



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

Minutes of August 31, 2020
Meeting held via ZOOM

The meeting convened at 6:00 p.m.

Present from Selectboard were Phil Dowling (Chair), Maureen Dempsey, and Teri Anderson. Others present were Deborah Ecker (KPLaw). Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

The Selectboard voted by roll call, 3-yay, 0-nay, to enter into Executive Session at 6:00 p.m., pursuant to G.L. c. 30A, section 21(3), as the Chair declared that discussion in a public meeting may have detrimental effect on the town's potential litigating position with respect to Cotton Tree Service, Inc., et al. v. Planning Board of the Town of Westhampton, et al., Hampshire Superior Court, C.A. No. 1580 CV 00112. Open session will resume at

Adjourned Executive Session and returned to Open Session at 7:00 p.m.

Present from Selectboard were Phil Dowling (Chair), Maureen Dempsey, and Teri Anderson. Others present were Eric Weiss (Pioneer Valley Planning Commission), Bill Jablonski (highway superintendent), Todd Alexander (Local Inspector & Emergency Management Director), Tom Martin, David Blakesley & Robby Armenti (Board of Health), Susan Bronstein, and Ginny Curtis. Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

- COVID-19 actions:

Phil introduced Eric Weiss from Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) to discuss possible assistance with FEMA & CARES grant application procedures. Phil explained that the town has Todd Alexander, Emergency Management Director, and Susan Bronstein to work on submittals for grant funds and wants to be sure deadlines are being met. E Weiss described two rounds of COVID phase funding. Tom Martin spoke of information received from Dept. of Public Health regarding grant funds. Foothills Health District used contact trace grants awarded to the district. There was question if those grant funds go directly to the district or the town to be paid to the district, and how that will be reported. E Weiss noted that the short-term immediate need is to submit information to the correct agency. The next step is ongoing monitoring of expenses and grant funds. Phil reported the town submitted for estimated expenses through June 30. Based on list and population the town was awarded access to \$144,000. Of that, \$28,000 in grant funds were received. Phil questioned when the next grant period is, adding the town needs to get a FEMA grant submitted by September 25 and are in process of doing that. It won't be a big amount since many of the supplies were from MEMA for PPE and other items. The largest expense has been from Westhampton Elementary School. Hampshire Regional School District has their own access to grants. Things they're not getting covered are going to be expensive if remote learning is the process, also janitorial costs. Phil described a proposal for a shared

daytime custodian to work in the elementary school and other municipal buildings to sanitize on a regular basis. E Weiss asked Phil to define what PVPC is being asked to do. Discussion ensued regarding the position of COVID Coordinator, the details are still being worked out. Phil suggested Susan Bronstein could fill the position if she is interested. Someone in the background to make sure we're on track is needed to look at grant applications, work with the coordinator, and with the schools. E Weiss asked Susan if she knows what needs to be submitted. She replied she has an idea, she has a distribution list. There was discussion as to what Susan's role is in collecting expenses to determine what is CARES and what is FEMA. All expenses should be submitted to FEMA, some will be rejected. Those items should be covered by CARES. T Martin reported that in Goshen the Town Administrator is doing FEMA applications. B Jablonski spoke of the role the Emergency Management Director should have in the process, adding there are specific trainings for it. T Alexander reported he met with a MEMA Rep, the subject they discussed was related more to boots on ground. A lot of grant items fall on account/finance in the state. E Weiss reported PVPC has individuals that assist towns at different levels. He may be able to assist through his position. The town needs to define what is needed. Phil explained someone that can make sure the town is meeting deadlines and following reporting requirements. E Weiss needs to take that back to his staff, noting there is a need for keeping track after September. Phil explained primary contacts are Cheryl Provost, Susan Bronstein, Tod Alexander, Phil Dowling, Teri Anderson, and Joe Boudreau. E Weiss returned to topic of Foothills Health District funding and the need to coordinate with them for reporting.

Teri reported the town should have an entity account in SAM (System for Award Management). Susan set up a user account for herself and will need access to the town account. Annual registration is required, reminders are sent. Phil, Cheryl, and Susan agreed to work on registering the town as an entity.

Robby Armenti asked if the board received updated recommendations for Hampshire Regional High School re-opening plans. Board confirmed. Robby asked if the Agricultural Commission received the complaint from Barbara Pelissier. Confirmed and the committee is meeting September 8 to discuss.

- Highway Department updates:
Phil reported that Bill Jablonski has been superintendent since February. There was a 6 month period to see how he's doing with the job. Phil used a list of skills to rate Bill's performance and reported that Bill excels each category. From his own interaction with Bill, Phil reported that it has been a pleasure to work with him. He's had to take on a lot of things he didn't need to as foreman. Teri and Maureen concurred with the review. Phil motioned to appoint William (Bill) Jablonski as permanent superintendent of highway department through June 30, 2021. Second by Maureen. So moved by vote 3-years, 0-nays.

Bill Jablonski reported:

-received a letter from MassDOT for a bridge project on Perry Hill Road over North Branch of Manhan River. Attempts to contact someone from the state for more information have been unsuccessful so far.

-last week helped Fire Chief David Antosz with fire extinguisher inspections in town buildings

-ordered the new generator, needs to be grounded to be up to code

-cleaning catch basins

- mowing roadsides
- fixed steps at town hall
- helping in town hall with Clerk for election prep
- oil & stone completed on Southampton, Laurel Hill, and Edwards roads
- working on parking lot at Westhampton Elementary School

Phil reported the Municipal Vulnerability Grant was received and responses for award could be any day.

- Building Commissioner:
Teri reported she collected job descriptions and will have a draft put together for the next meeting.

Todd spoke to licensing agreement for electronic permitting. He questioned the software agreement and procurement laws under 30B. The contract does not describe what the contract is for. The proposed agreement is for 3 years at \$4,000 per year with a cost of \$1,000 for each user. It's unclear if the 4 licenses are included in support and asked to have that clarified. There is a threshold of \$10,000 for using sound business practice for purchase of supplies and goods, above that amount requires seeking 3 written quotes. A three year contract exceeds the threshold. Tom Quinlan is familiar with two different permitting software options and provided that the alternative option will cost Easthampton up to \$40,000. He had made recommendation for Point Software. Phil motioned to reach out and offer a one year agreement with Point Software and, if agreed by Point Software, to authorize Phil to enter into and sign a contract for \$4,000. Second by Maureen. So moved by vote 3-years, 0-nays.

Inspection Fees

Teri reported she has no objections to proposed fees. Maureen concurred. Phil motioned to adopt a new fee schedule for electrical permits as proposed effective October 1. Second by Teri. So moved by vote 3-years, 0-nays.

Ginny Curtis requested a formal notice that the Selectboard is not responding to the General Bylaws in action to 0 Main Road. So noted. Teri explained two notices had been sent to the operator and to landowners, one from Select Board covering motor vehicles and the other from Building Commissioner covering zoning. The actions of the Zoning Enforcement Officer will take care of both. Phil reported if more information comes forward Tom Quinlan (Zoning Enforcement Officer) will report it. The Board asked for an update from Tom Quinlan at next meeting to get a timeline for the bridge construction in VT necessary to remove the remaining vehicles and to determine if business activities are taking place at 70 Main Road residence without the proper permits.

- Reviewed Affidavit of Intent to purchase land held under Chapter 61 Forestry, consisting of 92.34 acres located at Chesterfield Road, known as Map 3, Lot 1 and recorded in Hampshire County Registry of Deeds Book 1969, Page 159, currently owned by Patricia Lewis. The affidavit states the property is in a purchase agreement with Shippen L. Page and Anne F. St. Goar and that they intend to maintain the property in Chapter 61 for a minimum of five years. The board confirmed they reviewed all information and agreed exercise Right of First Refusal does not apply. Notice will be given to the Board of Assessors.

- Town Property and Energy Assessment Committee, Art Pichette spoke to an email submitted by the committee. The Town Energy and Assessment Committee continues to meet regularly to assess Town property maintenance and improvement projects. In addition, they have attempted to assist in the application process for the Green Communities Program to the extent possible. They have made some progress in this regard, they need some contact with the Selectboard in general. The committee believes the town should move forward to select one of two firms that have submitted proposals to the Committee. The scope of work that would be covered in this initial application would cover lighting/electrical work only. Other eligible projects would be included in future applications after analysis of their eligibility and the Town's wishes coupled with anticipated payback projections. The committee wishes to remain involved in these applications but believe there is a need to push forward with at least this initial application soon. In addition to choosing a firm to assist in the application process they are informed that the next big step is data collection and data reporting of energy usage (electrical, propane, oil and diesel) for the Town Hall, Annex, Library, Highway Garage, Elementary School, Blacksmith Shop and Library. The Committee does not believe that this work is their purview/responsibility. They make no recommendation who in town could do this work but note that some towns have engaged the PVPC to do this data collection. The town has a certain number of hours per year available through District Local Technical Assistance and maybe have some for this year. Phil replied the board needs to what the cost to the town will be. Some is paid through Eversource. Art replied that all they're doing is assisting with the application process. He requested Phil attend the next committee meeting. So noted.

Art reported the committee is moving along with the roof project. There are a number of issues related to the highway garage roof, it needs repairs. Tried to get contractors to look at it to give an estimate unsuccessfully. Art questioned if it could be added to the town hall roof contract. Cheryl replied not. Ginny Curtis suggested a review of the warranty.

- Appointments:
Vacancies to be reviewed September 14. Phil motioned to appoint Patricia Cotton as Assistant Town Clerk through December 31, 2020 at \$25.00 per hour to be paid through the Town Clerk Expense Account. Phil made recommendation to review the position further and discuss at a fall town meeting. Second by Maureen. So moved by vote 3-yeas, 0-nays.
- Tax Collector ad and job description were reviewed. Teri made recommendation to post ad with "applications accepted until job is filled". Voted to approve the ad as revised and adopt the job description and post notice of the job. Teri requested a copy to post at the Career Center.
- Anti-racism action:
No updates
- Pollinators committee, Maureen reported the committee can go through the resolution and make amendments which could be voted on at a town meeting.
- Designation of Chief Procurement Officer postponed.

- Council On Aging has gained approval from the church for use of the church parking lot on Wednesdays from 9-10:30 am for Chair Yoga. A member of the church board reported the church parking lot is Town property and therefore permission should be given from the Town too. The COA seeks approval of the use of the church parking lot for this purpose from the Selectboard. Phil would not want to approve it without physical barriers. He suggested using the lot on the other side (easterly) of the church. Discussion ensued regarding traffic, visibility, safety. Voted to authorize outdoor chair yoga with recommendation to use the east side of the church lot for safety reasons. Alternately, the back (westerly) lot can be used if the area can be secured with physical barriers. Questions to be directed to Maureen.
- Ginny was recognized and she asked if there is an update on the Code Red System reporting on weather situations. Phil replied no discussions have been held. David Antosz, Fire Chief, is in charge of Red Code.

Warrants were reviewed and approved by vote 3-yay, 0-nay for:

Payrolls: \$71,509.28

Vendor: \$63,588.96

- Next meeting: 7:00 p.m., September 14, 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Approved by vote of the Selectboard at virtual meeting held October 13, 2020

Phil Dowling
Maureen Dempsey
Teri Anderson