

**Board of Selectmen
May 5, 2015
Center School
6:00 pm**

The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Whately was called to order on Tuesday, May 5, 2015 at 6:05 pm by the Chair, Joyce Palmer Fortune. Present were Selectman Paul Newlin, Town Administrator, Mark Pruhenski and Administrative Assistant, Maryellen Cranston.

New Business

Mill River Contract – Mark presented the Biodiversity contract for the Board’s signature. The timeline of the monitoring of the Mill River habitat is established by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program. The Town has no control over this. Because the project is establishing new habitat for the dwarf wedgemussel and the monkey flower, it will take a long time to prove it a success. If at some point in the process, there appears to be a problem, corrective action can be recommended. The plan remains to begin construction this summer. The Board agreed to have Joyce sign the contract as chair.

Jones-Whitsett Contract – Under this contract, Jones –Whitsett will develop conceptual designs for the town hall as a community center. The cost will be \$8000 with \$300 for reimbursable expenses. The Board agreed for Joyce to sign the contract as chair.

Potential debt exclusion wording for the ballot – The Board and attendees had a comprehensive discussion regarding the Town Meeting vote to purchase the library. Mark presented the Board the following wording for a debt exclusion ballot question:

Shall the Town of Whately be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bonds issued in order to pay costs of purchasing the Western Massachusetts Regional Library System Building at 4 Sandy Lane, Whately, for the purposes of housing Whately Town Offices, including the payment of all costs incidental and related thereto?

YES_____ NO_____

and provided, further, that said question shall be deemed approved if a majority of the persons voting thereon shall vote “yes”.

Question 1 asks you to approve a debt exclusion for the purchase of property located at #4 Sandy Lane, Whately, for the primary purpose of consolidating our town offices. The \$815,000 cost will be paid via a multi-year, level debt-service bond(s) and the measure will affect the tax rate only for the duration of the bond. “Costs incidental and related thereto” are costs directly associated with the purchase, such as closing costs, counsel and bond counsel, insurance, etc. The new building will combine town offices currently located in two separate buildings.

There was extensive discussion on holding the debt exclusion vote at the June 9th local election or to wait until September when the renovation costs will be known. Some people felt the town meeting attendees knew they were voting for a June 9th vote. Others felt at that meeting it was important to wait for the total cost to be known before voting. Concern was expressed the money to renovate the library will be voted down and the town will be left with a building which will still need work. There was some sentiment expressed the building was ready to be moved in now. The Board voted unanimously to recommend the wording for the debt exclusion ballot question as presented to be placed on the June 9th election. Every effort will be made to have the renovation costs before the election so voters will know the total cost of the project.

May/June meeting schedule – Mark will email the Board potential meeting dates for May and June.

Masterson Road Chapter 61A Right of First Refusal – The Board signed the waiver for the Right of First Refusal on Lot #7, Masterson Road.

The agenda lists topics reasonably anticipated within 48 hours of the meeting. The chair of the committee reserves the right to add items to the agenda that may not be listed here; additionally, members of the committee may have unanticipated concerns not listed here that they may bring to the committee. The Board agreed to have Joyce sign, as chair the FY16 Property and Liability and Police and Fire insurance.

Al and Judy Targhetta discussed with the Board problems they were having with their town water. Because the Water Commissioners were meeting in the next room, the Board suggested they speak directly with them.

The Board signed the vendor and payroll warrants. They agreed with Mark's recommendation the Bill Schedule for the Treasurer/Collector be pulled for a conference on the Cape. He was concerned with her being out of the office given her work load and the upcoming audit. The Board and Mark agreed they support educational opportunities, but it may be a better time for her to take advantage of Treasurer/Collector school in August. The final vendor warrant approved was for \$40,515.58.

There being no further business to come before this meeting it was adjourned at 7:27 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul K. Newlin, Clerk

Documents Used at Meeting and are on file in Selectmen's Office

Vendor and Payroll Warrant #15-23 (on file in the Accountant's office)

5/5/15 email from Ethan Nedeau regarding the Mill River project

4/24/15 documents regarding Lot #7, Masterson Road

4/17/15 email and documents for Police/Fire Insurance Quote

4/22/15 letter regarding Property and Liability Insurance Quote

2015 Biodrawiversity Contract

5/4/15 contract with Jones Whitsett Architects