

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
December 20, 2019

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, December 20, 2019, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

OPM Steering Committee: Jim Ayres, Kim Boas, Jean O'Neil

1. OPM Steering Committee – Committee Co-Chair Jim Ayres reported on progress so far. They have found an OPM firm and feel confident that it will be a good partner. Choice of site is a big question and they put out a request for proposals for other than town land and got no responses. They went through the reports of past committees and developed several scenarios, e.g., combining police and fire and separating them. All scenarios were very expensive and they didn't want to have Westhampton's experience of proposing an expensive building that was not approved by the voters. They scaled down to 10,000 square feet, still a good size. They considered the three town-owned spaces, the Helen E. James, the Town Offices, and the Highway Garage. The garage is in the flood zone, the town offices are far from many places in town, the best choice is the James location. They are considering the James building and a new structure, which would allow the vehicle bays to be pre-fab. Further discussion included: office size looks large for a part-time person, things can be scaled down further; town population is not likely to grow in the foreseeable future; \$2.5 million probably isn't feasible and the town should look at \$3 million; both chiefs realize that the original vision of the public safety complex would not be sellable to the community; bays for the fire trucks will take green space and change the appearance of the James building; it would be possible to place the bays around the corner and landscaping would help; trailers could be put in a sheltered bay; or the vehicles could be stored somewhere else; the committee is focused on the public safety complex for the present rather than the future, as in the future everything may be done regionally; the town needs to plan for a building for the next 50 years; there are historical issues in the way the two departments have been treated and the firefighters feel that they have not been as supported; townspeople are more interested in the fire department now than the police department; separating into stages, one building now and another later, would be hard for the second building, and two big capital chunks at the same time, the James Building and the safety complex, would be hard; using the James would require work on the roof, elevator, bricks, windows, doors; doing the James roof now is essential or the building will deteriorate quickly; the fire trucks are a huge town asset and need to be protected; if the James site is used the town offices will need to move to the James; there may be less need for record storage since the town is going digital; the decision about the James and its roof needs to be done within a year; consensus in town is to keep the James, and selling it would bring very little; report to the community should be soon, and not at the time of the vote. The conclusion was that the James is the only possible site, that the building can be used in various ways, and that the price needs to come down but not try to get all the way down to \$2.5 million.

2. Firefighters' recognition – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to sign certificates of appreciation of Deputy Chief Daryl Springman, Captain Robert Lapointe, Lieutenant Daniel Banister, Senior Firefighters Paul Sanderson, Alan Everett and Glen Everett, and Firefighter Bartholomew Casey for their outstanding life-saving work in Conway on November 2, 2018. **So voted** (3-0). The firefighters will be invited to the January 3 meeting for personal thanks and congratulations.
3. Farmer's award – Alan Everett – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to sign the letter of congratulations to Alan Everett for winning the Ogonowski Award. **So voted** (3-0).
4. Building Inspector and Electrical Inspector service contracts – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the renewal contracts, noting that there were no significant changes except for the dates and amounts, and the expansion of the indemnification section to include any Northampton employees who work on the Williamsburg account. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to sign the Agreement between the Town of Williamsburg and the City of Northampton for Electrical Inspection Services for a term to end June 30, 2019. **So voted** (3-0). The charge to the town consists of the fees collected. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the agreement between the City of Northampton and the Town of Williamsburg for Building Inspection and Zoning Officer services in the amount of \$39,125 for a term July 1, 2018, through June 30, 2019. **So voted** (3-0).
5. Williamsburg Fire Station – The heating system needs an aquastat to control the fans from heaters. Charlene will tell the electrician to go ahead. The floor has loose tiles in the meeting room; gluing them down has not worked, linoleum won't work. The Fire Department will be asked to select appropriate safety mats to cover the area.
6. Senior Center Volunteer Policy – Town Administrator presented the new Volunteer Policy proposed by Senior Center Director Jenn Hoffman, covering selection of volunteers, roles and responsibilities, training and supervision, work schedules and café hours, leaving volunteer service, and parking. Board members acknowledged that the Senior Center Director has the power to make policies and that they do not need Board approval. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to endorse the Volunteer Policy for the Senior Center. **So voted** (3-0).
7. Highway surplus – forklift – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that in light of the OSHA requirement for a seatbelt and the fact that the town can use forks added to the Loader if necessary, Highway Superintendent Bill Turner recommended getting rid of the forklift. The equipment was given to the town and not purchased. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to declare the Hyster H60 Forklift as surplus. **So voted** (3-0).
8. Highway and Water/Sewer – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the Finance Committee had requested that Highway Department track the time of the crew and equipment that is spent on Water/Sewer projects. Water/Sewer currently pays $\frac{3}{4}$ of a person of Highway crew payroll. Discussion included that Highway Superintendent Bill Turner used to track the time and it came to approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of an employee, that every year is different and that he

thinks this is fair; that it would not take a lot of effort to track the time; that Bill Turner would have to note what was paid for a given piece of equipment, since Water/Sewer had paid for some equipment, and would have to get a verbal bid on the cost of contracting out a project; that there may be a lot of Water/Sewer work for two months of the year and then nothing over the winter; that at the current rate Water/Sewer probably overpays. The Board asked Charlene to ask Bill to keep track of the time for the crew and equipment.

9. DLTA (District Local Technical Assistance) funding – Open Space and Recreation Plan update – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi said that in the past she would just write to PVPC Director requesting DLTA funds but that there is now an application form, which the Open Space Committee is working on. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the DLTA funding request for updating the Open Space and Recreation Plan when it comes forward. **So voted** (3-0).

10. State Representative Steve Kulik – The Board would like to honor and thank Rep. Kulik for all that he has done for the town of Williamsburg over the years. They will give him a Certificate of Appreciation and Williamsburg items (mug, coaster, and the new town flag), at a presentation during the Highway Garage Christmas Party on Friday.

11. Old Town Hall – A suggestion had been made to look into Mass. Preservation Projects Fund for the Old Town Hall. Discussion included: using those funds means that there is a deed restriction in perpetuity, the money comes in the form of a matching grant, the Historical Society does not feel it can fundraise for the building, a historical preservation easement might be a better approach, and an idea had been floated that the town might want to preserve just the façade and use for a theater. Charlene will ask other local towns about their experience.

12. Planning Board – draft bylaws for short-term rentals – Board members received the draft bylaws and commented that the Planning Board has done an amazing amount of work. Public hearings will be held and Town Counsel will review the proposed bylaws.

13. Town Collector fees – Town Collector Bonnie Roberge had requested that the fees she is paid be included in her salary for retirement benefits. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented a chart of salary and fees for the past five years, though it was noted that the numbers need to be checked since there appears to be an error. The Collector's office hours are 26 hours per week; the position is 30 hours per week according to the bylaw; the Collector is often at work early and she says she gets the mail and works from home on Fridays. Board members asked for a comparison with what other town collectors are paid. Board members felt that her combined compensation was very high and out of proportion to what other town employees are paid. Board members would like to consider and come back to this another time. Discussion later in the meeting included that fees for most other positions were changed years ago so that they do not go to the person but to the town's general fund, and that the Board could support including the fees in her salary but her overall compensation would be reduced. Charlene will review minutes from the time of the original appointment to see what was discussed in relation to salary.

14. Town Administrator's report –

Highland Ambulance – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi distributed Highland Ambulance's annual report. Budget meeting with Highland Ambulance will be January 9 at 7 p.m. in Goshen.

Budget items – She reported that the Fire Department had some unexpected expenditures and will be asking for a Reserve Fund transfer at the end of the fiscal year; Finance Committee will invite the Fire Chief to a meeting. She reported that Computer Services went over budget by a lot this month. Comments included that technology is expensive and vital, that enough hours may not have been allocated and that the number increased by two hours this year.

Capital Planning items – Ashfield Road guardrails need to be replaced; pre-rusted, which lasts only eight to ten years, and galvanized steel both cost over \$400,000. Charlene will follow up with the Highway Superintendent. James Building elevator repair will be \$69,000.

OSHA – Charlene and the Highway crew finished the required items. Policies were based on OSHA policies and don't need approval.

Eversource land purchase – The transaction is complete. The Town will communicate with the abutters after the holidays.

Data management system – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi, Town Clerk Brenda Lessard and Administrative Assistant Eleanor Warnock were trained on the new General Code document storage system. Documents are being scanned into permanent storage on a City of Northampton server. The set-up and training are part of a grant from the state for five towns; the \$2100 annual payment to Northampton will be part of the town's budget. Since the contract was signed in December 2017 and the set-up and training only happened in December 2018, the town will ask that the time of the contract be amended.

Housing and Economic Development – When Rep. Richard Neal and Jeff Ciuffreda were visiting with town officials, Rep. Neal suggested that Secretary Ash would be a good person to talk to about housing and economic development. Since the town's priority is the public safety complex and there are no current development projects, no action will be taken at this time.

Helen E. James temperature sensor – The sensor was installed this morning. A question is who will be responsible to keep the building from freezing. It was suggested that Charlene ask Jamrog or John Hoogstraten how to proceed.

Excavation Safety training – Highway crew members Don Turner, Dan Banister and Bryan Osetek went for training with the New England Water Works Association and received certificates for successful completion.

Ashfield appreciation for Fire Department – A letter of appreciation for the mutual aid from the Fire Department on December 4 noted Deputy Chief Springman's professional manner.

Evaluation of Senior Center Director Jennifer Hoffman – The evaluation has been completed. Charlene will work with her to evaluate her employees. Board members expressed appreciation for Jennifer Hoffman and the tone she sets.

15. Annual report dedication – Board members decided on the dedication to the annual report.

16. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of December 6. **So voted** (3-0).

17. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP19-14 for \$119,713.07 and expense warrant W19-14 for \$195,260.47, payable 12/26/18.

18. Miscellaneous –

Speeding – Board members expressed concern about speeding on rural back roads. Suggestions included encouraging people to write letters to the Police Chief with information, publicizing the concern in the newsletter, using a speed trailer and adding a camera to identify speeders, patrolling by police, and using the MIIA grant to fund initiatives.

Tax rate – Board members asked Charlene to write letters of appreciation to former Town Accountant Joyce Muka for help with the tax rate.

Highway Christmas party December 21 – The money donated personally by Board members will be put toward pizza for the party.

Holiday and vacation time – Charlene will take off Christmas week but will keep track of things that are happening.

Snow Farm – Snow Farm is a tax-exempt non-profit education organization. The Assessors would appreciate a Payment In Lieu Of Taxes, like what UMass pays the town of Amherst, for police and fire and winter plowing.

OPM – Charlene will notify the OPM Steering Committee that \$7500 of the \$10,000 approved has been paid to the OPM.

Tire invoice – An invoice for a town vehicle should identify which vehicle.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Firefighter recognition certificates
- Alan Everett letter of congratulations
- Building inspection and electrical inspection service contracts
- Williamsburg fire station photos
- Senior Center volunteer policy
- Representative Kulik certificate
- Planning Board draft short-term rental bylaws
- Chart of Collector's fees and compensation
- Highland Ambulance annual report
- Ashfield letter of appreciation
- Minutes
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk