

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
April 25, 2019

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, April 25, 2019, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:01 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: Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eileen Stewart (Hampshire Council of Governments), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Hampshire Council of Governments – Eileen Stewart reported for the Hampshire Council of Governments. The organization is running out of money and is going out of business on June 30. The RSVP program (Retired and Senior Volunteer Program) will be moving to a local social service agency. The purchasing program is more complicated; discussions are ongoing with several interested groups. Purchasing contracts for the coming fiscal year, including Hampshire IT and highway supplies, are being signed. Regarding health insurance, the Insurance Trust agreement says that if it is dissolved the Insurance Advisory Committee members become trustees; the hope is that the Trust will continue without a hitch. For retirement costs it is unclear how to pay for unfunded liabilities; there is a question whether the towns may be assessed; this is still unresolved. HCG wants the state to take on the costs the way it did for other dissolved counties. The state is renovating the courthouse; the deed says that if the county is dissolved the courthouse reverts to Northampton but Northampton doesn't want it. She will keep the Board informed.

2. Appointments – Council on Aging Advisory Board – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to appoint Maureen O'Brien to an Associate position on the COA Advisory Board, term to expire June 30, 2020. **So voted** (3-0).

Mill River Greenway – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the resignation of Mimi Kaplan from the Mill River Greenway Committee, effective tonight, and thank her for her service. **So voted** (3-0).

3. Licenses – Pool table – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the license for American Legion Post 236 for one pool table. **So voted** (2-0, DM abstaining).

4. Hampshire IT Program contract – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the new Hampshire Council of Governments contract for Information Technology. Paragus will again be the provider, and there is now a flat rate and the cost has gone down. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to sign the agreement between the Hampshire Council of Governments and the Town of Williamsburg for IT services, as outlined in the agreement. **So voted** (3-0).

5. Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) grant letter of support – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the letter to the Assistant Secretary of Climate Change in Cambridge in support of this grant. **So voted** (3-0). The grant application includes stabilization of the riverbed to protect Route 9 as a corridor, among many other things.

6. Memorial Day plans – The parade lineup is at 12:30, parade at 1:00, route ending at Veterans' Memorial. Veterans' Agent is checking about the band. William Sayre will speak the Welcome at the beginning, Denise Banister will give the Thank You at the end.

7. Regional services – DLTA – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Scope of Services agreement with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission for the exploration of shared emergency services. **So voted** (3-0). It was noted that this is just an exploration, with no commitment. The group is Goshen, Chesterfield, Worthington, and Williamsburg, and two additional towns have expressed interest in joining. The in-kind match will be met easily by staff time; no cash will be needed.

8. Complete Streets – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that, of the engineering proposals for South Street and East Main Street, the lowest was TEC at \$68,750. It was suggested that the town might do a portion of the project, rather than the whole project. Highway Superintendent Bill Turner said that the Town might handle \$44,000 for the East Main Street piece and do the South Street sidewalk in-house (by Highway). Charlene will look into using some of the grant money to cover the engineering.

9. Fire Department – Deputy Chief Daryl Springman gave the department's regular report. Two members will attend an 80-hour online finance class in May. There have been 306 incidents so far this year, compared to 253 last year; 48% were sick-person calls. The operating budget is low; some items have been postponed to save money, and labor line may not cover all of the final quarter of the year. Equipment and apparatus have been working well. The monthly truck checks have identified potential problems and given hands-on training. The recent OSHA inspection went well. Several firefighters, along with members of the Police Department and Highland Ambulance, were awarded a "SAVE Award" for their life-saving actions in an incident on January 31. He noted the importance of going to all medical calls, as one call came in as a fall, but the person was suffering cardiac arrest – even small calls can be something major. The Police and Fire 5K Run was a huge success, with 166 participants, and the money raised will allow the purchase of 4 or possibly 5 AED's. Different towns use different radio frequencies so firefighters don't hear what each other are saying; they hope for a statewide radio system but there are problems with reception in the hills. Board members asked for monthly payroll numbers, especially around budget time, from January on; Deputy Chief Springman thought that that should be easy because reports to the state are done monthly. He went on to report that morale is good. They do a lot of events, especially centered around the school; the 5K run connected with a different group of people.

10. Budget – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the current state of the budget as submitted to Finance. Nothing has been cut as yet. Total operating budget is \$8,073,131; total gross budget including articles is \$9,023,651. Revenue estimates are conservative; excess revenue will go into Free Cash. Finance will consider whether some money from Free Cash will be put into Stabilization. The final budget will need to be signed by May 9. If Finance is considering a 1% raise for employees, Board members felt that that is too low; they don't want to balance the budget on the backs of employees. The current budget is \$11,455 under the levy limit; it costs \$10,035 for every 1% raise. Discussion about increasing the Fire Department Labor line included that you can't control the labor line, if there is a big fire you want everyone there, if there is a disconnect between the mission and the budget either the mission needs to be reduced or the

budget increased, and perhaps a little could be added this year and then a little again next year. Discussion about taking some of the Building Repair line and putting it into the Building Supervisor's salary included that Building Repair should be reduced from \$20,000 to \$18,000 and the salary increased from \$7356 to \$9356, that the salary should be increased but the repair line should not be reduced, and that the Building Supervisor is working a lot more hours than he is paid for including checking the Helen E. James Building every day. The Board decided to recommend the transfer of \$2000, resulting in \$18,000 for Building Repair and \$9356 for Building Supervisor's salary.

11. Annual Town Meeting warrant – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the draft warrant.

Flags – An article has been added for \$200 for maintenance and replacement of American flags and brackets for Route 9. She will also put a request for donations in the newsletter.

Police – Article has been increased to \$5000 for training and equipment, so that the applicant does not have to pay upfront but will sign an agreement for prorated repayment if the person leaves in less than three years.

Trees – Article for \$9,000. The Town had run out of budgeted money this year by November.

12. Town Administrator's report –

Foothills Health Agent – Health Agent Valerie Bird is leaving to take another job. She has offered to train her replacement in May.

Senior Center Age-Friendly award – Board members will be invited to a celebratory event.

Senior Center new employees – New employees are Carol Hendricks, Outreach Coordinator, and Tryna Hope, Office Assistant. They will come to a future Select Board meeting.

Senior Center volunteer – Senior Center Director Jennifer Hoffman is handling some changes with volunteers.

Pedestrian signs – Signs will be put out May 1.

Tree on Hemenway Road – Resident understands the tree is dead or dying and wants to leave a 20 foot stump. The Tree Warden and Planning Board have decided that the tree must come down; there is liability if it falls. They will come to the Select Board meeting June 6.

Helen E. James roof – Roof is leaking again. Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten is concerned that the ceiling in a third floor room is close to collapsing. He is looking into it.

Town Offices bathroom – The sink was clogged. M.J. Moran fixed it but said it was corroded and needed to be replaced. There is money in Building Repair.

Anne T. Dunphy siding – The issue is not the siding but the trim and it is not a Hardie product but PVC; the nails are as specified. John Hoogstraten is looking for a solution.

Air conditioners – The plan is to buy one for the Select Board office and move the current one to the Planning Board Room, and buy a new one for the Assessors' office. The Senior Center has grant money and is planning to buy two for the auditorium for their programs. Charlene will check the power source type of wiring and communicate with people who overuse air conditioning.

Eversource park land and abutters – Lincoln Fish was given permission to park at Valley View Farm and use the access road, but unfortunately with the snow he accidentally parked on the lawn instead of the parking lot. Charlene will reach out to the owners.

Town Collector – Town Collector Bonnie Roberge has worked with property owners and nothing will be going into tax title this year.

Taxpayer correspondence – An offensive note was sent to the Collector. It has been forwarded to Town Counsel.

Health insurance – The Town Administrator and Town Treasurer met with the teachers' union representations about the \$3900 in mitigation funds for the union members. The town proposed a one-time premium adjustment to all actively enrolled employees and non-Medicare retirees. The union representations wanted a health reimbursement fund so that the people who used the health plan the most would get the most back. The town cannot administer the fund because of privacy issues and a lack of time resources. Research has been done for a firm to administer the fund and the cost for doing so. The union has also lodged a complaint about the improper process and lack of proper notice for the decision making. The town's attorney said that the town made every effort to do things correctly. The group will meet again on April 30.

74 Village Hill Road – The First, Second, and Fourteenth Amendment, Open Meeting Law and Conflict of Interest claims have been dismissed and the remainder of the case has been remanded back to Land Court.

13. Correspondence – Correspondence included HCG press release, PVPC annual meeting notice, and email that Hampshire Regional will complete on As Schools Match Wits. Board members looked at the preview copy of the annual report and commented on the excellent job done by the Administrative Assistant.

14. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the minutes of April 11 as written. **So voted** (3-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to accept the minutes of April 23 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

15. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP19-23 for \$110,600.80, and expense warrant W19-23 for \$526,945.64, payable 5/2/19.

16. Miscellaneous –

Snow Farm – The organization is a 501(c)(3) and will be getting \$30,000 back in taxes.

Vacation – The Administrative Assistant will be taking vacation next week.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Letter of interest and letter of resignation
- Pool table license renewal application
- Hampshire IT Program contract
- MVP grant letter of support
- DLTA Scope of Services agreement
- Draft budget
- Draft Annual Town Meeting warrant
- Letter to Collector
- Minutes
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:06 p.m.

Approved:


Clerk