

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
May 21, 2020

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, May 21, 2020, by conference call. The chair called the meeting to order at 3:05 p.m.

Present: Denise Banister, William Sayre and David Mathers

Also present: Dan Banister (Highway Superintendent), Jonathan Flagg (Building Inspection), Louis Hasbrouck (Building Inspection), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Building Inspector – Permits – Building Inspector Louis Hasbrouck gave his regular report. Permit activity for FY2020 is about half of 2019, not in the number of permits but in what is being done. The Building Inspection office is continuing to work, just not in the office building. Some people are starting up jobs without the required permits. He hasn't heard anything about the two solar projects (Lashway property and West property), though Dave Mathers reported that National Grid is working on Route 9 lines and poles in order to handle the output.

Reopening – His department has a basic form for calculating a business's occupancy limit based on measurements of the space. He has been downloading and collecting advice and guidance on reopening that he would like to make available to businesses. He will write up the information and send it to the Town Administrator, who will get it to the Board of Health and out to businesses.

New Building Inspector – He introduced Jonathan Flagg, who will be taking over as Building Inspector. Jonathan Flagg said that he is used to working with small towns and Select Boards. Board members introduced themselves and welcomed him.

Retiring Building Inspector – Board members said a sad good-bye to Louis Hasbrouck, thanking him for all his years of service to the town, working closely together, and expressing appreciation for his friendship and his sense of humor.

2. Depot Road culvert – Town Administrative Charlene presented the proposal from Hill Engineering, for \$24,000 and a reduced scope of the project. Jim Hyslip gave some background to the project. He has been involved for ten years, they did some surveying and wetlands delineation, got a Smith College design team involved, and did some test borings. They were following the Stream Crossing Guidelines and looking at a 25-foot span. They got a grant for \$350,000 but found the actual work would be a lot more expensive – a different engineering firm quoted \$1.2 million plus design fees. The culvert has continued to get worse. They decided the only option was not to adhere to the Stream Crossing Guidelines and to start looking at a small diameter culvert. If it stays under a 10-foot span, that is below the threshold for a lot of required engineering work. He added that a 10-foot culvert would have three to four times the capacity of what is there now. They reached out to Hill Engineering, in Dalton, which he has worked with for years as a geotechnical consultant. Hill Engineering proposed a 9'11" pipe, which would cost in the range of \$200,000. Hill Engineering's portion would be \$24,000, including design, construction documents, and help with the Notice of Intent (NOI), but not construction oversight. He recommended their approach, saying they are reputable and do high quality work, the solution is practical and the price is reasonable. Board members agreed that this was the right approach, and were glad that the project had been scaled down and would presumably be less invasive to

the stream. The alternative, assuming the million dollar pricetag, would be not to do it at all and to close the road. Jim Hyslip noted that people would need to be made aware that the work will not be adhering to the Stream Crossing Guidelines. Charlene will withdraw the current Notice of Intent (NOI) from the Conservation Commission and let them know about the change in scope and that a new NOI will be coming to them. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to authorize the chair to sign the Hill Engineering proposal. **So voted** (3-0). Further discussion included that Chapter 90 money could be used for construction oversight, estimated to be in the range of \$10,000; that the construction firm would bring in the culvert rather than separating the contractor and the materials into different bids; that there were pieces the town could do including paving and ecological preservation work; and that it will be good to spend the money quickly, in order to abide by the terms of the grant.

3. Highway – Highway Superintendent Dan Banister gave his regular report. He said things are going smoothly. They are working on preparing South Street for paving, cleaning roadside ditches, patching potholes, and putting flags out. Roberts has been hired to hook houses into the new water main on South Main Street. Bryan Osetek is doing quite a bit with the water department. New employee Mark Loven is working out really well. The equipment is doing fine. They have bought a hot water pressure washer that will clean the equipment better than the cold water washer. New tires have been bought for Truck 5. The projects on the county bid – small paving, chip sealing, crack sealing, line painting – will come to \$120,000, and there is \$138,000 left in Chapter 90 funds from last year, so they have \$18,000 left, and are due to get \$188,000 in new Chapter 90 funds for the new fiscal year. They have pulled the generator out from storage into the open and run it; after some tweaking it ran well. It is a 65kw generator. Electrician Winston Bancroft thinks the 20kw range is appropriate for a new generator and will provide specifications for it. The garage doors are not on the capital plan for June 2020 because the Capital Planning Committee members want to wait till fall, but they think the doors are valuable and worth doing. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reviewed the schedule for putting flags up and said that the townspeople love seeing them and a lot of people have contributed toward them. The cost is roughly \$20 per setup, including the flag and bracket, and there are 160-180 flags. Board members and the Town Administrator thanked Dan Banister and said that he is doing a great job, exceeding their expectations.

4. Appointments – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to accept the resignation of Meg Taylor from the Local School Committee, with regret and thanks for her years of service. **So voted** (3-0). Town Administrator Charlene Nardi noted that the next step is for the School Committee to propose a new candidate and then for the two boards to have a joint meeting to make an appointment.

5. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission Memorandum of Understanding – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi explained that in the past, former Energy Chair Kim Boas had helped with the annual report and any new grants under the Green Communities program. Recently PVPC has done that portion, of compiling the energy data, and she would like PVPC's help going forward. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to ratify the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding with PVPC for Green Communities assistance. **So voted** (3-0).

6. Hilltown Resource Management Cooperative – Community Eco Power Disposal Services Agreement – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that Kathleen Casey, Administrator for the HRMC, and the town Board of Health recommend signing a three-year municipal waste

disposal agreement with Community Eco Power, LLC, which will result in savings to the town. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the Community Eco Power Disposal Agreement. **So voted** (3-0).

7. Chapter 90 reimbursement form – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/WS) to authorize the Board to sign Chapter 90 reimbursement forms for the purchase of the grapple and for work on South Street. **So voted** (3-0).

8. Memorial Day parade – It was reported that the Board decided to cancel the Memorial Day parade and observances this year, and that the American Legion will continue to do services at cemeteries. People can attend if they distance themselves. The Town Administrator had polled the Board members to make the decision. She noted that although the Health Agent said that gatherings of more than ten people in outdoor unenclosed spaces are permitted as long as people distance themselves, the Board members didn't feel that social distancing could be effectively enforced, and most communities were cancelling their parades.

9. Annual Town Meeting and warrant articles – Meeting – The meeting will be June 29, with a rain date of June 30. Two tents have been reserved with the Sheriff's department. Concerns were raised about the ability of voters to maintain a six-foot distance. The Board would like to see what the cost would be for renting a larger tent.

Capital items – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the Capital Planning Committee recommended moving forward in June with three capital planning articles, the Highway truck (because the current truck is not expected to last till November, \$51,093), the Hampshire Regional HVAC article (\$16,640), and the town computers (\$18,257). Board members agreed. Board members would also like to do the Library fire alarm system (\$2600), but put off the library front walk (\$9800) and the anniversary celebration (\$4000). The Board will plan to sign the warrant at the next meeting.

School budgets – The school budget increases are huge, a \$165,709 increase for the local school, mostly Special Ed, and a \$44,500 increase for the regional school. Board members felt that it was unfair for the school to have such large increases while the town had to cut back. Several suggestions were made, including asking the school officials to meet with the Finance Committee, proposing a reduced budget for the June Town Meeting, with a supplemental budget in the fall if the town has the money, and communicating the concerns to the other towns in the school district.

10. Reopening – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the plan for reopening is to be slow and cautious. The Town Office Building won't open till fall, and the Building Supervisor is looking at the town departments for a place where they can meet the public safely with a screen between the employee and the public. The town is not going to force employees to come in. People can work from home unless they have an appointment. The Highway Department is complying with social distancing, traveling in different vehicles, and wearing masks if they have to be together.

11. Time of Select Board meetings in June – The Thursday morning emergency team meeting will be moving to every two weeks, rather than every week. Board members decided to meet on the Board's regular Thursdays, the opposite week from the emergency team meeting, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon, in June, and to skip the July 2 meeting.

12. Personnel – sick leave – An employee has asked to use sick leave, a few hours each day, in order to care for a terminally ill relative (illness unrelated to COVID-19). This is allowed under the personnel policy. Board members agreed that the employee should be able to do this. Town Administrative Charlene Nardi reviewed the sick leave policy: that an employee can accrue up to 180 days of sick leave, that it is cumulative and carries over from year to year, that employees earn three weeks of sick time a year, and that when an employee leaves, there is no payment for accumulated sick leave, unlike vacation time.

13. Town Administrator's report – LED lights – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the original installer did not want to bid on the maintenance contract, but that she had quotes from two other contractors. She recommended Dave Foster, who has done parking lot lights but not streetlights, and who has received glowing references, for a one-year contract with option to renew. Dave Mathers will check with National Grid about what is involved.

Land for dog shelter – In response to Northampton's inquiry about a half acre of land for a dog shelter, Charlene said that several plots were suggested but there is no good space for a half acre. There were also concerns that a dog shelter near a house would create noise outdoors.

CARES Act funding – The federal program covers some things that MEMA would not, so Charlene will apply for the funding.

CARES Act hearing – Hilltown Community Development Corporation will hold a hearing on May 26 about shifting CBDG funds from the Housing Rehab Program to emergency food and other assistance for unforeseen expenses directly related to the coronavirus.

Vehicle fuel – Prices through FRCOG purchasing have been locked in at \$1.98 per gallon for gasoline (fixed price) and \$1.735 and \$1.765 for diesel (regular and winter, fixed prices).

Heating oil – The price the town locked in in March through LPVEC (\$1.568 with Roberts) was in the same range or lower than FRCOG's heating oil price (\$1.54-1.68 with Sandri).

Hatfield's 350th Anniversary celebration – She reported that Williamsburg broke off from Hatfield in 1771, because people did not want to have to cross Horse Mountain to attend church services and wanted to have their own church. Denise Banister will write and share a short recorded message of congratulation. William Sayre will record it in front of the Town Office Building.

14. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DM) to approve the minutes of May 7 as presented. **So voted** (3-0).

15. Warrant – Dave Mathers will review and sign the warrant.

Documents used

Hill Engineering proposal

Resignation letter

PVPC Memorandum of Understanding

HRMC Community Eco Power Disposal Services Agreement

Chapter 90 Reimbursement Form

Minutes

Adjourned at 5:42 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk