



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

Minutes of April 12, 2021  
Meeting held via ZOOM

The meeting convened at 7:30 p.m.

Present from Selectboard were Phil Dowling (Chair), Maureen Dempsey, and Teri Anderson. Others present were Tom Martin, David Blakesley, Robby Armenti, (Board of Health), Susan Bronstein (Covid Coordinator), Bill Jablonski (highway superintendent), Katrin Kaminsky (Town Clerk), Ira Brezisky (Treasurer), Dave Antosz (Fire Chief), Ginny Curtis, Shelby Macri. Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

- Board of Health, Tom Martin reported:
  - there have been 71 cases total in 36 households overall for Westhampton
  - currently 4 cases in 3 households
  - B117 English variant of virus is dominant
  - Foothills Health District applied for \$250,000.00 through a Safe Act Grant to update and transform the health district
  - Westhampton allocated \$161,500.00 through the American Rescue Plan, learning more about the program
  - septic plan signoff for public safety complex is required pre-construction; information sent to Phil

David Blakesley emphasized the importance of the requirements of the septic design are met for the building permit for the safety complex. Discussion ensued regarding the notice and requirements and what has been done so far. Phil will be sure it's taken care of.

Robby Armenti reported:

- receiving requests to go over recommendations for pickle ball
- vaccine ambassador is holding informational session April 21
- Tom schools have had covid cases appear in schools but no transmission in the school systems

Covid Coordinator, Susan Bronstein reported:

- more money is coming available
  - CARES money can pay for some of the HVAC improvements at the elementary school.
- Discussion ensued regarding engineer study of systems.

- Highway department updates, Superintendent Bill Jablonski reported:
  - cleaned up after another high wind storm
  - moving stuff out of the safety complex into salt shed, highway garage, to Steve Holts (Asst. Fire Chief)
  - patching dirt roads

- grader broke down, got it back in operation
- construction office for police department delivered and set up at back of highway garage

Dave Antosz reported the highway department has done a great job taking care of that.

- Treasurer, Ira Brezinsky reported:  
 -The town has funds in an Other Post-Employment Benefits (OPEB) Trust. Goal is to have 100% of funds for retiree benefits, dental/health/life insurance in 20-30 years, in accordance with Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) 75 recommendations. An actuarial study to determine what actual liability is also recommended periodically. This has not been done so liability is unknown. Studies are conducted by accounting firms. This is a good time to complete one in preparation to go to bond for safety complex. Received a quote from Odyssey Advisors out of Connecticut for \$5,500.00; payment could be spread out over two years. Seeking a couple more quotes. Discussion ensued regarding details of OPEB Fund and funding for study. Teri motioned to authorize Phil as Chief Procurement Officer to enter into an agreement for a study after Ira seeks 3 quotes. Second by Phil. So moved by roll call vote:

Phil-yes

Maureen-yes

Teri-yes

-Recommended review of Investment Policy Statements, one for the OPEB Trust Funds and the other for General Funds & Long-Term Funds. Ira described the purpose and benefits of investing. Regulation of OPEB investments falls under Chapter 203C (Prudent Investment) of Mass. General Laws; General Funds under Chapter 44 §55 of Mass. General Laws; Trust Funds under Chapter 44 §554 of Mass. General Laws. Policies to be approved by the Selectboard. Brian from Bartholomew is available to meet with board and answer questions. Board will review and decide at next meeting.

- Public Safety Complex Building Committee, Phil reported:  
 -demolition contractor arriving Monday  
 -will have a contact for engineering services for next meeting
- Pollinators Committee, Maureen Dempsey reported:  
 -completed proposed Resolution Declaring Westhampton to be a Pollinator-Friendly Community to be presented to voters at Annual Town Meeting. The committee is interested in continuing as an educational and awareness committee. Phil made recommendation to move on that following town meeting vote on resolution. The library received a grant to do some planting to encourage pollinator habitat. They are planting some flowers, herbs, high and low bush blueberries and two blooming trees. The plantings should not affect anything at the library or mowing.
- Tom Jenkins was recognized. He is administering a timber harvest on Spruce Hill Road. In the past logs have been skidded down Spruce Hill Road onto town property. Other loggers have done so at various times, the last one left a mess. Tom was seeking authorization to use the location and offered to clean up after previous firm and himself. Discussion ensued regarding permitted use of town property for a landing for logging. Discussed contracts between land

owner and logger. Teri motioned to authorize Tom Jenkins to use the town property as the landing area for forestry, with agreement that he cleans it up at the end of the project. Second by Phil. So moved by roll call vote:

Phil-yes

Maureen-yes

Teri-yes

- Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness, Teri reported: Public listening session is April 29. Notice is posted to town website with forms available for opportunity for public written comments. Posters will be put up around town.

Reviewed draft grant application. Working with Amanda Kohn, Laurie Sanders, John Shaw on Action Grant. Amanda working on securing Chris Curtis as consultant. Amanda is also reviewing list of potential consultants to do work on social resilience topics. Discussion with Grinspoon Foundation regarding Cooler Communities Program; they're offering \$3,000.00 grant to the schools to work on sustainability projects and curriculum in the schools. In addition, they will provide \$4,500 worth of in-kind staff support and the grant will support another \$4,500 of their time. A project Manager is required; Teri offered to serve as interim. Grant applications due May 7. Three main components are resilience master plan, open space and recreation plan update, and social resilience. Discussion ensued regarding the timing of the grant, town in-kind match, and American Rescue Plan Funding as potential cash match.

- Administrative Assistant, Cheryl Provost requested authorization to work remotely April 14-21. April 19 is a holiday (Patriot's Day). So moved.
- Audit Engagement Letter was reviewed. Phil motioned to approve the letter and to be authorized to sign. Teri second. So moved by roll call vote:  
Phil-yes  
Maureen-yes  
Teri-yes
- Annual town meeting draft warrant was reviewed. Phil reported the Finance Committee completed deliberations last week and made financial recommendations on the FY2022 budget. Phil spoke to school budget increases above 2 ½ percent and the impact it has on town department operating budgets. Discussion ensued regarding overrides to fund school budgets and other budget practices. Capital Planning had made two proposals to Finance Committee and they did not make a recommendation on them. Spoke to current debt of reminder of Public Safety Complex Design & Engineering and the highway pickup. Finance Committee recommends to combine \$120,000.00 highway pickup and \$76,000.00 Public Safety Complex Design & into one 5 year note with estimated payment of \$34,370.00 in FY2022.

In capital planning schedule is funding for highway garage breakroom to be completed. The breakroom was in original plans when garage was built. The highway crew currently takes breaks in the garage among the equipment and diesel fumes. Phil emphasized the conditions are not appropriate for a break area. An area to build a breakroom exists in the garage but was not included in the original construction. The capital plan includes \$30,000.00 for this. There was

\$90,000.00 budgeted for the town hall roof. To date, approximately \$50,700.00 was spent. Received a proposal of \$7,000.00 for gutters to add to that contract, leaving \$32,300.00 remaining in the appropriation. Break room was not included in budget; an estimate is needed. The Finance Committee discussed transferring funds from the roof to fund refinishing the floor of the town hall. The walls of the town hall need to be painted first. Phil proposed an article to complete the break room and another article to refinish the floor and paint the walls. Article 15 town hall floor and paint/ Article 16 highway garage break room.

Phil motioned to approve warrant as amended with two new articles. Second by. So moved by roll call vote:

Phil-yes

Maureen-yes

Teri-yes

- Memorial Day update, Maureen reported:  
Steve Holt will work on it. Don't have a speaker.
- Phil reported he secured a tent for town meeting. He will reach out to Telectract to secure sound.
- Phil made motion to approve the FY2021 Firefighter Safety Equipment Grant award and to authorize David Antosz or Philip Dowling to sign the contract in the amount of \$8,380.00. Second by Teri. Discussion ensued regarding grant authorization and signatories.
- Correspondence was reviewed:  
Cheryl Fuller-Malinowski requested a response to her report of town highway department depositing material on her property. Phil advised no action. So moved.

Minutes of March 15 & 30, 2021 were reviewed and approved by roll call vote:

Phil-aye

Maureen-aye

Teri-aye

Warrants were reviewed and approved by roll call vote:

Phil Dowling-aye

Maureen Dempsey-aye

Teri Anderson-aye

Payroll: \$83,162.79

Vendor: \$29,688.27

Next meeting: 7:00 p.m., April 26, 2021

Adjourned meeting at 10:05 p.m.

Approved by vote of the Selectboard at virtual meeting held April 26, 2021.

Phil Dowling

Maureen Dempsey

Teri Anderson