

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*February 4, 2016*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, February 4, 2016, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:05 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: Collin Black (Recreation), Jason Connell (Fire Chief), Attorney Richard Evans, Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant), Denise Wickland (Police Chief)

1. Personnel review – Police Chief Denise Wickland – Board members were very pleased with Chief Wickland’s work. They commented that Police Officers seem very pleased with her leadership and respect her and her decisions. Board members appreciated her ability to make tough personnel decisions. The department has been running smoothly, even when she was out on maternity leave. She works well with the Town Administrator and keeps the Board informed, and townspeople are happy and respect her. She understands the constraints of a small budget, keeps a close eye on her budget, and accomplishes a lot. She is a good team player. Board members were grateful for her hard work and dedication. Chief Wickland responded that she enjoys working with the Board and especially appreciates its support.

2. Police Department – budget and report – Chief Wickland presented her budget request, level-funded. She does not foresee large expenses next year. Calls increase every year. In response to a question about utilities, which had been transferred to a town account, Town Administrator Charlene Nardi clarified that changes in the price of oil would not affect the Police budget, just the town line. In response to a question about video cameras, Chief Wickland said she is in support; she is a little concerned about people’s privacy, but the cameras will cut down on false claims against the police. She reported that the department has been very busy. They have received two grants – a Pedestrian Bicycle grant, \$1000 for equipment and \$2000 for extra patrols to monitor crosswalks and bike paths, especially around schools, and a Child Passenger Seat grant, \$2000 to purchase child seats for income-eligible families in the town and surrounding towns, to do child safety checkpoints, and to install seats by trained technicians. A Board member asked for a report of calls in a table form with comparison of previous years. She said the calls made directly to the Police Station cannot be put into a chart unless it is done by hand, but she will do such a report for calls to the Dispatch Center.

3. Appointments – Resignation – The chair read the letter of resignation of John O’Sullivan from the Recreation Commission. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of John O’Sullivan from Recreation with regret and thanks for his many, many years of dedicated service. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Elections – Town Caucus – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to set the date for the Town Caucus as March 7 at 7 p.m. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Elections – Presidential Primary – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the Board to sign the Presidential Primary warrant for Tuesday, March 1. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Personnel review – Fire Chief Jason Connell – Board members appreciate the fine job Fire Chief Jason Connell is doing, and they thanked him for his hard work and dedication. They commented that he has professionalized and modernized the department and equipment. Coming after chiefs with a make-do philosophy, he has had to play catch-up. He has succeeded in bringing in new and younger people. He is well respected by members of his department and people in town. They lauded his leadership and his advocacy and at the same time cautioned about seeming inflexible in pushing forward with requests; they mentioned the need to understand the Board's asking tough questions and the need to take a few years to reach the goals. Chief Connell responded that he had grown up in the department and wants to see it in a better position when he leaves. He acknowledged that he can come across as pushy when the department is in need. He thanked the Board for the good reviews and commented that he respects what they do.

7. Fire Department – report and budget – Chief Connell gave his regular report, including number of incidents and recent major incidents. He was proud that losses from fires were about \$110,000, compared to a value of \$3 million before the fires. The department has received a SAFE grant, for school programs and outreach, and a Senior SAFE grant, which this year is being used for emergency-access key boxes. He reported that the department is excited about the new truck, recently approved at Special Town Meeting. It will use some equipment already in the department. Home Depot has donated a generator. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the generator, described as 3,000-Watt Super Quiet Gasoline Powered Electric Start Inverter Generator with Eco-Throttle and Oil Alert, and valued at \$1999, on behalf of the Fire Department. **So voted** (3-0). Concerning the old truck, he asked for permission to start stripping the equipment off. It is possible that another town department may be interested in the truck; otherwise it will designated as surplus and sold.

Budget – Chief Connell presented the Fire Department's proposed budget. He noted that in payment of payroll, one salary is being charged incorrectly to the Labor line rather than the Salaries line. Also the Expense line approved for FY16 mistakenly still included utilities that should have been pulled out when they were put into the town utility lines; he is requesting that the amount remain in the Expense line for FY17, to cover hose testing and other small increases, explaining that if the department does the hose testing, the cost is \$2500-3000 in labor and if they hire it out, it costs the same amount in expenses and the results will be certified through the company; he also recommended not reducing the labor line, because if they don't use it, they don't use it. Emergency Management Director Denise Banister said that she is looking at a new reverse 9-1-1 called Regroup to replace Blackboard Connect.

8. Chapter 61A – Right of First Refusal – Attorney Richard Evans introduced himself, said that he represented James Snow, Dawn White, and Keith Snow, who are selling a small strip of land to neighbors, and requested the Board not to exercise its right of first refusal. An email from the Planning Board said that they had no objection. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) that

the board vote not to exercise its right of first refusal on land under Chapter 61A at 6 Hyde Hill Road. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Appointments – Recreation – The joint meeting, without quorum, of the Board of Selectmen and the Recreation Commission began at 7:10 p.m. It was noted that Collin Black was the only member of Recreation able to attend and that there did not need to be a quorum of Recreation members to make an appointment. Jessica Lockwood had resigned. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to appoint Joel Strate to the Recreation Commission for a term to expire June 30, 2016. **So voted** (Denise Banister aye, Bill Sayre aye, Dave Mathers aye, Collin Black aye).

10. Mass. Association of Health Boards/Mass. Department of Public Health grant – The chair had signed the award letter for this grant between meetings. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to ratify the chair's signature on the Mass. Association of Health Boards/ Mass. Dept. of Public Health Grant for Healthy Aging through Healthy Community Design, in the amount of \$7970.

11. EMPG grant contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Commonwealth of Massachusetts standard form for the EMPG grant in the amount of \$2460. **So voted** (3-0). The grant will be used for Fire Department radios and bollards to protect the Fire Station generator.

12. Heating oil contract for FY17 – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi explained that she had approved an increase of 1100 gallons, from 15,000 to 16,100, to help out the seller. They had put in the contract that the town would not be charged storage fees. The price has been locked in at \$1.55 per gallon. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the agreement for purchase of heating oil from Global Montello at \$1.5481 for the period of October 2016 to September 2017. **So voted** (3-0).

13. Tax agreement – Clean Energy Collective – The chair reported that the tax agreement for the solar installation on 127 Goshen Road included a one-time payment of \$5000, annual payment of \$14,000 per megawatt for 1.32 megawatts, or \$18,480, with a yearly increase of 2%. It was noted that if they had to pay personal property tax on the solar panels, it would be a huge amount; this agreement evens out the payments over 25 years. This is the second solar farm in town. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to sign the tax agreement with Clean Energy Collective as set forth. **So voted** (3-0).

14. Dam Site Trail – Memorandum of Understanding – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Memorandum of Understanding between the Town of Williamsburg and the City of Northampton regarding the Historic Flood and Forest Trail on Northampton Water Department Property. **So voted** (3-0). A letter of thanks will be written to the participating landowners, Bethany and Wilfred Ouimet.

15. Technology – website upgrade – Technology met with the town's website provider, Virtual Town Hall, now Virtual Town Hall and Schools, and recommends upgrading the town's eight-year-old website. Cost will be \$5000; there is \$9000 left in the Computer Server/ Wiring

account that is not needed. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize an article on the June town meeting warrant to repurpose \$5000 from the Computer Server and Wiring account for the purpose of updating and changing the town's website. **So voted** (3-0).

16. Mass Dash – use of Helen E. James Building – Charlene explained that the Mass Dash is an annual 100-mile nonstop relay race from Mount Greylock to UMass Amherst and on to Boston to raise money for Dana Farber Cancer Institute. The organizers have requested use of the James Building parking lot on July 16, 2016. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to allow the Mass Dash group to use the Helen E. James Building parking lot on July 16, 2016. **So voted** (3-0).

17. Helen E. James Building development – Dick Kisloski of the Public Safety Complex Committee would like to talk to a developer that he knows to look at the cost of repairing the James School Building for various uses. The Board was favorable.

18. Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve a Live Entertainment Permit for a D.J., 8:30 to 11:45 p.m., on Saturday, February 27, Friday, March 4, Friday, March 25, and Saturday, March 26, at Beaver Brook Lounge. **So voted** (3-0).

19. Review of salary survey – The Board will plan to meet Tuesday, February 16 at 5 to 6:30 p.m. to look at the salary survey, to put salaries in line with other similar towns and see how that fits into the budget.

20. Budget – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented budget requests from town boards and departments. She noted that Conservation Commission increased its labor line but decreased its expense line by the same amount, to allow for more hours for the administrative assistant to the Commission. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the budgets of Conservation, Collector, Shade Tree, Moderator, Zoning Board of Appeals and Police and send them on to the Finance Committee. Discussion of the Collector's budget included concern about Deputy Collector delivery to incorrect address, question about tax title expense, question about potential conflict of interest in collecting and keeping fees. The motion was **amended** to exclude the Collector in order to clarify the Collector's request. The others were level-funded. **So voted** (3-0).

21. Select Board's budget – Charlene presented the proposed budget for the Select Board, to be discussed next time. Many lines are the same. She thought Town Telephone and Town Heating might be reduced. Regarding Town Computer Services she said that the town's technology service costs are approximately \$15,000. She and the Technology Committee recommend using \$4500 of the revenue from the Comcast contract as follows: \$2750 for the annual cost of the town website through Virtual Town Hall and \$1750 for technology services. Comcast revenue is lower than years ago; in the past the town spent \$4500 for tech services plus the \$2750 for the website. In light of the recent state Informational Guidelines Release the town should consider setting up a revolving account for the Comcast money and have an annual article at Town Meeting, for transparency to voters. Regarding Insurance, she recommended a 4% percentage increase plus the valuation increase. For the OPEB contribution (Other Post Employment

Benefits) she recommended putting in something, keeping it relatively small since it is not yet mandated.

## 22. Town Administrator's report –

Board of Health issues – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the Health Agent is dealing with the Main Street camper and Myrtle Avenue issues very professionally.

Fuel tracker update – Everyone is clear on how to use it.

Helen E. James Building electricity and oil usage – She had sent some figures from FY15 and FY16. The tenants have paid rent for December, January and February. The amount will be adjusted depending on energy usage starting in March.

Town Clerk office hours – Town Clerk is not working Monday evenings in the winter because no one comes in.

Helen E. James Building ceiling leak – Charlene will check with Building Supervisor Jim Locke.

Insurance of buildings – She reported that the town's insurance company has reviewed the valuation of the town's buildings and they are underinsured, especially the Anne T. Dunphy School. Water storage tank coverage is also low. The total premium increase is \$13,974. She recommended doing one-third this year, FY16, one-third in FY17 and one-third in FY18. Board members agreed. She noted that she is very positive about the insurance company, with the credits, service and trainings, and that the valuations are not automatic but are done on site.

Personnel evaluation schedule – Next meeting will be Highway Superintendent and Town Administrator Charlene Nardi.

Community Compact signing – Will be February 11 in Northampton. Charlene Nardi will plan to speak for the town and Bill Sayre will plan to sign on behalf of the Board.

COA Advisory Board membership – Chair of the Advisory Board Fred Goodhue would like to speak to the Select Board about a Town Government Bylaw change in the Advisory Board membership.

Town Office windows work – Building Supervisor Jim Locke is working with a contractor to weatherproof the building windows.

Executive session minutes – Charlene has been working with Town Counsel on what can be released.

Comcast contract committee update – She reported that the town is limited in what it can negotiate with Comcast. Revenue to the town (franchise fee) was set at 1% in the past, and that cost gets passed on to the subscribers. The advisory committee feels that the best strategy is not to increase that revenue, but to push for building the network out to the 20 or so homes that do not have access. The committee plans to do a survey and public hearing.

Health Agent's response to public records request – The town received a request for records on 142 Main Street and the Health Agent reported that she had no relevant records.

Policy handbook for boards – Town Counsel encourages use of trainings instead. Don Schmidt, an attorney in Williamstown, used to do training for building inspectors about what could and could not be done, and the zoning boards of appeal and planning boards would go. Charlene recommended inviting him and asking him to address certain issues. Board members agreed. She also plans to ask the Small Town Administrators what they do about trainings.

Hampshire Regional High School budget – She reported that the School Committee voted a 2.49% budget increase. This would mean a 10% increase for Williamsburg because of the way the assessment formula works; one town gets hit very hard and it's Williamsburg's turn.

Mill River Greenway Initiative planning session – Was February 2. Bill Sayre attended and reported that it was exciting.

Vacation days – Charlene reported that she plans to take February 17 and 24.

Community Compact – Charlene reported that Kim Florek, the IT person at Hampshire Regional, organized to get all five communities on board to address using Mass Broadband fiber-optic network in a cost-effective way.

Ice skating rink electricity – Charlene reported that the organizers of the ice skating rink at the James Building have asked for electricity at the rink. Discussion included using solar-powered lights or generator or a line from the building to a temporary pole, and concerns about having people there in the evening, about trash, about lack of portapotties, and about general organization of logistics. Board members concluded that the rink would be for daytime use and if people wanted a night event, they could come to the Select Board with a proposal for a specific date and address the Board's concerns.

Division of Local Services Information Guideline Releases – Included establishing a Comcast revenue revolving account. Charlene will follow up with the Town Accountant.

Cleaning up town accounts – There are some small accounts that the auditors say should not just sit for years and the accountant urges spending. One is the Town Lines Sign account, \$1000, one is the remainder of a gift to purchase an emergency generator, \$100.

23. Annual report dedication – The Board decided on the dedication of the town's annual report.

24. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of January 7 as presented. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to approve the minutes of January 13 as presented. Charlene reported that the Energy Committee will be meeting with another energy company about net metering credit purchases and is calling communities that are dealing with Nexamp, and that Nexamp has increased the percentage to the town to 25%. **So voted** (3-0). Motion was made and seconded (DB/DM) to approve the minutes of January 27 as presented. **So voted** (3-0). Regarding executive session minutes, Charlene noted that minutes about personnel matters may need to stay private; she will be talking with Town Counsel for advice.

25. Miscellaneous –

Walk-through at school – The town had the final walk-through. A few issues remain but most have been addressed.

Transfer station – The blacktop heaved.

Free cash – There is a new free cash number because \$203,000 was used at the Special Town Meeting in December 2015.

Personal credit cards – There was a question about use of personal credit cards for town purchases. The town has petty cash, and accounts at various stores. Town Treasurer is not in favor of use of personal credit cards but is willing to discuss.

Bridge Street bridge – Charlene reported that the engineering has been done, the construction cost estimate is \$295,000.

#### Documents used

Agenda and notes

Letter of resignation, John O'Sullivan from Recreation Commission  
Election warrant for Presidential Primary March 1  
Fire Chief report  
Letter from Attorney Richard Evans about Chapter 61A right of first refusal, Hyde Hill Road  
Mass. Association of Health Boards/Mass. Dept. of Public Health grant standard contract  
EMPG contract  
Heating oil contract with Global Montello Corp.  
Tax agreement with Clean Energy Collective  
Memorandum of Agreement regarding Historic Flood and Forest Trail  
Email request from Mass Dash  
Live entertainment request  
Budget requests  
List of correspondence received  
Plumbing and Gas Inspector's continuing education certificate  
Hampshire Council of Governments Annual Report  
Minutes  
Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Approved:

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Clerk