

*Minutes*  
*Williamsburg Board of Selectmen*  
*January 30, 2020*

The members of the Board of Selectmen met in regular session on Thursday, January 30, 2020, at the town office. The chair called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m.

Present: Denise Banister and David Mathers

Absent: William Sayre

Also present: Dan Banister (Highway), Amy Bisbee (Planning), Charlene Nardi (Town Administrator), Eleanor Warnock (Administrative Assistant)

OPM Steering: Jim Ayres, Mitch Cichy

Fire: Jason Connell (Chief), Daryl Springman (Deputy Chief)

Police: Jason Soukup (Sergeant), Denise Wickland (Chief), Peter Fisher (Officer candidate)

1. Planning Board – Amy Bisbee, chair of the Planning Board, updated the Board on the things the Planning Board is thinking about to improve the zoning regulations. They are very interested in detached accessory apartments, especially for enabling people aging in place to have extra income and for the town to have more rental properties. In the past the town was not in favor; they want to see where the town is now. They are thinking about changes for ground-mounted solar arrays to make the process work more smoothly. They are interested in signs, especially internally lit signs. Discussion included that signs inside a building can be lit internally, the prohibition is just about outdoor signs; that the list of businesses not in compliance with the signage part of the 2003 zoning bylaw includes practically every business in town, and that the bylaw needs to be revised to reflect what the community wants.

2. OPM Steering Committee – Mitch Cichy and Jim Ayres, co-chairs of the OPM Steering Committee, reported that the committee has revised the amount requested for the next step for the public safety complex from \$385,000 down to \$180,000. The things that are omitted in the new plan are construction documents and construction bidding. The plan will include the schematic design phase, as well as analysis of the James Building, geotechnical borings, site survey, and testing for hazardous materials. Several scenarios will be explored, including repurposing the James Building, having a free-standing building with the James, or having a free-standing building without keeping the James.

3. Fire Department – Fire Chief Jason Connell and Deputy Chief Daryl Springman gave their regular report. Three recent incidents involved cardiac arrests and one resulted in a saved life. Calendar year 2019 had a record number of calls, 379, of which 14 were fire-related and 179, or 47%, were sick person incidents. Because of the large number of calls in a short period of time, the department brought in a stress management team to help department members deal with the impact. There have been a number of complaints asking the department to investigate various issues, including code violations and issues with short-term rentals. The Training and Labor budget lines are doing well; the Expense line is also doing well and they have been able to complete some projects that were put off last year. The chief's car has some rust and will need body work. Engine 2 has intermittent primer/relief valve issues, they are not sure what is going

on. They are working on replacing Engine 3, the mini pumper. Air packs have had issues; they will change to a different battery brand. Major fires have been an incident in Ashfield in November that took all night where Williamsburg was a major player, and a motor vehicle fire on 143. Acting Highway Superintendent Dan Banister noted that Chief Connell was responsible for the saved life, he was there by himself doing CPR, and today the person is able to function because of Chief Connell's actions. The Board expressed appreciation for Chief Connell and said they were very proud him. A Board member also noted that the ambulance service says how vital it is that the fire department responds to medicals.

4. Elections –

Special Town Meeting – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to sign the warrant the Special Town Meeting, which will be held February 24 at the Dunphy School at 7 p.m. **So voted** (2-0).

Presidential Primary – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to sign the Presidential Primary warrant. **So voted** (2-0).

Town Caucus – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to sign the warrant for the Annual Town Caucus. **So voted** (2-0).

5. Licenses – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to approve the Live Entertainment Permit, D.J., for American Legion Post 236 in Haydenville for Saturday, February 1, 6 p.m. to 12 midnight. **So voted** (2-0).

6. Name of Board of Selectmen – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that the statewide Selectmen's Association is changing its name to Select Boards Association, in order to be inclusive of women, and many communities are making a similar change. This will be raised at a future meeting when all members are present.

7. Appointments – **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to appoint Holly Hendricks to the Planning Board, for a term to expire June 30, 2024. **So voted** (2-0). **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to appoint Steve Snow to the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration Committee, for the duration of the committee. **So voted** (2-0). It was noted that both of these residents came forward because of the request on the town signs.

8. Town Administrator's report –

Review of meetings and dates – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reviewed the upcoming dates, including the meetings with the candidates for Senior Center Director on February 3 and 10.

Budget, legal expenses – Charlene reported that the Legal Expenses budget line is running very low, because of the things that are in court.

FRCOG highway bids – Charlene reported that she and Acting Superintendent Dan Banister went to a training at Franklin Regional Council of Governments for handling purchasing of Highway supplies. She said that she learned a lot and there will be less for her to do than under the Hampshire Council of Governments system.

Resident concern about taxes – A resident expressed frustration that the tax rate is so high. Charlene plans to work with Paul Wetzel, co-chair of Finance Committee, to put together an explanatory history of how the tax rate was built.

Trash hauling – The current prevailing wage is \$47.50, which is \$20 more than last year. Kathleen Casey of the Hilltown Resource Management Coop (HRMC) plans to fight the price increase.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Charlene and Acting Highway Superintendent Dan Banister will be going to Springfield February 12 to advocate for the town's two projects, Mountain Street and Mill River Greenway.

Chapter 90 – She reported that the town has been awarded \$18,000 extra in Chapter 90 funds and that Acting Highway Superintendent Dan Banister recommends purchasing a grapple. This will be useful for trees, drainage, rocks, and brush. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to authorize Acting Highway Superintendent Dan Banister to spend up to \$10,000 for a grapple for the wheeled excavator. **So voted** (2-0).

UMass study on vehicle fuel consumption – Charlene withdrew her recommendation about participating, having learned that the town would have to pay to have the equipment installed, subject to reimbursement, and the town would have to make quarterly reports. Board members supported her conclusion.

Lights – Charlene reported that she had learned from National Grid that the town installed LED's on some National Grid lights, and didn't do some of the town's lights. The options are all undesirable: the town to replace/restore the previous lights, the town to purchase the lights from National Grid, or National Grid to replace/restore the lights at the town's expense. There have also been complaints about the lights. The RealTerm Energy company was supposed to manage the LED replacement and there have been issues. She noted that there is a downside of accepting grants.

School retro-commissioning – The school is using a lot of electricity. They are looking into doing retro-commissioning. Green Communities may pay for a portion of it.

Personnel – Police – Town Administrator Charlene Nardi reported that she and Select Board member Denise Banister met with Police Chief Denise Wickland about the renewal of the chief's contract.

9. Police – Appointment – Police Chief Denise Wickland introduced Peter Fisher and recommended that he be appointed to the position of part-time Police Officer. In answer to questions, Peter Fisher explained that he used to live in Haydenville and liked it, he has worked in Chesterfield with some of Williamsburg's officers, law enforcement is in his family. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to appoint Peter Fisher to the position of part-time Police Officer, for a term to expire June 30, 2020. **So voted** (2-0). It was noted that this appointment is subject to the standard six-month probationary period. Board members welcomed him and thanked him for stepping forward.

Detail rate – Chief Denise Wickland recommended that the town increase the detail rate to \$50 per hour, with time and a half for night or emergency. In addition there is 10% administrative charge for non-Mass. Highway details, and a cruiser charge of \$12 per hour. She explained that most towns go with what the state police recommend, because that is what contractors expect, and that the last time she requested an increase was three years ago. She added that it is hard for the town when its charge is lower than in other towns, because the town wants the officers

working here and not in other towns. **Motion** was made and seconded (DM/DB) to set the detail rate at the recommended \$50 per hour, effective immediately. **So voted** (2-0). It was noted that while officers can make a lot more working a detail than working a town shift, the police officers' manual requires officers to work their regular shifts.

Second annual police and fire 5K run/walk – She reported that the event is scheduled for Sunday, April 26, and the proceeds will be put toward a police and fire wellness program and a house numbering program.

10. Correspondence – Correspondence included a letter from PVPC about the TIP program; notice of forestry cutting on Walpole Road; and copies of letters from Town Counsel about tax title matters.

11. Minutes – **Motion** was made and seconded to approve the minutes of January 16 as presented. **So voted** (2-0).

12. Warrant – Approved and signed the warrants: payroll warrant WP20-17 for \$164,451.73, and expense warrant W20-17 for \$117,504.33, payable 2/5/20.

Adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Approved:

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Clerk