

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
December 21, 2017

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, December 21, 2017, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Present: William Sayre, David Mathers and Denise Banister

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

1. Personnel – employee evaluation – Administrative Assistant Eleanor Warnock – Board members rated Eleanor Warnock very highly in all the skill areas and commented that she is a rock in her position. She is dedicated, cooperative, attentive to details, and has tremendous knowledge. They appreciate that she is willing to take on additional tasks as needed to help get work done, noting that she did a terrific job in covering during the Town Administrator's unplanned absence. The Board members feel her work is valuable and she does it well. Her skill set complements the Town Administrator's and therefore between the two of them they accomplish a lot. The Board feels very fortunate to have such a dedicated employee. The Town Administrator echoed the words of the Board, stating that she truly enjoys working with Eleanor, trusts her and appreciates her support, dedication and follow-through. The Board asked if Eleanor felt there were enough hours in her week to accomplish all the tasks asked of her. It was noted that the limitations of keeping the position part-time limited increasing the hours; however, it would be helpful long-term to increase the hours of the position if it were ever possible to do so. The budget concerns were the big issue with that. Eleanor thanked the Board members for their kind words and support and said that she enjoyed working for the town.

2. Personnel – employee evaluation – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi – Board members rated Charlene Nardi very highly in all respects and commented that she is a shining star and the lifeblood of the town. She takes on every task she is given and has a tireless work ethic. She may have a hard time saying no. She is efficient and gets things done in a timely manner. She works with all departments and boards in a friendly way, gives constructive criticism when needed, and makes the town more friendly and connected. There has been a difficult and time-consuming situation that she has handled well. She is highly respected. Discussion included the need for more assistance. Long-range planning gets pushed aside because of things that need immediate attention. The town receives a number of grants and the board proposed that when there is a grant application there needs to be a plan for the administration, so that it doesn't all fall on Charlene. Charlene will do a memo for town officials. There is also a need for temporary part-time help with filing – addressing the four separate filing systems that have developed over the last twenty years – and scanning of town documents – needed with the new Laserfiche system. A student internship was suggested; names of several Senior Tax Work-off people were met with enthusiasm. Charlene will plan to work with the Administrative Assistant and a tax work-off person to get things going. There is also a need for Continuity of Operations Planning, for when she and the Administrative Assistant are unavailable. Charlene thanked the Board members for their supportiveness and said that she enjoyed working for them. She added that

there is a lot that she needs to do and to pay attention to and it would be nice to have four more hours every day.

3. Mill River Greenway –

VHB contract – Charlene Nardi explained that the survey work for Mill River Greenway, from the South Main Street Bridge in Haydenville to South Street in Williamsburg, will be done in two phases, the second not starting until the money for it is in hand. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the contract with VHB in the amount of \$80,000. **So voted** (3-0).

Brassworks agreement – Agreement for temporary access was requested by Herb Berezin and is similar to one with the city of Holyoke for work on his premises. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the Temporary Access Agreement between Brassworks Associates and the Town of Williamsburg so that workers can go onto his property for wetlands flagging and hydrology data. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Licenses –

Special One-day Liquor License – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to grant a special license to expose, keep for sale, and to sell wine and malt beverages, to be drunk on the premises, to the Friends of the Williamsburg Libraries and Rebecca Houlihan, at Meekins Library, Thursday, April 26, 2018, 8 a.m., to Saturday, April 28, 8 p.m., hours of serving Friday, April 27, 7 to 10 p.m., and to waive the requirement of no alcohol on town property. **So voted** (3-0).

Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to grant a live entertainment permit for auctioneer and guitarist to the Friends of the Williamsburg Libraries, Friday, April 27, 2018, 7-10 p.m. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to grant Bread Euphoria Café a live entertainment permit for live music – folk, Irish, and jazz, 5:30-7:30 p.m. – Saturdays, January 6, 13, 20, 27, February 3, 10, 17, 24, March 3, 10, 17. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Appointments –

Resignation – Letter of resignation from Moderator Joseph Larkin was read. He has sold his house and moved out of town. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to accept his resignation with deep regret and thanks for his years of service. **So voted** (3-0). Board members commented that he has been a great moderator. A letter of thanks will be sent.

Resignation – Letter from Eric Cerreta resigning from the Fire Department was read. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to acknowledge the resignation of Eric Cerreta from the Williamsburg Fire Department, effective 12/31/17, with deep thanks for his years of service to the town. **So voted** (3-0). A letter will be sent thanking him for his 35 years of service.

6. Pedestrian light/sign – Resident Nick Harder expressed concern about the unsafe crossing for school children in the center of Williamsburg and MassDOT's recommendation of a flashing beacon. Discussion included mention of multiple requests to MassDOT over the years, frustration at the lack of useful response, getting the flashing beacon, having a crossing guard, asking police to assign an officer to stand in the crosswalk, lack of sidewalks, getting help from PVPC, asking Town Meeting for funding, putting in a lighted sign giving vehicle's current speed, asking legislators for help to redesign the intersection when the road is redone, putting in a four-way stop intersection, putting in a roundabout.

7. The Commons Corporation lease agreement for James Building – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented a draft updated agreement. The current lease expires December 15. She has not yet heard back from the town's insurance company about vacant buildings. Concerns were expressed about lights being left on at night and the building's use of a lot of heat. Charlene noted that Dave Chase is a very good tenant and is excellent at keeping things up. The Board looked at the number of people working there (about 20), the rents they are paying to the Commons (estimated at \$2000-2500), the square footage (quite large at 7000), and the low rate per square foot (\$1.29 or 10% of market rate) and agreed on a new rent of \$750. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to set the rent for the Commons Co-Working Group workspace at \$750, effective January 1. **So voted** (3-0). [Rate increase was later put on hold, 1/18/18.]

8. Heating service contract – Charlene Nardi reported that Cernak Fuel is unable to offer a service contract but is willing to help on an as-needed basis, after the needs of their regular oil customers. Several other providers were discussed; Charlene will follow up.

9. Town Administrator's report –

Leak in Town Offices – Radiator in the Health office has been turned off; it will need to be replaced.

Hodgkins v. ZBA update – Case has been taken by an attorney through the town's insurance company; there is a motion to remove it to federal court.

Planning Board ANR – Landowner wanted 100 feet of the 200 foot frontage to be only 1.2 inches deep; the request was denied but a satisfactory compromise was reached.

Information gathering from departments – Charlene is gathering information from departments for the capital plan, such as pushing off the time for vehicle replacement. She wants the liaisons to the departments to make sure the departments realize that the belt-tightening questions are being asked of all departments.

Whiting Street Fund – Charlene reported that the funds for the poor have not been spent in a long time. She plans to work with the new Moderator to set up a new process and has a call in to the person at Community Action who handles fuel assistance for Williamsburg.

MIIA department head meetings – MIIA would like her to start having quarterly meetings with department heads to talk about safety issues. First meeting will be the end of January or beginning of February.

Helen E. James playground equipment – Charlene reported that the town needs to decide to surplus and sell the equipment or keep and maintain it. The wooden structures have some safety concerns, the plastic in good shape. It was suggested that the town get rid of the problematic equipment and ask Recreation Commission about the good equipment.

PVPC DLTA funding – She had no areas to recommend for technical assistance.

Audit – Some minor things have been found, nothing major.

COOP Plan (Continuity of Operations) – She hopes to report by the end of January.

Facilities Use Policy – Policy has been rewritten for clarity; some changes are suggested, such as charges, waiver for alcohol use, removing reference to Purrington Hall policy since it hasn't been found. Use of Haydenville Library goes through the main library, Ames Field goes through Recreation. The Board will plan to review it at the next meeting.

Highland Ambulance – Meeting at Highland Ambulance is Wednesday, January 3, at 7.

Senior Center office space – There is a need for a space that has less noise and activity. The cost of dividing the office space was more than hoped. Suggestions were made about other areas in the building, including the small room off the auditorium.

Senior Center laptop – The new laptop has broken. Suggestion was made to buy a laptop for Town Administrator and pass along her current one to the Senior Center.

Dogs, Village Hill Avenue, Unquomunk – resident concern – A resident is concerned about dogs getting too close to walkers and about affecting the wildlife and has suggested not having dogs on town property at all. It was suggested to ask town departments about policies and what they recommend.

Scholarships – It was noted that scholarships for high school students have had no applications. Charlene will work with Denise Banister about publicizing in the back of the town report.

Sale of fuel tank – The highway fuel tank sold for \$1050.

Taxes – The Town Collector sent a memo saying that a lot of people want to prepay their town taxes because of the new federal tax plan and would like to send out information to residents about the problems with it.

10. Correspondence – Mass. Municipal Association Annual Meeting is January 20 in Boston.

11. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the minutes of October 12 as written. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the minutes of October 26 as printed. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve Highway Superintendent Bill Turner's review as printed. **So voted** (3-0).

12. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrant.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

VHB contract

Brassworks agreement for temporary access

Licenses

Resignation letters

Commons lease agreement

Facilities Use Policy draft

Minutes

Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk