

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
October 11, 2018

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, October 11, 2018, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Country Journal reporter.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Jason Connell (Fire), Gaby Immerman (Mill River Greenway), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Daryl Springman (Fire), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant), Denise Wickland (Police)

1. Fire Department – Fire Chief Jason Connell and Deputy Chief Daryl Springman gave the department's regular report. There were 103 incidents this quarter, about half of them sick person calls. They went to mutual aid 12 times and requested mutual aid one time. They described recent incidents, including a motor vehicle accident that needed the Jaws of Life to extricate the driver, and several oven fires. They did public outreach, including AED (defibrillator) training at the town offices by Daryl Springman; several people commented on the excellent job he did. There have been a number of equipment breakdowns, which is affecting the operating budget. The utility pickup is going out on calls because Engine 3 is out of service. They are continuing to do a lot of cleaning out. A major new program is the formation of working groups, each one assigned a month to go through all the equipment and make sure everything is in working order, and to perform small focused trainings on equipment. Everyone on the roster will be involved and each group will have long-time firefighters and newer firefighters. They described the current grants, for brush fire packs, air packs (SCBA) and a new SCBA fill station. Department of Labor voluntary audit on OSHA standards will be in November or December. They are looking into air handling systems. Radio communication continues to be an issue; they are waiting to see what system changes will be happening statewide or regionally. Emergency Manager Denise Banister reported that the EMPG grant has come through. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the legislation for Alan Everett and Robert Lapointe to work past age 65 has passed in the House and is going to the Senate.

2. Police – Police Chief Denise Wickland reported that Aubrey Luszczki (formerly Aubrey Malo) has resigned effective October 31. She has been a big asset to the department. Interviews for the now three open positions may be next week. Department open house is Saturday. The budget is in good shape. They are looking into grants, e.g., for child seats and for cruiser and body cams. The Municipal Training Commission has approved the department training program. The house numbering project is in process. Call volume year to date through the dispatch center is 70 more than last year and through the local station is 110 more. Increases are in disturbances, accidents, assaults, investigations, motor vehicle stops; decreases in larcenies and animal calls. There have been 46 arrests so far this year. Drug take-back day is October 27, with a box at the station year-round. The crosswalk flashing beacon works well when people use it but many people cross without using it. Possible ways to advertise it are a newsletter article, social media, school newsletter, and asking the crossing guard to use it. The Board asked for information on

serious incidents, in order to be more informed when talking with the public, and thanked her for her report.

3. Mill River Greenway Committee –

Eversource land purchase – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi had reported that the town was working with Eversource on the proposed division of the land for the town park. The proposed division, originally estimated at 4 acres plus or minus, came in at 5.4 acres. The placement of the line and the change in acreage have caused concern for the abutters who are planning to purchase the remaining land, especially about the road and possible loss of access to their property. Gaby Immerman of the Greenway Committee pointed out that the original line was based on ecology and the riverbed and the committee would be fine with allowing the abutters to use the road. Board members felt that the town should meet with the abutters to discuss; Gaby will coordinate with Charlene to invite them to a meeting.

Recreational Trails grant – Gaby Immerman reported that the Recreational Trails grant for \$47,000 has been extended to \$147,000, to be spent by November 2019. This will enable them to do engineering survey work to take another step forward and reduce the money needed from the town.

4. Election warrant – A revised election warrant was presented; the previous one did not include the non-state-wide non-binding ballot question on Medicare for all. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to sign the revised state election warrant for November 6. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Cultural Council contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the contract for the Cultural Council in the amount of \$4500. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Licenses – live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to grant a permit for live entertainment, a D.J., 8 p.m. to 12 midnight, to Dot's Golf for October 27, November 30, December 1 and December 7. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Senior and Veterans' Volunteer Tax Relief programs – Fifteen applications were received for the twelve spots in the Senior program. Six are lower income, i.e., below the income preference level, and nine are above. Discussion of how to proceed explored various possibilities, including: having veterans' widows switch out of the Senior program to the Veterans' program; dividing the total amount for the 12 people (12 at \$1500 = \$1800) among the 15 people (\$1200 each); having two different rates, one for people under the income preference level and dividing the rest among the others or having a lottery; increasing the number of available spots in the program; and in the future asking for more information about need and income level, especially for the over-income people. The Board decided to approve the people who are under the income level and the people who are continuing in the program. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the Senior Volunteer Tax Relief program people, excluding the three new over-income people. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the single applicant for the Veterans' Volunteer Tax Relief program. **So voted** (3-0). It was noted that people in the program who sell their homes would thereby leave the program.

8. Personnel policy – Whistleblower Protection Policy – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the revised policy. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the Whistleblower Protection Policy, as amended. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Personnel – Senior Center – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that a Senior Center employee has been working 19 hours, the budgeted 15 hours plus 4 hours on PVTa grant money. Employees working more than 16 hours a week are eligible for vacation, holiday, sick time, medical leave and personal time; those working more than 20 hours are also eligible for health insurance. The Senior Center Director recommends continuing the person at 19 hours, with the same funding, and giving her the vacation (etc.) time. A suggestion was made to look at changing the policy on vacation (etc.) time to 20 hours, grandfathering in the current employees who have benefits at 16, though it was noted that health insurance is expensive for the town and it is good to have a benefited level below health insurance but with vacation (etc.) time. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to increase the employee's hours from 15 hours per week to 19 hours, 15 from the town budget and 4 hours contingent on a grant, effective October 11. **So voted** (3-0).

10. Town Administrator's report –

MassDOT – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported on a fruitful conversation with Francisca Heming, MassDOT District Highway Director, about the flashing beacons that the town just installed, and MassDOT's interest in coming to a future Select Board meeting.

Bridge Street bridge – Charlene Nardi, David Mathers, and Highway Superintendent Bill Turner met with Mark Devylder of MassDOT at the bridge. MassDOT regulations would require two sidewalks, which would mean taking of the house on the left. The resolution will be to recommend an eighteen foot wide bridge and ask for a waiver of one of the two sidewalks; this would involve omitting the center line on the bridge and posting a sign saying "yield to oncoming traffic"; with one sidewalk there would be no need for land taking.

Veterans' Day – Veterans' Day will be observed Sunday, November 11, at 11 a.m.

Depot Road culvert – Charlene Nardi, Bill Turner and Jim Hyslip of Water/Sewer met with Brian Kelder from the Mass. Department of Fish and Game, Division of Ecological Restoration, about replacement of the culvert and the possibility of a grant. Jim Hyslip will work with Hills Engineering to guide him through the process.

Town flags – The residential town flags have come in.

Old Town Hall – The unofficial estimate for painting is \$50,000, because it is all lead paint. The Board may want to think about it for the 250th anniversary celebration.

Senator Hinds – In preparation for a meeting with Sen. Hinds, Charlene recommended a pre-meeting with the school superintendent and high school principal, to get up to speed on the school issues.

11. Correspondence – Correspondence included notice of Hampshire County Select Boards Association meeting October 19, celebration of the retirement of Rep. Kulik October 16, letter from PVPC asking for someone to serve as alternate member on the Metropolitan Planning Organization, Zoning Board of Appeals hearing for a Special Permit for a pre-fab shed at 161 Main Street, and notice of PVTa assessments.

12. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of September 27 as written. **So voted** (3-0).

13. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP19-09 for \$113,821.09, expense warrant W19-09 for \$624,995.78, payable 10/17/18.

14. Personnel – Evaluations – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi distributed packets of information for the Select Board members in their evaluations.

Documents used

Agenda and notes
Fire Department report
Mill River Greenway email about Eversource land purchase, abutters' concerns
State election warrant
Cultural Council contract
Live entertainment permit
Senior and Veterans Volunteer Tax relief application list and supporting information
Whistleblower Protection Policy
Minutes
Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:12 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk