



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Select Board/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting May 6, 2020; 6:00 p.m.; Virtual Meeting

Members Present Patrick J. Crowley, Chairman Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chair John W. Hadley, Clerk Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman
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Members NOT Present Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman

Invited Guests: Ms. Elaine Novia, Town Clerk Mr. Tom Welsh, Fire Chief

Mr. Crowley convened the meeting at 6:00 p.m. Mr. Kittredge was absent.

Chairman's statement:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 31A, §20, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of West Boylston Select Board is being conducted via remote participation. No in person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to view this meeting while in progress may do so by:

- Join Zoom Meeting

If despite our best efforts, we are not able to provide for real-time access, and we will post a record of this meeting on the town's website as soon as we are able.

PUBLIC COMMENT – 6:00 PM:

APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES:

April 15, 2020, Regular Session

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve, second Mr. Rajeshkumar

Roll Call vote

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING APRIL 15, 2020 TO May 6, 2020: Town Payable Warrants FY2020-43 and 44; Town Payroll Warrant FY2020-21 and 22; Sewer FY2020-SE16 & FY2020-SE18; and School Warrant FY2020-S18.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar to approve, second Mr. Hadley.

Roll Call vote

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

6:15 p.m. Public Hearing, in conformity with the requirements of the General Bylaws of the Town of West Boylston, ARTICLE XXIII – PUBLIC HEARING AND NOTICE to consider amending ambulance rates and other Fire Department fees:

Chief Welsh discussed the Fire Department permit fees. He is recommending to raise the fees stating they have not been updated since 2004. He gave the Board an overview of the inspection process and justification for recommended increases. Mr. Hadley would like all the fees to be \$50 across the Board for bookkeeping process. Chief Welsh stated \$5.00 of every permit goes towards the permitting software. MR. Rucho stated he does not want West Boylston to be the highest in the area with inspection fees, but sees the Chief has put in the effort to explaining the fees. Chief Welsh stated the fees not being the same across the Board is not an issue. Mr. Crowley stated he does not feel having different rates is difficult for the Chief to manage.

Chief Welsh stated he received a request from Comstar Ambulance Billing to review and update the ambulance rates. He explained he has two rates to update the first is the mileage rate charged is currently \$32.23 per mile and would like to increase to \$35.00. He explained the increase of the rate will help with the maintenance of the ambulances and believes this is in line with other towns. He stated he is also requesting the addition of \$150 extra EMT Fee. He stated this is not frequently used but, in the event, they need the extra EMT on the call they can bill for it. He stated Medicare and some private insurances will not pay this fee. He explained beginning July 1st they will be participating in an audit of the medicare system to compare Medicare rates across the country. HE stated Medicare pay 50% less than private insurance.

Motion Mr. Hadley to close Public Hearing, second Mr. Rucho.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar to approve the proposed fees, second Mr. Hadley.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

NEW BUSINESS

1. Discuss language for proposed Water District article:

- The sale to the District “for nominal consideration”

Ms. Lucier updated the Board that she has been working with Town Counsel and the Board will need to decide the language for the article. She stated Town Counsel recommended using the language “for nominal consideration \$1.00”

Motion Mr. Rucho to approve, second Mr. Hadley.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

2. Consider Signing One-Year Bridging Agreement with Teamsters Union for the DPW (tentative). Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting

3. Consider Signing On-Year Bridging Agreement with Teamsters Union for the Cemetery (tentative). Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting

4. Consider the appointment of the new DPW Director effective June 1, 2020 for a term to expire on May 31, 2023 (tentative). Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting

5. Consider voting to sign employment contract for new DPW Director (tentative). Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting.

6. Consider signing Memorandum of Agreement with the West Boylston School Committee and the Town of West Boylston Employee Unions (tentative). Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT

1. COVID-19 update:

Since March 27th I continue to post on the home page of our town’s website the number of positive cases reported in West Boylston. Shortly after our April 15th meeting, we secured a shelter for First Responders, Police, Fire and EMS to locate to in the event they test positive and need to be away from their families. I would like to extend a thank you to Holy Cross who has offered a fully furnished house at their Worcester campus for our use.

I would like to thank the residents of town for their generous donations. Gift cards have been provided to the town, which were given to the Food Pantry, 100 face masks were donated to the Senior Center, and we have received a number of calls from people expressing interest in shopping for seniors or assisting at the Senior Center preparing meals on wheels. The local Rotary has partnered with The Manor and are delivering meals to those residents in need.

The town did receive a Notice of Award for \$17,300 in requested grant funding to support public health infrastructure in response to COVID-19. At this time, we anticipate those funds will

be used for additional costs incurred for our nursing services and supplies. We will provide monthly updates to the state on the use of the funding.

2. June 2, 200 Annual Town Election:

The Annual Town Election is scheduled for Tuesday, June 2nd with voting taking place at the senior center. Due to social distancing advisories, over-the-counter Absentee or Early Voting at Town Hall prior to Election Day will be suspended for this election.

I would like to echo the Town Clerk's message and encourage all our residents to take advantage of mail in voting. It is a very simple process. To submit a request for a mail-in ballot please visit the website and fill out an Early Ballot Application which can be found on the Home Page, or call the Office of the Town Clerk at 774.261.4020, or send a written signed request to the Town Clerk, 140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, MA 01583.

On voting day, the polls will be open at noon. There will be limited essential staff, one way into the polls, and one way out. The greeter will ensure no more than 4 voters are in the building at the same time. Cones will be set up outside the building marking six-foot intervals. All elections workers will be required to wear masks and voters will be required to either wear a mask or some kind of facial covering before entering the building. If they refuse, they will be directed to wait to cast their ballot until the building is cleared of all other voters. After they exit, areas in which the voter has had contact will be sanitized. Voting booths will be placed at least 6 feet apart and pens and booths will be cleaned and sanitized after each use. Bottles of pump hand sanitizer will be placed at the entrance and exit of the buildings as well as near election workers and in voting booths.

I have contracted with Service Master who will come in the next day to clean all areas after the election.

In accordance with MGL the Board of Selectmen must vote to allow reduced hours of voting. Typically, a town election has voting from noon until 8:00 p.m. We originally discussed hours from noon until 4:00, however, upon further review, we would request the Board consider voting to amend the voting hours for the June 2, 2020 Annual Town Election to allow voting to take place from noon until 6:00 p.m.

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve the reduced hours, second Mr. Rajeshkumar.

Mr. Rajeshkumar expressed concern for the hours and spacing of voters. Ms. Novia, Town Clerk stated she believes the plan provided will keep the staff, and voters safe and is the main concern. Mr. Hadley agreed with Ms. Novia. Mr. Rucho discussed postponing the election, Ms. Novia stated this is currently not permitted from the State. Mr. Hadley is hopeful the state will give ample time for notification of towns being able to postpone. Mr. Rajeshkumar asked how long each voter will take to vote, Ms. Novia stated she believed no more than five minutes. Mr. Crowley stated there is not a Selectman contest on the ballot which would typically draw a large number of voters. Mr. Rucho stated he is concerned that if voter turnout is high every person will not be able to get their votes in. Mr. Crowley stated that is why the Town Clerk is running a mail in voting campaign. Ms. Novia stated she is following the states guidance to hold the election. Chief Tom Welsh stated the volunteers are of the vulnerable age group and are putting themselves out there working the election. Ms. Novia explained she plans to have thirteen workers and explained each of their duties at this election. He stated there may be lines for voting. Ms. Novia stated the mail in voter campaign is very important and being advertised and hopes to have a lot of interest. Ms. Lucier

would like the Board to accept the Town Clerks recommendation. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated many voters want to come in and not vote by mail.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, no

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Ms. Novia signed off from the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

3. Memorial Day Exercises:

I've been in contact with Jack McCormick about plans for Memorial Day. For Memorial Day we will put flags on all veterans' graves in all 3 of the cemeteries. If people want to volunteer for that assignment please call Jack McCormick at 774.261.0596. A private ceremony will be conducted on the common and it will be recorded by WBPA-TV and posted on the town's website. For this year we will not have a parade or ceremonies at any other cemetery locations due to COVID-19. Mr. Rucho asked what will be process if people do show up, Ms. Lucier stated Mr. Jack McCormick has advised it will be at an off hour to dissuade people to not come, and it will ten people or less he will thank people but ask them to not join the group.

4. Recreation Director Update

I had been in communication with Holy Cross and we were moving in a good direction. The initial internship program we were initially interested in moving forward with will not be an option this summer. I had asked if they would consider a similar situation with the town as they have with the library, \$12,000 a year for a 5-year commitment. Understandably so, with COVID-19 their first priority is now to their students and facility who might need additional financial considerations. So that is not an option they feel they can entertain at this time. I then explored a Remote Learning Summer Internship Project, however, after looking into it I don't believe it would be the ideal situation for the student or the town.

With all the unknowns around us, including decreasing revenues and a forecasted slow down with new growth, I feel we need to revisit this perhaps in the fall. Right now, for me to bring forward any new program at time, in my opinion, would not be in the best interest of the program. There is too much uncertainty and I believe we need to get beyond this temporary situation we find ourselves in and move forward with a program in a better economic time, which will give it a better opportunity for the program's success.

Ms. Lucier stated she spoke with Ms. Erin Palumbo that is leading this movement with residents and she agreed that a 2020 Remote Summer Learning Project would not be overly beneficial this summer and understands Holy Cross' position and will revisit in October. Mr. Crowley stated this is not something that will go by the wayside but will be revisited in the future.

5. Snow & Ice Update:

Snow and Ice line item balances are as follows: Wages \$19,028, Purchase Services (\$15,350) and Supplies (\$88,544) for a total deficit to date of \$84,866, which we will deal with at town meeting.

On the positive side, as of April 29th we have a balance remaining in our fuel line item of \$52,000, which was budgeted at \$100,000.

6. Central Mass Mosquito Control Project:

Moved to May 7, 2020 Meeting when Mr. Kittredge is in attendance.

7. Election Workers' Wage Salary

Holden – \$11.00/hour and snacks and treats served, no meals

Leicester - \$12.00/hour and all meals

Princeton - \$9.00 & \$10.00/hour and meals

Spencer – \$12.50/hour and lunch and dinner sometimes - not every election

Sturbridge - \$12.50/hour and lunch catered

Westminster – \$12.00 - \$15.00/hour and meals

Previously reported

Oxford – Minimum Wage – \$12.75/hour and meals

Boylston – Minimum Wage – \$12.75/hour and meals

Sterling - \$13.00/hour and meals

West Boylston - \$9.00/hour and meals

Ms. Lucier stated she has budgeted for an increase to \$10 per hour this coming budget and then every year after continue to review to get the salary up. Mr. Rucho stated he would like the rate to be \$11 per hour and see what the cost is. Mr. Rucho stated if the budget is developed already than definitely next year, Mr. Hadley agreed with MR. Rucho. She stated she can look at the budget with the Town Clerk to see if there is availability in the budget to raise it to \$11 per hour this year.

FISP UPDATE:

1.General Update on Senior Center:

Mr. Hadley stated the paving has been completed and there are not any puddles in the back and front, he stated they are now waiting for the plantings and the line striping to be completed. Mr. Hadley stated they will have someone there during the work. Mr. Rucho stated he would like Ms. Lucier to speak to the DPW about not plowing against the berms next year and explained there are scrape marks in the berms from this past winter and with the new parking lot the light poles are very close.

APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS:

- Concurrence on the reappointment of William Chase to the Conservation Commission for a three-year term.
- Concurrence on the reappointment of Gary Flynn to the Parks Commission for a three-year term.

- Concurrence on the reappointment of Marion Karsina to the Insurance Advisory Committee as the Teachers Union Representative for a one-year term.
- Concurrence on the reappointment of James Bartlett to the Insurance Advisory Committee as the Police Union Representative for a one-year term.
- Concurrence on the reappointment of Roger Pontbriand to the Insurance Advisory Committee as the Administration Representative for a one-year term.

Motion Mr. Hadley to approve, second Mr. Rajeshkumar

Roll Call vote

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

MEETINGS, INVITATIONS & ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Reminder, Section 6 of the Town's General Bylaws requires owners, keepers or persons walking or in charge of a dog to remove dog litter if any dog defecates upon any public property or area. The Town has seen an increase in non-compliance of this bylaw and will be issuing non-criminal disposition tickets, as allowed by the Bylaws and the Bylaw will be enforced by the Animal Control Officer. The commission of any of any violation of this bylaw shall be punishable by a fine of \$25.00 for the first offense, a fine of \$50.00 for a second offense and a fine of \$100.00 for all other offenses.
- Any seniors in need of disposable masks for medical appointments should contact Lisa at the Senior Center 508-835-6916
- Library News - Virtual Tech Help- by appointment Email beaman@cwmares.org to make an appointment for one-on-one virtual help with Library ebooks, databases, apps and more. Many of the Library's most popular Children's programs are now online! Visit the Beaman Library Children's Room on Facebook to participate in virtual early literacy programming, story hours, crafts, STEAM programming, Virtual Stay and Play, cooking and baking videos, Waggin' Tales
There are also book groups and virtual meetups for older readers, please visit beamanlibrary.org or email the Head of Children's Services ssmith@cwmares.org for more information.
For teen events, please email sgomes@cwmares.org to learn more
For all other Library related questions or to sign up for the Library's monthly enewsletter please email beaman@cwmares.org

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECTMENS REPORTS:

- Mr. Hadley would Ms. Lucier to speak to the DPW about the landscaping at the Senior Center. He explained there are weeds growing everywhere.
- Mr. Rajeshkumar would like to know when the paving projects will begin. Ms. Lucier stated they are currently getting started on the sidewalks next week. She will inquire to the DPW Director as to when the projects will begin and which roads.
- Mr. Rucho discussed the dog cleanup and stated they cannot expect the the Animal Control Officer to be able to see everyone. He asked how does a resident handle complaint. Ms. Lucier stated neighbors need to remind other about the bylaw. Mr. Rucho asked how long

have we had tickets, Ms. Lucier stated we just received the ticket book and will be given to the Animal Control Officer when he gets sworn in.

- Mr. Rucho would like to have a drive up drop box installed at the Municipal Building, Ms. Lucier looked into prices but will need to work out a location. Ms. Lucier stated she has money in the purchased services budget. Mr. Hadley thinks this is a great idea.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: Consider entering into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30a, Section 21(A), Part 2 to discuss strategy with respect to negotiations with union and non-union personnel and contract negotiations with nonunion personnel and the Chair declares that an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining sessions.

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar: I move to enter into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30a, Section 21(A), Part 2 to discuss negotiations with union and non-union personnel in regards to health insurance options, and contract negotiations with non-union personnel (DPW Director), and Part 3 to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining with DPW and Cemetery union. Chair declares that an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body, second Mr. Rucho at 7:16 p.m.

Mr. Crowley stated the Select board will not reconvene in open session

Roll Call vote

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar to adjourn at 7:57 p.m. Mr. Hadley, second all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved: May 20, 2020

Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Patrick J. Crowley, Chairman

Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chairman

John W. Hadley, Clerk

Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman

Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman