

**Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
February 9, 2022
Town Offices
Open Session via Zoom
6:00 pm**

The open session of the Selectboard of the Town of Whately was called to order on February 9, 2022, at 6:01 pm by Vice Chairperson Joyce Palmer-Fortune. Also present via Zoom was Selectboard member Fred Baron, Town Administrator Brian Domina, Assistant Town Administrator and Community Development Administrator Hannah Davis, Administrative Assistant Amy Lavallee, Whately 250th Committee members Adelia Bardwell, Susan Baron, Highway Superintendent Keith Bardwell, Planning Board member Judy Markland, Police Chief James Sevigne, Massachusetts State Senator Jo Comerford, State Representative for the 1st Franklin District of Massachusetts Natalie Blais, District Director Elena Cohen, and Legislative Aide Corrine Coryat.

Meeting Minutes: Review and vote to approve the meeting minutes from January 19, 2022

The Board voted to approve the meeting minutes of January 19, 2022.

Roll call vote: Fred-yes, Joyce-yes

Vendor & Payroll Warrants: Review past vendor and payroll warrants

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

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

None.

Scheduled Appointments:

a) (6:05 pm) To appoint "Shamus" to the position of Comfort Dog with the Whately Police Department

Police Chief James Sevigne introduced to the Board the new Police Department Comfort Dog Shamus. He presented to the Board the new Comfort Dog Police Department policy to be put in place. He discussed that comfort dog training entails 26 weeks of specific training which, upon successful completion, the dog would then be certified as a comfort dog. Motion was made to vote Shamus in as the new Town Comfort Dog contingent upon the successful completion of training. Motion seconded. Roll call vote: Fred-yes, Joyce-yes.

b) (6:10 pm) Whately 250th Committee (Susan Baron, Keith Bardwell) to provide an update on the 250th Anniversary celebration events and activities

Susan discussed with the Board an overview of the planned activities for the Whately 250th Celebration scheduled for June 17, 2022, through June 26, 2022. Susan and the Board also

discussed fundraising efforts of the 250th Committee and a planned gift to current and future Whately residents.

c) (7:00 pm) Senator Jo Comerford and Representative Natalie Blais to provide a legislative update and to hear municipal concerns, issues and ideas

Senator Jo Comerford discussed with the Board the new redistricting plan and her regrets in losing the Town of Whately. She thanked Brian, the Board, and all other members of the community for working together with her. Natalie expressed similar sentiments. The Board and our state representatives discussed a wide variety of topics, including the need to extend remote meeting participation legislation, concerns over ISO-NE and the availability of electricity, the lack of state education and transportation funding and concerns over the decline of gas tax revenue as more electric vehicles come on the road.

COVID19

a. To review existing COVID19 policies

Brian discussed with the Board that he will be speaking with the Board of Health regarding next steps to move forward regarding COVID19 restrictions in Town Buildings and public meetings.

Old Business:

a) To discuss the disposition process (lease or sale) of the Whately Center School

Brian presented an outline of the process that the Board needs to follow for the disposition (sale or lease) of the Whately Center School. The Board discussed the document and would like the Assessors to provide an up-to-date assessment of the building's value. The Board also discussed town responsibilities, restrictions, and options regarding upkeep and maintenance if building is leased. The Board decided that it would like the RFP to present a lease option as opposed to an outright sale for the first RFP.

b) To prioritize 2022 District Local Technical Assistance project requests and submit to FRCOG 2

Hannah presented to the Board the DLTA Priorities list she compiled. The Board agreed to submit the following projects (1) energy resiliency planning and zoning, including clean energy implementation and storage, (2) municipal Service sharing feasibility-Conservation Commission Agent and (3) EV charging stations. Motion made to accept these proposals. Motion seconded. Roll call vote: Joyce=yes, Fred=yes.

New Business

a. To review and vote to submit a Community Compact Efficiency & Regionalization grant application

Hannah discussed with the Board the Community Compact Efficiency & Regionalization grant application to be submitted by February 10, 2022. Hannah informed the Board that this grant would be used for the purchase of a plotter and supplies for the Town Office. Motion made to submit grant. Motion seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Joyce=yes, Fred=yes.

- b. **To discuss the recommendation from the Resource Replacement Fee working group for the adoption of a Selectboard regulation to calculate the resource replacement fee per Section 171.28-5 (H)(8) of the Whately Zoning Bylaws.**

Hannah discussed with the Board that the proposed language, if adopted by the Board, will set the way the Resource Replacement Fee will be calculated when the fee is required under the Zoning Bylaw. The following language was proposed by the Resource Replacement Fee working group to be adopted as a Selectboard regulation:

“The Resource Replacement Fee shall be equal to the difference between the median market value per acre of all Whately parcels in Chapter 61 and 61A for that year as established by the Whately Board of Assessors and the median value of those parcels per acre published by the Massachusetts Department of Revenue for Chapter Land for that fiscal year.

The Town Assessor shall provide this calculation to the Select Board annually so that the fee may be reset.

Acreage in a dual use solar facility meeting the Massachusetts SMART siting guidelines as outlined in MGL 225 CMR shall be exempt from the fee.”

Motion made to accept the recommendation of the Resource Replacement Fee working group as written. Motion seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Joyce-yes, Fred-yes.

- c. **To discuss a letter from the Whately Capital Improvement Planning Committee (CIPC) requesting that that the Selectboard begin the process of planning for a new facility for the Highway Department**

Brian informed the Board that the CIPC voted unanimously to request the Selectboard start the process of forming a committee for the building of a new Highway Department Facility. The Board agreed and a committee will be formed in the near future.

- d. **To appoint Brant Cheikes, Natalie Bourdon, and Montserrat Archbald to the Housing Committee**

The Board voted to appoint Brant Cheikes, Natalie Bourdon, and Montserrat Archbald to the Housing Committee. Motion made. Motion seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Joyce-yes, Fred-yes.

- e. **To discuss a request to hold a Special Town Meeting before April 1, 2022**

Brian discussed with the Board that the CPA-backed loan for the Town Hall restoration has a balance of \$160,000 with the next payment due April 15, 2022. The Community Preservation Committee has requested a Special Town Meeting (STM) for residents to vote to pay off total loan amount. The STM needs to happen before April 1, 2022. Brian will work to find some dates for the STM and reach out to the needed individuals.

Town Administrator Updates:

Selectboard Member availability for a license transfer hearing on February 23, 2022, for Castaways.

Joyce and Fred both stated their availability for this date.

Jennifer Remillard appointed as the new Director of the South County Senior Center.

Brian informed the Board that Jennifer Remillard has been appointed as the next Director of the South County Senior Center.

Channel 15 Bulletin Board is operational again

Brian informed the Board that the bulletin board for news on cable channel 15 is finally operational again.

Items Not Anticipated:

None.

Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 8:05 pm. Motion seconded. Adjourned.

Documents:

Selectboard meeting minutes, January 19, 2022

Warrant WP22-17

Warrant WP22-16

Warrant W22-16

Comfort Dog Policy

Outline of Process for the Disposition of the Whatley Center School, document

2022 Local Technical Assistance Request Form

FY22 Regionalization and Efficiency grant application

Report of the Resource Replacement Fee Advisory Group to the Selectboard, dated January 24, 2022

Letter from the Capital Improvement Planning Committee to the Selectboard, dated February 9, 2022

Housing Committee Member List

Email: RE: TH debt repayment analysis from Lynn Sibley to CPC members, dated January 18, 2022