



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

MINUTES of the MEETING
Monday, November 20, 2023, at 7:00 PM

The Westhampton Selectboard scheduled a regular meeting to be held on Monday, November 20, 2023, at 7:00 PM at the Town Offices, 1 South Road.

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30 PM.

Present: Dempsey, Bronstein, Johndrow

Interview – Christopher Alexander – “Extra Set of Hands”

MassDOT Co-op Reimbursement Program / UTMCM Reimbursement Program

The board interviewed Mr. Christopher Alexander, who has asked to participate in the “Extra Set of Hands” program, sponsored by MassDOT, as a part-time temporary employee of the Town’s Highway Department.

Mr. Alexander spoke about his interest in the program, and the anticipated benefits of participating in the program to himself and the town.

Mr. Alexander noted that after January 26, he would be eligible to start the program.

Mr. Jablonski noted his support for the applicant and the program, and that the school would have to conduct a site visit to review conditions at the Highway Building.

After brief discussion, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Bronstein

To appoint Mr. Christopher Alexander as a part-time temporary laborer to the Highway Department, at a pay rate of \$15 / hour, contingent on approval of the site by Smith Vocational School and approval by Mass Dot, appointment to commence on or about February 1, and conclude after 160 hours.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0. (7:07 PM)

Police Department

Chief David White was present to speak about a grant that was recently applied for by the department. The \$40,000 grant was awarded to the Town for the purchase of dual band Police Radios; the radios will be programmable, and upgradeable through software; three radios are anticipated to be purchased; the radios will serve the department far better than current systems.

The Selectboard congratulated the Police Chief on receipt of the grant.

Chief White noted that he would like to post the part-time shift opening in January, as he has been unsuccessful finding a part-time officer thus far.

Master Plan Implementation Committee

Structure of Committee, Appointment of Core Members

Present: Ms. Teri Anderson, MVP Committee Chair.

The board considered a recommendation for the formation and structure of the master plan committee.

Ms. Dempsey noted that her first impression was on the committee as proposed was too large.

Ms. Anderson noted that the size of the committee was driven by the consensus of the MVP /

Master Plan committee.

Ms. Bronstein suggested that she agreed with the size and representation of the committee as proposed.

There was some discussion about board overlap – where one person might serve to represent multiple boards; Mr. Johndrow spoke about different representation might be useful and helpful.

There was discussion relative to how the committee might work, what the duties of the committee might be, and whether the committee might act as a project lead, directing or guiding the work of independent board or committee members.

Mr. Johndrow also spoke about the size of the committee, noting that it appeared to be too large.

Ms. Anderson noted that the size of the committee was intended to ensure that all boards had representation.

Ms. Dempsey noted that boards and committees could be approached to appoint a representative to the committee, and that the Selectboard could suggest a starting structure.

Ms. Dempsey asked Mr. Finn to reach out to all boards and committees to appoint members, with the anticipation of initial appointments to be made by the Selectboard in December, and a first meeting in January.

Ms. Anderson noted that the Westhampton MVP Master Plan won the 2023 Comprehensive Planning Award given by Mass Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Department Reports

Highway

Mr. Jablonski spoke about recent work, including prepping snow removal equipment for winter, calibration of sanders, catch basin cleaning, road grading, some tree removal, some brush cutting, some mowing, road prep for winter, salt stocks, etc. Mr. Jablonski noted that crew members have been attending classes through Baystate Roads at UMass;

Health

No member was present. Mr. Finn noted that the “Naloxbox” was mounted in the common hallway, and he would be ordering signs for the main hall to direct people to the location in case of emergency. There was brief discussion about the use of the opioid settlement funds.

Others

Mr. Steve Holt was present to report of building committee work, and the conclusion of the project was near at hand. The single largest outstanding issue is the remaining amounts of money that should be paid to the contractor. The board noted that the issue would be taken up in Executive Session.

Old Business

Library Roof repairs

Mr. Finn noted that the library roof repairs had been completed; however, he asked permission to issue an RFP for the full roof repair as specified by Wally Marek and others. After some discussion, no action taken.

Town Meeting Followup - Perry Hill Rd Extension (sign plan)

The board agreed to sign the plans as presented.

New Business

Proposal - Highway Department Clerk (no action requested)

The board considered a proposal for the addition of a department clerk for the Highway Department. A job description was reviewed.

Mr. Jablonski noted that the addition of a part-time clerk would free him up to pay attention to the work of the department, instead of the paperwork.

Proposal – Use of ARPA funds (no action requested)

Town Hall Insulation

Mr. Finn presented a proposal to insulate the attic areas of the Town Hall, and requested an appropriation of ARPA funding to cover the cost. Mr. Finn noted that he had received a \$6,500 grant from MIIA to offset the \$39,000 proposed cost.

The proposal was reviewed. No action taken, and the subject was tabled.

Proposal – Establishment of a Real Property Investment and Maintenance Committee

Mr. Finn requested approval to solicit for volunteers interested in Real Property Investment Plan Committee. After some discussion, approved.

Capital Planning Committee

Mr. Dowling noted that the Capital Planning Committee needs members.

Mr. Johndrow (Selectboard) noted that he would be reaching out to members of the committee to schedule a meeting.

Unanticipated Business

Mr. Dowling noted that Eversource had approved AEG to complete the work on the lights at the library.

Administrative

Review Other Correspondence

No correspondence was presented.

Review and Sign: Payroll and A/P Warrants: W24-11, WP24-11

The payroll and A/P Warrants were presented for review. It was MOVED by Bronstein, SECONDED by Johndrow

To approve the Payroll Warrant #WP24-11 and A/P Warrant #W24-11 as presented.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0 (8:03 PM)

Review and Sign: Minutes from Previous Meetings

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

To approve the minutes from November 6, 2023, as presented.

VOTED: 3, 0, 0 (8:05 PM)

Set date for next meeting

The board agreed to meet on December 4, December 18.

Executive Session – if needed or requested

It was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Bronstein

To enter into executive session for the purpose of discussing pending litigation, the chair believing that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the Town.

VOTED: JOHNDROW: YES; BRONSTEIN: YES; DEMPSEY: YES. (8:12 PM)

The board entered executive session at 8:12 PM.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, it was MOVED by Johndrow, SECONDED by Bronstein

To leave executive session, and immediately to adjourn.

VOTED: JOHNDROW: YES; BRONSTEIN: YES; DEMPSEY: YES.
(9:12 PM)

Respectfully submitted,
Douglas C. Finn

Approved by a vote of the Selectboard at a regular meeting, held on December 4, 2023.



Maureen Dempsey



Scott Johndrow



Susan Bronstein