

**Selectboard  
Meeting Minutes  
September 9, 2020  
Town Offices  
Open Session via Zoom  
6:00 p.m.**

The open session of the Selectboard of the Town of Whately was called to order on September 9, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. by the Chairperson, Fred Orloski. Also present via zoom was Selectboard Member Joyce Palmer-Fortune, Town Administrator Brian Domina, and Administrative Assistant Amy Schrader.

**Review and vote on the meeting minutes of August 26, 2020.**

The Board voted to approve the meeting minutes of August 26, 2020.  
Roll call vote: Joyce – yes and Fred – yes.

**Review past vendor and payroll warrants**

The Board had no comments or questions on past vendor and payroll warrants

**Comments from the public on items not listed on the agenda**

None

**Scheduled Appointments:**

**6:00 pm (Water Department): To provide an update on the outdoor water conservation restriction, manganese filtration project and water merger project** - Wayne Hutkoski (Water Superintendent) appeared before the Board to provide an update on the odd/even outdoor water conservation restriction, manganese filtration project, and water merger project. Wayne informed the Board that the odd/even outdoor water conservation restriction expired on September 1, 2020. The conservation efforts of water users had a positive impact on the situation and helped avoid a complete mandatory outdoor watering ban. The manganese filtration project continues to move forward. The engineers have a few little projects to finish before the project is complete. Wayne informed the Board that MassDEP rejected the booster pump application for the pump house due to the number of booster pumps proposed. MassDEP would prefer that three booster pumps be installed instead of two. The revised permit application will be resubmitted to MassDEP by the end of the month. Wayne would like to have the booster pumps installed by March so the Town can be prepared for the high-water usage months of June, July, and August. The permit application for the booster pump station to be installed in the center of town is nearly complete. This application will be sent to MassDEP for approval by the end of the month.

Brian informed the Board that as part of the water merger project, he, Wayne, Mary Stuart, and Nicholas Jones had a virtual meeting with MassDEP to discuss the steps that have been taken so far to merge the two water systems and to discuss next steps. Brian found this meeting to be extremely useful. The water merger project will likely begin after the Complete Streets sidewalk/crosswalks project

is complete. The water main has already been installed under Chestnut Plain Road prior to the Complete Streets sidewalk/crosswalk project to prevent damage to the new pavement.

The Board suggested revising the water restriction notification on the Town's website and drafting an article for the December issue of the Whately Scoop to thank Town residents who complied with the water restriction. The Water Department and Selectboard thanked the residents for complying with the water restriction.

**6:15 pm (Jim Sevigne, Chief of Police): To consider the appointment of Zachary Liebenow as a part-time police officer** - Chief Sevigne appeared before the Board to recommend appointing Zachary Liebenow as a part-time Whately police officer. Chief Sevigne discussed his part-time police officer recommendation, Zachary Liebenow, with specific attention to Zachary's experience, education, current job status, and geographic location. The Board had a brief discussion regarding Chief Sevigne's recommendation, officers training, and the demand for police officers. A motion was made to appoint Zachary Liebenow contingent on his drug test and physical results. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Joyce – yes and Fred- yes.

Chief Sevigne stated that FRCOG has issued a draft memorandum of understanding for the new radio system project. The language in the MOU is similar to the MOU for the current radio system. Chief Sevigne will be attending a meeting tomorrow night to review and discuss the MOU with FRCOG staff. The new radio system for the Police Department will hopefully be in use by the end of the year.

### **COVID19 State of Emergency**

**To discuss, review and consider modifications to the following:**

**i. Directive on Town Employees Returning to Work During the COVID19 Pandemic:**

Chief Sevigne virtually appeared before the Board to discuss the COVID19 pandemic in relation to the Police Department. Chief Sevigne stated that there have been no major issues in town. The Department resolved a few minor issues over the weekend and the stand-out protest on route 116 was held on Saturday with no issues. The Board took no action and will revisit this on September 26, 2020

**ii.**

**Order Reopening Town Buildings to the Public for Limited Hours and Appointment Only - to review and comment on the library reopening plan for appointment only Browsing**

Brian informed the Board that a proposed reopening Plan for the S. White Dickinson Library has been developed by the Library Director. Brian reviewed the proposed reopening plan with the Board. The Board had a lengthy discussion regarding the reopening plan with specific attention to face mask requirements, restrooms, closed areas, and hand sanitizer requirements. The Board of Health has reviewed and offered suggestions on the re-opening plan. The top floor of the library will be reopened and the lower level will remain closed. Brian stated that Bob Smith (Library Trustee) requested purchasing I-WAVE filtration systems for their seven mini-split units in the library. This purchase could be paid out of

CARES Act funds. The estimated cost along with installation is \$300.00 per unit. After much discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to support the purchase of I-WAVE filters for the library.

The Board suggested having a discussion at a future meeting about whether to allow outdoor gatherings/meetings on Town property. The Board requested that Brian check-in with the Board of Health for a recommendation.

A motion was made to modify the Order Reopening Town Buildings to the Public for Limited Hours and for Appointment Only by adding language to allow the library to offer in person browsing by appointment only per the reopening plan. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Joyce – yes and Fred – yes.

### **Old Business:**

**To discuss an updated Priority Project List for the remainder of calendar year 2020** - Brian reviewed the Priority Project List for the remainder of the calendar year 2020 with specific attention to Haydenville Road/Mountain Street reconstruction, the water merger project, Chestnut Plain Road sidewalks, Poplar Hill Road resurfacing and drainage, the 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration, driveway permit revisions, capital improvement planning modifications, Center School reuse/sell, workplace safety improvements (Highway Garage mezzanine), veterans monument redesign, personnel policy revisions, and Tri-Town Beach. Fred inquired about the Town Offices renovations and if any progress has been made on this project? Brian stated that there has not been a big push for the Town Office renovations at this time, but it would be a good project to complete. The renovation project would separate the space behind Lynn and Janet's office by installing semi-permanent walls for additional office spaces. The Board had a brief discussion regarding the Town Office renovations with specific attention to the importance of dividing office spaces, previous work already completed on this project, and previous cost estimates. The Board suggested putting this project on the high priority list. The Board had additional discussions about grant applications, the Library's lift project, intersection improvements at Christian Lane/Route 5, and installing solar with storage at town locations, specifically the pump house. After much discussion, the Board decided to list the Town Offices renovation on the high priority list and the Library's lift project and Intersection improvement at Christian lane/route 5 lift under the medium priority.

### **Town Administrator Updates:**

Brian informed the Board that at the last Selectboard meeting Don Skorski (resident) expressed concern regarding the Christian Lane railroad crossing noise. Keith Bardwell (Highway and Building Superintendent) met with representatives of PanAm to discuss the railroad crossing, but that meeting was not successful. Keith is going to reach-out to the MassDOT Rail Division to discuss the crossing. The rail appears to be the highest point in the crossing. The appropriate rubber pieces might have not been installed correctly around the rail which would help to soften the noise.

Brian informed the Board that the Chestnut Plain road sidewalks and crosswalks project is moving forward, and the paving of the new sidewalks has started.

Brian informed the Board that the Williamsburg Road Bridge Replacement project is still moving forward.

Brian informed the Board that Keith Bardwell (Highway and Building Superintendent) and the Highway Department crew is currently working on installing catch basins on Poplar Hill Road in preparation for resurfacing the road.

Brian informed the Board that Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has awarded \$690,000 to Franklin County communities for the Microenterprise Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to very small businesses. Applicants can contact the City of Greenfield for more information about these funds.

Brian informed the Board that the Town received a CESFP grant. The Fire Department applied for and was awarded just under \$50,000 to purchase technology training equipment, other equipment (clothing, respirators, etc...) and funds to purchase two electronic messaging boards.

**Items Not Anticipated within forty-eight (48) hours of the meeting:**

None

The meeting was adjourned 7:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

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Brian Domina, Town Administrator

Next Meetings: September 30, 2020 and October 14, 2020

**Document List Filed in the Selectboard Office**

Selectboard Meeting Minutes dated 08.26.2020

Payroll Warrant WP21-06 dated 08.31.2020

Vendor Warrant WP21-06 dated 08.31.2020

Reopening Plan for S. White Dickinson Memorial Library/ Whately Public Library

Priority Project List – Draft 07.29.2020

Memorandum of Agreement By and Between the Executive Office of Technology Services and Security and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments

Memorandum of Agreement By and Between Franklin Regional Council of Governments and Users of the Franklin County Emergency Communication System and Commonwealth of Massachusetts Interoperable Radio System