

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*May 10, 2018*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, May 10, 2018, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Country Journal reporter.

Present: William Sayre, David Mathers and Denise Banister

Also present: Jason Connell (Fire Chief), Richard Kisloski (Capital Planning), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eileen Stewart (HCOG), Bill Turner (Highway), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Highway – Highway Superintendent Bill Turner made his regular report. Things are going well. Patching is almost finished. There is a bad oil leak in the 2011 F550 truck. The truck is not due to be replaced until 2026; he cautioned that a 15 year lifespan is possible for big trucks but not for this heavily used mid-size truck. The new employee, Bryan Osetek, is working out very well. Guardrail on Ashfield Road is rotting out; the posts can be reused but the metal has deteriorated. It was noted that the rotted and rusted guardrails had originally been chosen for the nice antique look. Bill Turner will figure the footage. Walpole Road and North Farms Road will be added to the five-year plan; North Farms Road may be eligible for a MassWorks (formerly STRAP) grant. The proposed purchase of the wheeled excavator will be funded in part by Water/Sewer and the price will be reduced by starting with a rent-with-option-to-buy arrangement out of the Highway budget, and will be further reduced by a trade-in allowance.
2. Trees – Tree Warden Bill Turner reported that most of the bad trees have been taken down but there is still a long list. Several additional trees were mentioned for him to look at.
3. Hampshire Council of Governments – HCOG Councilor Eileen Stewart discussed the letter from the Hampshire Council of Governments on unfunded legacy liabilities, especially retirement pensions and health care costs, and handed out a chart showing Williamsburg's annual cost at \$4797 and total liability at \$71,634. She explained that counties that remained as counties continued to have income through a deed excise tax, counties that dissolved and became regional planning agencies had their assets and debts taken over by the state, but the two counties that became Councils of Governments are not receiving state assistance and have no ability to tax or assess. If HCOG did not exist, the costs would be assessed to the towns. They have asked the legislature for a deed excise tax but the legislators seem not to be interested. Board members proposed getting together with the other towns to figure out a way forward, especially asking the legislature for help.
4. Capital Planning – Capital Planning chair Dick Kisloski discussed capital planning items for the Annual Town Meeting. Highway Department excavator – Cost is \$155,915, part of the cost to come from Water/Sewer funds, \$15,000 trade-in, and three months' rent. A blade, boom and some other items were deleted to bring the cost down. Recreation Department resurfacing – This will be recommended for FY22 instead of this year. Old Town Hall painting and repairs – Capital Planning Committee felt that the repairs should be done and the painting postponed. Fire Department rescue vehicle – Since the grant did not come through, the committee did not pursue this and will recommend it for FY21. Fire Chief Jason Connell said that the current truck has a

pump that can't get tested and thought that money fixing the truck would not be money well spent; he recommended not waiting until FY21. Dunphy School tractor – The current tractor is close to end of its useful life. Cost was reduced by eliminating one of two blades. The vehicle was put off last year and the committee recommends doing it this year. Meekins Library entrance – They thought the Highway Department could do the sidewalk and some planting could be done. The Library has the Friends of the Library as a source of funds. The Library Director had been invited to discuss the item but she did not come. The committee did not recommend the article. Capital Plan – He handed out the updated version of the capital plan, pointing out that if the Public Safety Complex is done, the town cannot afford other large things. A Board member asked to have a capital plan showing what the town could afford.

5. Fire Department – Fire Chief Jason Connell reported on incidents year to date, recent major calls, and apparatus. He said that preventive maintenance is paying off. They did not get the grant for a new fire engine and have reduced their specifications so they think they could get an adequate truck for \$125,000. They are doing quarterly payrolls and the labor budget is on track. He talked about the current fleet. There will be another state Volunteer Fire Assistance matching grant opportunity in June and he hopes that the Firefighters Association will help with the match. A tanker is needed when they go out to where there is not a lot of water; he will write up something to explain the need to residents. Mutual aid is there to help but Williamsburg cannot rely on Chesterfield and Goshen because they have fewer people in town during the day and the town would wait longer for them to respond. Discussion about the fire lane at the school included putting up signs, allowing buses to park in the fire lane because the vehicles are occupied, a quick pickup of a sick kid should be possible, and there could be a spot labeled for 10 minute parking; all agree on the basic safety need and more creative thinking is needed.

6. Annual Town Meeting warrant – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi presented the current draft of the warrant. Board members reviewed and discussed it item by item.

Old Town Hall Capital Plan article – Charlene reported that Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten pointed out that a lot of money is needed for the staging to reach the cupola and so it makes sense to paint at the time the carpentry is done. She also noted that John has spent a lot of time in Old Town Hall and has creative ways to reduce cost, and she mentioned that the town's insurance company is requesting the work. It was decided that reducing the project budget did not make sense and the original estimated amount was reinstated.

Vote tabulation system petition article – Discussion included that such a system needs to be maintained, it will become obsolete, it is used only once a year, a resident has said this expenditure is more valuable than spending for public parks, a resident has said people are not willing to vote openly against something that is popular, Selectmen sit up front where they are very visible voting no, a secret ballot takes 45 minutes under the current system, people should be able to talk to their neighbors and be able to disagree, and Board members would not be opposed if the system were free and the main stumbling block is cost. Charlene can reach out to see if other towns would be interested in sharing the system.

Signing the warrant – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/DM) to approve the warrant as amended, to be signed as soon as it is available. Selectmen will come in individually to sign. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Licenses – One-day special 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 Our Lady of the Hills Parish, Father Richard Bondi, for Saturday, June 9, to Monday, June 11, hours of serving Saturday, June 9, 5-9 p.m. **So voted** (3-0).

Late closing and live entertainment – **Motion** as made and seconded (DB/DM) to approve Late Closing, 1:00 a.m., Live Entertainment, D.J., for Saturday, May 12, to American Legion Post 236, Haydenville. **So voted** (3-0).

8. \$30,000 Transportation Bond for Mill River Greenway – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi explained that Chair William Sayre had signed the state contract and the Board was asked to ratify the signature. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the signing of the \$30,000 state contract for Mill River Greenway by the chair. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Resident complaint – noise – Board members read a letter about the noise of truck jake brakes on Route 9 and the noise of the school emergency generator. Suggestions were made to plant trees or put up a fence for the one hour a week the generator is running; there is still money in the school construction account. Regarding the brakes, any sign on Route 9 would have to be approved by the state; Charlene will ask the state sign person if they would consider putting up a sign or allowing the town to install signs.

10. Pole hearing – National Grid made a request to install a pole on Old Goshen Road. Date was set as next meeting, May 24, at 6 p.m. Denise Banister disclosed that she may be related to the property owner, but since one of the other members will be away, she will need to vote by the Rule of Necessity.

11. Helen E. James playground – Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten had written recommending removing unsafe playground structures, namely the wood structures and the peastone and curbing around them, and keeping the metal structures. Discussion included that structures require maintenance, young people can play on the new equipment at the Dunphy School playground, and the structures need to be removed for safety reasons. It was decided to remove the unsafe items as John Hoogstraten recommended and keep the safe items. Discussion about the skating rink included the suggestion that there be better guidelines about taking it down by March 30.

12. Town Administrator's report – Senior Center operations – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the Senior Center is working well. Sherry Loomis, Administrative Assistant and Melinda McCall, Interim Meal Site Coordinator, are doing a great job.

Senior Center Director position – She reported that the position has been advertised and the search committee has been established.

Fire truck – The town did not get the Assistance to Firefighters grant for the rescue truck.

Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP) grant – Application deadline for MVP grant is coming up soon. Grant can help with flood proofing and culverts. PVPC can help with the application.

Electrician work – Winston Bancroft replaced LED lights in the auditorium, connected the Town Office boilers to the generator, and put the outside lights on a timer system.

Town flag – The 3'x5' size flag was too big for homes and too expensive, so the decision was made to go with 2'x3', with a cost of \$35 including set-up. It will be advertised in the newsletter and at Town Meeting. The committee asked for money for making the large flag for the Hall of Flags. The Board supported putting an article on the Town Meeting warrant for \$500. The committee would like two ceremonies, both in town and in Boston.

Pedestrian cone – Police Chief will put the cones in the road when MassDOT authorizes.

Town picnic – The Masons may be interested in taking a leadership role with the Lions Club.  
Low temperature and boiler ignite monitors – These have been installed, with alerts to go to Charlene’s office, home and cell phones.

Curtains on stage in auditorium – The Williamsburg Players would like to install two curtains across the stage, one at the edge of the stage and one in the back. Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten would be asked to install them, and the Players would pay for everything. Concern was expressed about sagging. John Hoogstraten will be consulted.

Public Safety Complex Committee – Charlene reported that she received only four responses from members of the Public Safety Complex Committee, two of them from Selectmen; the other two expressed willingness to continue. Board members decided that the Committee has completed its task and will not be reappointed; individual people can be asked to work on the committee for construction. Committee members will be thanked for their work.

Finance Committee and budget – Finance Committee voted a 2% raise for town employees and will meet next week to finalize the budget and capital plan and vote on the Town Meeting articles.

Vacations and Select Board meetings – Charlene reported on proposed vacation times for her and for the Administrative Assistant. Meetings of July 5 and August 2 will be cancelled due to various vacations.

13. Correspondence – Included a letter from the Organization of Nurse Leaders opposing the ballot question on nurse staffing levels, and notice of the Western Mass. Developers Conference.

14. Miscellaneous – Old Town Hall – Charlene Nardi reported that Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten said that he has done work and the cupola is stable for now.

Senior Center search committee – Charlene reported that the committee has discussed the interview process. Seniors will be invited into the process.

15. Warrant – Charlene reported on budget lines that need reserve fund transfers or end of year transfers, including legal expenses for the Planning Board, and the Senior Center Outreach Coordinator position because of retirement expenses (the Director position will have money left over). Board members approved and signed the warrant.

#### Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- HCOG letter with list of costs per town
- Draft town meeting warrant
- Draft capital plan
- Licenses
- Resident complaint about noise
- Email about James playground
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:50 p.m.

Approved:

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Clerk