



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

Minutes of June 22, 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), David Antosz (Fire Chief), Thomas Martin, David Blakesley, and Robby Armenti (Board of Health), Patty Cotton (Treasurer), and Ginny Curtis.

Minutes were taken by Cheryl Provost.

Phil announced there is no joint meeting with Finance Committee and made recommendation to meet 7:00 p.m. June 26. So moved.

- Highway Dept. Updates, Superintendent Bill Jablonski reported:
 - helped do perc test at public safety building
 - changing signs at transfer station
 - patching roads
 - hazard trees taken down under direction of Tree Warden
 - department using up vacation time
 - fixing rotten blocks at transfer station, patched for now
 - seeking authorization to sign Recycling Services Agreement for bulky rigid plastics between Town of Westhampton and WM Recycle America, LLC.
 - new boxes are in for recycling. Recyclables now being separated.
 - working on getting new fuel tanks going
 - laying out Westhampton Elementary School parking lot for paving related to a grant

Phil motioned to authorize Bill Jablonski to sign the Recycling Services Agreement for bulky rigid plastics between Town of Westhampton and WM Recycle America, LLC, effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021. Second by Teri. So voted 3-yay, 0-nay.

Phil explained the grant Bill mentioned is a Shared Streets Grant through the Dept. of Transportation. Application period opened today. Phil submitted an application and a response will be received within fourteen days.

Bill reported another item that needs consideration is to post foreman position internally. Scott Tirrell's term as interim foreman ends August 13. Phil replied a job description and ad need to be put together for review June 29. So noted.

Maureen reported she received a request from a Lyman Road resident for a speed limit sign. Bill explained a study needs to be completed then the town sends a request to the Mass Dept. of Transportation for approval. Pioneer Valley Planning Commission offers the study once per year

at no cost. It's at the discretion of the Selectboard. Teri asked if there is a process to get on a list to prioritize locations. Bill replied Lyman Road would not be at the top of the list. Phil requested David Blakesley speak to it. David agreed with Bill that Lyman Road is not a priority and confirmed there is a list on file. Phil asked Bill to find the list and share it with the Selectboard. The police department will be requested to put up their speed sign board.

- Tom Martin provided updates from the Board of Health:
 - state phase 2, part 2 started today which includes indoor dining
 - Hampshire Regional High School grab-n-go program running again
 - distributed 20 COVID kits at transfer station Wednesday and Saturday
 - church is going through self-certification in preparation of re-opening services. Looking to start AA meetings in the basement.
 - state grant mostly used. Foothills Health District continuing with contact tracing through Northampton. No new cases reported in town. Still dealing with lack of compliance from Outlook Farm.
- Annual Town Meeting logistics:

Tom Martin reported the Board of Health will be on site for initial approach for people coming in. They will provide masks and gloves. The Board will serve as a model to others.

Discussion ensued regarding individuals not wearing a mask. They must be allowed to participate. They will not be asked if they have a medical exemption. They will be reminded to be respectful of others and maintain distance.

Two accessible sani-cans will be provided, Bill agreed to place the order for their delivery. A bathroom will be available in the school. Discussion ensued regarding cleaning of sani-cans and restroom. Tom volunteered to spray down sani-cans between uses. School janitor will be asked to clean the one in the school. Hand sanitizers will be available in sani-cans, at check-in tables, and on hand of Board of Health.

Discussed secret ballot procedures, if it were to come up. Cheryl will make preparations for secret paper vote.

- Fire Chief, David Antosz reported:
 - he hand delivered the ambulance contract Friday to Chief of Easthampton Fire Dept., to then be delivered to the Mayor for signing.
 - asked EMS Coordinator, Mark Gould to stock up on PPE in case of resurgence. MEMA is weaning off on stocking municipalities. David trying to shop through regular means. Have tubs of surface wipes, may have sanitizer.
 - reached out to scouts regarding volunteering to help at town meeting. Reply received is scouts are not supposed to be doing COVID volunteer services.
- Treasurer, Patty Cotton reported:

Property in tax title at 225 Northwest Road filed in court to Motion to Vacate Judgement filed in the Towns' case against the Kellogg Property. The total owed to date will be \$36,596.29. Court date is June 25. Patty explained that Kellogg claimed she is incapacitated and were in an

agreement with the town. Patty reported the agreement was broken when payments were not made. Patty and Attorney Berenson will attend hearing. Patty also reported there are seven more properties in tax title (as seen in annual report). So noted.

- Phil made recommendation to begin search for a COVID Coordinator, there is a need for the position. So noted.
- Town Property & Energy Assessment Committee:
 - Phil reported he attended a Mass Energy preliminary seminar. A lot of information is available through them. He hopes the committee can take on following seminars.
 - Invitation For Bids for the roof replacement is published. Deadline for submittal is July 6 at which time they will be opened in public.
 - David Blakesley reported the committee is frustrated with trying to get anything done with Green Communities funding. Had a couple contractors lined up to complete an assessment before COVID. Now having a hard time getting anyone out. Meeting next week. Barbara and Art want to see a printed copy of application form. Phil replied they will get access to it, he thinks he has a copy printed.
- Annual Town Meeting Warrant review:
Article 27 to be reviewed June 26.
- Town meeting logistics:
 1. Pop ups for shade
 2. Teri creating spreadsheet with chores and list of names
 3. Sound company will change sleeves on mics between use
 4. Public awareness-overhead pics from Phil to be published on website; reverse 911 notification; Bell Tower
- Phil will not be at the July 6 meeting. The bids for the roof replacement will be opened in public. As Chief Procurement officer, Phil may designate another to open the bids. Phil designated Maureen to open and read aloud the bids received for the roof replacement of the town hall & annex. The bids will be reviewed by the Town Property & Energy Assessment Committee.
- Phil reported he spoke with Tom Quinlan regarding serving as Temporary Commissioner and having a local under him. Tom made recommendation for Walley Marek and Todd Alexander. Phil explained the concept is to hire both with Tom as Commissioner for six months. W Marek and T Alexander are both amiable to doing it and both support the decision of the Selectboard. Tom Quinlan was unwilling to make a choice between the two. Phil motioned to appoint Tom Quinlan as Building Commissioner for \$500 per month and Walter Marek and Todd Alexander as Local Inspectors for \$625 per month each effective July 1 through December 31, 2020. Second by Maureen. So moved by vote 3-yay, 0-nay. Tom will have supervisory and delegation power over W Marek and T Alexander. The jobs will be advertised in early fall to fill permanently.
- Review of Anti-Racism Resolution:
Teri read into the meeting a revised resolution:

“We, the members of the Westhampton Selectboard, are horrified by the recent violent deaths of Black Americans at the hands of law enforcement officials across the country. We recognize that these actions are only the most recent in a long history of violence and are part of the structural racism that has existed in the United States since its foundation. We condemn racism, racial bias, intolerance, and the violence it facilitates.

Therefore, we hereby resolve:

- To identify, through education, conscious and unconscious racial biases that affect our public and personal decision-making processes.
- To work with our Federal and State Legislators, local Municipal Officials, Westhampton Boards, Departments and Residents to examine and challenge societal norms and governmental systems that perpetuate racial inequalities.
- To strive to make Westhampton a welcoming, safe, and inclusive community to all people.

We invite all Westhampton residents to join us in this commitment.”

Phil supports the changes. Teri motioned to adopt the Anti-Racism Resolution as read. Second by Maureen. So moved by vote of 3-yay, 0-nay.

Phil commented that it’s more than a statement, it’s a commitment. Change is difficult. Teri made recommendation it be an ongoing agenda item. So moved.

- Phil recognized Ginny Curtis. Ginny asked Bill how the highway department feels about article 27 (declaration for the protection of pollinators). Bill replied the town does have a lot of open space. If roadside mowing is shut down it becomes a safety issue. If mowing can’t be done until later in the year they’ll be into snow season before it can be finished. Some intersections are mowed more often. The town highway department has worked hard for years to cut back roadsides for better vision and less obstruction. Mowing classes he attended says shade is the worst thing for roads, they don’t get to heat up. The highway department does not use herbicides, they’re not licensed to. Bill explained there are residents that don’t want it mowed in the front of their property and those are passed over until later in the season. Maureen responded that the Right To Farm Bylaw should not be affected by this. Phil will discuss it with Fred Morrison, Conservation Commission member and beekeeper.
- The Annual Town Report will be available at town meeting.
- Maureen reported she received a report from a resident of speeding and gatherings off Tob Hill Road. Police department is aware of it. Discussion ensued regarding ways to reduce activity, such as blocking the road. Bill replied it’s a public road and shouldn’t be blocked off. The best that can be done is stay on top of it, there’s been parties up there for years. So noted.

Warrants were reviewed, approved and authorized Cheryl to sign by vote for:

Payroll: \$85,493.77

Vendor: \$155,295.13

- Next meeting: 7:00 p.m., June 26 (joint with Finance Committee) & June 29, 2020.

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Approved by vote of the Selectboard at virtual meeting held July 6, 2020

Philip Dowling, Chair
Maureen Dempsey
Teri Anderson