

Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
July 11, 2023
4:00 pm
Hybrid Meeting

The open session of the Selectboard of the Town of Whately was called to order on July 11, 2023, at 4:03 pm by Chairperson Fred Baron. Present was Selectboard member Julie Waggoner and Selectboard-elect Joyce Palmer-Fortune. Town Administrator Brian Domina and Highways and Buildings Superintendent Keith Bardwell were also present.

Note: Joyce Palmer-Fortune has been re-elected and is currently out of the country and unable to be sworn-in making her ineligible to vote on Selectboard matters.

1. **Meeting Minutes**: Julie made a motion to approve the Minutes from June 27, 2023. Fred seconded. All in favor. Fred-yes, Julie-yes.
2. **Vendor & Payroll Warrants**: No Comments
3. **Public Comment**: No Comments
4. **Scheduled Appointments**:
 - a. None
5. **COVID19**: COVID19 rapid tests are available at the Town Offices, Library and Police Station
6. **Old Business**:
 - a. **To discuss the next steps towards the replacement of the highway garage:**

Brian provided an overview of the discussions thus far in regard to the replacement of the highway garage. Fred, Keith and Brian recommend that the Board move forward with a programming study that will determine the operational and space needs for the Highway Department. The results of the study will help better define the next steps needed in terms of procurement. The Board agreed to pursue funding for a programming study whenever the next Special Town Meeting is needed.
 - b. **To discuss the zip code public feedback session held on June 29, 2023:**

The Board discussed the zip code meeting that was held the week prior. Fred expressed concern that the USPS would consider closing the Whately post office if the zip code change was pursued. Julie noted that the opinions on the issue tend to be equally divided in favor and opposed to the change. The Board expressed disappointment that

representatives from the post office were not in attendance at the meeting. The Board decided to seek more information about the issue. Julie was going to reach out to Leverett about the Town's experience changing zip codes and Town Office staff will try to make contact with the USPS staff to get additional questions answered.

c. To review, discuss and vote whether to approve the contract with ACE Solar for the installation of a solar array with battery storage at the Town Offices

Brian informed the Board that he, Joyce, Paul Newlin met again with ACE Solar to discuss their requested changes to the contract originally provided. Brian indicated that the changes had been made (e.g. requiring payment and performance bonds, payment of prevailing wages, and including the battery system as the default system). Joyce recommended that the Board sign the agreement. Julie made a motion to enter into the contract with ACE solar. Fred seconded. All in favor. Fred-yes, Julie-yes.

7. New Business

a. To discuss the compensatory time arrangement of non-exempt salaried employees

Brian discussed with the Board that the Fire Chief position is considered non-exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act and overtime payment is required for hours worked beyond 40 hours, despite the position being salaried. This has the effect of any hours worked past the 20 hours required by the Board to essentially be uncompensated. For other positions in town the Board has agreed to a 1:1 compensatory time arrangement. Julie made a motion to provide compensatory time for the Fire Chief position for hours worked beyond 20 hours in a week pursuant to the terms of the Town's Personnel Policy. Fred seconded. All in favor. Fred-yes, Julie-yes.

8. Selectboard Liaison Updates:

Fred informed the other Board members that Tim Drumgool was appointed as the interim chief at South County EMS. Fred mentioned that Tim currently has no interest in filling the position on a permanent basis so South County EMS will be starting the search process in the near future to find a permanent replacement. Fred also mentioned that South County EMS is looking that the amount of trips the ambulance service is making out of jurisdiction and the financial impacts on the system.

Joyce informed the Board that the South County Senior Center received two Service Incentive Grants – one for outreach and the other for transportation.

9. Town Administrator Updates:

Brian informed the Board that the Housing Production Plan has been completed by FRCOG and the Housing Committee and will be reviewed by the Planning Board tomorrow evening. The next step would be for the HPP to be provided to the Selectboard for review and approval.

Brian reminded the Board and those watching about the retirement party for Chief Hannum and several other members of the Fire Department to be held on Saturday (07/15/23)

Brian discussed with the Board a memo received by the Town from the Cannabis Control Commission about requirements for Host Communities to adopt equity guidelines by July 1, 2023. The memo stated that the CCC is required to have regulations in place by November 2023 about how to implement equity guidelines. Brian recommended to the Board that the Town take no action until the CCC adopts regulations in November.

10. Items Not Anticipated: None

11. Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm.

Documents List

Meeting Minutes – June 27, 2023

Warrants: W23-28, W24-02, WP24-02

Proposal from Weston & Sampson for Highway Planning Study dated March 31, 2023

Personnel Policy Excerpt – Section 8 (c) Flex Time

Letter from Town Clerk Amy Lavalley dated July 6, 2023 re: Zip Code Changes

Resignation Letter from Amy Lavalley from Administrative Assistant position

Letters to Selectboard re: zip code changes from:

Judy Markland (July 10, 2023)

Joseph Wicinski (July 3, 2023)

Gail Matthews (July 8, 2023)