



**Town of West Newbury
Select Board
Monday, February 6, 2023 @ 7:00pm
381 Main Street, Town Office Building
www.wnewbury.org
Open Session Meeting Minutes**

Open Session: Open session was called to order at 7:00 pm by Chairperson Archibald

Participation at the meeting:

- David Archibald, Richard Parker, and Wendy Reed- Select Board Members
- Angus Jennings- Town Manager
- James Blatchford- Town Clerk
- Bob Janes- Board of Water Commissioners Chairperson
- Rob Phillips- Finance Committee

Announcements:

- This meeting is being broadcast on local cable TV and recorded for rebroadcast on the local cable channels and on the internet; Meeting also accessible by remote participation; see agenda for details.
- Annual & Special Town Meeting: Monday, April 24, 2023 at 7pm
- Town Election Monday, May 1st. Last day to obtain nomination papers from Town Clerk: March 9th at 5pm. Nomination papers due to Town Clerk by March 13th at 5pm.
- Call for volunteers! Open positions on Boards/Commissions/Committees. See www.wnewbury.org/volunteer
- Reminder to subscribe for emailed Town agendas/news/announcements at www.wnewbury.org/subscribe

Regular Business

A. Update on Water Superintendent; request to establish wage rate and extend terms for Interim Water Superintendent position – Board of Water Commissioners

Bob Janes appeared before the Select Board in person. Janes stated the Board of Water Commissioners had voted in favor of continuing to pay the Interim Water Superintendent, Mike Gootee, at the previously agreed upon wage through the end of April or after Town Meeting. Janes stated that Gootee would be required to work 16 hours per week excluding weekends. Janes informed the Select Board of three projects that would need to be completed (Brake Hill Tank, Pipestave Hill Tank, and the budget for Town Meeting) and Gootee would be needed to help Mark complete these projects. When asked if the Water Department could support the proposed budget, Janes stated funds could be transferred from the health insurance fund. The Select Board questioned how the Board of Water Commissioners had not realized Gootee was almost through the allocated hours and previously approved budget that should have lasted for 6 months. Janes stated the weekend hours had contributed to how quickly the allocated hours and budget had been used. Jennings stated the initial request from the Board of Water Commissioners had included weekend coverage but it was not anticipated that the weekend coverage would use so much time. Reed was thankful Gootee was willing to help with the transition of the new Water Superintendent, but stated the transition had not been completed to date and expressed concern the transition would not be completed in the next three months. Reed expressed discomfort in approving the request without assurance that the transition would take place. The Select Board and Jennings discussed the role of the Select Board to approve or deny any wage range that was higher than the approved range of the position. **Reed made a motion to deny the Board of Water Commissioners request to continue at the current rate. Parker seconded.** The Select Board and Jennings discussed the implications if the motion passed. **After discussion, Reed amended the original motion to deny the Board of Water Commissioners request to continue at the current rate, the arrangement could continue with the former Water Superintendent as long as the rate was within the current wage range and step schedule with a maximum of 48.31 per hour. Parker seconded, then withdrew the second and requested clarification.** Parker asked if anything would preclude the former Water Superintendent from being assigned to the highest step. Jennings stated the Board of Water Commissioners would assign the step and nothing would preclude being placed on the highest step. **Parker seconded.** Reed strongly encouraged the Board of Water Commissioners to ensure there was enough money to fund the request. **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

B. Review referral from Parks & Rec Commission re 2023 Summer Rec Program budget/wages

Jennings stated the wage rates for the Summer Recreational Program staff did not include COLA and could be adjusted upon approval of COLA for the upcoming fiscal year. The prior year, each Co-Director earned \$10,000. The wage rates for the coming year proposed a different rate for the Co-Director with multiple years of experience and the Assistant Director that had advanced to the Co-Director position to earn a lesser rate. **Reed made a motion to approve the pay rates for the Summer Recreation staff and the proposed FY23 budget. Parker seconded.** The Select Board agreed that COLA would be added to the returning staff wages the coming year. **Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

C. Presentation of proposed FY24 Town Operating Budget and Capital Program updates – Angus Jennings, Town Manager

Jennings presented the draft FY24 budget and stated placeholder numbers were included for education as the exact number would not be determined until March. Jennings stated that 54% of budget was education funding and explained that while the total operating budget had increased 3.6%, the operating budget without education had decreased 1.2%. Jennings stated the redistribution of responsibilities within the Town Clerk's Office and DPW was one of the areas that had contributed to the decrease. Richard Baker, Board of Assessors, appeared before the Select Board in person. Baker stated property assessments would be completed in house going forward, as opposed to being outsourced, and would result in a 10% decrease within that department.

Jennings reviewed the dates for Finance Committee meetings and the deadline to post the warrant by April 10th. **Reed made a motion to refer the FY24 operating budget as prepared by the Town manager to the Finance Committee. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously approved (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain)**

D. Review of proposed/potential warrant articles for spring Annual and Special Town Meetings

The Select Board reviewed the proposed/potential warrant articles for the spring Annual and Special Town meetings. Upon review, the Select Board decided to remove the Whetstone Greenway supplemental funding article from the warrant as the project was not ready to move forward at this time. The Select Board discussed potentially amending the Capital Improvements bylaw and kept a placeholder on the warrant for this item.

E. Vote to close Annual and Special Town Meeting warrants

Archibald made a motion to close the Annual and Special Town Meeting warrants. Reed seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).

F. Referral of proposed FY24 capital articles to Capital Improvements Committee

Jennings recommended to refer six article items to the Capital Improvements Committee. **Reed made a motion to refer the six items to the Capital Improvements Committee. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

G. Meeting minutes: January 3, 2022

Clerical errors were noted for correction. **Reed made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from January 3, 2022 as amended. Parker seconded. Motion unanimously approved (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

Town Manager Updates

H. Update re Safe Routes to Schools grant application

The Select Board and Jennings discussed how to advance this project forward and what MassDOT could potentially require. Jennings stated an invitation to attend an upcoming meeting could be extended to the engineer. **No motion was made at this time.**

I. Submittal of FY23 MIIA Wellness Grant applications

Jennings stated two FY23 MIIA Wellness Grant had been submitted last week and matching funds were not required for the grants. **No motion was made at this time.**

J. Follow up meeting assignment; placing items for future agendas

Archibald requested more information surrounding the Traffic Safety Bill signed by Governor Baker that would give cities and towns more control over reducing speed limits.

Archibald made a motion to adjourn Open Session. Reed seconded. Motion unanimously passed (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain). Open Session adjourned at 11:15 pm.

To view a video recording of this meeting, use the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZppZpZPoh4>