

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
November 9, 2017

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, November 9, 2017, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Country Journal reporter.

Present: William Sayre, David Mathers and Denise Banister

Also present: Pat Billingsley (Board of Library Trustees), Glen Everett (Assessor), John Hoogstraten (Building Supervisor, John Merritt, Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant), Marie Westburg (Director of Senior Center)

School Committee: Cindy Kassell (candidate), Amber Smith-Harder, Kayla Gilman Solomon,

1. Local School Committee – appointment – The joint meeting of the Selectmen and the School Committee began at 6:02 p.m. Kayla Gilman Solomon, Chair of the Local School Committee, presented prospective member Cindy Kassell. Cindy has been a teacher for 21 years and is very interested in staying involved in education in the community. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to appoint Cindy Kassell to a position on the Local School Committee through June 30, 2018. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye, WS aye). (It was thought that since the School Committee did not have a quorum that it could not vote, but since the Board of Selectmen had authority to act, it could vote on its own.) It was noted that in order to continue on the committee, the new member should plan to come to the Town Caucus in March and be nominated. The joint meeting ended at 6:08.

2. Libraries – Greta Carey Month – Pat Billingsley, Chair of Board of Library Trustees, proposed that April 2018 be declared Greta Carey Month in the Town of Williamsburg. She explained that Greta Carey was a Williamsburg resident and taught painting at the Hill Institute; her daughter has discovered over 70 paintings and is giving them to the library and the Grange to sell. There will be a reception and live auction on April 27 at the library. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to make April 2018 Greta Carey Month. **So voted** (3-0).

One-day Special Liquor License – Pat Billingsley said that they would like to serve wine at the April 27 event and would like the Select Board to waive the policy of no alcohol in town buildings. The sense of the Board was that the waiver would be granted when the license application was made.

3. Mill River Greenway – Eversource – Access and Indemnification Agreement – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the agreement to allow Mill River Greenway and contractors to go onto Eversource property to do survey work. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the Access and Indemnification Agreement between the Town of Williamsburg and Eversource Energy. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Mass. Cultural Council – Charlene Nardi presented the yearly contract between the Town and the Mass. Cultural Council, in the amount of \$4400. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB)

to authorize the chair to sign the Mass. Cultural Council contract for \$4400 for the Town of Williamsburg. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Licenses – Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to grant a Live Entertainment license for a D.J. for 9 to 11:45 p.m. for Thursdays November 30 and December 7 to the Beaver Brook Lounge. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Appointments –

Resignation – Zoning Board of Appeals – Mimi Kaplan – A letter of resignation from Mimi Kaplan was received resigning her position as Alternate on the Zoning Board of Appeals. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to accept the resignation of Mimi Kaplan from the ZBA with regret and thanks. **So voted** (3-0). The ZBA has two alternates, Paul Kennedy and Osa Flory.

Retirement – Highway Department – Peter Banister – The chair read the letter from Peter Banister announcing his retirement from the Highway Department. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to acknowledge and accept the retirement intentions of Peter Banister with thanks for his countless years of service. **So voted** (3-0). The Board will write a letter of thanks for all he has done.

7. Building Supervisor – Building Supervisor made his regular report. He said he is focusing on weatherizing buildings. Old Town Hall – Old Town Hall is the biggest unknown in terms of structural issues. He has found a way to get up to the cupola, which is hard to access. The building has been stabilized against deterioration in the short term. Several people would like the cupola painted. Anne T. Dunphy School – There is still no clear evidence what was leaking. Roofer recommends stripping open the surface and redoing; he will do a metal valley. Gutters were plugged by maple seeds; John cleaned them out but a better system is needed. James Building – He has done what he can but the roof needs more professional attention. It was recommended that he find out who did the work on it three years ago, to advise about fixing the leak and what the time period is for needing to it. Replacing the roof is high on the capital plan. Budget – Building Repair budget line has \$11,700 left, out of \$20,000. He was reminded that he did not need to do all the work but could hire others.

8. Personnel – employee evaluation – Marie Westburg, Director of Senior Center – Board members appreciate the good job that Marie Westburg is doing. Her knowledge, professionalism, initiative, new programs, and desire to serve seniors' needs are all good. She has accomplished a lot. They are concerned that stress in the work environment may be affecting communication and listening skills. Cooperation and the working environment are not as good as they would like. They commented that skill levels in the department don't necessarily match the mission; while the mission is large, reality is constrained; also space is tight, the budget is limited, and she may not have gotten the support she needs from the Select Board or the COA Advisory Board. The proposal was made to do an overhaul of the Senior Center, looking at the mission and skills levels and see if they match. William Sayre, as the Board's liaison, offered to work closely with Marie, with the help of Town Administrator Charlene Nardi, and to meet with the Advisory Board, to look closely at the issues over the next couple of months, at what they would like to accomplish and what they can realistically accomplish, and think about restructuring.

Some questions were asked about her role, whether administrative or hands-on; whether other projects such as work with the PVPC, Mill River Greenway, and the ice rink are detracting from her time with the Senior Center; what the plan is for when a staff member is out for several months; and just what the Senior Center does on a weekly basis.

Marie responded that she does what needs to be done, jumping in sometimes for example to make soup, and she knows how to do everything. She said she has streamlined tasks and made the department more efficient, allowing her to increase services. The statistics don't show everything they do because the staff members focus more on serving people than on recording that they serve people. Stress is caused when systems break down. Her staff members feel the stress but care about the clients and are doing the best they can. She went on to say that she is trying to manage very scarce resources and the Senior Center has been able to affect people's lives in profound ways. She wants to increase the ability to reach out to people who can't drive, and reach out to people who are uncomfortable with getting help. She is using volunteers, senior tax workoff people, and is looking into getting students. She said the things that she does out in the community are not done on work time. On the other hand, the grants, the greenway, town planning, all have to do with the senior center and making the town age-friendly. As for planning for absence due to staff medical leave, she will do case management herself if necessary or she will bring in help through other agencies. They are looking at closing for a couple of hours in the middle of the day, in order to have staff to cover all shifts while staffing is short. She will use some grant funding for extra staff hours. She doesn't believe she is being too ambitious, because seniors should be a priority. She added that the Advisory Board was reduced by the previous COA chair and needs to be increased.

9. Senior Center report – Marie Westburg presented a written report and the application and budget for the annual state Executive Office of Elder Affairs formula grant. It was noted that because other town employees are at the town offices, they may be able to help cover staffing for nighttime programming.

10. Tax Classification – public hearing – The hearing opened at 7:40 p.m.; the chair read the ad announcing the hearing. Assessor Glen Everett reported that the Assessors recommend a single tax rate. A split tax rate would place an unfair burden on industrial and commercial property with only insignificant savings to residential property. Denise Banister disclosed that she is an Assessor. The hearing ended at 7:45 p.m. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to accept the recommendation of the Assessors for one tax rate in town for 2018. **So voted** (3-0). There was a question about how much land is in Chapter or PILOT, i.e., at a reduced tax rate. Charlene Nardi will look into it.

11. Full-time permanent Highway employee – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the Highway Department has advertised for a full-time employee and Highway Superintendent Bill Turner will set up interviews and make a recommendation. There may be a candidate who works for two departments, who would be paid at a blended rate. The new person starts at a beginning rate, which increases after six months and over three years is brought up to the same rate as the other Highway employees.

12. Finance – Board members reviewed the proposed six-step budget process and the description of the responsibilities of the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee from the Guide to

Financial Management for Town Officials. It was noted that this process is more or less what the Board has been doing. Charlene Nardi reported that she had spoken with the Accountant and Treasurer about getting the necessary information.

13. Mass. Dept. of Revenue – The chair signed a letter requesting Field Representative Terry Williams attend a meeting of the Board of Selectmen.

14. MDI grant – The Board had previously received the economic and market analysis of the town's businesses with recommendations about economic development reuse of town-owned properties. Discussion included that there is a lot of good information in the report, there is a lot of space devoted to one business, there is value in harnessing the energy of a business group, a group like the Community Development Advisory Committee could look at how things in the report can be pursued, and the report will plug into the OPM process to some extent.

15. OPM Steering Committee – The Board discussed some possible names for the committee. The next step is to develop a list of questions and then interview the people, looking for people who are open-minded. William Sayre and Charlene Nardi will plan to attend meetings even though not named to the committee. Further discussion included moving the town offices to the James Building, the need for immediate repairs to the elevator and roof of the James, and what to do with the James if it is not used for the public safety complex.

16. Public Safety Complex Committee status – William Sayre reported that the committee is disappointed not to be more involved in the process. They will remain as a committee but resting for the time being.

17. Town Administrator's report –

MIIA Loss Control Grant – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that she submitted three applications, from Fire, Police and Highway with two alternates.

Accountant – Stacey Mousseau is resigning from FRCOG, effective the end of November. Charlene will be checking to see what the plan is.

Workers compensation – The hearing will be in December, Charlene will be going. She has sent a letter to the employee asking to get together.

Hampshire Regional Superintendent – Superintendent Craig Jurgensen will be retiring at the end of the school year.

Department liaisons – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) that Denise Banister will be liaison with Fire, Dave Mathers with Highway, William Sayre with the Senior Center, and the chair on a rotating basis with Police. **So voted** (3-0).

Capital Planning, Highway – Each department head was asked to share thoughts about the Capital Plan. Highway's capital planning was postponed to next meeting.

Cash Management System, Zobrio – The town is moving forward with the purchase of the Zobrio Cash Management System, in this week's warrant; cost is \$7600, paid in part by a \$3200 MassIT grant through FRCOG.

Data Management System, General Code – The towns of Williamsburg, Southampton, Chesterfield, Goshen and Westhampton received a grant of \$60,250 (\$12,050 per town) for a Data Management System for scanning and archiving documents; Northampton will act as host; ongoing cost is \$2100 per year. She will ask for support at Finance Committee next week.

Vacancies – She provided an updated list of board vacancies.

Ice rink – The Recreation Commission is taking over the ice rink. The same volunteer group is involved.

Helen E. James heating issues – M.J. Moran, Inc., is helping. Board members feel that John Hoogstraten is doing a great job.

Ambulance changes – Mike Rock of Highland Ambulance advised that the proposed changes would not have much effect on small communities.

Fire Department – She showed the proposed framing of historic Fire Department patches.

Tree warden – Bill Turner has confirmed that he just wants to be interim Tree Warden; he is still looking for a Tree Warden.

Fire Department basement, Haydenville – A beautiful job was done cleaning out the basement.

Mill River Greenway donations – There have been a number of donations including two very large ones.

Shredding Day – Day was a big success.

Veterans' Day – Observance is this Saturday at 11. The main speaker withdrew so Tom Geryk will speak.

Weather warning system – Annual cost is \$500.

Town sign bylaw – There was discussion of signs not in compliance with the town bylaw; Board asked Charlene to send a letter to the Zoning Enforcement Officer asking him to enforce; Planning Board has been encouraged to review the bylaw.

18. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to sign the employee evaluation of October 12 as printed. **So voted** (3-0).

19. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrant.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Eversource Access and Indemnification Agreement
- Mass. Cultural Council contract
- Live entertainment permit
- Resignation and retirement letters
- Building Supervisor activity log
- Senior Center report
- Tax Classification hearing ad
- Budget process and description of Board's responsibilities
- Letter to Department of Revenue
- OPM Steering Committee charge
- Employee evaluation
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk