

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
November 3, 2022

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, November 3, 2022, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:11 a.m.

Present: Denise Banister, William Sayre and David Mathers

Also present: Dan Banister (Highway Superintendent), Jason Connell (Fire Chief), Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Daryl Springman (Fire Department), Ken Taylor (Fire Department), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Fire Department – Fire Chief Jason Connell made his regular report. They continue to be busy, with numbers at or above last year's numbers. There have been 355 incidents this calendar year through the end of October; 57% were medicals. They have responded to 23 fires in the town and out of town. One major fire caused millions in losses. They have responded to mutual aid 44 times this year and have requested aid 8 times, both a large increase over the previous two years. One firefighter is in an EMT class and another doing a basic class. The firefighters are great but diminishing in numbers. The department is working on recruitment with little success. The town is losing the ability to respond to fires, especially in the daytime. He recommended that the board consider having a full-time fire chief and/or a full-time administrator/ firefighter in the next couple of years. He is not necessarily requesting the full-time chief position for himself. In terms of apparatus, they are transitioning away from using Engine 3 and relying instead on the utility truck for medical responses. The rescue truck is expected next year sometime. They have requested new radios out of the ARPA funds, upgrading to include all bands. Payroll budget is being used quickly and is expected to be short again. The expense line is OK. They received an Assistance to Firefighters Grant for \$83,000 for a new fill station. They are applying for Firefighter Safety grant, Safe/Senior Safe grant, and Volunteer Fire Assistance grant. They plan to request a new trailer for the Utility Terrain Vehicle. The Chief's car is on the capital plan for this year. They are looking forward to the new public safety complex, though they are worried about storage space.

2. Highway – Highway Superintendent Dan Banister gave his regular report. They are still dealing with downed trees. Adams Road was reclaimed, graded and the base coat of asphalt was applied; topcoat or chipseal will be done in the spring. The old roller sold for \$4000 on Municibid. They continue to work with the public safety complex crews. Guardrails were installed on Mountain Street and Fort Hill Road, using WRAP money. The new employee is working out well. An employee out on sick leave has returned. Potholes are being finished. The gate at the Dunphy School is being installed. The new front end loader is due in December, the pickup in January. Trucks are being readied for the winter and issues are being addressed. Salt prices have gone up, as have the cost of repairs, tires and fuel, and cost of plowing subcontractors.

3. Special Town Meeting – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the proposed warrant for the upcoming meeting. Article 1 is to pay invoices from the prior year. Article 2 is to pay a

5% grant match for the Fire Department Fill Station. Article 3 involves reducing the interest payment for the public safety complex, which had been estimated for the annual town meeting, and correcting a few small General Government budget items. A possible fourth article, focusing on easements for the South Main Street/ Bridge Street reconstruction project, was postponed as premature. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to sign the warrant for the Special Town Meeting to be held November 19, 2022, as presented. **So voted** (3-0)

4. Auditor – Roselli, Clark & Associates – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the letter of engagement for new auditor Roselli, Clark & Associates, for Fiscal years 2022, 2023, and 2024, at a fee of \$24,000 for each fiscal year. This auditor was recommended by the town's new Collector and is highly regarded by the Small Town Administrators group. They do most of the work remotely with only one to two days on site. While CPA firms are exempt from procurement, he recommended considering creating an audit review committee to review RFP's in the future. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the engagement letter with Roselli, Clark as auditors for FY22, 23 and 24. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Green Communities annual report – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented the annual report for Green Communities, looking at the town's energy usage compared to a baseline of 2009, and required for a competitive grant process. The town's buildings are using less energy because of the Anne T. Dunphy School energy-efficient renovations, and the removal of the Helen E. James building. Streetlights were switched to LED's. The town gets net metering credits through Nexamp. Having energy audits on record would help prove energy reduction, and ARPA money may be a way to fund them. The focus should be on the Dunphy School, which is high in usage, and the Meekins Library, which is high usage and inefficient. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the Green Communities annual report. **So voted** (3-0).

6. MassDOT Focus on Reducing Rural Roadway Departures (FoRRRwD) – Williamsburg has been selected for this program because the town has a lot of rural roads and a lot of cars going off the road. Benefits include purchase of a speed radar sign, with a second one in a year's time, and evaluation of the roads by Fuss & O'Neil. It's a good opportunity to improve road safety. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the Memorandum of Understand between MassDOT and the Town of Williamsburg for the FoRRRwD program. **So voted** (3-0).

7. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) requests – The Board discussed requests for the remaining unallocated funds. An energy assessment for one building would cost between \$15,000 and \$20,000 and would make the town eligible for Green Communities funds. The Meekins Library is the most inefficient; the Dunphy School has the highest usage. Painting the Old Town Hall was endorsed. The easements for the MassDOT Bridge Street project did not feel like a good use for ARPA funds. While quickness was not a priority, the deadline for spending the money needs to be kept in mind. Town Administrator Nick Caccamo encouraged Board members to identify which projects would not be funded, so that could be communicated to the departments.

8. Holidays 2023 – The Administrative Assistant presented the proposed list of holidays for calendar 2023. Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve are traditionally the employee’s choice of either day, or a half day each, with the permission of the supervisor. There was a question about how to list them since they fall on Sunday, and the rule of thumb is to move Sunday holidays to Monday. But Christmas and New Year’s are already on the Monday. The Board decided that the Christmas Eve and New Year’s Eve holidays could be taken any time the week before or the week after the holiday.

9. Town Administrator’s report –

Public Safety Complex – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that everything seems to be moving forward well. Concrete floors are poured, framing starts soon, and interior work will be done in the winter. The project is on budget, and timelines are on track. Insulation on the floor has been removed from the plans, as the construction engineer said the insulation would not support the building’s weight.

MVP report – The monthly report for October, including photos from the project, was presented. The next report will include invoices for reimbursement. Solar photovoltaic is feasible on the roof and the parking lot canopy but not ground-mounted. More work will be done on scope of work and hiring of an architect or engineer to design the system. The plan is to have the design by the end of FY23 and to construct in FY24. A possible administrator, funded by the grant, was discussed, and it was recommended that the person be hired as soon as possible.

MMA legislative breakfast – Nick Caccamo described items discussed at the recent legislative breakfast, including the state FY23 budget, the general government bond bill, additional chapter 90 funding, energy and the environment, and administrative changes like remote meetings. He will plan to invite the new state representative and new state senator to Select Board meetings.

Town Administrator time off – Nick Caccamo requested personal and vacation days and the chair approved.

Roberts heating oil price email – Roberts Energy is refusing to honor the fixed price in contracts through the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative. LPVEC recommends buying at the spot market price rather than going out to bid again. The bids were opened in January 2020 and LPVEC cannot just move to the second bidder. They are looking into banning Roberts from future bidding. Board members would like more information about what recourse the town has.

10. Licenses – Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to approve the Burgy Bullets Snowmobile Club request for live entertainment for a D.J. on Saturday November 12, 3-11 p.m., Saturday December 3, 5-11 p.m., and Saturday December 10, 5-11 p.m. **So voted** (3-0).

11. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to approve the minutes of October 20 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

12. Warrant – Select Board chair Denise Banister will review and sign the warrant. Payroll warrant WP23-10 for \$120,884.58, and expense warrant W23-10 for \$159,214.91, payable 11/9/22.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

Special Town Meeting warrant

Roselli Clark engagement letter

Green Communities annual report

MassDOT FoRRRwD memorandum of understanding

ARPA requests

Holiday list

MVP report

Live entertainment permit

Minutes

Adjourned at 12:14 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk