

**Selectboard
Meeting Minutes
June 30, 2021
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 June 30, 2021, at 6:03 p.m. by the Chairperson, Jonathan Edwards. Also present via Zoom was Selectboard Members Joyce Palmer-Fortune, Fred Baron, Town Administrator Brian Domina, and Administrative Assistant Amy Schrader.

The Board welcomed Fred Baron as their new Selectboard member.

Review and vote on the meeting minutes of June 2, 2021 and June 21, 2021

A motion was made to approve the meeting minutes of June 2, 2021. Motion was seconded. Motion passed.

Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, Fred – abstain.

A motion was made to accept the meeting minutes of June 21, 2021. Motion was seconded. All in favor.

Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, 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

Paul Newlin (resident) stated that he sent an email to the Board regarding the use of the Town Hall. Paul Newlin decided to table this discussion for a future Selectboard meeting.

Old Business:

To discuss department liaison assignments for fiscal year 2022

The Board had a brief discussion regarding their different liaison roles with specific attention to the Town Offices and Water Department. A motion was made to accept the following assignments:

FY22 – Fred – Fire Department and Water Department, Jonathan – Town Offices, Town Administrator, and Highway Department, Joyce – Police Department and Schools.

Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Fred – yes, Joyce – yes. All in favor.

To discuss posting an official speed limit for Conway Road

Keith Bardwell (Highway and Building Superintendent) virtually appeared before the Board to discuss posting an official speed limit for Conway Road. Keith discussed his request with specific attention to the speed limit assignment process, potential road section split, speed assessment (paved portion vs. gravel), speed analysis by the Police Department, and MassDOT involvement. The Board had a brief discussion regarding funding options, speeding concerns, possibility of a FRCOG speed study, gravel road conditions, and the appropriate

communication process. Keith stated that the FRCOG speed study is not acceptable for this type of assessment. Keith suggested that the Board write a letter to MassDOT District 2 to see what the requirements are to get a speed study for Conway Road. Paul Newlin (resident) stated that the speed study would be favorable for the residents in the Conway Road area. Keith stated that Beth at FRCOG could be contacted to see what she would recommend. After much discussion, the Board unanimously agreed that a letter should be sent to MassDOT to obtain information regarding their official speed limit requirements.

To appoint the Town Administrator as the authorized contract signatory for FRCOG collective highway bids

Brian informed the Board that two meetings prior, the Board voted to authorize Fred Orloski to sign these contracts. As of June 8, 2021, Fred Orloski is no longer a Selectboard member. Brian recommended that the Board authorize him to sign these agreements. A motion was made to authorize Brian Domina, Town Administrator, as the authorized contract signatory for FRCOG collective highway bids. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, and Fred – yes.

New Business

To discuss and make Selectboard appointments for fiscal year 2022

Brian read the FY22 Selectboard Appointment List. The Board had a brief discussion regarding FY22 Selectboard's appointments with specific attention to Police Department, Police Sargent, Administrative Assistant, Tri-Town Beach Commission, Recreation Committee, and Housing Committee/Trust.

The Board nominated Fred Baron to be appointed to the Capital Improvement Planning Committee as the Selectboard Representative. The Board suggested contacting Lynn Sibley, Town Clerk, and/or Amy Schrader to inquire about Board/Commission vacancies. A motion was made and seconded to appoint the persons for the positions as stated in the amended FY22 Selectboard Appointment List. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, and Fred – yes.

To discuss and consider voting to fill the vacancy for the Operator/Laborer position with the Highway Department

Keith Bardwell (Highway and Building Superintendent) virtually appeared before the Board to discuss the Highway Department Operator/Laborer position vacancy. Keith stated that Brian and himself held interviews last week and recommends that the Board appoint Maxwell Bartlett to the position. A motion was made to appoint/hire Maxwell Bartlett to the Operator/Laborer position of the Highway Department. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – abstain, Fred -yes, and Joyce – yes.

To discuss and vote to accept the resignation of Lynn Sibley as Town Clerk

The Board thanked Lynn Sibley for her 22 years of service as Town Clerk. The Board requested that flowers and a thank you card be sent to show appreciation on behalf of the Town.

A motion was made to accept the resignation of Lynn Sibley as Town Clerk. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Fred -yes, and Joyce – yes.

To discuss and vote to appoint Amy Schrader as Town Clerk until the next annual election

A motion was made to appoint Amy Schrader as Town Clerk until the next annual election. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Fred –yes, and Joyce – yes.

To discuss the vacancy on the Frontier Regional School Committee and to consider voting to appoint a representative until the next annual election

Brian informed the Board that a mistake was made and the position for the Frontier Regional School Committee member was never submitted for the official ballot for the upcoming election. After consulting with Town Counsel, Lynn (Town Clerk) learned that the position will automatically become vacant after the June 8th election. Bill Smith has held this position for the last 48 years and would like to remain in the position. The vacancy can be filled by vote of the Selectboard until the next annual election (M.G.L. c. 41 s.11). After a brief discussion, a motion was made to appoint Bill Smith to the Frontier Regional School Committee until the next annual election. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Fred –yes, and Joyce – yes.

To discuss the Town Office building schedule effective July 1, 2021

Brian informed the Board that he received a request that the Town Office building be closed to the public on Fridays. Brian discussed the potential new Town Offices building schedule with specific attention to Treasurer/Collector and Town Clerk position, potential resident concerns, agenda posting concerns, and Town Offices re-organization. Currently the building is open to the public from 9:00 am to 12 (noon) on Fridays. Brian recommended that the Town Office building be closed on Fridays through the first Selectboard meeting in September – as “summer hours” and then we evaluate how it went. A motion was made to accept the new Town Office building schedule effective July 1, 2021. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, and Fred – yes.

To discuss a request from Representative Natalie Blais about municipal spending priorities

Brian discussed a request from Representative Natalie Blais about municipal spending priorities. The Board had a brief discussion regarding spending priorities with specific attention to the Town’s Highway Garage, Town Buildings energy improvements, Center School rehabilitation, Senior/Community Center, and rehabilitation of Tri-Town Beach. Keith Bardwell (Highway and Building Superintendent) read the spending priorities requests that Deerfield and Conway submitted. After much discussion, the Board unanimously agreed to three spending priorities: Tri-Town Beach rehabilitation, Highway Department renovation, and Senior/Community Center.

To discuss and vote to award fuel bids (diesel and heating oil) for fiscal year 2022

The Board voted to award the contract for diesel fuel and # 2 fuel oil to Kieras Oil of North Amherst. Kieras Oil was the lowest bidder and has always given the Town a local discount. The gasoline contract was bid out through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments earlier in the year. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, and Fred – yes.

To discuss and vote to submit an application to the PARC grant program

Brian informed the Board that one of the conditions to receiving reimbursement for the Open Space & Recreation Plan grant is that the Town submit a PARC (Parkland Acquisition& Renovation for Communities) grant application. The application needs to be submitted by July 9, 2021. It needs to be on land that is Article 97 protected or

otherwise restricted to parks and recreation purposes. Brian inquired with the Recreation Commission for their input. The Recreation Committee requested that funding be used towards making Herlihy Park handicap accessible, parking lot paving, and overall safety improvements. Brian discussed the lack of handicap accessibility at Herlihy Park. Wayne, Keith, Amy, and himself met with M.E. O'Brien to discuss the potential of installing a playground. The Board had a brief discussion regarding Herlihy Park with specific attention to land ownership concerns. A motion was made that the Town of Whately apply for a PARC grant, for the paving, safety, and ADA improvements. Motion was seconded. All in favor. Roll call vote: Jonathan – yes, Joyce – yes, and Fred – yes.

Town Administrator Updates:

Brian informed the Board that FY21 closes on June 30th, 2021 and requested that FY21 invoices/bills be submitted by Thursday, July 15th. Encumbered funds need to be submitted by July 16, 2021.

Brian informed the Board that the Annual Town Meeting funded the Community Development Position. Brian is going to prepare a job description which will be presented to the Personnel Committee and then to the Selectboard.

Brian informed the Board that the easement acquisition has been slowing up the water merger project. There were some issues with the deed to the property. There have been discussions between the Selectboard and the Water Commissioners regarding economic hardship assistance for the hookup fees. Brian drafted a quick extended payment idea. Jonathan feels strongly that a hardship assistance payment plan should be offered. Brian requested that the Board review his proposed payment plan for the next meeting. The Board requested that the Water Commissioners appear at their next meeting to discuss this.

Brian informed the Board that there are two FRCOG agreements that need to be signed by the Selectboard for the FCCIP and the FRCOG accounting program.

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

Fred Baron informed the Board that WEBS yarn store in Northampton has a series of yarns named after the Pioneer Valley communities. A yarn has been named in honor of the Town of Whately and appears in their catalog that gets distributed to thousands of people.

The Selectboard meeting scheduled for July 14, 2021 was re-scheduled to July 21, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned 7:30pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Domina, Town Administrator

Next Meetings: TBD

Document List Filed in the Selectboard Office

Selectboard Meeting Minutes dated 06.02.2021 and 06.21.2021

Payroll Warrant WP21-26 dated 06/07/2021
Vendor Warrant W21-26 dated 06/07/2021
Payroll Warrant WP21-27 dated 06/21/2021
Vendor Warrant W21-27 dated 06/21/2021
FY21 Selectboard Liaison Assignments
FY22 Selectboard Appointments
Resignation Letter from Town Clerk, Lynn Sibley, dated 06.02.2021
Memorandum from Town Administrator, Brian Domina, dated 06.30.2021
Email from Representative Natalie Blais dated 06.07.2021 with budget request form
Kieras Oil Low Sulfur Diesel Fuel and #2 Fuel Oil FY22 Price Form/Bid
Parkland Acquisitions and Renovations for Communities (PARC) Grant Program FY22
Letter from Town Accountant, Dara LaPlante, dated 06.15.2021
Memorandum from Executive Office for Administration & Finance Federal Funds Office (FFO) dated 06.03.2021
Water Hookup Fee Extended Payment Plan Request - DRAFT