



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

Minutes of May 11, 2020

The meeting convened at 7:00 p.m.

Present via zoom conference from Selectboard were Phil Dowling, Maureen Dempsey, and Teri Anderson.

Others present via zoom conference were Bill Jablonski (highway superintendent); Tom Martin, David Blakesley, & Robby Armenti (Board of Health); Dave White (police chief); David Antosz (fire chief); Barbara Cook (TPEA Committee); Tom Cleary (Finance Committee); Melissa Nuttleman; and Judy Wayne.

Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

Minutes of April 13 & 27, 2020 were reviewed and approved as amended by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.

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

Payroll: \$81,994.37

Vendor: \$130,080.25

Town Caucus

- COVID action:
Board of Health would like to deputize police dept. Under Governor's order #31 where the board has authorization to do so to enforce the regulations of public health during the pandemic. They requested that the Selectboard direct the police dept. to accept the direction of the Board of Health if deputized. Discussion ensued regarding whether the Selectboard needed to take action since the order authorizes the Board of Health to do so. Teri moved to authorize the Westhampton Police Dept. to work with the Board of Health if deputized to enforce public health regulations during the COVID-19 emergency period. Second by Maureen. So moved by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.

Cheryl requested authorization to purchase wall-mounted hand sanitizer dispensers to be placed at the entrances of the annex and town hall. Discussion ensued regarding styles of dispensers and if they're needed. Cheryl reported that the Governor announced that one of the requirements for all phases of the state re-opening plan will require availability of hand sanitizer, among other items. For any hope to have them before large events such as town meeting they need to be ordered soon since they're all on back order. Teri motioned to authorize the purchase of five wall-mounted, manual hand sanitizer pump dispensers for the town hall and annex. Second by Phil. So moved by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.

Discussed requirements in order to phase in re-opening to boards and committees and public service. Cheryl reported some of the smaller committees struggle with the ZOOM meetings and suggested they can begin to meet in the hall in the near future. Two committee members had

been in the office during a meeting in order to use the WiFi. Phil made recommendation to notify board and committee chairs that no one is allowed in the office without prior consent of Selectboard or Administrative Assistant and if they have to meet in person they must discuss it with the Selectboard and Board of Health first. So noted and agreed. Selectboard and Board of Health to bring ideas for requirements to begin opening to be reviewed at next meeting. Robby Armenti reported that the library trustees want to discuss re-opening with the Selectboard. Teri suggested adoption of a town-wide policy for re-opening with each department giving input on their operational needs under reopening plan.

A location needs to be determined for the Annual Town Caucus scheduled for June 8. Options were discussed. Voted to hold the caucus at the Westhampton Highway Garage. Face masks or coverings will be mandatory.

Tom Cleary reported that Representative Lindsay Sabadosa and Senator Adam Hinds announced the state is looking to cut local aid in FY21, waiting to see if there's federal funding before a decision is made. Tom suggested to establish a 1/12 budget for July and hold off on setting FY21 budget until more information is available, perhaps in August. May be looking at significant cuts, as much as 20%.

- Highway Department updates, Superintendent Bill Jablonski reported:
 - finished sweeping roads
 - finishing grading roads
 - finishing cleaning equipment (winter)
 - the fuel bids will be in next week, Bill will respond before the deadline of May 22
 - request to advertise for the crew position and authorize himself, Cheryl, and a Selectboard member to conduct the search and make a recommendation to the Selectboard. They need to bring someone on and the timing may be good to receive applications with people out of work. Phil moved to post for crew and to authorize Bill, Cheryl, and Phil to conduct the search and make a recommendation to the Selectboard. Second by Maureen. Discussion opened. Teri questioned if the search should wait given the uncertain funding for FY21. Phil and Maureen agreed that the department has been working shorthanded and the Selectboard should do something to help. Discussion ensued regarding Scott Tirrell's term as interim Foreman and the procedure to fill that position permanently. That term ends in August, same as Bill's probationary period. The interviews for crew can be in June with a potential start date in July. Teri asked if there's any thought to not fill the position in order to find the 20% Tom Cleary spoke of in state aid cuts. Bill replied he hoped not. Motion called and passed by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.
 - made two requests for transfer between appropriations from Highway Machinery Fuel Account, one to transfer station account and the other to Highway Administration Account. Phil moved to transfer the amount of \$7,500 from Highway Machinery Fuel Account to Transfer Station Account and the amount of \$1,000 from Highway Machinery Fuel Account to Highway Administration Account. Second by Teri. So moved by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.
- Board of Health, Robby Armenti reported:
 - they received gloves and masks for the distribution at the caucus, town meeting, election, and transfer station. Kits will be put together in paper bags to be handed out. Regarding re-opening, at their meeting the board discussed meetings of boards and committees to be held only in the

meeting hall. Phil directed the Board of health to send their list of recommendations to Cheryl. He added that the Selectboard will also be following state guidelines.

- Treasurer: Cheryl reported that Treasurer Patty Cotton awarded the borrowing for the design and engineering of the public safety complex in the full authorized amount of \$236,000 to Greenfield Community Bank with interest rate of 1.4% for a term of one year, with option to pay early. Documents are available to be signed upon approval. Phil motioned to approve the note issued as described. Second by Teri. So moved by roll vote of 3-yay, 0-nay.
- Town Property & Energy Assessment Committee, Barbara Cook reported:
The Energy Assessment of the buildings is Friday (May 15). Discussion was held regarding how to gain information for what is required when applying for Green Communities Grant funds. Discussion was held regarding the status of the bids for the roof of the town hall.

B Cook also requested Selectboard approval to allow the Fire Department to look at the roads at Pine Island (private roads) to be sure they're still wide enough for access by emergency vehicles. She had discussed it with Fire Chief Antosz who suggested the support. So approved.

- Teri moved to authorize a Memorandum of Understanding with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission to include the Town of Westhampton in the grant application to assist communities with administering and submitting projects for reimbursement under the Green Communities Act. Second by Maureen. So moved by roll vote 3-yay, 0-nay.
- Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Provost requested May 21 & 26 as vacation days. So approved.
- Fire Dept, Chief Antosz reported:
The draft ambulance agreement between the Town of Westhampton and City of Easthampton had been reviewed and revised by town counsel. Easthampton accepted all but one revision. They request to revise the statement "Easthampton will insure that adequate insurance coverage is carried on all ambulances used within the Town of Westhampton naming Westhampton as an additional insured." by striking where counsel added "...naming Westhampton as an additional insured." Discussed the purpose of the statement and what the objection is from Easthampton. Dave questioned it since it has not appeared in previous ambulance contracts. He will find out if there is an additional cost to Easthampton and Cheryl will ask counsel if it's standard language and what the ramifications are if it's removed. Discussion will continue at next meeting.

Dave reported he received the notice of non-operation of the current town ambulance. Town of Longmeadow no longer interested. The Town of Hampden may be interested in it and looked at it. If they're not, Asst. Fire Chief Steve Holt and Fire Deputy/EMS Coordinator Mark Gould suggest to donate the stretcher to Easthampton as there's no use for it outside of ambulance service. The department will keep the stair chair.

- Chief of Police Dave White inquired if a decision is made on Memorial Day activities. There was discussion of acknowledging the day on some level without public activities. The Selectboard agreed that no public ceremony will be held. Steve Holt agreed to work on something with the scouts. The flags will be placed at the cemetery. Other details to be worked

out.

- Tag sale permit:
Reviewed a request for a tag sale permit to Renea Anderson of 12 Chesterfield Rd. and considered issuance. Discussion was held as to whether tag sales were allowed or not under the Governor's order. There was also discussion of term of permit. Declined to issue the tag sale permit until a determination can be made that it is an allowed activity under the Dept. of Public Health and Governor's orders.
- Town meeting warrant:
Reviewed the warrant of the Annual Town Meeting and Election. The warrant is required to be posted no later than June 19 and is required to be submitted to the Finance Committee two weeks prior (June 5). The warrant will need to be finalized at the next Selectboard meeting. A location will need to be determined, options were discussed and will be reviewed over the next two weeks. Guidelines will be needed regarding facial masks/coverings and distancing. Options were discussed in the event the Moderator opens the meeting and continues it for up to 30 days.
- Annual appointments review:
Reviewed the list of officials whose terms end June 30.
- Shared Building Commissioner:
Phil reported that Southampton posted the position and he would like to participate in the selection process.
- Declaration to fly U.S. flag:
Phil recommended a declaration to fly the official Town of Westhampton flag at half-mast until sunset on May 15 in honor of the passing of a local veteran. So moved.
- Stantec Consultant Services Inc. contract:
Phil reported he reviewed the contracts and has concerns. He requested authorization to work with Stantec on the contract and bring it before the board at their next meeting for review and approval. So moved.
- Correspondence:
 - Election procedures. Cheryl reported in response to an inquiry from Tom Cleary regarding conducts of election where Tom suggested he was ineligible to vote at the Presidential Primary. Cheryl explained that he was eligible to vote as an unenrolled voter, which required him to select a party ballot to cast his vote. Tom had previously filled out the proper application to change his party enrollment from Unenrolled to a party and the change was entered into the system but did not generate on the voters list of the Presidential Primary.
 - Mass. Audubon. Lynes Woods Wildlife Sanctuary trail had not been shut down, but also had not been advertised as open. Reopening guidelines will be posted and the society requested Selectboard recommendations. The Selectboard agreed they prefer the trail be left open but not to post it publicly as such. Phil will relay that message to the society.

-email report from an anonymous sender claiming of a hate sign posted in town was reviewed. Dave White replied he did not find anything outside of freedom of speech. Discussion was held regarding determination of hate speech and local sign regulations. It was agreed something needs to be done in response to the report. Teri offered to call the office of the Attorney General for information and guidance.

- Documents approved to be signed:
 - Treasurer's note in the amount of \$236,000 issued by Greenfield Community Bank
 - Memorandum of Understanding with Pioneer Valley Planning Commission
 - transfer between appropriations in the amount of \$7,500 from Highway Machinery Fuel Account to Transfer Station Account
 - transfer between appropriations in the amount of \$1,000 from Highway Machinery Fuel Account to Highway Administration Account
- Next meeting: 7:00 p.m., May 26, 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 9:20 p.m.

Approved by vote of the Selectboard at virtual meeting held May 26, 2020

Philip Dowling, Chair

Maureen Dempsey

Teri Anderson