

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
August 30, 2018

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, August 30, 2018, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:02 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: Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Nathan Rosewarne (Treasurer), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Bill Turner (Highway), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Tax Title Custodian – appointment – Treasurer Nathan Rosewarne explained that in order to sell a property in tax title, such as for Old Goshen Road, someone needs to have custody of the property and be empowered to accept bids. **Motion** was made and seconded (WS/DB) to appoint Treasurer Nathan Rosewarne as Tax Title Custodian, who shall have the care, custody, management and control of all property heretofore or hereafter acquired by the Town of Williamsburg by tax title process as described in Chapter 60, section 77B, for a term to expire June 30, 2019. Nathan Rosewarne said that nearby towns recommend a certain auctioneer. Because the current property is so small, the fee will probably be a flat fee rather than a percentage. It was suggested that this appointment be until 2019 and thereafter be for three years, to coincide with the Treasurer's term of office. **So voted** (3-0).

2. Complete Streets – Town Administrator Charlene presented the Complete Streets program project prioritization plan. The committee recommends doing items #1, #2, and #7 or 8. There had been some difference of views in the committee about item #1, installing a crosswalk across South Street between the Helen E. James building and the access road to the Anne T. Dunphy School, with some people, including the Police Chief and Highway Superintendent, feeling that this is a dangerous area and people should be discouraged from crossing there. The Board agreed with this assessment. The committee recommended addressing it with signs saying do not cross here, cross at the corner. The cost estimates were supplied by the consultant, TEC, and Highway Superintendent Bill Turner says that the amounts may not be accurate. Board members will consider the recommendations and plan to vote at the next meeting on which ones to submit.

3. Veterans' Volunteer Tax Relief Program – It was reported that recent legislation would allow the town to increase the amount each participant could earn from \$1000 to \$1500. This had been done for the Senior Volunteer Tax Relief Program two years ago but the veterans were overlooked at that time. There are very few veteran participants, and they do not make up to the current limit, so this change should have little impact on the town. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to increase the limit that can be earned by veterans under the Veterans' Tax Workoff Program from \$1000 to \$1500, starting November 1, 2018. **So voted** (3-0).

4. Highway – Highway Superintendent Bill Turner reported that things are going well. Petticoat Hill Road and Briar Hill Road have been chip sealed. Line painting on Route 9 has been done by the state except for some areas where there might have been cars in the way; he will check what has been skipped. He will also check to see that the line painting on Conway Road is redone at no cost to the town as it failed immediately upon application last year. Cross-hatching is done by

the town, not by the state. Regarding the plan for Complete Streets he said the cost numbers don't look right and mentioned in particular the need for a survey to indicate where the right of way is on Buttonshop Road. He noted that the new excavator is working out better than expected and the John Deere backhoe was taken as a trade-in. Board members commented that the Highway crew gets a lot done, often eating lunch at the project where they are working. Bill Turner said that the winter plowing looks fine and they will just need to shuffle the vehicles around to make up for not having the backhoe. William Sayre is the new Board liaison to the Highway Department. The Highway crew is starting to work on the rail trail between Williamsburg and Northampton, as part of the town's in-kind match for the Mill River Greenway Recreational Trails grant; Northampton is paying for the materials. The town has not heard from the businesses on South Main Street, and so the town will fill in the area between the sidewalk and the road. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi plans to replace Bill Turner's computer and plans to switch the Highway Department internet to Comcast, since the Verizon cost went up.

5. Employee review process – Discussion of the employee review process included: a performance review like one in the private sector can be time-consuming and take time away from working; no one likes the current evaluation forms; having employees do a self-assessment is valuable; the self-assessment and the supervisor's evaluation of the employee should be done independently and the supervisor shouldn't see the employee's self-assessment before doing the evaluation; it's useful for the supervisor to see the employee's self-assessment; the supervisor could be instructed to ignore the self-assessment; it's useful to have a paper trail for a problem employee; the forms could come to the Town Administrator and Administrative Assistant but that would slow the process down; supervisors need to supervise professionally and deal with personality conflicts with employees; the purpose of the evaluation is to create dialogue; the employee can evaluate the supervisor and indicate whether the comments can be shared with the supervisor; copies of employee evaluations will be given to the Select Board, as has been done in the past; the Select Board's evaluation of department heads has been done at a public meeting but the purpose of liaisons was to have a frank discussion, which is hard at a public meeting; individual Select Board members can fill out forms and give them to the liaison person, or to the Town Administrator/Administrative Assistant; the Town Administrator rather than the Select Board should evaluate the Administrative Assistant; there are six department heads, seven when the Treasurer becomes an appointed position, so approximately two for each Board member; department head goals may be the same every year, such as maintain equipment, respond to all fires, plow roads in a timely manner; there is some confusion about what is meant by goals and how valuable it is to ask for them; the Board will ask for goals; the Board will ask for feedback on the evaluation process. Summary and conclusions: employee evaluation forms will be rewritten; employees will be asked to fill out self-assessment forms and evaluation-of-supervisor forms; supervisors will fill out evaluation forms; while there were differing opinions, Board members leaned toward allowing supervisors to see employee self-assessments before doing their evaluations, and asking supervisors to ignore the self-assessments for purposes of doing their own ratings; supervisors will meet individually with employees; department heads will be asked to list goals; all Board members will evaluate department heads and the department liaison will meet with the department head.

6. Town Administrator's report –

Trust Fund process – An email from the Trust Fund chair had explained that any unused income from the Kmit bequest does not stay available for use the following year.

Mill River Greenway Recreational Trails Program match – Charlene explained that the \$100,000 grant is 80% of the project total and the town is responsible for the other 20%, or \$25,000.

AED training – Training on the defibrillator will be September 17 during the day.

Town flag – The Flag Committee would like to do the presentation in Boston in November. It will be scheduled through Steve Kulik’s office since he was a big proponent. Board members suggested possible dates.

Public Safety complex – Inspector General conversation about land acquisition – She reported that the Inspector General’s office said yes, the town can put out a Request for Proposals for land acquisition and they recommended involving Town Counsel. And while the town can’t put out a Request for Proposals of what to do with the Helen E. James building without voting the building as surplus, a process can be done informally. It was noted that if the town buys land, that would not leave much money for the safety complex, and also that it will be difficult to sell the James building.

Public records – Transfer Station – She reported that a resident had asked for the dump sticker list as a public record. Since the Transfer Station makes its own list and it includes sensitive information, the question arose whether privacy is adequately protected. The state Public Records office suggested using a list that already exists – such as a street listing or voter registration list – and being wary about creating a new list, and further suggested thinking about why a record is needed before creating it, as a public record request is only about a record that the town has.

Transfer Station – Board of Health would like to have compliance with dump stickers but at the same time does not want to discourage residents from using the Transfer Station.

7. Correspondence – Included notice that the town was awarded a Recycling Dividends Program grant of \$3850 through the Sustainable Materials Recovery Program.

8. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the minutes of August 16 as written. **So voted** (3-0).

9. Miscellaneous –

Picnic – The town picnic is Saturday, September 8, with a lot of food provided and people are invited to bring potluck contributions. The Lions Club will be cooking, there will be a bounce house courtesy of the police, and kids’ games courtesy of the PTO.

Accountant – The new accountant, Kala Fisher, has started. She has experience with municipal accounting and is easy to work with. She raised the question of why there is a long time lag between the warrant and when the checks are sent out.

Director of the Senior Center – Jennifer Hoffman starts September 11. Charlene has been looking into training for her.

Library – Part-time circulation assistant has been hired.

Documents used:

Agenda and notes

Tax title motion

Complete Streets list of potential projects

Employee evaluation forms

Minutes

Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk