

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
Thursday, March 2, 2017

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, March 2, 2017, at the town office. The acting chair, William Sayre, called the meeting to order at 6:31 p.m. The chair noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Town Administrator and the reporter.

Present: William Sayre and David Mathers

Absent: Denise Banister

Also present: Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Bonnie Roberge (Town Collector), Susan Fortgang (Valley View Farm).

Town Collector Evaluation: The Board stated that Bonnie Roberge is very capable and efficient, knowledgeable of the laws and applying them consistently. She manages her office in a very professional manner, being considerate and fair with taxpayers and putting the best interest of the town as a priority. Members complimented her on keeping up with technology opportunities and modernizing processes. They noted that her attention to detail and dedication show in the excellent audit reports the town receives. Members expressed appreciation for her communication with the Board on receivables and outstanding balances throughout the year. They acknowledged that her office is one of the toughest in being able to maintain a positive relationship with the public and she does that well. Complaints that she is not available are often those who are paying at the last minute or late and then come after hours or unfortunately when she is out. Ms. Roberge noted that she has had the same office hours for 9 years and while she doesn't hold evening hours, she would be happy to have that discussion. It was decided that the very few comments received by the Board don't warrant a change at this time, especially with the increased online options and outside office drop-off box. In the future, the online system will actually have the most recent bill. Members thanked her for her work and commitment to performing the operations in her office with great success. Ms. Roberge thanked the Board and stated that she enjoys her job and gets immense pleasure when everything balances, as is always her goal.

Town Collector Goals: Ms. Roberge reported that she continues to educate taxpayers about online payment and partial payment opportunities and is working with Unibank to enhance online services. She is excited about the future of having bill information online in Unibank, which will be useful to taxpayers. The system also tracks payments so taxpayers can access that information any time during the day. She installed a wall safe next to her office for payments when she is not in the office and a memo board for announcements and taxpayer information. She is working with Mike Quinvilan to update CAMA to handle the water/sewer billing, and is managing the changeover process to new water/sewer meters. She also noted that she is recertified for another five years; the Board congratulated her. For next year, Ms. Roberge plans to complete the changeover of software and meters, continue to get information out to taxpayers about all the options for paying taxes, and continue to collect taxes, balance and reconcile accounts, obtain clean audits, and maintain positive, friendly, professional working relations with the public.

Report: Ms. Roberge presented a list of commitments and outstanding balances as of February 28, 2017, for real estate, personal property, motor vehicle, and water/sewer taxes. The FY2017 real estate commitment is \$5,728,046.87 of which only \$1,545,164.54 is outstanding as of 2/28/17. The Board commended her on the low outstanding balance of \$11,521 in FY16 real estate taxes, again acknowledging her commitment to going after all taxes owed.

Valley View Farm Farmer-Winery Pouring Permit Change in Beneficial Interest: Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the removal of David Nehring from Valley View Farm's farmer-winery pouring permit. **So voted.** (2-0).

Valley View Farm Late Closing and Live Entertainment: Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the late closing to midnight and live band from 9 to midnight for an event on June 24, 2017. The Board discussed that the late closing request is in response to the special permit that has specific restrictions with closing at 10 p.m. but allows the Board of Selectmen to occasionally permit later hours. The request is not in response to hours associated with an existing alcohol license. The live entertainment request is a requirement by the town. Ms. Fortgang stated she has notified all her potential clients that closing is 10 p.m., but anticipates that she will request an extension in closing time up to six times. Her farmer-winery pouring permit allows up to 11 p.m. closing. It was noted that she will have to reconcile the different hours of the special permit with the pouring permit. **So voted.** (2-0)

Pioneer Valley Joint Transportation Committee (PVJTC) Alternate: Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to appoint Nick Dines as the PVJTC alternate until June 30, 2017. Members stated that Nick Dines is an excellent choice and an advocate for the town with all his knowledge. **So voted.** (2-0)

Budgets: The Select Board reviewed the Senior Center Budget request for a \$2,186 increase to cover the 3 hours on Monday currently covered by the EOEA grant. The Board approved the Senior Center budget as submitted to be forwarded on to the Finance Committee. Discussed the Fire Chief's request for a new training line to be used to send committed and vetted fire fighters to the academy. Board members appreciate the need to retain and train fire fighters but do not feel this is the year to establish the new budget line and will review it again next year. Members reviewed the Board of Selectmen budget lines, set the budget request amounts, and approved forwarding those lines on to the Finance Committee. Reductions were made in the electric, vehicle fuel, Highland ambulance debt service and Highland Ambulance building and ambulance debt service lines. Increases were made to the computer service, technology upgrades, building repairs, ambulance services, and the comprehensive insurance, workers compensation insurance and police and fire accident insurance budget lines. The Board will discuss the building & grounds and heating oil lines at the next meeting. It was noted that the Police Chief and Town Administrator contracts are in negotiation and will be discussed in executive session at the next meeting of the full Board.

Capital Planning Requests: The Board members discussed again the Highway requests for a wheeled excavator and articulating loader. The usefulness of each piece of equipment was

acknowledged but members questioned increasing the equipment inventory and the need to do both items this year. The Town Administrator will invite the Highway Superintendent to the March 30, 2017 meeting when all Board members are expected to be present to discuss the requests.

All Board's Meeting: Proposal is April 18th at 5:00 p.m. with pizza. The agenda will be sharing of activities within each department / committee and a short presentation by Board of Selectmen or Williamsburg Public Safety and a Finance Committee budget update.

Veterans Volunteer Tax Relief: Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the Veterans Volunteer Tax Relief Application as presented. The names of the participants in the program are not public. **So voted.** 2-0)

Town Administrator's Report: Charlene Nardi reported on the following items:

Highland Ambulance – Cummington, Goshen, Plainfield and Ashfield are interested in holding a joint meeting with Highland Ambulance. Chesterfield is choosing to hold their own meeting about the budget. A meeting is suggested for early April.

Emergency Protocol – in light of the emergency situation in Conway, it was noted that completing the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) and detailing a policy of how the Board of Selectmen are kept informed needs to be done and made a priority.

FY17 District Local Technical Assistance (DLTA) – Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) awarded technical assistance to the Planning Board to review the Zoning Bylaws and recommended changes from the 2011 Village Centers Study Report.

Recreational Marijuana – as part of the Town's request for DLTA funding, the Planning Board asked for technical assistance from PVPC to deal with recreational marijuana. In response to multiple requests on the topic, the PVPC will set up a regional project to assist towns with the new recreational marijuana law.

Town Picnic – Tom Adams, Denise Banister, Lisa Bertoldi, Bill Sayre, Marie Westburg, and Police Chief Wickland have volunteered to coordinate the event.

SolSmart Grant: PVPC was looking for at least five communities to participate in the SolSmart grant program. The invitation came on Monday, February 27th with a deadline to respond by February 28th. Kim Boas and the Town Administrator sent in a commitment statement requesting assistance with the following three items:

- Assess Town Owned As-of-Right designated site for a Community Solar Project.
- Expand and communicate solar finance options for residential or commercial properties.
- Develop and execute a community solar program.

Cichy's Snow Plowing Agreement – MassDOT responded in regard to the piling of snow in the state highway area. Bill Turner is going to follow up with a permit application.

Conway 250th Anniversary – An advertisement congratulating Conway was sent in; Board members and the Town Administrator paid out of pocket for it since the auditor stated it was not a legal use of public funds. Bill Sayre noted that there are fundraising efforts for Conway following the Saturday, February 25, 2017 tornado that went through and caused extensive damage to the town.

School Gymnasium Floors – Stacey Jenkins, Principal, said the school is taking the steps to purchase the rugs to protect the floors during large events.

Verizon Pole on Bridge Street – National Grid has moved its wires off the old pole and onto the new pole; however, Comcast still needs to move its wires before Verizon will do its wire transfer and remove the pole. National Grid will follow up since the Verizon representative didn't seem to want to follow up. Board wants to get the pole moved so that the Highway Department can finish the work this spring.

Various Projects: Charlene reported that she participated in a meeting about the Community Compact Shared IT project, sent in a final report for the Community Compact Facilities Master Plan project, with Kim Boas is completing the Green Communities final report and reimbursement request, met with Planning Board, Healthy Hampshire and Bill Turner on the Complete Streets Policy, will schedule a meeting with Josh Garcia, PVPC, about a regional shared planner.

Correspondence: The Board read the ZBA Decision on Worthington Air Automotive signs. Town Administrator reported that the Planning Board also noted the decision and may be looking at the sign bylaw to make changes. The Town Administrator will convey the Board of Selectmen's interest of staying apprised of any changes. Noted the letter of introduction from the MMA District 1 Selectmen's Association representative.

Minutes: Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the January 5, 2017, minutes as written. **So voted.** (2-0). Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the February 16, 2017, minutes with changes. **So voted.** (2-0). Moved and seconded (WS, DB) to approve the evaluation of Highway Superintendent Turner. **So voted** (2-0). Moved and seconded (DM, WS) to approve the February 21, 2017, joint meeting with the Finance and Capital Planning Committee minutes with changes. **So voted.** (2-0).

Warrant: Approved and signed the warrant.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

Documents: Evaluation form / write-ups, budget requests, veterans volunteer tax relief application, pouring permit application forms, late and live entertainment forms.

Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:30 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk