

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*November 19, 2020*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, November 19, 2020, by video conference call. The acting chair called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: David Mathers and Denise Banister

Absent: William Sayre

Also present: Shayla Howe (Animal Control Officer), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Donald Taggart (National Grid), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

Residents for National Grid hearing: Laura Davenport, Heidi Johnson, Geoff LeBaron, Jim Pepper, Judy Salosky

1. Pole hearing – National Grid – The acting chair opened the public hearing at 9:02 a.m. Donald Taggart representing National Grid explained that an old tree is being removed and the company is putting in a stub pole to support the utility pole. The hearing ended at 9:07 a.m. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to allow National Grid to install a stub pole where an existing rotten tree is being removed, with a guy to pole #35. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

2. Appointments –

Council on Aging Advisory Board – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded to accept the resignation of Jacqueline Dufresne from the Council on Aging Advisory Board, effective December 31, with regret and with thanks for her service. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

Agricultural Commission – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to appoint Ann Loomis to the Agricultural Commission as an Alternate, term to expire June 30, 2021. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

3. Helen E. James Building lease – The lease with the Commons Corporation is being renewed but only for six months because of the developing plans for the site. The monthly rent remains the same. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to sign the lease with the Commons Corporation for a terms of six months, to expire June 1, 2021. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

4. Personnel policy – Sentences on drug and alcohol testing have been added to the driver's license section under Pre-employment and Employment Checks. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to accept the proposed change to the Personnel Policy regarding Commercial Drivers Licenses and random drug and alcohol testing. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

5. Animal Control Officer – Animal Control Officer Shayla Howe made her regular report. Everything is normal, and there are not many complaints other than the regular ones about loose dogs on neighbors' property. A town resident is fostering a dog for a relative in the hospital and wants to adopt it. Her software was renewed in the summer. Changes were made to the kennel including a replaced roof and a harder cloth underneath. She plans to open an account with a local store so she can just go and have the town billed rather than getting reimbursed for receipts.

The Northampton kennel plan is on hold. Dogs are currently being housed in Hadley. Board members thanked Shayla for her work, acknowledged that it can be emotional, and reiterated their offer of support.

6. Town Administrator's report –

COVID and department updates – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reviewed the various departments.

Board of Health – There are two COVID cases in town. Foothills Health District has hired a nurse to follow up on contract tracing and an additional agent to help with enforcement.

School – There are no cases. Families are flexible and getting tested on their own and keeping children home as needed.

Library – The library was planning to open but decided not to, as the staff is dealing with other things. They are continuing with curbside pickup.

Hotline – She has received the first call on the dedicated phone line, someone with questions for the Health Agent.

Highway – Everything is going well. They have dealt with tree issues, are ready for winter, and have finished major projects.

Fire Department – Staffing is OK, a couple of people are self-quarantining, all are testing negative. They are continuing Tuesday night trainings, using safe guidelines. The Chief's day job has been busy so he has not been as available for things related to the town. Several long-time dedicated responders have stepped back from Fire Department work.

Police – Two officers are out on quarantine, unrelated to the town. Things are going well. They temporarily suspended fingerprinting for firearms licenses at the start of the pandemic, resumed in the summer, and may suspend again. They are busy with cases, including a recent breaking and entering on Ashfield Road, where the suspect was arrested within hours.

Building Superintendent – Dan Hathaway would like to continue in the position. He would like to revise his schedule to have two dedicated days a month for the town, with the remaining hours available for unexpected issues. Board members were pleased to have him back.

Police Station ventilation – She will follow up with Jamrog.

Energy Committee – Two people are interested in the remaining vacancy. They will attend a meeting. A long-term member will stay on for now, for continuity.

250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee – They will meet to determine the date for postponing the celebration.

Children's Christmas fund – Sabrina McGill coordinates the Williamsburg Children's Christmas drive, collecting monetary donations and shopping for families. She has asked if the Board has thoughts about families that need help, or would like to participate in any way.

Evaluation update – The evaluations of the Senior Center Director and Town Administrator have been done. Other senior staff are upcoming this week and early next week.

Trees – There has been a lot of wind and a lot of trees are down. The Highway Department has been cleaning up. There are a few trees that need to be taken down that shouldn't wait till next year's annual town meeting. The tree at Old Village Hill Cemetery will be addressed by the Cemetery Commission. The Tree Warden has put together a list and is working with the Highway Superintendent.

CARES Act funding – The town was awarded \$99,000, but most of it is for ventilation systems, and needs to be spent by December 31, which can't be done. Charlene recommended going

forward with ventilation work at the library, which costs under \$10,000 and doesn't need to go through procurement procedures. Board members agreed. She will also use the funding for a laptop for the Treasurer, in her ongoing attempt to have fewer people working in the same room. Snow plowing agreement with Hatfield – The town plows The Jog and Cole Road for the town of Hatfield and is reimbursed with sand and salt. The Hatfield Select Board has approved the agreement, which had not been renewed in years. It will be presented at the next meeting.

7. Correspondence – Correspondence included the Zoning Board of Appeals approval of the land swap at Cichy's, so that the business and the house could be separated in case they were ever sold.

8. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to accept the minutes of November 5 as presented. **So voted** (DB aye, DM aye).

9. Miscellaneous –

Haydenville Gas & Electric property – Zoning Enforcement Officer is looking into it. Charlene will follow up.

Mountain Street – Representative Natalie Blais, who has been working with MassDOT on Mountain Street, has asked if the town could contribute what it can afford. The Board discussed Chapter 90 and a Town Meeting article.

Adjourned at 9:54 a.m.

Approved:

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Clerk