

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
August 3, 2017

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, August 3, 2017, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and noted that the meeting was being recorded by the Country Journal reporter.

Present: William Sayre and Denise Banister

Absent: David Mathers

Also present: Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. CelluSpray Insulation contract – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize the chair to sign the contract between the Town of Williamsburg and Cellu-Spray Insulation for \$16,688 to do the proper insulation at the Dunphy School. **So voted** (2-0).
2. MMA essay and poster contest – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi explained that every year the Mass. Municipal Association puts on a contest to promote interest in government in the schools. This year it is an essay contest for the eighth graders and a poster contest for third graders. Hampshire Regional is eager to commit for the eighth graders; she is waiting to hear back from the elementary school. Board members supported participation.
3. Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to grant a live entertainment license to Bread Euphoria for live music on Saturdays July 29, August 12, 19, 26, September 2, 9, 16 and 23, 6-8 p.m. **So voted** (2-0).
4. Senior Volunteer Tax Relief Program –
Income level – The Administrative Assistant explained that there used to be an income limit for participants but that the Board had changed it to a preference. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to increase the income level for preferred applications to the Senior Volunteer Tax program to align with the 0.3% cost of living increase, up to \$30,233 from \$30,143. **So voted** (2-0).
Number of participants – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi noted that the maximum number of participants has always been set at ten but recently more people have expressed interest. The number is up to the Board of Selectmen but they may want to consult with the Assessors, since it affects the taxpayers.
Criteria – Charlene also noted that if there are more than ten applicants, the Board can look at need, based on the income level, and at the skills the person brings to the town.
5. Pole hearing – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to set the date of August 17 at 7 p.m. for the pole hearing for National Grid and Verizon for midspan poles on Ashfield Road. **So voted** (2-0).

6. Public Safety Complex meeting – Chair William Sayre asked the Board to consider the topics, purpose, and the invitees for the meeting August 31 with the Public Safety Complex Committee. He reported that the original amount of \$300,000 for design services, to be requested from Special Town Meeting, did not include money for an OPM (Owner's Project Manager), now estimated at \$80,000, nor money for a more comprehensive design of administrative offices and public safety at the James Building – since the placement of a public safety complex would affect the possible uses of the building – which would bring the total to \$575,000. Board members agreed that it made sense to go with the more comprehensive study, even though it is expensive. The chair also suggested opening the meeting up to other committees and inviting Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC), Mill River Greenway, Finance, Capital Planning, as well as Public Safety Committee. Board members agreed. The possibility of inviting Dillon Sussman of PVPC was suggested; Charlene will talk to him and see what he thinks. The meeting will focus on when and how much to ask of Special Town Meeting and will be held August 31 from 6 to 7:30.

7. Sign on town tree – resident concern – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that a resident had expressed concern about a White Lives Matter sign nailed to a town shade tree and had asked the town to do something. Charlene noted that there are several signs posted in the town's right of way, and that it is important not to pick and choose signage based on whether we agree or disagree. There is no town policy about posting on trees or posting on town property. It was suggested that the town could use a policy and apply it in an even-handed way. Charlene will look into it and will consult Zoning Enforcement Officer Louis Hasbrouck.

8. Town Administrator's report –

Email policy – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that there are a lot of things being posted on Facebook, including emails between residents and town officials, even material collected by a private individual and given to the opposing attorney in a court case. She would like all communications to go through town email, not personal email, and through committee chairs, not individual committee members. The cost is \$25 per email per year [later corrected to \$45]; the budget line will need to be increased. She is working on a better email policy, as part of the personnel policy. This could be a topic for an All Boards Meeting.

Moderator – She reported that Moderator Joe Larkin described the duties of the Moderator, namely, chairing Town Meeting, chairing Town Caucus by tradition, and appointing Whiting Street Trustees. He emphasized that the Moderator should not be focused on what the town decides but on process; should be informed about issues but should not take sides (though should be prepared to vote to break a tie); should be comfortable speaking in public; should keep procedure straight; and an appreciation of law and interest in history may be helpful. He suggested a possible name. There is a moderators' association. If the moderator resigns, the Board of Selectmen can appoint a new one until the next election.

Electricity – The Department of Public Utilities has approved the town's application for municipal aggregation and Colonial Power Group would like to meet with the Board of Selectmen in August. National Grid sets electricity rates in September and Colonial Power sets rates right after that.

Fire truck property claim – The new fire truck was damaged when it hit a cement abutment when it was being backed out during a training. The incident was reported to the town's insurance company and the Fire Chief is taking steps to ensure it doesn't happen again.

Garden – The Town Clerk has recruited volunteers to weed the front garden and plant flowers.

Heating system – Charlene has asked Guardian to do a walk-through of the new heating system. When she went downstairs recently the boiler was in lockout. Board members were interested in having a sensor to prevent this. She also mentioned an overdue bill from last fiscal year that Guardian was supposed to take care of.

Cash management system – FRCOG Mass. IT grant – She reported on a cash management system and a FRCOG Mass. IT grant that would support its purchase. Currently the Treasurer and Accountant both have to enter data; under this system that would not be necessary. The Treasurer and Accountant both recommend it, and the towns that have the system like it. The cost is \$2400 a year plus \$4000 one-time setup. FRCOG has a Mass. IT grant to support purchase of the system, \$20,000 for ten communities so it should cover \$2000. Special Town Meeting in October could be asked for money.

Fuel contracts – She reported that in FY17 the town used over 7,000 gallons of diesel and had contracted for 5,000; similarly gasoline over 4,000, estimated 3,000. If the town contracts for more, the concern is that it won't be used and we will have to store it.

Personnel policy – It had been brought to her attention that the personnel policy is unclear how and when to credit the extra week of vacation earned by 5-year, 10-year, 15-year employees, in particular whether the week is prorated that year. She will bring proposed revised wording, to start next fiscal year.

9. Miscellaneous –

Tax rate projection – Chair William Sayre and Charlene Nardi have been working on a tax rate projection tool.

Cemetery mowing – Mountain Street cemetery is only mowed three times a year.

Meeting starting time – Suggestion has been made to start meetings at 6:00 rather than 7:00. This can be discussed when all Board members are present.

10. Correspondence – Correspondence included a letter from Clean Energy about the solar facility decommissioning plan surety bond, Highland Ambulance quarterly report, and a What's New in Municipal Law workshop. Town Administrator Charlene Nardi said that several years ago Terry Williams of Department of Local Services came and did a training about municipal finance, a very interesting two-hour meeting. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to authorize inviting him. **So voted** (2-0).

11. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the minutes of July 20 as presented. **So voted** (2-0).

12. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrant.

13. Miscellaneous –

Meeting times, continued – Board members liked the idea of starting earlier. Suggestions have been to put estimated times on the agenda and to put a three-hour limit on the meeting, as it is harder to make good decisions after three hours. The reporter commented that most towns start at 6:00.

Fire alarm – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that there was a smoke alarm on Monday night and a smell of hot wire. They think it was triggered by dust outside the elevator. She will call the company that does the fire inspections.

Horse Mountain – Sign has been installed.

Petticoat Hill – No further complaints about drainage.

Generator at school – It is loud, for half an hour once a week during the day. Time has been changed once.

Picnic donations – Donations have been received.

Documents used

Agenda and notes

Cellu-Spray Insulation contract

MMA Statewide Eighth Grade Essay Contest

Live entertainment

Minutes

Warrant

Adjourned at 8:45 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk