

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
January 3, 2019

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, January 3, 2019, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:07 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: Louis Hasbrouck (Building Inspector), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

Fire Department: Dan Banister, Jason Connell, Alan Everett, Glen Everett, Joshua Lapointe, Robert Lapointe, Worth Noyes & Nancy Noyes, Daryl Springman, Kenneth Taylor

1. Firefighter recognition – Chair David Mathers described the life-saving work of seven firefighters in extricating people trapped in a car on November 2 in Conway, thanked them and all the town’s firefighters who respond to the call of duty and give their all, and recognized Chief Jason Connell for his leadership and training. David Mathers called each name – Deputy Chief Daryl Springman, Captain Robert Lapointe, Lieutenant Daniel Banister, Senior Firefighter Alan Everett, Senior Firefighter Glen Everett, as well as Senior Firefighter Paul Sanderson and Firefighter Bartholomew Casey who were not able to be present – and presented each one with a certificate of appreciation for exemplary service. Deputy Chief Daryl Springman noted that the call went very well operationally even though they were working with people they don’t regularly work with, adding that it was a team effort and crediting Chief Connell’s leadership.

2. Building Inspector – Building Inspector Louis Hasbrouck made his regular report, saying it was a good year. Solar installations are taking his attention; he thinks Williamsburg has more per person than other towns. His software doesn’t track solar separately. Discussion of possible downsides of solar fields included that Northampton has decided not to use agricultural land for solar, that taking away trees affects the carbon environment, that fences can affect movement of wildlife, that clearing a big area can destabilize the land, that solar panels have hazardous materials but they don’t melt down, that solar companies have improved, that decommissioning bonds are part of the permit process, that using land for solar limits the development possibilities, that when the Payment In Lieu of Taxes ends in 20 years it leaves a hole in the town’s income, that older panels get taken out and upgrades don’t produce more money for the town. The Town Administrator will look into the current bonded status of operational solar installations. Louis Hasbrouck said that he will plan to bring the new Assistant Building Inspector to a future Select Board meeting; there has been a lot of recent turnover and he is trying to get the pay rate increased. He is dealing with 10 Fort Hill Road, where there is a B&B without a permit. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi expressed her thanks to Louis Hasbrouck for his dedication and commitment, for being a great resource for the town, always taking time, and treating the town as equal with Northampton.

3. Oldest Citizen – The town’s oldest citizen, Ted Warner, died today. Board members took a moment to talk about Ted Warner. There will be a new oldest citizen and the Town Clerk will be asked who it is.

4. Minimum wage increase – The state minimum wage increased to \$12 in January 2019 and will go up 75 cents each year thereafter till it reaches \$15. Municipalities are exempted and so action is needed by the Select Board. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to increase the minimum hourly wage to \$12 per hour and to follow the state minimum wage thereafter. **So voted** (3-0). The Finance Committee will be informed. The increase affects three town employees, who are paid 50-75 cents less than the new minimum.

5. Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Western Tier ballot – There are two candidates for an alternate position, John O. Martin of Southampton and Charley Rose of Worthington. Board members commented that both seem to be well qualified. Southampton had asked that the town support their candidate, and it was pointed out that the town often partners with Southampton. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to support John O. Martin, as alternate to the Metropolitan Planning Organization. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Fuel heating oil – The Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative (LPVEC) has informed the town that the prices for heating oil are low and encouraged the town to lock in the price for next winter. Given that the town has used approximately 13,000 gallons each of the last several years, the plan is to increase the guaranteed amount to 11,000 gallons for the buildings that use oil. The town will authorize the LPVEC staff person to lock in the rate on the day he chooses. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the Notice of Buy Order for #2 Fuel Heating Oil for 11,000 gallons starting in October 2019. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize and designate the Lower Pioneer Valley Educational Collaborative as the town’s agent and authorize them to enter into an agreement to purchase 11,000 gallons. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Licenses – Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to grant a live entertainment permit for a D.J. to the Burgundy Bullets Snowmobile Club for Saturdays, January 5 and February 9, for hours 5 p.m. to 12 midnight. **So voted** (3-0).

8. Town Administrator’s report –

Complete Streets – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the town has been awarded \$275,000 for Complete Streets projects. This is less than the \$365,000 requested and does not include a Nash Hill Road piece. Concern was expressed about the lack of a crosswalk from the east to the west side of Nash Hill after Mill Street.

Building Supervisor – Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten sent a report that the Haydenville Library roof still needs to be finished and that the Town Office building roof is done but should still use the heat cables to prevent ice dams. The Board considered the condition of the roof on the Helen E. James Building and agreed to explore putting this on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

James spotlight – The new spotlight at the Helen E. James has been installed.

Fire Station plumbing – The plumbing at the Williamsburg Fire Station is backed up and snaking it has not worked. The plan is to disconnect it from its tank and connect it to the sewer stub.

Highway training on forklift – Highway members will do training on January 4; the cost is \$150 per employee.

AirBnB – Charlene shared a newspaper article about state regulation of AirBnB’s. A potential fee of up to 6% for the town should be part of the discussion of the proposed bylaw.

Audit – The auditor has rescheduled the FY18 audit for the week of February 25, by which time the FY18 books should be closed.

Mill River Greenway – The Greenway Committee plans to submit an application to the new Mass. Trails Program, replacing the Recreational Trails Program. Application is due February 1.

9. Correspondence – The Town of Ashfield Police Chief had sent a letter expressing appreciation for the mutual aid provided by the town Fire Department at an incident in Ashfield on December 4 and especially the professional leadership of Deputy Chief Daryl Springman; a letter of thanks from the Select Board has been given to Daryl Springman. Correspondence also included thanks for the Highway Department for the personal donations of Select Board members for the Christmas party; a letter from a resident suggesting having people from the jail do community service combatting invasive bittersweet; and a note of thanks, along with payment in full, from the Haydenville Congregational Church for their use of Town Offices auditorium when their heating system failed.

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

11. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP19-15 for \$104,558.87 and expense warrant W19-15 for \$113,570.88, payable 1/9/19.

12. Miscellaneous –

Vacation and personal time – Charlene notified the board that she would be taking personal and vacation time for hours here and there over the next month.

Highway Department Christmas party – The party was smaller than in the past but members were pleased with the turnout and people stayed longer. There was plenty of food.

LED streetlights – The contract packet has been signed and sent back to RealTerm Energy. Charlene will follow up about the schedule for installation.

Mill River Greenway park land – Board members discussed the content of a possible letter to the abutters. Charlene will follow up.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Firefighter recognition certificates
- Building Inspector permit listing report for 2018
- Metropolitan Planning Organization Western Tier ballot
- Heating oil documents
- Live entertainment license
- Correspondence
- Minutes
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 8:02 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk