

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Thursday, May 13, 2021 at 9:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

Present: William Sayre, David Mathers, Denise Banister

Others: Donna Gibson (Board of Health), Mark Bushee (Health Agent), Bev Bullock (Library Director), Joan Coryat (Board of Library Trustees Chair), Rob Stinson (Board of Library Trustee), Dennis Hackett (Reminder), Peter Spotts (Country Journal), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator)

Mosquito Spraying:

The State is going to spray in certain areas of Massachusetts. The actual areas are not defined or not known at this time. The State has not sprayed in Williamsburg because prior to this current year communities and districts had to Opt-in to the spraying program. However, last year the State passed a bill allowing the State or the State's contractor to spray anywhere in the state of Massachusetts it felt needed to be sprayed. After complaints from communities, the State is now offering an opt-out program by application and a plan to minimize the reproduction of mosquitos. Most communities are opting out. Over the last several years, the Foothills Health District has been focused on educating the town residents on how to minimize the reproduction of mosquitoes. Board of Health Chair Donna Gibson and Health Agent Mark Bushee stated that there are a lot of health concerns with the spraying, which affects people with asthma and those who are chemically sensitive. The long-term effects on humans are unknown still, which is very concerning, and it is known to adversely affect the environment, bee pollinators and other species. The focus of the Board of Health is to continue to educate the public to remove all standing water. Mosquitos can reproduce in the smallest amount of standing water.

The Board of Health has completed the application to opt out and recommends that the Board of Selectmen vote to opt-out of the spraying because it does more harm than good and doesn't necessarily achieve the intended goal of reducing reproduction. On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board unanimously voted to opt-out of the State spraying for mosquitos.

Public Safety Building Committee: On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board unanimously appointed Mary Dudek to the Public Safety Complex Building Committee.

Town Administrator Contract: On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board unanimously voted to approve and sign the Town Administrator contract with Nicholas Caccamo.

Town Meeting Warrant: The Board discussed the warrant articles.

Library walkway: Bev Bullock noted that the library insulation project, which was voted years ago, came in under budget by about \$11,000. In 2019, those funds were put back in the general

fund and became certified as a part of Free Cash in 2020. The Board came forward with an article in 2020, but because of COVID-19, the article was withheld. The Board of Library Trustees would like the walkway article put on the town meeting warrant for this upcoming town meeting. Rob Stinson, Board of Library Trustee member, who is leading this project, stated that the proposed project is to replace and repair the walkway leading up to the original part of the Meekins building. The area is a tripping hazard and is in serious disrepair which has gotten worse over the last year. The proposal includes reducing the width and using pavers to keep it within the character of the town. Rob Stinson noted that he has recently been able to update the quotes and learned that material costs have increased and craftsmen are very busy. The updated quotes came in between \$10,500 and \$12,500, which is an increase from the original quote of \$9,850. The Board members suggested looking at other options of donations and volunteer help to offset the cost. There were some concerns with doing this.

Board of Library Trustees Chair Joan Coryat asked the Board of Selectmen to put the article on the town meeting warrant with the increased amount. It was discussed that the amount is now above the \$10,000 threshold for procurement and the Capital Planning Committee should be notified. Chair Coryat, BOLT member Stinson and Director Bullock will attend the Finance Committee meeting this evening, Thursday May 13th at 6 p.m., to update them on why the amount is increased and why it is happening outside of the normal process. On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board of Selectmen voted to put the article on the warrant at the increased amount of \$12,500.

Police Vehicle: The language was amended to allow purchasing a hybrid vehicle. The Board agreed to the increase to \$55,100, which would purchase a hybrid including all equipment needed, including the cruiser MDT (mobile data terminal) which we have learned can't be upgraded to windows 10. The cost of the MDT is about \$5,000 and was not included in the original \$46,894 quote. Therefore, the difference between purchasing a regular cruiser at \$51,894 or \$55,100 is only \$3,206 and the town is going to apply for a Green Communities grant for \$5,000 to help offset the vehicle cost. Therefore, the cost of the hybrid is actually \$1,794 less than purchasing a regular gas vehicle. The Board posted the article at \$55,100.

Article to Transfer from Free Cash to Stabilization: The Finance Committee is recommending an article to transfer \$150,000 from Free Cash to Stabilization fund. The intent is to put funds in the stabilization fund to use in future years to help offset the bump of the borrowing of the public safety complex. The Board was in agreement with this.

The Board noted that if all the free cash articles passed the town still had reserves at 11% of the total operating budget, which is above the 10% target.

On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board unanimously voted to sign the Town Meeting Warrant as amended.

Memorial Day Parade: The Town will hold a Memorial Day parade on Monday, May 31st. Details will be posted on the website.

Veterans' Agent: Tom Geryk has announced that he is leaving his position effective Friday, May 21, 2021. The Board was sad to hear this news as they felt that Tom has done an outstanding job serving the veterans in our community. They wish Tom well in his future endeavors.

OPM Steering Committee: On a motion by David Mathers, seconded by Denise Banister, the Board unanimously voted to disband the OPM Steering Committee, with thanks for their work.

Adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Approved:

Clerk