

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*March 9, 2023*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, March 9, 2023, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m.

Present: Denise Banister and William Sayre

Absent: David Mathers

Also present: Nick Caccamo (Town Administrator), James Pentland (Gazette reporter), Sharon Strzegowski (Collector), Aimee Wallace (Police Officer), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant), Denise Wickland (Police Chief), Melissa Wilson (Senior Center Director)

1. Senior Center – Senior Center Director Melissa Wilson gave her regular report. Calls for rides have increased. Technology drop-in times are popular. A volunteer appreciation open house is planned for April 26. They are asking state representatives for funds for the Northern Hilltown Consortium newsletter. The meal site is using the new equipment. Plans for the extra bathroom have not been moving quickly.

2. Collector – Town Collector Sharon Strzegowski made her regular report. She said things in her department are in very good shape. She has just mailed the excise tax bills. The new water billing system, allowing the department to drive around town getting readings, will coordinate with the new software. She has looked into a postage machine for the town. The town mails 16,500 items yearly. She recommended the popular vendor's middle-grade machine, which she has used before, at \$220 per month, \$2,640 per year. It would save 5 cents per stamp, or around \$800 per year, and would replace the non-functioning sealing machine. Setting up user codes would mean that each envelope would get billed to the right department. She likes her office space, and customers can come in and have a seat.

3. Appointments and resignations –

Highway – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the resignation of Jack McGill from the Highway Department with thanks and regret. **So voted** (2-0). New employee Josh Lapointe, who is also an EMT, has just been hired.

Cultural Council – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the resignation of Patricia LaFreniere from the Cultural Council, effective March 31, with thanks and regret. **So voted** (2-0).

4. Heating oil contract – The Administrative Assistant presented the heating oil contract for FY24 and related documents. She recommended that the town buy 4500 gallons, down from 5500 last year because the new Public Safety Complex will replace the Fire and Police stations, and to have the LPVEC staff person decide when to lock in the price, as usual. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the contract with Sprague Operating Resources LLC for the purchase of heating oil for FY24. **So voted** (2-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to authorize the chair to sign the Designation of Agent for the Fixed Price Futures Program for 4500 gallons of heating oil for FY24. **So voted** (2-0). [These votes were rescinded at the March 23 meeting.]

5. 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee – Lisa Bertoldi, chair of the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, reported that they feel their work is done, and they have \$19,000 to give back to the town. They requested that \$4,000 go to the Fire Department, for their efforts above and beyond. She will work with Mary Dudek on planting an anniversary tree and will reserve \$500 from the funds.

**Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to disband the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, effective June 30, 2023, and to transfer the extra funds to the town, reserving \$500 for the tree, and to express deep thanks and congratulations for all that they and the volunteers did for an incredible celebration. **So voted** (2-0).

6. Police –

Police Chief Denise Wickland discussed her budget request. There is currently one full-time officer and the Chief is full-time. She is unable to hire qualified part-time officers – people have no desire to come to a place in the middle of nowhere, with backup 20 minutes away, for a low rate of pay. In addition, she expects to lose three of her part-time officers in the next five years to retirement and/or moving out of the area. A new full-time officer would be in place of unfilled part-time positions. Officer Wallace is taking the Bridge Academy and is interested in the full-time position. Chief Wickland acknowledged that there are complaints about lack of police coverage, and even with three full-time officers there will be some shifts unfilled. Adding a full-time officer in place of unfilled part-time positions would increase the labor budget by \$8100, from around \$145,000 to around \$153,000. She will supply a history of call volumes. Chief Wickland also discussed replacing the 2016 cruiser, which is falling apart. She suggested that a pickup truck would be useful as the replacement, for fitting a wheelchair or transporting a prisoner without needing a second cruiser.

7. Information Technology consulting services – Town Administrator Nick Caccamo presented a first draft of a Request for Proposals for IT services for FY24. He is meeting with the Tech Committee. The scope of services needs to be broad enough to capture the needs of the town. Transition to the Cloud should be included. Backup and disaster recovery is included in the current contract. Fair evaluation criteria for the proposals will need to be created. Reference checks will be included. If the lowest bidder is not chosen, the reason needs to be given. Because the cost will be more than \$50,000, the RFP will be published in the Secretary of State's weekly bulletin. If everything goes quickly, the new vendor could be in place in May.

8. Crosswalk flashing lights – Last year the town was approved for a Shared Streets grant for crosswalk flashing lights in the amount of \$32,400. The bids have come in lower than expected so there is enough money not only for the Haydenville bus stop, the Public Safety Complex, and the Williamsburg Post Office, but also for a fourth. Nash Hill was suggested.

9. Meeting time – The March 16 special meeting will be at 9.

10. Town Administrator's report –

Public Safety Complex – The building continues to go up, with no delays or problems.

MVP report – He presented the February MVP report, focused on deliverables.

Solar design – Two qualified proposals were received in response to the RFQ. A working group will meet to evaluate them.

ARPA update – Nick reported that the Fire Department’s portable radios have arrived. He is working with Building Supervisor Dick Bart to identify vendors and create purchase descriptions in several areas. They are soliciting bids for the fence. The Meekins gutter project is moving ahead cautiously. Dick is following up with vendors for painting and for windows. Nick has met with Bryan Osetek about the Water/Sewer upgrades. The Assessors’ audit should be awarded shortly. The meal site improvements are moving ahead nicely. There is still \$120,000 in unexpended funds. He noted that Highway would like to use ARPA money to fund vehicles. He encouraged the Board to talk with Finance Committee about vehicles and other large requests, whether funded by Town Meeting or by ARPA funds.

11. Correspondence – Bridge inspection report was received for the Bridge Street bridge, which is old and still working.

12. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to approve the minutes of February 23 as presented. **So voted** (2-0).

13. Warrant – Chair Denise Banister will review and sign the warrant. Payroll warrant WP23-19 for \$118,236.91 and expense warrant W23-19 for \$433,234.41, effective 3/15/23.

Documents used

Senior Center report

Collector’s report

Resignations

Heating oil contract and related documents

Draft RFP for IT services

MVP report

ARPA funds update

Bridge inspection report

Minutes

Adjourned at 3:39 p.m.

Approved:

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Clerk