



Town of West Newbury
Select Board
Monday, June 26, 2023 @ 7:00pm
381 Main Street, Town Office Building
www.wnewbury.org
Meeting Minutes

Open Session: Chairwoman Reed opened the session at 7:04pm.

Participation at the Meeting:

- Rick Parker, Wendy Reed, Chris Wile- Select Board
- Angus Jennings- Town Manager
- Chief Michael Dwyer- West Newbury Public Safety, via Zoom
- Christine Wallace- Dept. of Public Works, via Zoom
- Robert Janes- Chair of the Water Commissioners
- Chip Wallace- Chair of the Energy and Sustainability Committee
- Robert Phillips- Chair of the Finance Committee
- Kevin Dandrade, Rebecca Dean- Engineers of TEC Incorporated

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; instructions below.
- Celebration of Life for Mary Dorothy "Dot" Cavanaugh- Tuesday, June 27 at 4:30pm, SAGE Center
- Housing Opportunities Initiative/MBTA Communities Design Workshop, Tuesday, June 27th at 6pm
- 2023 Summer Bandstand Concert Series-Thursdays at 6:30pm - list of performers located on Town website
- Call for volunteers! FY24 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. Updates since June 5th discussion of Ash Street posted speeds/ speed limit enforcement

Reed updated the Board that further wildlife injuries had occurred since the previous Select Board discussion on this topic, and that several options for mitigating the problem had been examined, including closing the road temporarily/seasonally, increasing police patrols on the Street, with the potential introduction of traffic calming (speed bumps and other methods), as well as wildlife barriers. All three major options were not feasible for a number of reasons. Chief Michael Dwyer has been working on lowering the weight limit and reaching out to others to remind them of speed limits. Parker stressed the need to communicate clearly with various stakeholders regarding the issue including the Dept. of Transportation and the Dept. of Fish and Wildlife. The Board decided to determine the potential legal issues surrounding deployment of speed bumps on the Street. **No motion was made at this time.**

B. Presentation of updated plan for improvements to Route 113 (Main Street) crosswalk between Page School and Pipestave; and overview of Route 113 ped/bike safety planning process -TEC Consultants

(See Exhibit B, p. 17-26). Representatives from TEC, hired to develop a concept for the safety improvements, showed a slideshow providing information on their efforts to date. Prior to the presentation Town Manager Jennings provided a brief recap of the process to date. Kevin Dandrade stated that the preliminary estimate for all costs in the project was \$240,000. TEC displayed several maps and images with details of changes to sidewalks and roads including flashing beacons for the crosswalks, changes to sidewalks, and the enhancements of entries to roads and parking lots at the Pipestave Recreation Area Driveway. Dandrade then provided updates on the firm's plan for the corridor as a whole, stating that activities such as aerial photography, public outreach, and gathering of crash data were underway. He hoped to have a public hearing in the Fall to receive feedback. Dandrade, Dean, and Wallace answered brief questions from the Board. **Parker motioned to approve the submittal of the "25% Design Plans" to MassDOT. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**

C. Updates regarding research into potential conversion to LED Streetlights - Energy/Sustainability Comm.

(See Exhibit C, p. 27-29). Chip Wallace told the Board that neighboring communities had made this switch (Amesbury, Haverhill, and others), and that he had looked into the process which would cost \$130,000 to do (with potential defrayment from grants) but reduce the costs of running the lights about 50%. The Merrimack Light Department had offered to install a demonstration unit in Town with adjustable color and brightness. A short discussion occurred on where to install the demonstration light, but no final place was determined, and Wile asked for clarification on the costs of the installation, which Parker explained would include both the installation and the product. The Select Board decided to wait to approve the project until lighting conditions, location, and other factors were nailed down. **Item was tabled for a future meeting.**

D. Update on work to pursue potential creation of new public water source at 31 Dole Place

Reed guided the room through a slideshow on the years 2015 to 2023, focusing on the acquisition of the land and using it for a well, as well as the various pitfalls in the process including testing the site, expenses occurred, and attempts to purchase the property from its owner. Wile expressed his reservations at the cost and uncertainty of the project- with no guarantees on returns as a stable water source. He suggested exploring other options to find water with Janes stating that the 31 Dole Place option was one of the best hopes to meet the Town's water needs. A contract with an engineering firm had been signed to pursue the next steps of the project, Reed said, and they would provide updated costs for Special Town Meeting vote in October, with further final decisions to be made in April. **No motion was made at this time.**

E. Review of recommended vendor selection: Page School Conditions Assessment

Select Board Open Session Meeting June 26, 2023.

Minutes approved July 10, 2023

Posted Agenda on June 23, 2023 at the Town's Offices and the Town's Official Website www.wnewbury.org

(See Exhibit E, p. 30-81). The Town Manager informed the Board that a vendor had been chosen, and gave the reason for their selection. Wile asked what the value of the contract would be. Jennings responded by saying it would be \$85,000, with Rob Phillips questioning the costs. The timeline of the project would be “very aggressive” once the contract would be formalized. **Parker motioned that the Town Manager be allowed to negotiate with the vendor for the Page School Conditions Assessment cost. Reed seconded.** Wile requested to modify the motion to include that the negotiation be contingent upon approval of the Town Accountant that the financial statement is satisfactory. **The amended motion failed. (Parker and Reed Yes, Wile No).**

- F. Request for authorization to apply for MassDOT Small Bridge Grant for Middle Street Bridge**
(See Exhibit F, p. 82). **Parker motioned to authorize the Town to apply for the MassWorks grant. Wile seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- G. Review of draft LAND grant application for proposed acquisition of Sawmill Brook property**
(See Exhibit G, p. 83-109). Jennings felt that the application checked a lot of boxes, and he and Wile praised the hard work done on the application. **No motion was made at this time.**
- H. Review of projects approved for ARPA funding, and potential new projects for consideration**
(See Exhibit H, p. 110-121). The Board reviewed additional items to fund with ARPA dollars, as well as ones already approved to use said funds. Parker hoped to contribute ARPA funds toward the Middle Street Bridge project and the group spent time running through the costs associated with the project pulling from a variety of funding scenarios (combinations of grants, ARPA, Town budgets, and other areas). Reed suggested possibly using the funds for water infrastructure replacements, but Parker felt that achieving this in a short timeframe was a tall order. The Board discussed timeframes for grant applications and proposals. **No motion was made at this time.**
- I. Approval and signing of the borrowing paperwork in connection with the Town's \$1,020,000 Bond Anticipation Note dated July 12, 2023, payable July 12, 2024**
(See Exhibit I, p. 122-137). Jennings explained the need for the approved borrowing, mostly related to underestimated costs in infrastructure projects. **Wile motioned to approve the wording in the paperwork. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- J. Request for appointment of Ian Kenneth James as Associate Planning Board member**
(See Exhibit J, p. 138). **Wile motioned to appoint Ian Kenneth James to the Planning Board. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- K. Consideration of requests for Committee member reappointments for FY24**
(See Exhibit K, p. 139). **Parker motioned the Board appoint the list of members in Exhibit K in the Packet to the respective Boards, Commission, and Committees, with the exception of Walter Burmeister whose interest was unconfirmed at the time of the meeting. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- L. Review and approval of FY24 Grade/Step Compensation Schedule**
(See Exhibit L, p. 139-140). Item M is mislabeled Item L in packet. The FY24 Step increase was 3%. **Parker motioned to approve the 3% increase. No second was made. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).** **Wile motioned to approve the wage schedule as submitted. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- M. Review and approval of FY24 employee wage schedule.**
Wile motioned to approve the wage schedule as submitted. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).
- N. Item N. in packet- Requests for reappointment of Emergency Management Agency representatives/staff for FY24**
(See Exhibit N, p. 142-149). The Board and Town Manager discussed how the process of appointment works, and potentials for reformation of the process at the local level. **Parker motioned to reappoint the Emergency Management Agency representative, with amended term expirations. Reed seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- P. Acknowledgement of receipt of Ethics Disclosures from Summer Rec program staff and Water Superintendent**
(See Exhibit P, p. 150-159). Jennings explained that the disclosures were mandated even for Summer Rec staff and Water Superintendent, and that the Board would be acknowledging the receipt of the ethics disclosures. **Parker motioned to acknowledge the disclosures. Wile seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- Q. Request for authorization to waive Personnel Policy to allow payment to employee for more than 3 days of required Jury Duty -Angus Jennings, Town Manager**
(See Exhibit Q, 160). **Wile motioned to waive the Personnel Payments to allow payments. Parker seconded. The motion unanimously passed. (3 Yes, 0 No, 0 Abstain).**
- R. Meeting minutes: Feb. 13, 2023; Feb. 27, 2023; March 29, 2023; April 24, 2023; May 22, 2023 & June 6, 2023**
(See Exhibit R p. 161-176). **Parker motioned to accept the meetings. Reed seconded. The motion passed. (2 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain).**

Town Manager Updates:

- S. Summary of Town Counsel review of short-term rental bylaw**
(See Exhibit S, p. 172-199). The Board debated whether they wanted to encourage the growth of short-term rentals as an option in the Town of West Newbury, reflecting on the pitfalls and the present bylaw's vagueness. Their hope was to gather more input from Town government before bringing any changes in the bylaw's language to Special Town Meeting in October. They resolved that tackling the short-term rental issue, perhaps imposing a time limited rental period, would be the better approach before regulating Accessory Dwelling Units in the near future. **No motion was made at this time.**
- T. Update from Planning Board housing opportunities session held on June 20th**
The Board received a recap of the event from attendees Jennings and Reed- the emphasis on educating the public on these issues was stressed, and the potential for major penalties for not following through on the

housing development as mandated by state regulations. **No motion was made at this time.**

U. Affordable Housing Trust (AHT) work toward creating Small Grant Program; and work toward finalizing sub-grant agreement for AHT use of CPA funds

Jennings stated that the Small Grant Program was nearing its debut. **No motion was made at this time.**

V. Procurement updates

The Town Manager provided information on assorted procurement efforts for invasive species management and other areas. Reed asked if the Chief Procurement Officer was generally a distinct entity in other Town governments, and Jennings relayed that it varied by community, and stressed the density of the duties as Acting CPO. Parker asked about the status of the Office phone system, and Jennings responded that the examination of a new system was still underway. **No motion was made at this time.**

W. Updates on other ongoing/active projects/initiatives

(See Exhibit W, p. 200-201). See above. **No motion was made at this time.**

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

Reed motioned to adjourn the session. There was no second. The session adjourned at 10:20pm.

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

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vh5jxea03G8>