

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*April 6, 2023*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, April 6, 2023, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Present: Denise Banister and William Sayre

Absent: David Mathers

Also present: Paul Brock (Hampshire County Retirement), Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Hampshire County Retirement System – COLA for retirees – Paul Brock, Chairman of the Hampshire County Retirement System, asked the Select Board to support an increase in the cost-of-living adjustment for Hampshire County retirees. A COLA of 3% on the first \$13,000 of a retiree’s pension payment had already been approved, but the Retirement Board, after a long internal discussion and concern about inflation, is asking for an additional 2%. Since the COLA is permanent, it creates an unfunded liability. Approval is needed from two-thirds of the towns in the retirement system. The cost to the town is \$6,324 for the additional 2%. This is unrelated to the OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) unfunded liability. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) that the Williamsburg Select Board approve Chapter 269 of the Acts of 2022, An Act Relative to Cost-of-Living Adjustments for Retirees, and further direct that the Hampshire County Retirement System be notified in writing of this vote. **So voted** (2-0).

2. Police – Police Chief Denise Wickland gave her regular report.

Revolving account for outside details – She would like a revolving account to be able to pay police officers for the outside details they work in a timely way and not have to wait for payment from outside. Select Board members agreed if the Accountant approves. This would be a Town Meeting warrant article.

Firearm fees – She would like a separate account for firearm licensing fees that the department could use for additional firearms training for police or for costs associated with the licensing. Currently training is paid by the labor line and ammunition comes out of the expense line. Suggestions from the Board included increasing the budget to provide the training she feels is needed, and setting up a separate training line. After discussion the Board supported a separate revolving fund for the fees and will plan to speak in favor of it at Town Meeting.

Cruiser – The estimate for a Chevy Tahoe came in at a little over \$60,000, plus the cost of the data terminal. She is waiting for a quote on the Ford Explorer. She repeated the issues she has had with the Chevy Tahoe.

State police – There are a limited number of state police officers operating out of the Northampton barracks and only one or two cars covering the fourteen rural communities from Pelham to Cummington. If the state police officers don’t show up it’s because of limited number of cars.

Statistics – She presented the breakdown of calls in 2019 and 2022. The numbers almost doubled in the three years. She noted that when the record says that an officer did not respond, it turns out that sometimes the department had not been called.

Strong chief – She requested that the Police Chief position be made a strong Chief position. The main difference is that she would be able to make decisions – e.g., hiring, and making change in policy – without coming to the Select Board. Most towns have a strong Police Chief and Williamsburg has a strong Fire Chief. The Select Board agreed, feeling that it spoke to their trust in Chief Wickland. This would apply to future Chiefs as well.

Grenade incident – A resident was clearing out a property and found a grenade, which turned out not to be a real grenade.

Dogs – A resident of Whately walks a dog on Williamsburg residents' property. The dog misbehaves and the owner claims not to be able to control the dog. The Board would support Chief Wickland in taking action. Suggestions were trespassing, warning, citation, mental health evaluation; Chief Wickland is trying to brainstorm a solution. In another dog matter, a resident has complained often of a barking dog that other neighbors say is not a problem.

3. Election – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve and sign the warrant for annual town election on May 1, 2023. **So voted** (2-0).

4. MassDOT Chapter 90 reimbursement request – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the reimbursement request for the first half of the paving of Adams Road. The bid was through FRCOG, and Highway Superintendent Dan Banister seems happy with the work.

**Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the reimbursement request for Chapter 90 work on Adams Road, in the amount of \$90,918.16. **So voted** (2-0).

5. Licenses – live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve live entertainment for the Burgy Bullets for a band on April 15, 7-11 p.m., a D.J. on May 6 and 13, 7-11 p.m., and a D.J. on June 3, 6-11 p.m. **So voted** (2-0).

6. Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative (HRMC) – waste hauling contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign Amendment Three, the two-year extension for hauling of recyclables and solid waste with Waste Management of Massachusetts, Inc., effective July 1, 2023. **So voted** (2-0).

7. Department of Energy Resources (DOER) grant – The \$15,000 grant is for municipal energy technical assistance (META), to be used for a retro commissioning study for the Dunphy School energy systems. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the META grant award of \$15,000 for technical assistance energy study at the Dunphy School. **So voted** (2-0).

8. Budget – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the current draft of the FY24 budget for the departments under the Select Board's oversight, and projected capital plan requests. Free cash has not yet been certified. The Board would like to meet with the Finance Committee, after reviewing Finance Committees' draft budget recommendations.

9. Town Administrator's report –

Public Safety Complex – Selectmen noted that the construction is going well. Nick Caccamo presented the March MVP report. The construction schedule is still in place, with completion

planned for this fall. The Building Committee is comfortable with Power Options for the solar design. The solar design contract is being reviewed by Town Counsel.

RFP for IT services – The RFP is currently being advertised according to procurement requirements. A number of requests have been received. There will be an evaluation process and then review of the price. If the highest scorer is within the town's budget, they will probably be the one selected. A recommendation is expected for the May 4 meeting, to start July 1, for a three-year contract.

Municipal conferences – Recent conferences were a Legislative Breakfast and a Western and Rural Mass. Municipal Conference. Nick Caccamo presented a legislative priority list from the new Rural Policy Advisory Commission. Chapter 90 is especially important to rural communities.

10. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of March 2, March 9, and March 16 as presented. **So voted** (2-0).

11. Miscellaneous –

Parking in fire lane – The Fire Chief sent an email to the Dunphy School principal about parking in the fire lane. There was concern that she didn't respond.

Full time chief – Cummington does not have a full-time police or fire chief; they are looking at shared people with another town.

Storm – Highway crew work together well. A lot of trees were down. They are still chipping brush from the storm.

Northampton sewer issue – Issue is not yet resolved. The chair with the chair of the Water/Sewer Commission talked with the Mayor.

12. Warrant – Chair Denise Banister will review and sign the warrant. Payroll warrant WP23-21 for \$118,954.90 and expense warrant W23-21 for \$343,009.02, effective 4/12/23.

#### Documents used

Hampshire County Retirement supporting documents

Police Chief notes

Election warrant

Chapter 90 reimbursement request

Live entertainment permit

Waste hauling contract

DOER grant

FY24 budget

MVP report

RFP for IT services

Legislative priorities list

Minutes

Adjourned at 11:52 a.m.

Approved:

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Clerk