

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
October 10, 2019

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, October 10, 2019, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

Present: Denise Banister, William Sayre and David Mathers

Also present: Michael Rock (Highland Ambulance), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Nathan Rosewarne (Treasurer), Bonnie Roberge (Collector), Daryl Springman (Deputy Fire Chief), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

Yellow Barn: Susan Fortgang, David Nehring

1. Licenses – Yellow Barn, Inc. – public hearing – The chair called the public hearing to order at 6:03 p.m. Susan Fortgang of the Yellow Barn explained that the Yellow Barn is the wedding venue and it has the retail liquor license. They have moved their cidery to a different location and want to expand the Yellow Barn license so that they can serve alcohol in two buildings. The hours would be the same, and the ABCC has said that it is fine to expand to an adjacent building. After some comments on the hours, it was clarified that the Yellow Barn's hours have been to 1:00 a.m. from the beginning, the neighbors were notified of this hearing and no members of the public attended. The public hearing ended at 6:14 p.m. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to approve the alteration of premises for the Yellow Barn, Inc., and to issue the license when the ABCC approves. **So voted** (3-0).

2. Treasurer –

Bond and fiscal advisor services – Treasurer Nathan Rosewarne reported on looking into fees for bond and fiscal advisor services. He said that only two companies in the state provide the services: Unibank, which almost all of the towns in the area, including Williamsburg, use, and Hilltop, which is used by bigger cities. They have the same \$15,000 minimum fee. He and Town Administrator Charlene Nardi feel that with no cost difference the town should stay with Unibank, with whom the town has a relationship.

Paid Family and Medical Leave – Treasurer Nathan Rosewarne provided information on the state Paid Family and Medical Leave law. As a municipality the town is exempt but could opt in, with a vote by Town Meeting. The cost is \$19,000 per year for the town, with a similar amount from employees. There is currently an unpaid federally mandated 12 week leave. Employees are required to use their vacation and sick time during the period of unpaid family and medical leave. After discussing the Paid Family and Medical Leave Act, the Board decided to take no action at this time.

Hampshire County Insurance Trust – Treasurer Nathan Rosewarne reported that there are health insurance rates changes that don't affect most employees.

3. Highland Ambulance –

Training for disaster recovery – Mike Rock of Highland Ambulance found, applied for and received a grant for training for disaster recovery, geared toward town administration and officials. They will allow 4-6 people from each town and recommend the Select Board,

Treasurer, Collector, Town Administrator, Fire Chief and Police Chief. It is for decision makers, key people, financial people, to help them to come up with a plan on how to rebuild the town. It is December 7, all day, free, run by FEMA. When the town has a list of names it can go online and register them. Board members thanked him for making this happen.

Appointment to Highland Ambulance Board – Highland Ambulance has suggested the appointment of Denise Banister to replace Leslie Smith on the Highland Ambulance Board.

Motion was made and seconded (DM/WS) to recommend Denise Banister to be a member of the Highland Ambulance Board of Directors and take the seat being vacated by Leslie Smith. **So voted** (2-0, DB abstaining).

4. Collector – Town Collector Bonnie Roberge gave her regular report. Real estate, personal property, and water/sewer bills can be paid online. There will be a message for people wanting to pay excise tax, with a link to the Deputy Collector. Online payments have gone up from \$55,000 in FY10 to \$635,000 this year. She has been encouraging partial payments. The online system offers flexibility and convenience and does not rely on the U.S. mail; she noted that millennials do everything on their phones. The town might want to consider picking up the 25 cent fee for online payment from checking/savings accounts. Water/sewer bills have been sent out. Deputy Collector Art Jones is working on the Registry of Motor Vehicles software change. Bonnie has learned from the Senior Center Director about programs available through that office to help low-income seniors. Her computer has been very slow; some parameters have now been adjusted. Computer backup has been set up. She has Windows 7 on her computer, which won't receive security updates after January 2020; eventually she will need a new computer. Charlene Nardi added that the town has a number of computers on Windows 7 and there is an option of paying \$50 each to have security updates for a year. Bonnie summarized that she is encouraged about the progress with online payment, having backup, and knowing about possible helpful programs for people struggling with taxes.

5. Fire Department – Deputy Chief Daryl Springman gave the department's regular report. There have been 291 incidents since January 1, up from 268 last year. Of the 291, 151 were Rescue & Emergency Medical Service; 129 of those were Sick Person calls. They recently finished purchasing apparatus with the state DCR grant; they will apply for the grant again. The Assistance to Firefighter Grant is not likely to come through; it probably depends on what is requested. There has been a major decrease in personnel recently; other towns have the same issue. They have been discussing ways to recruit members. Firefighters don't do it for the money. Engine 3 (mini-pumper) is still not working well, and they are trying to replace it. There have been some issues with inspections, and the Building Inspector has been a huge resource. The old AED has gone to the Transfer Station with new batteries and pads.

6. Senior Volunteer Tax Relief Program – criteria – There were more applicants than positions in the senior tax work-off program and the Board discussed criteria for choosing applicants. The Board's discussion focused on: prioritizing low-income people; splitting the positions and accepting some people for fewer hours; looking at the town's needs and people's skills; dividing the total budget/hours among all the people; and setting a maximum household income. Other ideas floated included: increasing the number of slots, requiring town residence, keeping people already in the program, and suggestions for how to use some people's skills.

7. Appointments and resignations –

Senior Center Director – resignation – Jennifer Hoffman – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to accept the resignation of Jennifer Hoffman from the position of Senior Center Director, effective November 1, with deep regret and heartfelt thanks for her innovative approach and hard work. The Board will write a letter of appreciation.

Replacing Senior Center Director – Jennifer Hoffman had made suggestions for replacing her. Charlene will work with the COA Advisory Board.

Highland Ambulance – resignation – Leslie Smith – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to acknowledge the resignation of Leslie Smith from the Highland Ambulance Board, effective October 31, 2019. **So voted** (3-0).

Mill River Greenway – James Weed – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to appoint James Weed to the Mill River Greenway Committee for a term to expire June 30, 2020.

Historical Commission – Jacqueline Dufresne – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to appoint Jacqueline Dufresne to the Historical Commission for a term to expire June 30, 2022.

School Committee – resignation – Keira Durrett – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to accept the resignation of Keira Durrett from the Local School Committee, effective immediately, with gratitude for her commitment and service. **So voted** (3-0).

8. Personnel policy – sexual harassment – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the proposed sexual harassment policy and noted that training of employees will be important. After discussion and an adjustment, **motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to accept Section XVII, Amendment B, Sexual Harassment Policy, as amended, to be part of the town's Personnel Policy. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Evaluations – Packets of feedback on department heads were distributed to Board members, in preparation for doing the evaluations.

10. Town Administrator's report –

Upcoming meetings – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reminded the Board of upcoming MVP meetings on October 15 and 23.

Brewmasters liquor license – There has been a glitch in their application and they have a lawyer and are working with the ABCC.

Budget lines – She reported that the lines for Tech Replacement and Computer Services are not realistic; there have been excess hours needed every month this year and reserve fund transfers have been requested at the end of the year for the past two years. Windows 7 will no longer be supported starting in January 2020. She asked for the Board's support in looking at the budget, and she anticipates a Town Meeting article to replace old computers.

Yellow jackets – There is an infestation in the Health Agent's office.

Police concerns at local business – A suggestion was made to support the Police Chief by writing to the business's management. Charlene will talk to the Chief, who may write a letter herself.

Insurance on buildings – Haydenville Library and Old Town Hall – The insurance company said that the Haydenville Library and Old Town Hall must be locked and drained or kept at 60 degrees. Discussion included that the library is used for meetings, the bylaw would have to be

changed to close the library, Charlene should talk with the library personnel about closing the building in winter. The Board felt 50 to 55 was an acceptable temperature.

Nexamp v. National Grid – Energy usage at the school has increased. The school currently has a \$3000 credit on the National Grid bill, which will be used up in winter.

Depot Road – She is hoping for a STRAP grant decision later this fall.

Storage of air conditioners – Where to store the air conditioners is a question. Suggestions were made to put them on the auditorium stage and to stack them in a rack.

Stop sign on South Main Street – The Board is considering a stop sign on South Main Street.

Complete Streets, East Main Street – Charlene has reiterated to the Complete Streets program that the town does not have \$46,000 to pay for the engineering for East Main Street and instead proposes installing flashing lights; Complete Streets has asked for a letter on town letterhead. Highway Superintendent recommends the middle of the hill, Police Chief recommends further down. Board members felt that the lower place was better.

Telephones – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to declare as surplus the telephones that have been replaced by VOIP. **So voted** (3-0).

OPM Steering Committee – Charlene thinks the OPM Steering Committee will be ready to come to the Board to make recommendations.

11. Correspondence – Correspondence included an announcement of the Hilltown CDC meeting on October 15, which will conflict with one of the MVP meetings.

12. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to approve the minutes of September 26 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

13. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP20-09 for \$110,076.64, and expense warrant W20-09 for \$106,492.45, payable 10/16/19.

Adjourned at 9:46 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk