

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*July 15, 2021*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, July 15, 2021, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Reminder reporter, starting with the school HVAC item.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Dennis Hackett (reporter, Reminder), Lisa Jasinski (National Grid), Stacey Jenkins (Dunphy School principal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

Mountain Street: Rebecca Brooks, George Fenn, Paul Fenn, Anna Lawrence, Julia Peters, Penny Robbins, Anna Seren, Patrick Sumner

1. Pole hearing – National Grid and Verizon – The chair opened the public hearing at 9:02 a.m. Lisa Jasinski of National Grid presented the petition for a new pole on Old Goshen Road to provide service to a new home. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the installation of a pole at 61 Old Goshen Road. **So voted** (3-0). The public hearing closed at 9:05 a.m.

2. Anne T. Dunphy School HVAC – Stacey Jenkins, Principal of the Dunphy School, discussed the HVAC system with the Board. The air conditioning is not working, though the ventilation still works. She is concerned about getting the system fixed before school starts because having a crane working on the property is disruptive and the repair needs to be done when the air conditioning and heat are not needed. There is a way for the school to do it as an emergency without going out to bid. She also noted that the units are not being made in the same way and a different model may be required, which would change the interface. Jamrog's estimate of \$150,750 from March was good for 30 days. Further concerns were whether parts will be available, whether the software might be a problem and whether the proposed repair will fix the system once and for all. The next question was where the funding would come from. With \$86,000 in CARES Act funds and \$15,000 from ESSER, there is a significant shortfall. It is not clear if this project would be eligible for ARPA money. The deadline for spending the CARES Act money is October 1. Going to Special Town Meeting for Stabilization money is a possibility. Free cash won't be certified till fall. In summary, first look at what the problem is, what is the availability of parts, and what is the price. Second, look at the timeline, when the ARPA money is expected, and explore the emergency option. Third, what about an engineering firm to evaluate and oversee. Selectmen William Sayre and Dave Mathers will plan to meet with Jamrog when they come to the school today.

3. Mountain Street project – Board members and residents discussed the project and a possible letter to MassDOT about the design. Residents favor Alternative 4 and feel that Alternative 5 is unsatisfactory. It was reported that according to MassDOT, Alternative 4 was considered and rejected by Complete Streets, for safety concerns, and that Complete Streets approval is required for MassDOT funding. Discussion included that Alternative 5 did not meet the Complete Streets criteria but received an exemption, that the engineering design is based on faulty data (e.g., there is no police record that the road is unsafe, and the engineers seem unaware that this is a farming

community), that the Mass.gov Design Guide emphasizes context-sensitive design options, preserving scenic, historic, esthetic and community features. Board members agreed to write a letter to MassDOT urging consideration of a design that more closely resembles Alternative 4, and suggested that residents write their own letters. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to write a letter to MassDOT to re-evaluate Alternative 4. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Veterans' Services – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the Veterans' Services Inter-Municipal Agreement between the City of Northampton and the Town of Williamsburg. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Community Development Block Grant application. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Auditor Management Representation letter – This is the routine letter where the town confirms that it has fulfilled its responsibilities and provided all pertinent information. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the Auditor Management Representation letter. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Auditor draft management letter and financial statements – The Board received the auditor's draft management letter and financial statements. These are to be given to the various departments mentioned that have deficiencies to be remedied; their responses will come to the Select Board for review. Town Administrator Nick Caccamo was asked to see that the issues are addressed.

8. Appointments – Cultural Council – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of Dianne Martin from the Cultural Council with thanks. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Department heads – Employee evaluations/ performance reviews of department heads are coordinated by the Town Administrator and are conducted by a single Selectman for each rather than by the whole Board. The Board discussed whether to have goal setting as part of the review process and settled on asking department heads for their priorities.

10. Miscellaneous –

Foothills Health District rent – The Health Agent has for years had an office in the Town Office Building for free. They have now added additional people. Town Administrator Nick Caccamo was asked to see whether the town is receiving an appropriate reduction in its assessment.

Pay rate schedule – Nick Caccamo said that he has had conversations with Highway, Fire and Police and the pay rates are correct.

Helen E. James Building – The James Building transition was discussed. Anything not fastened down will have to be removed. There will be a walk-through this Saturday with alumni and cameras. People will be asked to write memories. The watering trough is staying. The hedges won't need to be cut again. The heating oil has been removed. A Fire Department officer has offered to save bricks at the Fire Department. The remediation and demolition will be bid as a package.

Assessors' software – The Tyler software has been a disappointment and the department will be changing to Patriot software.

11. Town Administrator's report –

Meetings with Department heads – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that he had talked with Fire Chief Jason Connell, who works out of town during the day and cannot easily come in to morning Select Board meetings. Rather than coming in person, Chief Connell prefers to send a written memo and respond to questions. Board members feel they get a lot out of meeting with him. Various suggestions included having him come in twice a year instead of quarterly, or doing a single-item meeting or an evening meeting, or having the liaison meet with him individually.

Depot Road culvert – Nick Caccamo reported on issues of timing. A pre-cast culvert ordered now would not be available until late September, but the Army Corps general permit requires that the work be done by September 10. A best-case scenario would be to get an extension and do the work in October. Another possibility is to order the pre-cast culvert and footings and store them until summer 2022, noting that the Massworks grant is good only until June 30, 2022 (no extension available), and the contract with Maxymillian would have to be renegotiated for date and possible storage. Meanwhile the town may close the road, reduce to one lane, close the road to anything over five tons, and/or put another steel plate down. The plan is to apply for the extension, and get assurances from Maxymillian that they could do the work in the limited timeframe. A Special Town Meeting for the additional funding will not be planned until more is known about the timing of the work. Nick and Selectman Dave Mathers will work on this in consultation with Highway Superintendent Dan Banister and the Board will plan to revisit the issue next meeting.

Town Administrator job – Nick Caccamo reported that he is growing more comfortable in the job but that things take a long time. He would like to meet with each Board member individually to discuss priorities, to help set the course for the next few months. He also mentioned that some communities are forming small working groups to determine the best way to make use of the ARPA money. Board members would be in favor of creating a priority list of ARPA projects, whether done by a working group or by individual conversations with departments. Board members felt that Nick is doing a fine job.

12. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of June 17. **So voted** (3-0).

13. Warrant – Selectman Dave Mathers will review and sign the warrant.

Documents used

Pole installation petition from National Grid and Verizon

Veterans' Services Inter-Municipal Agreement

CDBG grant application signature page

Auditor representation letter

Auditor draft management letter and financial statements

Resignation letter

Minutes

Adjourned at 11:42 a.m.

Approved:

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Clerk