



The Selectboard
TOWN OF WESTHAMPTON
TOWN HALL
1 SOUTH ROAD
WESTHAMPTON, MASSACHUSETTS 01027

MINUTES of the MEETING

Monday, April 24, 2023, at 7:00 PM

The Westhampton Selectboard scheduled a regular meeting to be held on Monday, April 24, 2023, at 7:00 PM at the Town Offices, 1 South Road, and via video-conference.¹

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM by Maureen Dempsey, Chair pro temp.

Present: Scott Johndrow, Maureen Dempsey; Present by video conference: Phil Dowling.

Also Present:

In person: Bill Jablonski, Steve Holt, Chief David White, Tom Jenkins, Jon Callahan

By video conference: Mary Lou Burgess; Kim Darby

Call to Order

Ms. Dempsey, Chair Pro Tem called the meeting to order at

FY 2024 Town Meeting Warrant

The board conducted a review of all Town Meeting Warrant Articles proposed for the 2024 Annual Town Meeting.

Articles 1 through 32 were reviewed with discussion and deliberation on all items.

Tree Removal Services / Tree Warden Salary and Budget

Mr. Tom Jenkins, the elected Tree Warden, was present to discuss Article 33 - his request for funding for tree services along public ways in Westhampton.

The board considered the request, the practicality of getting all work done in one year, the potential of performing the work in a single year, and the necessity to comply with proper procurement rules. Further, the board reviewed the scope of the budgetary impact to the overall appropriation. Mr. Jenkins confirmed that the scope of work could be distributed over the course of several years, and that he could prioritize trees that posed a greater risk to property and safety first.

After extensive deliberation, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dowling

To amend Warrant Article #33 (Tree removal services) from \$100,000 to \$40,000, and to amend the request for funds for the Tree Warden's Operating Expense (account #015294.700) to \$5,200.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0. (7:38 PM)

Mr. Steve Holt requested that the tree warden's salary be increased from \$754 per year to \$1,000 per year. The board deliberated briefly, and then it was MOVED by Johndrow,

¹ Pursuant to Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2021, the meeting was conducted as a "hybrid" (in-person / remote) meeting. Members of the public could access the meeting in person, or connect via "zoom" teleconferencing via internet – Meeting ID#: 870 4390 0582.

SECONDED by Dowling

To adjust the Tree Warden's salary to \$1,000.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0. (7:40 PM)

Other Warrant Items

Mr. Finn noted that Article 35 would move certain money from Free Cash to Stabilization, and explained how free cash and stabilization differs. Mr. Finn suggested that the Selectboard consider how much free cash they would like to move into Stabilization.

Mr. Holt noted that members of the Finance Committee also agreed that it makes sense to move as much free cash into stabilization as possible.

Mr. Finn also noted that Article 36 would use free cash to reduce the debt.

FY 2024 Budget Discussion

The Selectboard reviewed the budget as drafted.

General comments:

There are adjustments upward in many budgets, but a number are 'one-time' adjustments, and not expected to continue at the same rate of increase.

The use of free cash to balance the budget is not unprecedented.

Department and Committee Updates

Bri Dupras, Board of Health

Noting the warrant article treating the opioid funds, and noted that Mark Bushee (FHD) would not act without consent of the Board of Health. There has been discussion relative to how funds could be used, and by what authority expenditures could be made.

"NaloxBoxes": Ms Dupras noted that the board of health would like to make NaloxBoxes – secure storage for naloxone, to be opened in case of an overdose emergency – available at public locations. The public is invited to reach out to the board of health if they are interested.

Bill Jablonski, Highway

Mr. Jablonski provided an update as to recent applications.

Mr. Jablonski noted that he was working on placing guardrails along a portion of Loudville Road directly abutting the North Branch Manhan River.

Mr. Jablonski also noted that he was working to resolve concerns about dirt-road water flow.

Mr. Jablonski also noted that Mr. Don Fox would be out for a few weeks, but that the Transfer Station would remain open normal hours.

Steve Holt, Public Safety Building

Mr. Holt noted that the public safety building open house was successful.

Mr. Dowling provided an update on the budget, and asked for an additional appropriation of ARPA funds to cover outstanding tasks, including the installation of radio equipment for the police and fire departments.

Mr. Finn noted that, after appropriation of \$30,000, \$135,270 would be remaining in ARPA for further appropriation.

Mr. Johndrow noted his interest in using ARPA funds to outfit the Town Hall and Annex with fire detection and alarm systems.

After discussion, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dowling

To appropriate \$30,000 from ARPA to the Public Safety Building Construction project.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0 (8:36 PM)

Old Business

NO old business was presented.

New Business

A request for a fund transfer was reviewed.

After review, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dempsey

To take \$2,000 from EMS (fund #015232.700) and \$2,500 (fund #015220.700), and transfer \$4,500 to the Safety Complex (fund #015229.700)

3, 0, 0 (8:41 PM)

Administrative

Correction to License – J and D Sales and Repairs

Mr. Finn presented a corrected license for J&D Sales and Repairs. Board reviewed the correction, and signed.

Request for a Tag Sale Permit

A request for a tag sale permit was received from Jesseca Williamson, 60 Burt Hill Road, for the weekend of May 20 and 21.

It was MOVED by Johndrow SECONDED by Dowling

To approve the application as presented.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0. (8:40 PM)

Request for Use of Town Hall

Mr. Finn noted that a request for use of the Town Hall had included a request to allow participants to bring their own alcoholic beverages. After brief discussion, the board

Review Correspondence

voted do not allow alcohol.

Letter from Jon Callahan, 41 Crowley Road.

Mr. Callahan asked that the board consider paving Crowley Road. There was some discussion relative to the cost, the prioritization of road projects, and the benefit to the town.

Letter from Leahy (Comcast) re Tob Hill Road

Mr. Finn noted that the letter provides a price for making full connections with the unserved four houses on Tob Hill Road. Mr. Finn noted that making the final connection on Tob Hill could likely be a contract negotiation point.

Ms. Darby noted her concerns about being unserved, and about having to wait for connections to be made.

Other correspondence received:

Letter from Comcast – re Channel Lineup Change – no action taken.

Review and Sign: Payroll and A/P Warrants: W23-22, WP23-22

It was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dowling

To approve the warrants as presented.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0. (8:59 PM)

Review and Sign: Minutes – April 10, 2023

After review, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dempsey,

To approve the minutes as presented.

VOTED: 2, 0, 1 (DOWLING). (9:01 PM)

Set date for next meeting – May 8, 2023

It was noted that Town Meeting would be on May 13, 2023. Board members will also likely attend the Finance Committee Meeting on April 26, 7 PM.

Adjourn

It was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Dempsey

To Adjourn.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0.

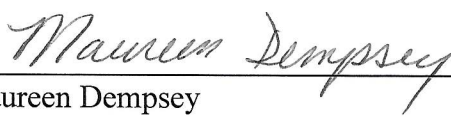
The Board stood adjourned at 9:02 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas C. Finn

Approved by a vote of the Selectboard at a regular meeting, held on May 23, 2023.



Phil Dowling



Maureen Dempsey



Scott Johndrow