



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

CHARLES E. SHEPARD MUNICIPAL BUILDING

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MINUTES OF MARCH 10, 2020

PRESENT: Mr. Dario F. Nardi; Chairman and Mr. John Nason, Vice-Chairman and Mr. Marc Richard, Clerk

ATTENDEES: See attached list

Opened the Meeting at 6:00 PM

Chairman Nardi opened the meeting and led with the Pledge of Allegiance. He advised all that tonight's meeting was being both video and audio taped.

MINUTES

Motion to approve the Minutes of February 18, 2020 made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous

CORRESPONDENCE

1. The office received the monthly reports from both the Police and Fire Chiefs for the month ending February 2020. – **Noted**
2. As a reminder, the Rabies Clinic will be held on Saturday, March 14th from 9 AM to 11 AM at the Highway Garage. The Town Clerk will be present to issue dog licenses for 2020. License fees for dogs will be \$11.00 for unsprayed animals and \$7.00 for neutered male or spayed female. **Bring our last rabies certificate with you. - Noted**
3. The office received notice that the Town received an additional \$775.00 in dividend credits from MIIA for maintaining excellent risk management and safety records. – **Noted**
4. The Warren Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing on Special Permit Application No. 295 for the Warren Water District. The applicant is requesting an expansion of the Warren Water District's existing water supply facility regarding a proposed water treatment plant. – **Noted**
5. The Conservation Commission received a \$5,000. Grant secured by Sen. Anne Gobi and Rep. Todd Smola to assist final improvements to Lucy Stone Park. – **Great News and many thanks to all who have brought Lucy back to her old grandeur.**
6. The office also received notice from the Governors' Office that pending final passage of the bond authorization, the Town of Warren's Chapter 90 apportionment for Fiscal year 2020 is **\$287,836. - Noted**

APPOINTMENT – BOARD OF HEALTH

Motion to appoint Timothy Czub to the Board of Health as recommended by the Board of Health until the May 2020 election – unanimous. Roll Call Vote: 3 Yes – Selectmen and 2 Yes votes from Board of Health (Mr. Lacey and Mr. Makowski)

WESTERN MASS LAW ENFORCEMENT MUTUAL AID AGREEMENT

This request is on behalf of the Police Chief from Monson and in agreement with the Regional Animal Control Committee stakeholders. This agreement is the same as what Police and Fire have with our surrounding towns in Central Mass. With no objections, the following motion was made: Motion to sign the Western Mass Law Enforcement Mutual Aid Agreement as presented made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous.

FFY19 GRANT EMPG (EMERGENCY MGT)

Motion to approve and sign the FFY19 as presented made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous (Mr. McKeon stated that the grant will be for bleed kits)

TOWN ACCOUNTANT – APPOINTMENT

After receiving many applications for a qualified candidate, the Board of Selectmen have come down to the finalist. Mr. Nason stated that this was a very tough decision as many of the candidates were very well qualified. All members agreed that this was a tough decision. With no further discussion, the following motion was made: Motion to appoint Tammy Martin to the position of Town Accountant with a 90-day probationary period and pending a successful employment agreement made by Mr. Nason; second: Mr. Richard – unanimous. This appointment is due to the upcoming retirement of Madeline Witaszek.

WARRANTS & INVOICES

Motion to approve and sign Warrant No's. 68 & 69 dated February 24, 2020 in the amounts of \$40,400.27 & \$195,689.68 respectively made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous

Motion to approve and sign Warrant No's. 70 & 71 dated March 2, 2020 in the amounts of \$41,329.16 & \$69,622.90 respectively made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous

Motion to approve and sign Warrant No's. 72 & 73 dated March 9, 2020 in the amounts of \$6,612.97 and \$50,623.77 made by Mr. Richard; second: Mr. Nason – unanimous

COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Board of Health Chairman, Ken Lacey addressed the Board this evening to advise all that with the current State of Emergency regarding the virus, he is suggesting that all residents treat it like the flu. Wash hands regularly, sneeze/cough into your elbow and avoid unnecessary contact if possible. He will have more information to follow as the state provides continued guidance.

6:15PM – QUESTION/ANSWER PERIOD FOR CHIEF MILLETTE

Mr. Nardi welcomed all who attended this evening for an opportunity to ask our (Interim) Chief Millette any questions that they have. Mr. Nardi also stated that he has performed an evaluation on Chief Millette and is very pleased with his performance thus far. He specifically noted that he puts the department's needs ahead of his own. The NEPBA, Local 195 was present this evening and fully support his appointment as full-time Chief. The Union stated that he was dealt a difficult hand, however they already have seen positive changes. Chief Millette gave a summary of his background serving as a Police Officer since his graduation in 2000. He stated that it is his lifelong dream to be able to hold such a position. He feels that he has built solid relationships with the community and is looking to advance the department. Mr. Nardi mentioned the staffing audit that was done and if chosen as Chief he will need to look to increase the staff.

Chief Lavoie was in attendance and he too expressed his full support and coined him as a true professional who goes above and beyond. His visibility in town is an asset. Lifelong resident and business owner, Kathy Allard-Fountain fully supports Chief Millette and has seen nothing but positive changes and a boost in moral. Mr. James Fountain feels that the Board should not waste anymore time and appoint him as soon as possible. Mr. Steven Duff, Principal at Quaboag has found him to be a great resource and their joint effort in a crisis plan continues to progress.

Mr. Soltys questioned what his thoughts were on his strengths and weakness of the department. Chief Millette stated that he wants to improve the departments Rules/Regulations along with Policy/Procedure, equipment and training. He stated that even smaller towns are ahead of Warren.

Mr. James Allard is in full support as well as Donald Nickerson. Both Mr. Nason and Mr. Richard have had nothing but positive feedback since his interim appointment. Mr. Nardi stated that he would request that the Board take a vote within the next several weeks. Chief Millette thanked all in attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Richard reminded all that Park & Rec will be holding a dance at WCES and thanks goes out to both Police and Fire for sponsoring recent dances.

Congratulations to Officer LaFlower and his wife Stacey on the birth of their new baby girl.

Mrs. Acerra stated that she applied for a competitive grant through Green Communities and is hopeful to hear by mid to late summer.

COMMENTS & CONCERNS

Mr. Nickerson questioned the status of the cell tower and Mr. Fountain questioned the possibility of a public safety complex. No hard answers were given this evening. Senator Gobi and Rep. Smola were expected to meet to discuss a feasibility study.

FY 2021 BUDGET DISCUSSION – Preliminary Discussion

Police Department – Chief Millette is requesting that the Sergeants position be replaced with a Lieutenant. That position would be out of the CBA and have an individual employment agreement. This position would add to the chain of command. There are increases to expense, clothing and firearms. The Board requested a clean copy, which Chief Millette will provide.

Fire Department – Chief Lavoie presented a budget with an increase due to more day to day expenses. At the last of ATM, a 5th FF/EMT was added. Calls went up another 12% this year. FF/EMT would like to pay the same rate providing they are certified in both. He is also proposing a new line (radio/pager equipment) to be funded at 5K. He too will send a clean version of his budget.

Park & Recreation – The request for funding for tree removal will be moved over to Highway. They have requested to increase park salary back to 17K. Total proposed budget - \$48,900.

Board of Assessors – They have requested a new line for inspectional services in the amount of \$9,000. Mr. Ramsey stated that they move that if he can be certified. They are currently working on a PILOT for Borrego Solar and Roy Bishop is doing the appraisal. Mr. Nardi feels that the developer should pay.

NEXT MEETING DATE: - March 17th - Time - TBD

Motion to Adjourn made by Mr. Nason second: Mr. Richard – unanimous at 8:45 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rebecca Acerra
Administrative Secretary


Marc W. Richard, Clerk