

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
March 28, 2019

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, May 28, 2019, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Nick Dines (Mill River Greenway), John Hoogstraten (Building Supervisor), Gaby Immerman (Mill River Greenway), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant); Helen Molloy and family and friends

1. Boston Post Cane presentation – The Select Board, town residents, and family and friends gathered in the Town Offices auditorium to honor Helen Molloy, age 98, the town's oldest citizen. Chair David Mathers spoke about the historic cane and presented it to Helen Molloy to keep during the event (after which it was returned to its display box in the Selectmen's office). A small replica cane, on a stand with an engraved plaque, and a certificate of recognition, were also presented. After the large convivial gathering, complete with inscribed cake, the Board reconvened in the Select Board office at 5:46 p.m.

2. Building Supervisor – Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten reported that it has been an ordinary winter with ordinary repairs, not like last winter. Upcoming projects include: the Town Office entry roof, which is worse than it looks; finishing the Haydenville Library roof (waiting for the roofer); more masonry repair on the Meekins Library addition. At the Anne T. Dunphy School there are issues with the siding; he has ordered materials and will keep an extra pile. There are no answers yet on the Hardy trim and the nails that were pulling out; the town may just need to pay someone to re nail it. The Helen E. James roof made it through the winter and hasn't leaked since the roofer did work in the fall; another roofer who looked at it thought the roof would last another year or two, not as urgent as had been thought. John recommended waiting a year or two and doing the roof with the rest of the renovation, and meanwhile keeping a close eye on it.

Police Department driveway – Board members felt the problem with the driveway was temporary mud and will go away when it dries out; it hasn't been a big issue in the past. The Board asked John Hoogstraten about using his Building Repair line instead of an article, if they decided to do it.

Building Supervisor stipend – John Hoogstraten said that he tends to do repairs himself because it's easier, and it's as fast as tracking down someone else to do it. Suggestion was made to move some money from the Building Repair line (currently \$20,000) into the Building Supervisor salary line (currently at \$7000). His predecessor had estimated he spent 20 hours a month but it is probably a lot more than that. Board members want John Hoogstraten to be compensated fairly and asked for an estimate of actual hours. There was also some reluctance to reducing the Building Repair line. It was noted that John's thinking about things and keeping an eye on things are valuable, his role is not just being up there with a hammer.

3. Budgets –

Police labor – Board members reviewed an email from the Police Chief explaining her request. Board members still had questions including: what does the current staffing schedule look like, for comparison; what is mandatory in-service training and is it in addition to work hours; why should the labor line be increased so much, especially when the town is looking at a tough budget year, explain the numbers. Board members felt it would be helpful if Chief Wickland would meet with them to address the questions.

Street lights – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the town will need a maintenance contract for the street lights that it will own, and a new budget line will need to be added. The current estimate is \$5000, it may be closer to \$3000. LED bulbs use less energy than the previous bulbs.

Schools – She reported that the local school budget went up only \$15,428, or 0.736%, and that the Smith Vocational Transportation line increased by \$1203, to \$40,085.

4. Licenses – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to grant a live entertainment license to Valley View Farm for Wednesday, June 19, 6 to 10 p.m., for a live acoustic band with singer and two speakers amplification. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to ratify the previously signed live entertainment permit for Cooley Dickinson VNA & Hospice at Valley View Farm for Thursday, March 28, 6 to 10 p.m. for a Barn Dance fundraiser. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Sidewalks – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that Highway Superintendent Bill Turner had considered the High Street and North Main Street sidewalks and recommended focusing on High Street, though he would like to do both. Board members agreed.

6. Collector's hours – Town Collector Bonnie Roberge had proposed two options for her new 30-hour office schedule. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the Collector's proposal of the hours of 8:30 to 3:30 Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, and 8:30 to 5:30 on Tuesday. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Regional DLTA grant, regional emergency services – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that Eric Weiss, now of PVPC, says that Chesterfield, Goshen and Worthington are looking at regional emergency services, focusing first on fire services, under a regional DLTA grant, and asked if Williamsburg would be interested in participating. Small towns are struggling; they are exploring options on how to be sustainable and how to protect the communities. Discussion included that a past study of regional police showed that that would not be workable; that there is some imbalance among the towns since Williamsburg pays its firefighters and other towns have volunteers; that if there is a problem in more than one town, there could be an issue of divided loyalties; that Williamsburg has a great fire chief and already has great mutual aid with the towns around; that people are always asking if the town has considered regional services; that participating in the study does not commit the town to anything. Board members would be interested and Charlene will notify PVPC that the town would like to participate in the discussion.

8. Solar project Hatfield Street – Discussion about the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) for solar projects included: the town should be putting some of the PILOT money away, not just using it for the budget, since it stops coming in after 20 years; if the business puts in new

equipment, they renegotiate the PILOT; and the town does not get PILOT money until the business is up and running.

9. Resolutions – Board members discussed the two proposed resolutions, in support of the Promise Act supporting funding for public schools, and the Cherish Act supporting funding for public higher education. Board members were in favor of supporting both but noted that if it came down to a choice in the state funding, they would choose the local public schools over public higher education. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign both resolutions and to stipulate that if it comes down to one the Board's support goes to the local public schools. **So voted** (3-0).

10. Mill River Greenway – MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) grant – Overview of grant – Gaby Immerman and Nick Dines of the Mill River Greenway Committee asked whether the Select Board would support the committee in applying for the MVP grant, a planning grant to enable the town to pull together relevant committees and emergency departments to get the town certified to apply for action grants in the future. The idea is to benefit the public safety complex, upgrade culverts and satisfy new drainage requirements, explore other ways to handle storm water, work on infrastructure and the wall by the Snack Bar, and update the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Board members felt it was worth pursuing, as long as it did not require time from the Town Administrator.

Administration – Gaby Immerman and Nick Dines stressed that they plan to build in money to pay for an administrative assistant to do the paperwork. They plan to put in 100 hours, at \$25 per hour, and plan to build in a grant administrator for all grants going forward. They emphasized that the Selectmen's comment at a previous meeting about not overburdening the Town Administrator made them think about alternative ways of administering; they hadn't understood the administrative burden.

Extra costs like engineering – A Selectman cautioned that sometimes there are unexpected extra costs to grants, such as a Complete Streets grant for sidewalks requiring engineering, at a prohibitive cost. It was noted that Whately had the same problem but they solved it with local retired engineer, and maybe Williamsburg could do the same.

Support letters – Gaby Immerman and Nick Dines said that the application will require support letters. The application deadline is May 3; they hope to submit sooner. They would like the workshop to be in September, with certification by January 2020. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to support the Mill River Greenway in applying for an MVP grant on behalf of the town and have the chair sign a letter of support. **So voted** (3-0).

Other committee steps – The committee is planning a public forum for the end of April to give an update on their progress and seek input on the new park parcel. They have also been to the Anne T. Dunphy School to propose that the Greenway can be an outdoor classroom for science education.

11. Town Meeting articles – Board members discussed some of the proposed Town Meeting articles.

Police Department driveway (\$3000) – Board members were not in favor of an article for the driveway. If anything is done, it should be done sooner rather than later and before Town Meeting.

Police Department training (\$5000) – Either the town will pay for Police Academy tuition and equipment or the officer would pay and be reimbursed. Board members favored the Police Chief's proposal of having the officer pay up front and be reimbursed and therefore the article would not be needed.

Fire Department fill station grant match (\$2000) – This is the town's portion to match the grant.

Fire Department Brush Truck grant match (\$10,000) – Similarly, this is the match, and is contingent on receiving the grant.

Bus contract – The school department would like to put it out for a longer term to try to get a better rate.

Revolving fund for Assessors – This is to receive the solar project Payment-in-Lieu-of-Taxes applicant fee so that the consultant fee for PILOT negotiations can be paid directly without going into the town's general fund.

Helen E. James elevator (\$79,000) – Article can be deleted.

Helen E. James roof – Article can be deleted.

12. Chapter 90 project requests – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the project request for chip sealing of streets in Haydenville in the amount of \$154,000. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the project request for North Main Street drainage improvements and curbing in the amount of \$15,555. **So voted** (3-0).

13. Highway – Overspend budgets – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize overspending Winter Labor and Winter Expense lines for Highway. **So voted** (3-0).

14. Town Administrator –

Free cash certified – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that free cash was certified at \$797,195, and that an additional \$122,000 was being withheld because Chapter 90 reimbursement from FY18 wasn't received prior to September 15, 2018.

5K benefit race – Police and Fire Chiefs plan to hold a race and would like to close South Street to through traffic. Board members supported closing the street, with a town-wide notification call.

Highway road capital plan – The reference to streets in the center of Haydenville just meant streets that are short, namely Kingsley, Hatfield, Maple, Edwards, Grove, Pine, Fairfield, Myrtle, Laurel, Dewey, and Coles.

Town flag – When the sewing crew finish the second large town flag, they would like to present it at the Annual Town Meeting. It was proposed that it be hung in the Town Office auditorium and that the Haydenville Center School sign be moved to the hallway.

Senior Center, Age-Friendly Communities – The town, through the Northern Hilltown Consortium of Councils on Aging, has been received into the AARP Network of Age-Friendly Communities.

Senior Center, Outreach Coordinator – The Board felt that the Senior Center Director could hire the Outreach Coordinator and did not need to bring the choice to the Board.

Electricity, municipal aggregation – Charlene and Energy chair Kim Boas had reviewed the bids for the energy supplier and locked in the price of 10.249 cents per kWh for 36 months from Dynergy, a green project. National Grid's commercial rate is lower than the aggregation rate this summer; Kim Boas is sending a letter to local commercial users explaining options.

Hilltown Community Development Corporation and town buildings – HCDC has expressed interest in the Helen E. James building or the current Town Office building for use for housing, not for senior housing. They know there are many people interested in the James and they don't want to interfere; they only want to be there if they are wanted.

Brassworks – She noted that there are new businesses going into the Brassworks building.

Complete Streets engineering – TEC, the engineering firm the town has been working with, has reduced their quote to \$68,750; Charlene has solicited quotes from other firms. Whately has solved their issue by hiring a retired resident engineer. South Street needs to be surveyed for the right of way, and the Highway Superintendent wants to chop off the embankment to make the corner less dangerous.

Health insurance, IAC meeting – Charlene reported that she and the Treasurer met with the union presidents and members at the IAC meeting. At the next meeting, the PEC meeting, the town will propose taking the \$6400 and cutting checks to participants, based on their health plans. The union would like a trust, and the town would want a third party to oversee and manage any trust. This option would eat up the funds in fees.

Insurance building review – The firm hired by MIIA to walk through and assess buildings did the Meekins Library and the Helen E. James.

15. Annual report – Board members reviewed the dedication and the Selectmen's report.

16. Correspondence – Correspondence included the bridge inspection for North Street and the West Branch of the Mill River, letters to delinquent taxpayers, and a payment from Comcast.

17. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of March 14 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

18. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP19-21 for \$106,116.06 and expense warrant W19-21 for \$255,342.40, payable 4/3/19.

19. Miscellaneous –

Williamsburg Market – It was noted that there was a meeting in town about finding a buyer for the Williamsburg Market, an important business for the health of the town.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Emailed explanation about police labor line
- Licenses
- Resolutions
- List of TM articles
- Chapter 90 project requests
- Annual report drafts
- Minutes
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk