

**Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
August 8, 2023  
Town Offices  
Hybrid Session via Zoom  
4:00 pm**

The open session of the Selectboard of the Town of Whately was called to order on August 8, 2023, at 4:01 pm by Chairperson Fred Baron. Also, present were Selectboard member Julie Waggoner, and Selectboard-elect member Joyce Palmer Fortune via Zoom. Town Administrator Brian Domina and Administrative Assistant Jessica Murphy were 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: Review and vote to approve the meeting minutes from July 11, 2023**

Fred made a motion to accept the minutes from July 25, 2023. Julie Seconded. All in Favor. Julie-Yes, Fred – yes

**2. Vendor & Payroll Warrants: Review past vendor and payroll warrants**

No Comments

**3. Public Comment: Listen to comments from the public related to items not listed on the agenda**

No Comments

**4. Scheduled Appointments:**

None

**5. COVID19:**

Fred stated that tests are still available at the Town Offices, Library, and Police Station for free for residents.

**6. Old Business:**

**a. To discuss changes to the budget planning process for future fiscal years**

Brian and the Board discussed various issues that arose in previous fiscal years and what can and needs to be improved upon. The Board suggested giving an earlier deadline for budgets, salary recommendations, and capital Improvements, as well as working closely with department heads to meet those deadlines. Brian will reach out to the Chair of the Finance Committee in order to gain better insight into a plan of action regarding the FY25 budget.

## **7. New Business**

### **a. To discuss the idea of entering into a public works mutual aid agreement with surrounding towns**

Brian discussed with the Board flooding from recent storms that impacted several surrounding towns. Mutual aid was requested from Conway, in which the Highway department sent an excavator and front loader to assist. Brian informed the Board of a state law regarding mutual aid agreements that he will be researching more. Keith and Brian will continue to work together to solidify the mutual aid situation for future incidents.

### **b. To discuss Chapter 90 project requests for paving on Long Plain Road and drainage work on Egypt Road**

Brian presented the Board forms for the Long Plain Road paving and drainage work on Egypt Road projects. Fred and Julie signed both project request forms. Julie motioned to approve the paving on Long Plain Road and drainage work on Egypt Road. Fred seconded, Roll Call Vote: Fred-yes, Julie-yes.

### **c. To discuss and vote to appoint election workers for calendar year 2024**

A motion was made to appoint election workers for the calendar year 2024 as presented in the memo from the Town Clerk titled "Re: Election Workers Appointments". All in favor. Roll Call Vote: Fred-yes, Julie-yes.

### **d. To discuss and vote whether to appoint Jessica Murphy to the position of Assistant Town Clerk**

A motion was made to appoint Jessica Murphy as Assistant Town Clerk. All in Favor. Roll Call Vote: Fred-yes, Julie-yes.

### **e. To discuss a letter from Town Clerk Amy Lavalley Re: Issuing Hunting & Fishing Licenses**

A motion was made to start to offer residents the ability to purchase Hunting & Fishing Licenses with the Town Clerk. All in Favor. Fred-yes, Julie-yes. A Special Town Meeting will need to be held to appropriate a small amount of funds to a revolving account before licenses can be sold.

## **8. Selectboard Liaison Updates: Timely updates from the Selectboard members serving on other boards and committees**

- Joyce shared with the Board that the South County Senior Center received a \$100,000 Digital Literacy Grant.
- Julie will be attending the Water Department Hearing on August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, and will review the new rate spreadsheet with Wayne for a better understanding.

- Fred met with JP Kennedy to discuss his transition to Fire Chief. Fred stated that JP is focused on sprucing up the station's physical appearance outside as well as internally to boost morale and retention. Fred will remain in communication with JP to support his full transition into the Fire Chief position.

#### **9. Town Administrator Updates: (Items likely to be discussed)**

##### **Flooding on Christian Lane:**

Brian informed the board that Wayne reached out to the Massachusetts Rural Water Association, who will be loaning the Water Department a sewer camera to investigate the condition of the pipe. The Board will continue to look into past records to determine if the pipe is town owned.

##### **Elementary School:**

Brian informed the Board the weatherization work at the Elementary school has been completed and will need a final walkthrough. Two pine trees located at the Elementary school were struck by lightning last week during a thunderstorm. Keith evaluated the trees stating that they are not in immediate danger of falling but will need to be taken down in the near future. Keith will be looking into whether the Highway Department can remove the trees safely. Additionally, Keith will be examining the generator due to it failing to turn back on after the storms.

##### **Exit 35 Stakeholder Meeting:**

Brian informed the Board of a Stakeholder meeting scheduled for August 16, 2023, to discuss the Exit 35 study and seek feedback.

##### **Cannabis Control Law:**

Brian informed the Board that he recently attended a Mass Municipal Association webinar about the Cannabis Control Law. He provided a brief update on how the draft regulations will impact Host Community Agreements and the requirement that communities adopt social equity standards.

##### **Items Not Anticipated**

The Board discussed returning to 6:00 pm meetings starting August 29, 2023.

#### **10. Adjourn**

Motion to adjourn at 5:31 pm. Motion seconded. All in favor.

#### **Next Meetings: August 29, 2023 & September 5, 2023**

**Documents List**

Meeting Minutes – July 25, 2023

Warrants - W24-04 & WP24-04

Letter from Town Clerk Amy Lavallee re: Election Workers Appointments

Letter from Town Clerk Amy Lavallee re: Assistant Town Clerk Appointment Request

Letter from Town Clerk Amy Lavallee re: Hunting and Fishing License Sales