



**Chesterfield Select Board Minutes
Monday, April 11, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.
Town Office Building - 422 Main Road**

The Select Board meeting was called to order at 4:30 p.m. by Mr. Fuller.

Select Board Members Present: Trish Colson-Montgomery and Don Willard

Select Board Members Participating Remotely: Roger Fuller

Select Board Members Absent:

Town Administrator Present: Brenda Lessard

Public Officials Present: Matt Smith, Highway Superintendent; John Chandler, Board of Health Chair

Public Officials Present Via ZOOM:

General Public Present: Sherill Redmond

General Public Present Via ZOOM: Shaw Israel Izikson-Country Journal Editor

Recorder of Minutes: Brenda Lessard

Common Acronyms:

ACO-Animal Control Officer

CDBG: Community Development Block Grant

COA: Council of Aging

DCR: Department of Conservation and Recreation

DEP: Department of Environmental Protection

DHCD: Department of Housing and Community Development

DLTA: Direct Local Technical Assistance

DOT: Department of Transportation

EMD: Emergency Management Director

FRCOG: Franklin County Council of Governments\

HAEMS: Hilltown Ambulance Emergency Management Services

HCDC: Hilltown Community Development Corporation

MassDOT: Massachusetts Department of Transportation

MLP: Municipal Light Plant

MSDS: Materials Safety Data Sheets

PILOT: Payment in Lieu of Taxes

PVPC: Pioneer Valley Planning Commission

RFP: Request for Proposals

RFQ: Request for Quotes

STM: Special Town Meeting

WG&E: Westfield Gas & Electric

Video Conference Hybrid Meeting:

Mr. Fuller stated that this Select Board meeting is being conducted in a hybrid model but with access consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of June 16, 2021. Governor Baker signed into law an Act Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency. This Act includes an extension, until July 15, 2022, of the remote meeting provisions of his March 12, 2020, Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The new law has two major parts:

First, the new law allows public bodies to continue providing live "adequate, alternative means" of public access to the deliberations of the public body, instead of holding meetings in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public. "Adequate, alternative means" may include, without limitation, providing public access through telephone, internet, or satellite enabled audio or video conferencing or any other technology that enables the public to clearly follow the proceedings of the public body in real time.

Second, the new law authorizes all members of a public body to continue participating in meetings remotely; the Open Meeting Law's requirement that a quorum of the body and the chair be physically present at the meeting location remains suspended.

Moment of Silence for Bob Recos:

Mr. Fuller called for a moment of silence for Bob Recos, who served the town in many capacities who has passed recently. He had been a Select Board member for 15 years. The Board noted he was a great source of knowledge and that he will be missed.

4:30 PM Matt Smith: Highway Superintendent:

FY23 Highway Wage Increase Requests:

Matt Smith was in to discuss his requested wage increases to the Select Board. He had already submitted them to the Finance Committee along with Roger Fuller and the Finance Committee approved of the wage increases. Mr. Smith wanted to explain the reasoning for asking for the increased wages for himself and all the highway workers. Mr. Smith gave some examples of surrounding towns and their current and expected wage increases. There will be some opening on some area highway departments and he does not want to lose any of his workers. His opinion is if the wages are comparable, even though the insurance contribution by the employee is higher, they may stay with his department. It was noted this came up after the last Select Board meeting on Monday, March 28th, and Mr. Fuller received a copy of the wages late Tuesday afternoon. He noted that he should have forwarded the information to the other two Select Board members but in the haste to review he did not think to do so. Ms. Colson-Montgomery opined that Mr. Smith should have come before the Select Board prior to him going to the Finance Committee. She noted some examples of other towns who are paying lower wages and did note that Mr. Smith gets winter overtime wages which many area Highway Superintendents do not receive. Mr. Willard noted that he was not aware of any of this. Mr. Fuller stated it was not too late to change the numbers if the other members of the Select Board were not in agreement with the proposed increases. Ms. Colson-Montgomery opined that she remains uncomfortable with the reasons that the raises are being given. She expressed concern that the laborers are making more than the COA Director, for example. Mr. Willard expressed concern with the whole process. Mr. Fuller noted that the laborers do more than just use a shovel. They have a CDL and hoisters licenses, are heavy equipment operators and truck drivers. They are not just laborers.

They have been trained as flaggers. The numbers were reviewed and Mr. Smith was advised that in future years he should come to the Select Board first with concerns about wages.

Old Chesterfield Road:

Mr. Smith reported that work on Old Chesterfield Road would be starting soon.

Wood in Russell Park:

Mr. Willard reported to Mr. Smith that there is a bunch of wood behind the dugout at Russell Park. Mr. Smith stated the highway department may be able to pick that up. He would go to the park and check.

Minutes:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard, and unanimously voted to accept the Minutes of 3/28/22, 2/23/22 and 2/7/22 as amended.

Warrants:

The Select Board reviewed and signed the W22-21, WPH22-21, and WP22-21 warrants. Mr. Willard questioned the Alarm Works bill, what it was for and what types of alarms are included for the price. Ms. Colson-Montgomery noted that a furnace repair was paid out of the heat expense line. The Select Board would like the repair bills paid out of the Major Repairs budget line.

Spring Tree Removal Bid:

A RFQ for some tree removal work was sent out by the Tree Warden and Town Administrator. There was only one bid received from LashCo in the amount of \$6,200. The remaining budget for tree removal is only \$5,400 so Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard to award the work to LashCo in the amount of \$5,400 and that Mr. Cotton will need to work with the tree warden to remove a tree or trees from the list to stay within the awarded amount. The motion was unanimously voted. The Select Board noted that they are disappointed that no other companies responded to the RFQ.

Additions to Agenda:

Youth Wrestling:

Mr. Willard reported that the Recreation Committee has started youth wrestling for grades 1-11. He reported that 57 children had signed up from the six towns from the Hampshire Regional School District. The group was split for Grades 1-3 which had 25 children and the other group included Grades 4-11 which had 32 children. Some wrestlers from the HRHS Wrestling Team are helping to coach the youth. The Select Board were impressed with how much interest there was.

Shredding:

Ms. Colson-Montgomery inquired whether an amount should be included in the FY23 budget for ongoing shredding once the big cleanout is done. Mr. Fuller opined that an analysis would need to be done to see how quickly papers pile up. There is a large amount now but the amount that is present has piled up for many years. The consensus was to observe the amount that collects for a year after the shredding is completed.

Vandalism at Russell Park:

Mr. Willard reported on some vandalism he has found recently at Russell Park. The first day he was there he noted that somebody had thrown a bunch of asphalt on the snack shack roof. He is not sure of any damage to the roof at this time but it was noted it was a new roof. The second day he went there, somebody had taken a board and had smashed two door locks to the snack shack. This left the two lock being unable to be unlocked. Mr. Willard noted the force and how much time it must take to smash the two locks that he observed. He was surprised no one in the town center had heard the noise and had either looked out to see what the noise was or had called the Police Department. Mr. Willard has some ideas and will speak to the Police Department about the vandalism and to get patrols in that area increased. Mr. Willard also noted that at some point home plate was also stolen.

Snack Shack Work:

Mr. Fuller asked Mr. Willard to check with Don Bisbee to see when the work at the Snack Shack will be completed.

Sherill Redmond, Lake Damon Corporation:

Sherill Redmond came in to ask the process of changing an entrance of a private road onto a town road. The Lake Damon Corporation is interested in selling the farmhouse on Farmhouse Road but would like to relocate the entrance to the cottages as the current entrance is also the farmhouse's driveway. The Select Board noted it is a private road and the changes would need to be approved by the Highway Superintendent as it would require a new cut into the town road. They advised the Lake Damon Corporation speak with Matt Smith. There was also a very brief discussion if this would impact the Damon Pond Road engineering.

Reports:**IT Services:**

Mr. Fuller reported that he has been trying to get a meeting setup with Entre and Whip City to discuss the siting of the server in the hut. He is making some progress.

RFP for Edwards Museum Work:

Mr. Fuller has been working with Sue Labrie and the Town Administrator and hopefully the RFP will go out on Thursday.

Capital Plan Review:

Mr. Fuller presented the Capital Plan to the Select Board. They reviewed the plan and had no questions.

Select Board Meeting Day Changes:

Mr. Fuller will be away for the April 25th meeting and is requesting the meeting be changed to Tuesday, April 26th instead. The other members are okay with the switch but request the meeting start at 2 pm instead of 4 pm as Mr. Willard has to leave by 5:30 or 6 pm. The Board is in agreement for the meeting to be on Tuesday, April 26th at 2 pm.

Ms. Lessard is asking for the Monday, June 6th meeting to be changed to Tuesday, June 7th as she needs to attend the Town Meeting in Williamsburg on the 6th. The Select Board are in agreement that the meeting can be changed to Tuesday, June 7th at 4 pm.

HAEMS Budget:

The Select Board would like to see the full budget but have not been allowed to see it. The Board used to receive the full budget for review in years prior and want to know why this policy has changed. The Board would like someone from HAEMS to attend their next meeting. The Board will also bring this up with Finance Committee on Wednesday, April 13th.

Community Center Oversight Committee Email:

The Select Board had briefly discussed the email from Jan Gibeau, COA Director, regarding some needed work at the COA and Community Center. They wanted to wait to discuss when Mr. Willard was in attendance. Mr. Willard opined the most needed work on the list would be the kitchen and hallway floor. The flagpole and flag was already done by Ron Loven. There was some discussion about the furnace. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Town Administrator's Report:**Lafayette Trail Marker:**

Ms. Lessard has the GPS coordinates for the Library lawn and will send them to Mr. Icher from the Lafayette Trail, Inc.

Phones:

The new phones are in my office. There is an issue with the porting of numbers from Magna5. Ms. Lessard will keep trying to move the project forward.

Warrant for ATM:

A draft is done. The final copy will be signed at the next meeting. Ms. Colson-Montgomery reviewed some previous warrants to make sure nothing was left out. Ms. Lessard will follow up with some questions to the Accountant and Treasurer and send another draft with some changes for review before the next meeting.

Tennis Courts:

No updates. Ms. Lessard still working on it. Some suggestions were discussed.

Old Town Hall:

The town has received a request from Ellie Goudie-Averill from Tori Lawrence Dance who will be using the Old Town Hall for a performance in July. She is requesting that she and the dancers be allowed to practice in July in the Old Town Hall and has supplied the dates. I am sending you the request. There would be approximately 15 dancers. The Select Board approve the dates. The group used the building last year for a day.

The Library also will be using the Old Town Hall on Wednesday mornings from 9 am until 11 am. The Select Board opined it is good to see the building being used.

Fish and Game Land Purchase:

Ms. Lessard spoke with Kelley in the Assessors Office and she stated this purchase would only affect the town's taxes by approximately \$900/year. The land they are purchasing is very wet or steep and not suitable for building and is in Chapter 61 at present. The Select Board noted that the town cannot do anything to prevent these purchases from happening.

RFP Landscape Architect Services for 6 North Road:

Ms. Lessard has sent out the RFP to Berkshire Design Group; William Canon, Landscape Architect; Dodson & Flinker; WOLA; and Walter Cudnohufsky Associates which were recommendations from Larry. The RFP was also posted on the Town website.

Sergeant Agreement:

A Sergeant Agreement was reviewed and some slight amendments were proposed. Mr. Willard made a motion, seconded by Ms. Colson-Montgomery, and unanimously voted to sign the contract after the revisions and send the contract to Peter Fappiano for signing.

Don Jacobs:

Ms. Lessard spoke with Don Jacobs about a proposal for updating the market value compensation plan and doing training for myself and John Follet in implementing the wage compensation plan. To just update the market value plan would be \$2,500. Mr. Jacobs then said training would be additional. There are a total of 4 tasks at \$2,500 each, which totals \$10,000. The proposal for this work was recommended by Finance Committee. The Select Board are unsure how to proceed with doing this update for the compensation plan. There will be further discussion.

John Chandler, Board of Health and Bridge Disposal Contract:

Mr. Chandler reported that Community Eco Power has gone out of business after filing Chapter 11 bankruptcy in West Springfield where the Town takes its trash for burning. USA is buying the property but will not give pricing until the sale goes through. Springfield is trying to block the sale to USA. The HRMC has sent over a bridge contract with F&G Recycling with a term of 45 days for the town to take their refuse to Agawam but at a much higher cost. The contract needs signing. This will more than likely raise costs significantly to the Town to get rid of its refuse. Ms. Colson-Montgomery made a motion, seconded by Mr. Willard and unanimously voted to sign the bridge contract for a term of 45 days with F&G Recycling and to take the trash to Agawam as recommended by the HRMC and Mr. Chandler.

Ms. Colson-Montgomery asked Mr. Chandler if additional funds will need to be added to the Transfer Station expense line in the FY23 budget. Mr. Chandler stated an additional \$2,000 would be helpful but as numbers are still unavailable it will be tough to estimate what the additional costs might be.

Correspondence Received:

- Email from Jan re: COA/Senior Center Oversight Committee
- Email from Ellie Goudie-Averill re: using Old Town Hall for a dance group
- Email from John Leary from Whip City re: costs to the Town for some IT work at Town Office: Roger will follow-up

Meeting Adjourned:

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 p.m.