street project is close to 25% design.

2. Mass in Motion – Caitlin Marquis of the Collaborative for Educational Services, talked about the Mass in Motion/ Healthy Hampshire program. Healthy Hampshire has been partnering with Williamsburg for the last ten years. This is a wellness program that encourages physical activity, healthy food, improved patient care and community health activities. In the past they have done a town-wide survey, master plan, walk audit, and big-picture policy and planning to improve community health. They are looking for municipalities to sign onto their application. This is not a grant proposal, more like a preferred vendor application. Board members would like to see a list of town priorities that the program could help with and asked Town Administrator Nick Caccamo to work with Caitlin. Suggestions were made to include meals for senior citizens and park design. Board members are open to signing the Participant Agreement but will wait for more information.

3. Licenses – Used Car Dealer license application – The Administrative Assistant described some issues with the application for a Used Car Dealer license from Robert Ross d/b/a Ross Bros. The Special Permit is in the name of Haydenville Gas and Electric, LLC, which is the property owner/ landlord, and not in the name of Robert Ross, the business owner/ tenant. The Special Permit expired on November 1, and the Zoning Board of Appeals plans to renew it when they get a letter from Mr. Ross saying that he has complied with all of the conditions. The Special Permit has not been filed with the Registry of Deeds. Paul Kennedy, chair of the ZBA, said that Mr. Ross is paid up on taxes. Further enforcement is up to the Building Inspector. Initial discussion included that Ross Bros is not the same entity as Haydenville Gas and Electric LLC (even though the LLC is wholly owned by the individual) and so doesn't have a Special Permit; he has not filed the permit with the Registry of Deeds as required and the vehicles are not ten feet back from the property line. Further discussion included a willingness to grant the license as long as he complies with the conditions of the Special Permit including filing with the Registry of Deeds; that the license is for the particular location and cannot be moved; and that the license can be withheld until he meets the conditions. There was also the issue that a Class II Used Car Dealer's Permit does not cover junk cars and unregistrable cars, which are Class III, and that the property cannot be visually degrading. The Board agreed that it could issue the license to Robert Ross d/b/a Ross Bros as long as it specified that it is on land owned by Haydenville Gas and Electric LLC. It was also noted, as a separate matter, that the Building Inspector and the Fire Chief should be asked about selling gas and removal of the gas pumps. Later in the meeting Mr. Ross arrived and was told that the Board cannot grant the license until he is in compliance with the Special Permit and the Special Permit, which has expired, is renewed, and that the Board will issue the license in the name of Robert Ross d/b/a Ross Bros on the land of Haydenville Gas and Electric LLC.

4. Highland Ambulance – Denise Banister, Selectman and member of Highland Ambulance Board of Directors, reported that they finished the year in good shape and are preparing the budget. The number of runs is increasing and they are struggling with finding staff. They returned a government personnel payroll loan that they didn't need. They are revamping the benefits package. A new truck is in service, thanks to a generous bequest from Kit Smith. They are looking into a way to receive donations and bequests.

5. UMass Boston Collins Center contract – wage classification study – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the contract with UMass Boston/ Collins Center for Public Management for the wage classification study for \$20,000, and described the process – orientation for department heads, questionnaire, individual meetings, draft job descriptions, comment period, survey, initial report, final job descriptions, and final report in February. The Select Board will be involved throughout. He reminded them that this is funded by a state grant and there is no cost to the town. Board members commented that the selection of which towns to compare makes a big difference, as do differences in job structure, and asked that they be able to approve the list of towns to compare. Nick will share their concerns with the project manager. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the contract with UMass/ Collins Center for the wage classification study. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Veterans' Services –

Office hours – Steve Connor, Director of the Veterans' Service District based in Northampton, discussed the question of office hours versus appointments. Right now, they are doing things by appointment only. In the past, very little was done during the scheduled office hours and most visits were done by appointment. He recommended doing things by appointment; he can come right over and use whatever office space is available. Board members remembered that the former veterans' services officer often just sat in his office waiting, and they agreed to the new plan.

Veterans' Day schedule – Steve Connor said that Veterans' Day has been at both 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. It was often in the afternoon so that Steve could go to other towns in the morning, and when the former officer was here it was at 11. This year's program isn't yet pulled together, and if it is at 1, then Steve can be here, with the new officer and the speaker. If it is at 11, then it will be just Dan Nye of the Veterans' Memorial Committee. He recommended doing it at 1 this year and aiming for 11 next year. He will also get in touch with the local American Legion to get more people involved in leadership.

7. Internet – broadband expansion – Comcast reached out to the town and said that broadband expansion is an eligible use of ARPA funding. They quoted \$14,701 to expand to the last three houses on Chesterfield Road. Board members thought that Comcast had already agreed to do this work as part of the last contract negotiations. Board members would like to know whether that was part of the agreement, who was part of the negotiation for the town, and when the contract is due for renegotiation. They will plan to discuss at the next meeting. A Board member commented that Cummington has a good system, possibly better than Williamsburg's.

8. MEMA EMPG grant – Emergency Manager Denise Banister is applying the annual EMPG grant toward furnishings, equipment, supplies for an Emergency Operations Center at the Public Safety Complex. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the acceptance of the MEMA grant for \$2700. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Public Safety Complex – site plan review – It was noted that the town is not exempt from a site plan review, with a hearing and notification of abutters, in accordance with the town bylaw, though it is exempt from fees. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the application for the site plan review with the Planning Board for the Public Safety Complex. **So voted** (3-0).

10. Town Signs – The Administrative Assistant reported the Glen Goebel is willing to continue to handle posting announcements on the town signs and to be paid at the rate of Massachusetts minimum wage. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to hire Glen Goebel to continue posting on the town signs. **So voted** (3-0).

11. Agenda items – Due to the lateness of the hour, some agenda items were postponed to a future meeting.

12. Town Administrator's report –

Evaluation of department heads – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reviewed the assignments. The process is the same as last year.

Covid – He reported that there is one active case in town.

CARES Act funding – He will be closing out the CARES Act funding, turning back \$80,000 unspent, in addition to another \$80,000 not requested. He noted that some communities that are not turning money back are having to do time-consuming reconciling of accounts.

James winterization – He is working with Western Mass. Heating and Cooling for dewatering of the James building.

Senior Center update – He will forward the report to Board members.

Building Supervisor and Animal Control Officer – He continues to work on how to address the positions of Building Supervisor and Animal Control Officer. Some nearby towns do the maintenance work through the Highway Department. Goshen has a part-time person and may be interested in exploring a shared service. Currently town employees are keeping an eye on their own buildings, with smaller jobs being paid through town building maintenance and larger items going through procurement. Board members will keep it that way for the time being and plan to discuss again.

13. Boston Post Cane – oldest citizen – Items for presentation are being ordered.

14. Meeting and holiday schedules – The Board approved the schedules as presented.

15. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to accept the minutes of October 21, 2021, as presented. **So voted** (2-0, WS absent).

16. Warrant – Selectman Dave Mathers will review and sign the warrant. Payroll warrant WP22-10 for \$113,283.47, and expense warrant W22-10 for \$451,688.65, payable 11/10/21.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

Used car dealer Special Permit

UMass Boston/ Collins Center contract for wage classification study

EMPG grant

Meeting and holiday schedules

Minutes

Adjourned at 11:41 a.m.

Approved:

Clerk