



**SELECTBOARD**  
**TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON**  
**TOWN HALL**  
**1 SOUTH ROAD**  
**WESTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01027**

Minutes of August 20, 2018

The meeting convened at 5:00 p.m.

Present from Selectboard were Phil Dowling, Art Pichette and Maureen Dempsey. Finance Committee members present were Tom Cleary, Steve Holt, Peter Montague, and Tad Weiss. Other officials present were Accountant Joe Boudreau, Highway Superintendent David Blakesley, ZBA Shirl Morrigan and Laurie Sanders, Assessor Dolores Thornhill. Also present were Financial Advisor Clark Rowell, Roy Bishop, Ginny Curtis, Paul Silvernail, Mary Powers, Joan Powers, and Tom Martin. Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

Warrants were signed for:     Payroll: \$69,026.21  
   Vendor: \$156,277.46  
   Special Town Meeting, September 11

Minutes of August 13, 2018 were approved.

- Financial planning for town meeting article for the public safety complex:  
The town meeting set to seek borrowing authorization for the reconstruction of a public safety complex is September 11. If the article is approved the projected timeline for the project is to go out to bid at the beginning of 2019, begin construction in the spring of 2019 and complete construction at the end of construction season 2020. A note can be issued during the construction phase and once the project is complete a bond will be issued. Estimated cost is \$4.3 million and estimated interest rate is 4.5%; conservatively. Discussion ensued regarding term of note and determined that it could be from 10 up to 30 years, with 20-22 being the target. The FY19 final budget was reviewed as to capital expenditures, overall budget, tax rate, and potential impacts on future tax rates. The school roof and highway truck note will be paid off in FY19, one year early. Discussed a scenario of paying down \$50,000k on the new truck being purchased in FY19. That option was not included in FY19 budget and is off the table. The bucket loader and highway truck being purchased in FY19 will be in one note and not due until FY2020. Discussed options of borrowing for the equipment. When the term of the note is up it will be determined how to proceed, dependent in part on the status of the safety complex project. If the project is approved all 3 items may be rolled into one bond. C. Rowell described the ongoing capital planning has included the safety complex project and equipment. The design of the plan was to knock off the school roof and highway truck debt before becoming indebted with the project. The idea is to level capital expenditures. J. Boudreau described the effect that leveling the capital budget will have on the overall budget and tax rate then submitted a spreadsheet to support his comments. Discussion ensued regarding the highest impacts on the operating budget, free cash, and stabilization fund. C. Rowell warned not to rely on and plan to use free cash to make first payment on the note. Discussion ensued regarding S&P bond ratings. The Selectboard voted to issue a one year note for up to \$285,000.00; broken down as \$135,000.00 for the loader and \$250,000.00 for the highway truck (final invoice may be lower). Discussion ensued regarding

fees paid to C. Rowell.

- Highway Department updates, David Blakesley reported:
  - Lyman Road & Southampton Road scheduled for oil & stone August 27 & 28.
  - attended the continued hearing for the solar facility. A revised site plan was submitted. David reported there is an issue with the drainage system where the switching station is. He has been in contact with Meredith from CVE to address it.
  - completed the work at the Westhampton Elementary School.
  - catch basin cleaner is in town and 2/3 of the work is done.
  - working on North Road drainage system.
  - submitted a Project Request in the amount of \$39,673.00 for crack seal on various roads. On a motion and second, voted unanimously to approve the project request.
  - submitted a Payment Request in the amount of \$5,250.00 for removal of pavement markings.
- Report of illegal sign on Northwest Road:

Phil reported that he spoke to Building Inspector Tom Quinlan regarding the sign for the sawmill on Northwest Road. The sign is legal and located as allowed by the building permit. P. Silvernail made inquiries regarding the Zoning Enforcement Officer's position on this matter, Phil responded.
- Green Communities Technical Assistance:

Catherine Ratte from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission reviewed the five criteria the town must meet to achieve status as a Green Community. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission has \$7,500.00 in funds allocated to assist the town with meeting three of the five criteria (1, 3, & 4). Jim Barry from DOER can assist with 2 & 5. Westhampton has met criteria 1 with the adoption of the solar bylaw. Criteria 2 requirement is a letter from town counsel stating that the procedures set in criteria 1 allows implementation in less than one year. Assistance can be provided by the UMass Clean Energy Center for criteria 3, inventory of municipal energy use. Criteria 4, fuel efficient vehicles; exempts most highway department and emergency vehicles. Criteria 5 requirement is adoption of the stretch code by approval of town meeting vote. There is \$125,000.00 available in funds once the five criteria are achieved. Typically funds are used to tighten up buildings. Completed projects will qualify the town for future funds. Projects are retroactive two years for purpose of criteria 3. Discussion ensued regarding a town meeting schedule. One will be needed to accept the tax negotiation of the solar facility, and article for the adoption of the stretch code can be included. If it's within 8 weeks the deadline for this year can be met. Otherwise, it waits until next year.
- Ground-mounted solar facility application, Tax Consultant search:

Dolores Thornhill and Roy Bishop provided information regarding the assessment of ground mounted solar facilities. R. Bishop reviewed his experience in taxation issues, including solar taxation. He described the process he follows when working with solar companies and reported current market trends. Taxes will be collected from the land owner for land and the solar company's PILOT. R. He would get involved right away if upon authorization from the Selectboard, unless the company prefers to wait for approval. Maureen motioned to enter into a contract with Roy Bishop consulting to negotiate a tax agreement with CVE, North America, Inc. for a solar facility on the property of Meehan at Montague Road (SP 213 application). Phil second. Motion passed 3-0.

- Fire Department updates, Chris Norris reported:
  - submitted questions to solar developer on Concerns regarding the Fire Department
  - seeking endorsement to apply for the Mass. Interlocal Insurance Assoc. Risk Management Grant in the amount of \$10,000.00 (maximum allowed) for the installation of smoke and carbon detectors in the Town Hall and Annex. Voted to authorize Fire Chief Chris Norris to apply for the grant.
  - conducting school inspections next week in conjunction with the building Inspector.
  - Hathaway blasting schedules notices have been posted. The notifications are working well.
  - the annual fireworks on South Road will be the last Saturday in October (27<sup>th</sup>). Chris will issue a press release to the Gazette, Country Journal, and post to Social Media, Bell Tower, Town Website, and notify surrounding towns.
  - attended the Annual International Firefighters Conference in Dallas. Completed his 3 year term on the board. The trip included networking and an expo.
  - new staff, Perry McDonnell & Cody Guessing-Ames- both Firefighters, have been measured for new turnout gear; included in the annual budget
  - Lee Douchkoff retired from the Fire Dept. Mark Gould is Deputy Fire Chief and Christopher Brooks is Captain. Keith Robbins resigned. Fire and EMS staff is robust. Adding to EMT roster.
  - Capital Planning included a utility truck for the Fire Department estimated at \$35,000.00. Been working with Dept. Conservation and Recreation surplus program. They have a 2010 jeep Liberty used by the National Weather Service available at no cost. Chris was seeking approval to accept the donation and defer town funding of fire department utility vehicle from the capital plan. Art made a motion to accept a 2010 Jeep Liberty from the Dept. Conservation and Recreation surplus program. Maureen second. Motion approved 3-0.
  - while at the Firefighters Conference Chris spoke to FEMA. He has been annually seeking approval to apply for grants. This year's grant requires a 5% match on \$25,000.00. The Fire Dept. budget will cover the 5% if awarded. Notice of awards should come in 2-3 weeks.
  - renewed certification of Mass. Chief Public Procurement Officer Designation, good for 3 years. Thanked the Selectboard for their support in the achievement. Provided supporting documents.
  - re-designated as a Chief EMS Officer. Provided supporting documents.
  - re-designated as Chief Fire Officer. Provided supporting documents.
- Amended Non-Exercise of Right of First Refusal to purchase property owned by Thomas Martin and Julie Held of 140 Easthampton Street, Westhampton, MA. Parcel ID 331/024.0-0030-0000.0 (Map 24.0 Block 030 Lot 0) and described as lot 2 on Plan recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds Plan Book 233, Page 113 to include Book 4017, Page 198 under Record Land Tax Lien(s). Tom Martin explained the amendment includes a change in the price of the purchase agreement from \$120,000.00 to \$112,000.00. There are no other changes. No comments.

Phil motioned to accept the amendment and to not exercise the Right of First Refusal to purchase property owned by Thomas Martin and Julie Held of 140 Easthampton Street, Westhampton, MA. Parcel ID 331/024.0-0030-0000.0 (Map 24.0 Block 030 Lot 0) and described as lot 2 on Plan recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds Plan Book 233, Page 113, Book 4017, Page 198 under Record Land Tax Lien(s), for the purchase agreement amount of \$112,000.00, second by Maureen. Motion passed by roll vote 3 yes, 0-no.

- Ground-mounted solar facility application, Peer Review Consultant search:  
The Planning Board requested a third party Peer Review of the solar facility application (SP213), conducted by VHB. The contract submitted by VHB is under review by Town Counsel. On a motion and second, voted to approve the contract between VHB and the Town of Westhampton Planning Board, contingent on contract from Town Counsel and to authorize Cheryl Provost to sign on behalf of the Selectboard Chair, Phil Dowling.
- IT upgrades:  
Northeast IT was sole respondent to request for quotes. Reviewed the service agreements to complete the upgrades. Art motioned to accept the quotes and approve the contract agreements with Northeast IT for System upgrades to the Account and Administrative Assistant workstations in the amount of \$2,192.25, new server and related software upgrades in the amount of \$17,731.96, rack installation (for server) in the amount of \$ 1,430.00, antivirus & backup monthly recurring in the amount of \$92.50. Rolled over minutes will be applied to the service hours to reduce the cost.
- Payroll:  
Treasurer Patty Cotton, Accountant Joe Boudreau, and Administrative Assistant Cheryl Provost met with Harper's Payroll Services to see a demo and learn of their services. Patty and Cheryl agree their platform is idea for processing the town's payroll and reports. Harper's clients include over 50% of Mass. Municipalities. Funding will be needed to move forward. Patty was seeking authorization to proceed with a schedule to secure the funding from Finance Committee or Town Meeting for the services of Harper's Payroll. On a motion and second, voted to authorize the Treasurer to seek funding to secure the services of Harper's Payroll.
- Special Town Meeting:  
Reviewed the article and motion for the September 11 Special Town Meeting. Voted to approve the warrant.
- Hampshire County Farm Bureau's Tractor Ride:  
Maureen and Cheryl spoke to Richard Jaescke, a Director of the Hampshire County Farm Bureau. Both reported Richard stated the bureau is unable to require a plate for all the tractors participating in the parade. Cheryl added that Richard stated that the event will be cancelled as they can't meet that requirement set by the Selectboard. He is interested in meeting with the Selectboard at a future date to discuss possible future events to see if an agreement could be made. So noted.
- Correspondence:  
The Zoning Board of Appeals submitted an email request seeking authorization for opinion from Town Counsel regarding the procedures of site plan approval and permit under the solar bylaw. Phil forwarded the request to Town Counsel. The response will be disseminated by Cheryl.
- The next Selectboard meetings will be 7:00 p.m. September 4 & 17.
- Documents submitted:  
-Chris Norris, certification of Mass. Chief Public Procurement Officer Designation  
-Chris Norris, Chief EMS Officer

- Chris Norris, Chief Fire Officer
- Suggested Forms of Article, Motion, and Ballot Question from Locke Lord LLP
- Budget Summary from Town Accountant Joseph Boudreau
- tax consultant agreement from Roy Bishop Consulting
- Peer Review consultant contract from VHB
- copy of email request from the ZBA to access opinion from Town Counsel

- Documents signed:

- Project Request in the amount of \$39,673.00 for crack seal on various roads
- Payment Request in the amount of \$5,250.00 for removal of pavement markings
- Non-Exercise of Right of First Refusal to purchase property owned by Thomas Martin and Julie Held of 140 Easthampton Street, Westhampton, MA. Parcel ID 331/024.0-0030-0000.0 (Map 24.0 Block 030 Lot 0) and described as lot 2 on Plan recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds Plan Book 233, Page 113, Book 4017, Page 198 under Record Land Tax Lien(s), for the purchase agreement amount of \$112,000.00
- contract agreements with Northeast IT for System upgrades to the Account and Administrative Assistant workstations in the amount of \$2,192.25, new server and related software upgrades in the amount of \$17,731.96, rack installation (for server) in the amount of \$ \$1,430.00, antivirus & backup monthly recurring in the amount of \$92.50
- Tag Sale permit for Susan Sicard, 36 Kings Highway through October 31

Adjourned meeting at 7:53 p.m.

Approve: \_\_\_\_\_  
Philip Dowling, Chair

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Arthur Pichette

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Maureen Dempsey