

Minutes
Williamsburg Board of Selectmen
September 28, 2017

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, September 28, 2017, 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 and Denise Banister

Absent: David Mathers

Also present: Kevin Cooper (Masons), Dick Kisloski (Capital Planning), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Leslie Smith (Highland Ambulance), Peter Spotts (reporter, Country Journal), Santo Tomasine (Masons), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

1. Personnel – employee evaluation – Police Chief Denise Wickland – Board members feel that Chief Wickland is very competent, professional, knowledgeable, reliable, efficient and friendly. She is highly respected in town. She responds to concerns and communicates well with the Board. She is a pleasure to work with on committees. She manages her department's budget well. Her officers are courteous and helpful. When it was pointed out that the town residents do not see what the Police Department does and how important it is, there was discussion about how to be more visible, e.g., putting a link on the town website to department happenings (but that takes time). The Public Safety Complex should help with accessibility. Her officers go into stores and talk to people, and are present when parents pick up kids from school. She is not yet on a school information distribution list but the Selectmen's office will look into that. Board members are very pleased that she is the Chief and hope she will be here for many more years.

2. Police – Police Chief Denise Wickland gave her regular report. The Coffee with a Cop program will start next week, with different businesses and different times of day, so that people can drop by and talk about whatever they may be concerned about. To show appreciation for her officers' hard work, she plans to present plaques acknowledging five-year milestones. Regarding the recent house break-ins, officers are changing hours so they will be present during target times. The new cruiser has been ordered; it will be a 2018 model rather than 2017, but at the 2017 cost, because it is late in the year. The expense and labor budget lines are in good shape. She is conducting interviews for new part-time officers and expects to present two recommendations. The department is open for walk-in hours two evenings a week.

3. Highland Ambulance – Leslie Smith, the town's liaison with Highland Ambulance, made her regular report. They had a successful fundraiser; proceeds are earmarked for specific equipment. There are staffing issues and an increased budget to pay better wages; they are also looking at a full-time EMT position and expanding the hours of one of the paramedics. Call volume is up from 40 to 50 calls a month. They are rethinking their relationship with Charlemont, which is far away, and want to create a different mutual aid and intercept services agreement with them. The newer ambulance is a lemon and needs to be replaced next fiscal year or the one after. Cost is \$220,000 and they have \$150,000; Williamsburg's share of the balance will be 32%, spread over the life of the loan. Board members asked for more information on the Charlemont relationship and what happened with the trouble-plagued ambulance, for the January 3 meeting at Highland

Ambulance. Emergency Management Director Denise Banister said that the Williamsburg meets with other towns for training and the emergency services people are well versed in what they do.

4. Helen E. James lawn – request from Hampshire Lodge of Masons – Kevin Cooper and Santo Tomasine of the Masons’ Lodge, residents of the town, introduced themselves and their lodge. They asked to use the James lawn for a community chili cook-off event on Saturday, October 28, sponsored by the seven lodges in the district, with proceeds to benefit organ donation. They will charge \$7 per person to eat, \$15 to enter. They have talked with the town Health Agent and Fire Chief. They plan to bring in tables, have cooking done elsewhere and reheat using crockpots, and ban tents that are not flame retardant; they will do set-up and clean-up. Since they will need electricity for the crockpots, they will meet with the Town Administrator and town electrician. There is apparently no conflict with the people building the ice rink on that day. Board members were pleased at the community event and made several suggestions. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the application of the Hampshire Lodge of the Masons to use the James lot from 10 to 5 on Saturday, October 28, alternate date October 29. **So voted** (2-0).

5. Special Town Meeting warrant – The Board considered two versions of the warrant, one with three articles, one with a fourth article on a vehicle fuel tank.

Article 1 – Public Safety Complex – Chair William Sayre said that the article is now for \$30,000 to hire an Owner’s Project Manager for pre-design services for a Public Safety Complex and reuse of the Helen E. James Building for town government purposes. He explained that new information was received after the large August 31 meeting with five committees (which had discussed approving \$380,000 for a Public Safety Complex or \$575,000 to include use of the James Building). The new plan is to use OPM services to develop a budget, confirm site selection, study use of the James Building, look at three to five options, and help with the selection of an architect. The \$30,000 would have been spent anyway, and this is a better process, to do things in stages and know more before going out to bid for design services. He apologized to Dick Kisloski, member of Public Safety Complex Committee and Capital Planning Committee, for not involving the committees better after the new information was received, and assured him that there would be separate cost estimates for the various options.

Article 2 – street lighting – This article is for \$45,000 to replace street lighting with LED lighting. The cost is estimated at \$42,250 and Dick Kisloski warned against budget creep. Board members noted that the estimate was some time ago, it is just an estimate and not a quote, and it is good to have wiggle room; if the extra money is not needed, it won’t be spent.

Article 3 – Cash Management System – The article is for \$6,400 for conversion and yearly maintenance; a grant is expected to offset some of the cost. The town’s accounting service through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments has urged all participating towns to convert to this system. In response to a question about whether this is a want or a need, Town Administrator Charlene Nardi said that it is an upgrade and an opportunity to get a better system for a function that is needed by the town.

Article 4 – fuel tank – This article is for \$9,000 for a larger fuel tank for diesel fuel, because there is no emergency backup – the company in town has closed and the company in the next town is not open in the middle of the night. While Board members were reluctant to put in infrastructure at the last minute, they felt this was an emergency and could not wait for annual Town Meeting. It was pointed out the article could be put on the warrant and then the Board could move to table it if it seemed premature.

6. Chapter 90 – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to ratify signatures on the Chapter 90 request for \$3949.64 for the Bridge Street bridge and \$43,421.74 for High Street. **So voted** (2-0).

7. Community Compact – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that she and chair William Sayre have been working on a spreadsheet as a tool to see what effect capital spending has on the tax rate. After an article in the paper about another town, they recommend requesting technical assistance from the Community Compact to help finish the project. Board members agreed.

8. Appointments – resignation – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to accept the letter of resignation of David Chase from the Local School Committee, effective October 31, 2017, with regret and thanks.

9. Licenses – Live entertainment – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to grant a Live Entertainment license to Bread Euphoria for Saturdays September 30, October 7, 14, 21, 28, November 4, 11, 18, December 2, 9, 16 for live folk or jazz, 6 to 8 p.m. or 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. **So voted** (2-0).

10. Surplus equipment –

Helen E. James playground equipment – The School Committee has voted the equipment as surplus. The Board decided to ask the Building Supervisor it to inspect it and if dangerous then have the Highway Department remove it; if not dangerous then ask the insurance company what the town needs to do.

Computer equipment from Conservation Commission – The Conservation Commission listed a Lenovo Thinkpad computer with accessories, Canon Powershot digital camera, Canon photo printer, Dell desktop computer with accessories, and a Gateway laptop computer. **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to vote as surplus the computer inventory from the Conservation Commission as listed. **So voted** (2-0).

Select Board office chairs – **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to declare the two offices chairs from the Select Board office as surplus. **So voted** (2-0).

11. Town flag – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the flag design is not quite finished and will be brought to the Board for final approval. The flag for the Hall of Flags in Boston will be quilted and needs to be vertical, portrait style. It was decided that the one for the Board of Selectmen should be the same size as what will be sold to residents, will be 28” x 42”, which is the same proportions as 4’ x 6’, and landscape style. There should be two, one to put up and not take up and down, and one to keep rolled up and to carry in a parade.

12. Personnel review process – A new process was proposed, whereby one Selectman (or the Town Administrator) is assigned to review the employee, and gathers comments from others, meets privately with the employee, and then reports back to the Board. The advantage is that it is possible to be more direct about employee performance and have a better dialogue about things that need to be addressed. It was suggested that this process be used this year for two employees,

as an experiment, Bill Turner and Charlene Nardi. This will be discussed next meeting. The Board can also discuss having a Select Board liaison with department heads.

13. Select Board calendar –

Yearly calendar – At a suggestion of the chair, the office has put together a single calendar with all the Select Board activities for the year. It could be kept in the agenda folder and updated by hand and by email during the year.

Meeting with Finance Committee – Thursday, November 16, at 6 p.m. was suggested

14. Town Administrator's report –

Municipal aggregation – electricity – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the rate was locked in for 18 months; source is green energy. Information will go out in the newsletter and there will be an information session.

Valley View Road – She is communicating with Town Counsel.

Insurance for vacant buildings – She reported MIAA insurance quotes for two vacant buildings: Haydenville Library, \$678 (\$782 with terrorism coverage); Old Town Hall, \$3480 (\$3818 with terrorism). This is \$200 more than is in the budget. She has not yet received a quote for the Helen E. James building. She will meet with the insurance agent about details. She reminded the Board that the new definition of non-vacant buildings is minimum 31% occupied by municipal activities. Some suggestions were to get quotes from other insurance companies, and to ask the Historical Society to contribute or to get a policy on contents, or to let the Historical Society know that the town's insurance is changing.

Insurance for vehicle fleet – She is making sure the list is accurate.

Depot Road culvert – Town did not get the grant. There is the possibility of getting \$75,000 from Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) next year, and use Chapter 90 funds for the balance.

Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) – There is still a vacancy.

Town information signs – Coffee with a Cop will be posted. Special Town Meeting will be taken down and put back up later. It was noted that only the top item is likely to be read, and that when something is up for a long time people don't see it any more.

Generator at Police and Fire Station – There is a red light not a green light; Marney Electric has been called. Furnace is not connected to the generator; she is waiting for quotes.

Trees at Police and Fire Station – She will ask Rory Zononi to clean it up.

Free cash certification – All information has been submitted; certification is needed by the October 16 Special Town Meeting.

Dunphy School roof repair – A reasonable quote has been received and she has authorized Building Supervisor John Hoogstraten to move forward with the repair before the cold weather.

Fire Station gear washer – She reported that the gear washer has been installed. The Fire Chief has offered use of it to the Police Department. A letter will be sent to M.J. Moran, who donated materials and labor.

Highway holiday party – The Board authorized Friday, December 22 at noon. The Highway Department uses the day to prepare for the party.

Sustainable Materials Recovery Program award – The state Department of Environmental Protection awarded \$3850 in recycling dividend funds. Thanks to Kathleen Casey of HRMC, the Board of Health and all residents who recycle.

Tree hearing – Planning Board will conduct the tree hearing October 12 for the tree at the corner of Hatfield Road and Dansereau Road; notice has appeared in the newspaper and been posted on the tree and in public places.

Public Safety Complex forum – Date is October 10.

Personnel – sick time request – Charlene reported that the town Personnel Policy is silent on whether sick time can be used if a child is sick; requests are handled individually. A request has been received and she recommended approval; the Board approved it. The Board confirmed that the Town Administrator has authority to approve requests under the personnel policy.

15. Correspondence – Correspondence included a copy of the recently approved act authorizing the town to continue the employment of James Ferron as Firefighter to age 70; notice of Zoning Board of Appeals hearing tonight on a Special Permit for a solar array; and bridge inspection report for Bridge Street bridge.

16. Minutes – After some discussion of the paving of Valley View Road and the need for Mr. Mazzarino and Mr. Bosworth to file the Notice of Intent with the Conservation Commission, **motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the minutes of September 14 as written. **So voted** (2-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DB/WS) to approve the Employee Evaluation for Town Collector Bonnie Roberge on September 14, 2017. **So voted** (2-0).

17. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrant.

18. Miscellaneous – Town play – Play is last weekend in October.

Highway personnel – New temporary employee is working well. He will be paid a blended overtime rate only when he works over 40 hours a week.

Highway – A Board member said that the South Main Street curb paving looks good. The Petticoat Hill chip sealing will be in the spring, to allow the patching to cure.

Picnic – The picnic committee is recommending having two co-chairs next time.

Documents used

- Agenda and notes
- Masons' application for use of James lawn
- Special Town Meeting warrant
- Chapter 90 request
- Resignation from Local School Board
- Live entertainment license
- List of surplus computer equipment from Conservation Commission
- Proposed personnel review process
- Selectmen's calendar
- Minutes and employee evaluation
- Warrant and expense report

Adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Approved:

Clerk