

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
September 24, 2020

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, September 24, 2020, by video conference call. The chair called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.

Present: William Sayre, David Mathers and Denise Banister

Also present: Shelby Macri (reporter, Country Journal), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant), Denise Wickland (Police Chief)

1. Police Chief – Regular report – Police Chief Denise Wickland reported that things are going smoothly at the Police Department. The staff stepped up and supported her when she took personal time off to help care for a family member. They are using e-citations for motor vehicle stops, saving time on data entry. There has been an increase in impaired driving, a couple of incidents a week. Domestic violence calls remain about the same, about one a week. They are getting crisis services to families where appropriate. The department is on budget.

Traffic and speed data – Chief Wickland discussed the traffic and speed data from the recent PVPC studies of Kingsley Avenue and High Street. She said what is considered excessive speed depends on the time of day, and whether the road is narrow or winding. Officers generally give some leeway over the posted speed limit, because tire changes can affect a car's speedometer readings. She noted that there is currently confusion on what the speed limit is on High Street. She said that the speed study will help the department know the best times for enforcement. She plans to apply for the municipal road safety grant through the Executive Office of Public Safety for extra patrols and money for "Your Speed Is" signs. She prefers signs with solar backup and ones that can be attached to poles.

Changing and posting speed limits – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi said that streets in the village centers and most streets in Haydenville can be set at 25 by a vote of the Select Board, once Town Meeting accepts the relevant section of the General Laws. According to Chief Wickland, the larger streets like Ashfield Road and Chesterfield Road are posted fairly and accurately and do not need to be changed. A letter was sent to residents who signed a speed petition, saying that the traffic and speed study was being requested and that the Board planned to bring the issue of speed limits to Town Meeting.

2. Chapter 90 reimbursement requests – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to sign the Chapter 90 reimbursement requests to resurface Old Goshen Road for \$17,153.49, and to shim and chip seal various roads for \$50,861.80. **So voted** (DM aye, DM aye, WS aye).

3. Elections – Change of polling location – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi described the various required steps that Town Clerk Brenda Lessard has taken to change the polling location temporarily to the Anne T. Dunphy School. The Town Clerk's report included that the school is centrally located, it meets ADA requirements, and holding the election there will not have a disparate adverse impact on access on the basis of race, national origin, disability, income or age. Board members agreed that moving the polling location to the school was a good idea, both for convenience and for public health, and agreed that there would be no adverse effect on access to the polls. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to change the polling location for the

November 3 election from the Town Offices to the Anne T. Dunphy School. **So voted** (DM aye, DB aye, WS aye).

Other election matters – In response to a question about the possibility of fraudulent ballots, Charlene described the precautions in place and noted that both the state and the Town Clerk do an incredible job.

4. Licenses –

Extension of outdoor service – Several businesses had received licenses from the town for outdoor table service of food or food and alcohol under a previous order of the governor, and under a new order the town is allowed to extend the time past November 1. Food and alcohol: Bread Euphoria, Dot's Golf, Yellow Barn. Food only: Local Burgy, Williamsburg Snack Bar. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to extend the current licenses for outdoor service to December 31, 2020. **So voted** (DM aye, DB aye, WS aye.) The current licensees will be notified that their licenses have been extended automatically, without the need for a request from them. Other businesses in town will be reminded of the opportunity to apply for outdoor service. Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the application for live entertainment from October 1 to December 31, 2020, Tuesday through Sunday, for music 2-10 p.m. for Dot's Golf. There have been no recent complaints about noise. **So voted** (DM aye, DB aye, WS aye).

5. Town Administrator's report –

Selectmen's office – The Administrative Assistant is now working in the office Tuesdays and Wednesdays and from home Mondays and Thursdays. The Town Administrator is working from home Tuesdays and Wednesdays and in the office Mondays and Thursdays.

Personnel, medical update – The staff member who was quarantined is now back working. This was coordinated through the Board of Health.

Flag donation – A donation was received from Zononi Lawn and Landscape. The flag fund is used to replace flags and brackets along Route 9, and had been depleted. A note of thanks has been sent to Rory Zononi.

Building Supervisor – Building Supervisor Dan Hathaway is resigning because he is unable to devote the amount of time he feels the job requires, at this point in his work life. He would like the Board to fill the position as soon as possible. He will take care of preparing the air conditioners for winter, shutting off the water at Old Town Hall, and overseeing the trim work at the Anne T. Dunphy School. Charlene will follow up with him about the drains on the roof of the Helen E. James Building. In the past in filling the position the Board has relied on a strong recommendation of a person with the appropriate skill set, from the outgoing Building Supervisor. This is still somewhat a hands-on position, because buildings need to be checked regularly, especially ones that are not occupied.

False unemployment claims – Eight claims have been made in the names of current or previous town employees. The Treasurer is documenting the falseness of the claims with the state unemployment department. The employees have been notified, with the suggestion that they take steps about identity theft. Charlene has called the Attorney General's office to see what else the employees can do.

Senior Center personnel – Senior Center Meal Site Coordinator Melinda McCall has recently submitted her resignation; her last day is September 30. The Senior Center Director has looked again at the position and has recommended returning it to 13 hours a week so that the person will handle meal delivery and have contact with the clients and get to know their needs. The Director

has a candidate in mind. The Director recommended that the other changes made at the last meeting be effective November 1. The Board acknowledged and accepted the resignation of Melinda McCall and approved the Senior Center Director to move forward as discussed.

Marijuana cultivation – Charlene reported that a marijuana business is looking at property in town for a cultivation facility and would like to speak informally with town officials about the process, the feasibility of the site, and whether the town would welcome a facility. She and Select Board Chair William Sayre will have a phone conversation with them to talk about the process and to say that the Select Board has no opinion. Charlene has notified the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Building Inspector/Zoning Enforcement Officer. Discussion included the nature of the neighborhood, concern about the odor of outdoor cultivation, and the community agreement as the source of revenue.

Shredding Day – There will not be a shredding day this fall, because Valley Green Shredding is booked up. Charlene will see if there is another firm willing to do a day event in the spring.

Snow Farm Seconds Sale fundraiser – Snow Farm will be holding their annual fundraiser on three weekends in November. Because cars will be lined up on Hyde Hill Road, the organization may need a flagger or police officer. Charlene will recommend that Snow Farm discuss this with the Police Department

MVP (Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness) grant and BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) grant – Charlene spoke with the coordinator for each grant, and funding for the public safety complex is unlikely because it is being located in the flood plain.

Finance Committee vacancy – There is someone interested in the vacancy and has sent a letter of interest. Finance Committee has been invited to a joint meeting October 8. Another person also expressed interest but withdrew because of the time commitment. Charlene will see if he is interested in the vacancy on the Capital Planning Committee.

Farmer's concern about taxes – Chair William Sayre will reach out to the person.

Halloween – The Williamsburg church, the fire department and the library are proposing an event with families invited to drive by.

6. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the minutes of September 10 as presented. **So voted** (DM aye, DB aye, WS aye). Charlene noted that the OPM Committee needs to find someone to take minutes for the committee, as the previous person has left and it is difficult for a committee member to participate and take minutes.

7. Warrant – Selectmen Dave Mathers will review and sign the warrant. Charlene Nardi noted that three items are over budget: police and fire insurance, \$329, because the exact premium was not known at budget time, PVPC dues, \$8, because the assessment hadn't increased in years, and fire truck loan, still working on figuring out the confusion.

Documents used

PVPC Traffic and Speed studies of Kingsley Ave. and High St.

Chapter 90 reimbursement requests

Live entertainment application

Minutes

Adjourned at 11:13 a.m.

Approved:

Clerk