



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

Minutes of February 3, 2020

The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

Present from Selectboard were Phil Dowling, Maureen Dempsey, and Teri Anderson. Others present were Scott Tirrell (highway), Steve Holt, and Shelby Macri (Country Journal). Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

Warrants were reviewed, approved by vote, and signed for:

Payroll: \$81,811.24

Vendor: \$31,168.63

- A review of the agreement for the Westhampton Highway Dept. Acting Foreman was held with Scott Tirrell. Scott will be acting foreman effective February 14 for a period of six months to fill the position left open by the promotion of Bill Jablonski to Superintendent. Scott had no questions on the agreement. Phil motioned to approve the agreement. Second by Teri. Discussion opened. Teri requested to change the last two sentences of paragraph 7 of the agreement to follow the Personnel Policies & Procedures in regards to posting a position. (text of ¶ 7, sentences in question underlined) “An evaluation shall be submitted to the Selectboard prior to completion of term as Acting Foreman. This evaluation shall be completed by the Highway Superintendent. If the evaluation is average or above on the scale of this evaluation form, permanency as Foreman will be offered to employee. If the evaluation is below average on the scale of this evaluation form, the position will be opened to additional applicants”. Phil motioned to amend the agreement to strike the last two sentences from paragraph 7. So voted. Phil motioned to approve the agreement as revised. Second by Maureen. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.
- A review of the Agreement Between the Town of Westhampton and the Highway Crew was reviewed. The agreement was updated to remove Bill Jablonski, upgrade Scott Tirrell to Foreman, add Zachary Pruzynski and remove Alex Antosz. The agreement follows the effective date of the current agreement, through June 30, 2021. Phil motioned to approve the Agreement between the Town of Westhampton and the Highway Crew effective February 14, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Second by Maureen. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.
- Department Updates:
Public Safety Complex Building Committee, Phil reported the architect has stated that the costs of construction of a new safety complex is up, both in the cost of construction and to build for what is needed. The architect has not completed the design so actual estimate is not determined. If construction doesn't happen this year then funds will have to be put in for the police department. There are issues with their office and they cannot be expected to continue to work out of the annex. We have the funds for the design and bid phase and have not talked to Senator Hinds and Representative Sabadosa at this stage. Phil comprised a letter to Hinds and Sabadosa

to seek state funding for the construction of a new Public Safety Complex. The letter points out that the Hampshire Regional High School is located in Westhampton but serves five towns in the district. The need to provide public safety to the high school is a regional service and should not be provided by only the Town of Westhampton. He plans to send the letter to them. Discussion was held as to whether the letter will be sent from the board or personally and it was concluded to be sent from the board. Teri motioned to authorize Phil to send the letter to request funding for the construction of a new public safety complex. Second by Maureen. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.

Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Provost reported:

-the Treasurer had kicked back a payment request for the Alternate Building Inspector. The request in question was for office hours held by the alternate while the Building Commissioner was away. Submitted was two sessions of office hours for two hours each at \$50 per hour, total of \$200. The information was reviewed and it was determined that the payment appeared to be an agreement between the inspector and alternate and should be paid. Phil motioned to approve the payment request. Second by Teri. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.

-received a report of violation of unregistered motor vehicle bylaw at 225 Northwest Road and 57 North Road. Will have the police department look into it.

- FY21 Budget:

IT Support proposed for \$11,108.00; a decrease of \$3,554.00 from the FY20 budget. Decreases in monthly support from 5 hours to 4 hours; no projects in plan for FY21; email conversion to add two departments, Fire and COA, for a total of 11 email addresses at the new domain "westhamptonma.org". The Police Dept. and Assessors office need new computers. Inventory of IT equipment and electronics is maintained for a replacement plan for the town offices, Highway Dept., Fire Dept., and Police Dept.

Raises proposal was discussed. A recommendation from the Selectboard typically comes later in the budget process after departments have had the opportunity to present a request. Phil explained historically raises are 2-2 ½ % overall in measure with Prop. 2 ½. Individual departments or officials may receive an additional increase if they provide valid representation for such. There is no standard policy or grading system in place. Cost of Living increases have been discussed with Finance Committee in the past. Teri reported that the COLA has been at 2 or under in recent years. The Selectboard and Finance Committee will meet later in the budget process to discuss raises. The board will review a 2% increase overall to start.

Proposal to fund a planner was discussed. Teri explained this is to be proposed as a consultant rather than an employee since the hours could be sporadic and on as needed basis. The consultant will be used to assist the Planning Board with the permit application process. The expertise of a professional would be valuable and could reduce legal fees. The consulting may also work with the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee with the revisions of Westhampton Zoning Bylaws. Teri asked Steve Holt of his knowledge of the Hazard Mitigation Plan and noted that it needs to be implemented. She asked if it needs to be revised first to include a municipal vulnerability component for climate change and impacts, another item that a consultant could provide assistance with. Steve is aware of the plan but was not involved with its development, noting that former Fire Chief Chris Norris and Highway Superintendent David Blakesley were. He will need time to review it. Teri will work on a budget number to propose to Finance Committee for the Town Planner.

A draft description of Assistant Town Clerk was provided to review over time. The concept is to provide clerical support in the office to remove the duties from the Administrative Assistant and to assist during busy times such as street listings and elections. A final version will be dependent on funding. The position is based on an average of five hours weekly with understanding those hours would fluctuate according to demand. The position could also be trained to scan documents for archiving. This would be an hourly paid position. Phil proposed \$25 hourly for budgeting purposes with extra allowed if additional hours are needed for a proposal of \$7,500.00. Phil motioned to propose FY21 Assistant Town Clerk budget at \$7,500. Second by Maureen. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.

- Appointment list needs to be updated for a list of vacancies and consideration of upcoming appointments.
- Proposed shared services with Southampton:
Cheryl reported John Martin, Chairman of Southampton Selectboard contacted her to learn if Westhampton is interested in combining building inspections (Commissioner/Inspector) together to create one position shared between the two towns. Tom Quinlan holds the position in both towns separately. The Southampton Select Board learned that he is seeking employment in other towns. They want to look into the option of sharing him as one employee to create a full time position in hopes to keep him in place. Cheryl asked if the board would like to open discussion with Southampton and how to proceed if so to move forward efficiently. The board agreed to open discussion and Teri moved to authorize Phil to discuss a shared inspector with Southampton. Second by Maureen. So voted.

Teri mentioned Franklin Regional Council of Governments provides inspection services and they have excellent reviews. She would like to know if they're the service to towns formerly belonging to Hampshire Regional Council of Governments. With the board's approval, she will look into inspector services offered by the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to learn if they're accepting towns in the area and the cost. So approved.

- Licenses:
Voted to approve a Tag Sale Permit effective through October 31, 2020 for Margot Cleary of 180 Southampton Road
- Correspondence:
 - Tax Title information and procedures from the Tax Collector. Teri would like to discuss a policy from the Selectboard to not evict individuals that are elderly or "at risk". Phil replied it would need to be done with KPLaw. To be added to future agenda.
 - Dept. of Environmental Protection, "Disaster Debris Management"; Phil attended a symposium in 2014 for the Municipal Vulnerability Program. The topic was mostly concerning rising water and climate change issues. Westhampton deals more with damage from strong storms. During storm emergencies the town looks to the Selectboard and Emergency Services for assistance. There were questions of who checks on elderly and persons with disabilities during such events. It was noted that Chris Norris used to organize a meeting of all emergency personnel, including fire, police, highway, EMS, Selectboard and Administrative Asst., and TRIAD to review protocol and update contact information. The meeting would typically take place late fall/early winter before winter weather arrived. There was discussion of continuing such meetings and the importance of maintaining contact between the departments. Phil spoke of installation of a generator at a new safety complex so the building could be used as a warming center.

-Preliminary FY2021 Cherry Sheets from the Dept. of Revenue (informational only).
-Comcast TV updates (informational only).

- Other issues:

Teri reported she and Maureen went to 225 Northwest Rd on February 2 to provide information for social services. There was no one there. Teri and Maureen had not spoken to Police Chief White. The Notice to Quit was sent January 29 by certified mail with return receipt request, Constable, and First Class mail.

- Next meeting: 7:00 p.m. February 18, 2020. Meet with Finance Committee February 4.

- Documents submitted:

- highway dept. foreman employee evaluation form
- draft Assistant Town Clerk job description
- payment request for the Alternate Building Inspector
- FY21 IT Support budget proposal

- Documents signed:

- Agreement Between the Town of Westhampton and the Acting Highway Foreman February 14, 2020 through August 13, 2020
- Agreement Between the Town of Westhampton and the Highway Crew February 14, 2020 through June 30, 2021
- Letter to Senator Hinds and Representative Sabadosa seeking funds for Public Safety Complex
- Tag Sale permit through October 31, 2020 for Margot Cleary, 180 Southampton Road
- Payment request for Alternate Inspector; office hours for two hours each at \$50 per hour, total of \$200 for Nov 27 & Dec 3

Meeting adjourned at 8:50p.m.

Approve:

Philip Dowling, Chair

Maureen Dempsey

Maureen Dempsey

Teri Anderson

Teri Anderson