

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
February 10, 2022

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, February 10, 2022, by video conference call. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Present: David Mathers, Denise Banister and William Sayre

Also present: Dan Banister (Highway Superintendent), Rebecca Brooks, Shaw Israel Izikson (reporter, Country Journal), Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Highway Department – Highway Superintendent Dan Banister gave his regular report. They have been very busy. They finished the walkway at the library and have stored the spare bricks. The equipment was prepared for winter. A new snow plow was bought for one of the trucks because the old one was worn out. They are still dealing with problem trees. They cut and cleaned up the tree at the Helen E. James Building. They have already used the camera for sewers obtained through the MIIA grant. They are working with the Sewer Commission doing sewer sampling to see if the numbers provided by Northampton are correct. In terms of vehicles, one had cab mounts and U joints replaced. The backhoe needed its tires replaced because the chemical used to weight them caused the tires to rot, and the accelerator pedal and throttle cable had rotted out from salt. One of the 10 wheelers developed a bad oil leak because of having been driven over a rock at a turnaround years ago. They are patching a lot of potholes and are buying cold patch in bags. The sewer pump and its alarm were on the same circuit breaker so when the pump failed, the alarm did not go off; that is being fixed. Reimbursement for Chapter 90 has been approved. Two radar signs were brought inside for the winter; the other two are still out and operating. The state will be buying a new one for the town. The budget is holding up all right except that storms have been coming on weekends and holidays, but the regular wage line can cover any shortfall in winter overtime. He is requesting a level-funded budget. He has accumulated about 4 weeks of comp time in addition to his 4 weeks of vacation. There was some discussion about how to handle the comp time – a schedule for taking the time, a possible one-time payment, and a suggestion of a contract going forward. Dan noted that his crew members make more than he does. In terms of capital items, the backhoe is showing rust and rot and is not really needed because of the excavator; it's time to go back to a loader, which isn't needed a lot but when it's needed, it's needed. The roller is probably good for another year; it should go on the capital plan. The chipper isn't needed all the time and could be replaced by a rental. The state is doing work on Mountain St. and High St. to find the depth of utilities including Northampton's water main. It was suggested that if Northampton digs up the five-year-old High St, they should pay for restoring it. The state's plan for Mountain St. has been reduced from 28 feet to 24 feet wide, which is what the residents have been asking for, a big change. Dan Banister added that his crew is all healthy and working every day with no time off. The Board expressed appreciation for all their good work.

2. Cultural Council contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Mass. Cultural Council contract in the amount of \$5,000. **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye).

3. Appointments – resignations – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the resignations of Dan Nye and Steve Snow from the 250th Anniversary Celebration Committee, with regret and thanks for all their efforts. **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye).
4. Pole hearing – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to set the National Grid pole hearing for February 24 at 9 a.m. **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye).
5. Town Administrator contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the letter to the Town Administrator stating the Board’s intention to renegotiate his contract, pursuant to clause VIII.B. of the contract. **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye).
6. Town office improvements and maintenance – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo said that if the town intends to remain in the Town Office Building, there will be significant expenses.
Elevator – The elevator, which is reaching the end of its estimated useful life of 20-25 years, would cost \$200,000 to maintain and improve. It can perhaps be done piecemeal. The elevator company can evaluate what needs to be replaced. It is important to remember that the line of parts for this unit may be discontinued. Windows – A top priority is probably the windows. Most offices don’t have working windows. They would cost an estimated \$250,000 to replace. There may be grants for energy efficiency. He will plan to submit a capital expenditure request. Exterior – A related priority is the exterior of the building, including lead paint and the roof and gutters. The building is an important landmark and esthetics are important. The interior design is less of an issue, and any major interior work would require the addition of a sprinkler system. Board members confirmed that the plan is for the town to stay in the Town Office Building and encouraged Nick to have surveys done, look for grants, and come up with a plan.
7. Public Safety Complex – Timeline – Construction documents will wrap up soon. Bid documents for demolition and construction will go out in March. Demolition is slated for June, and the new construction is to be completed in September 2023.
Order of conditions – The chair will sign the Order of Conditions. The Town Administrator will be following through to be sure the town complies.
8. One Stop grant program – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo has asked department heads for suggestions for the One Stop grant program. The town is able to submit two expressions of interest. Some possibilities are:
 - Improvement of the Town Offices through the Rural and Small Town Development Fund. The building serves as a meeting place and the Senior Center is a hub for services.
 - Stabilization of the river bank along Ashfield Road. This may be eligible for a MassWorks infrastructure grant. (The town will be eligible to apply for another MassWorks grant when the Depot Road culvert is finished.)
 - Mill River Greenway, South Main Street dismount off the bike trail. The engineering is being completed through a MassTrails grant. The Mill River Greenway Committee is interested in applying for a MassWorks grant for the construction and will plan to make a presentation to the Select Board soon.
 - A comprehensive master plan. This would require a lot of preparation. The 250th anniversary could be an opportunity to gather town support. The chair of the Planning Board is interested in working on it.
 - Old Town Hall. This is similar to the Town Offices, a highly visible building. Discussion included the possibility of making it a historically designated building and some concern about having volunteers tackle the painting.

9. Vacancies in elected positions – A Board member has reached out to a possible candidate.

10. Town Administrator's report – Covid update – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo reported that according to the Board of Health there is only one new confirmed case in the last week, and there are reports of a dropoff in cases in the Foothills Health District, county, and statewide, after the January omicron spike. The Board of Health mask order is in place through the end of February and will be revisited in early March. The Governor announced he will be lifting mask requirement in schools as of the end of February. If the Board of Health lifts the mask mandate, that will be put on the town sign boards and town website. In the Town Offices, one employee is still working from home and it is working well. The Board will review continuing that after hearing from the Board of Health in early March.

Meetings on Zoom – At the next meeting, on February 24, the Board can decide whether to meet remotely in the month of March or resume meeting in person. The Governor's order allowing for remote meetings will expire April 1 unless action is taken by the legislation. The order is very popular.

Newsletter – The newsletter will go the printer next week and will then be mailed out.

Depot Road culvert – The foreman plans to finish up and close the site in the next two weeks or so, then pause till spring and come back to do the blacktop. They have worked all winter and it has come along nicely.

Boston Post Cane – Nick delivered the replica Boston Post Cane to Paula Wentworth and reported having a delightful interaction with her.

11. Correspondence – An invitation and “save the date” notice for Whately's 250th anniversary celebration parade was received. Nick will follow up for details. The proposal for a land acknowledgment statement will be forwarded to the town's 250th Anniversary Committee.

12. Minutes – Minor typos were corrected. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of January 27. **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye). A request was made to include the Mountain Street slide show in the minutes of the July 12, 2021, public forum.

Motion was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of July 15, 2021 (Mountain St.), July 15, 2021 (with Finance Committee), July 20, 2021 (Dunphy School HVAC), and August 31, 2021 (before Special Town Meeting). **So voted** (DB aye, WS aye, DM aye).

13. Warrant – Selectman Dave Mathers will review and sign the warrant.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

Mass. Cultural Council grant contract

Resignations

Town Administrator contract letter

Public Safety Complex Order of Conditions

Invitation to Whately's 250th anniversary parade

Minutes

Warrant

Adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

Approved:

Clerk