

**Westborough Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
March 26, 2013**

6:00 p.m. – 7:20 p.m.

Present: Chairman Johnson, Vice Chairman Barrette, Selectmen Dodd (arrived at 6:08 p.m.), Drewry and Emery

Also Present: Jim Malloy, Town Manager; Kristi Williams, Assistant Town Manager/HR Director; Greg Franks, Town Counsel

Request to Approve the Board of Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

Selectman Emery's motion to approve the minutes of January 22, 2013 was seconded by Selectman Drewry. Vote: 4-0

Selectman Emery's motion to approve the minutes of February 12, 2013 was seconded by Selectman Drewry. Vote: 4-0

Open Forum

Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee / Bruce Tretter

Mr. Tretter came before the Board with a presentation on the Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee's progress to date. Their charge is to improve bike and pedestrian safety, increase accessibility for both and build multi-use trails. The Committee is participating in the Spring Festival, developing a Bike/Pedestrian Survey, and Selectman Dodd is working on a business/community sponsorship proposal for the high visibility crosswalk signs that were approved at Town Meeting. Mr. Tretter reviewed the recessed reflectors that will be installed in the crosswalks and how sewer grates that are parallel to the curb are a danger to bicyclists. The Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Committee has provided some funding for the multi-purpose trail. Selectman Emery met with Town Counsel today to begin work on the easement process. Mr. Burn explained that the Town will not be asked to fund the trail development. Information on the Committee can be found on the Town website.

Post Town Meeting Discussion / Town Moderator

Mr. Harrington and Mr. Behn came before the Board. Mr. Harrington asked the Board for their feedback, or what they may have heard from residents, on the microphone procedures. The results of the survey provided emphatic comments expressing severe disappointment regarding the length of time of presentations. For the October Town Meeting Mr. Harrington proposed negotiating a time limit with each initial presenter and the Meeting would set a limit for subsequent speeches. If the speaker goes over the limit Mr. Harrington would ask for a vote to allow the speaker to continue. He also suggested the use of a countdown clock, which has received some resistance in the past. There was a comment on the survey suggesting that a place be designated for signing up for transportation to Town Meeting, it was not evident if it was specific to seniors, and Selectman Barrette stated that the senior bus does run for Town Meeting. Mr. Malloy suggested cordoning off the upper sections until the lower section fills up to keep people closer together and Mr. Harrington is not in favor of that as there are people who prefer to sit there and are willing to walk to the microphones.

Selectman Drewry agreed with the time limit for presenters, the microphones did not seem to be much of an issue, and the meeting overall went well.

Regarding the length of presentations, Selectman Emery stated that whether the presenter is elected, a paid Department Head or appointed, the cue should come from them on how much information should be presented in order for residents to make an informed decision and would not be in favor of cutting short the presentations. She is in favor of the traveling microphone, but felt that the Scouts were not as quick or thoughtful as they should have been and the leaders should be informed. Selectman Emery does not agree with closing off the balcony until the front is filled as many people have a preferred spot.

Selectman Dodd had no specific opinion regarding the microphones or seating. Regarding the length of residents' comments, he does not agree with a time limit as it is an open Town Meeting. He agrees with setting a time limit for all presenters and suggested making presentations available to the public a week or two before on the website in order to lessen the length of the presentation. Mr. Harrington stated that there are fewer handouts now than in the past and suggested that the presentation slides be available at Town Meeting. He explained to the Board that some presenters are very passionate and well versed about their subject, making their presentations longer than may be necessary and sometimes counterproductive.

Selectman Barrette pointed out that the Rule of the Meeting is improving, the queuing at the microphones was helpful, and efforts to improve the process should continue. It is his opinion that thirty minutes is more than enough time for presentations and there should be equal time for the pros and cons. Selectman Barrette stated that, as a registered voter, it is his opinion that when a question is moved it should be voted right then as opposed to the Town Moderator making the decision as to whether the question is ready to be moved or not. He is working with Selectman Drewry and Mr. Behn to meet with town officials in Wayland and to observe their upcoming Town Meeting and the use of electronic voting devices.

Selectman Johnson agrees with the use of the running microphones, but that it is somewhat confusing about where they were being used and that the Scouts could have been more attentive, which can be improved. He agrees that it is appropriate to put time limits on presentations and asked to discuss the best way to do that for the next Town Meeting.

Selectman Emery pointed out that the length of the presentations should not be a surprise as there should have been discussions beforehand. She is in favor of the standing microphones as they serve a different purpose, but should continue to have the portable ones as well.

Mr. Behn pointed out that the Advisory Finance Committee did publish the booklet on the website one week before Town Meeting and did a press release as well. The addition of footnotes to provide clarification may have helped to pre-answer questions. He also discussed the presentation timing and that presenters should try to provide enough information without overwhelming the audience; the integrity of the meeting, and how it is undermined and hurts everyone when text messages are sent to bring people in for a particular Article; and holding a public discussion to find a way to encourage people to stay for the whole meeting or change to representative government. Selectman Barrette pointed out that the government study committees that were formed did not want representative Town Meeting, and therefore allows this type of situation. Other options were discussed and it was agreed to discuss this further on a future agenda.

Mr. Capriole came before the Board and supported Mr. Malloy's suggestion of the need for structure. He agreed that each presenter should receive the same amount of time and pointed out the consequence of Town Meeting, which is that at the end of the Meeting the community is authorized to send an approximate \$8,000 tax bill to the average homeowner. Mr. Capriole proposed not only setting a time limit for presenters, but also for the response period after, which should deter people from speaking frivolously and prevent one group from dominating the time. Mr. Burn came before the Board and explained that in private business a presentation is allotted a certain amount of time and extra slides are available if more information is requested. He does not agree with Mr. Capriole's timing suggestion as that process can be gamed as well. Mr. Tretter felt the tone and tenor of the meeting was positive, it was productive and does not feel that the texting was an issue as the meeting is broadcast live. Ms. Hensley's comments were that it was a positive meeting; she agrees with the microphone process and that it continue to be monitored; prefers short, crisp presentations but understands that each Article is different and some require more time than others; agrees with setting a time limit and letting Town Meeting decide if further information should be presented; and Ms. Hensley does like the Town Meeting process and encouraged more residents to attend and stay.

Request to Approve Relay for Life Event, May 18, 2013 / Terry Gavin

Terry Gavin came before the Board representing Relay for Life. This will be a Town-wide event and will not be overnight but will be held from 10:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.

Selectman Barrette's motion to approve the Relay for Life Event on May 18, 2013 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. was seconded by Selectman Drewry. Vote: 5-0

Request to Approve "Arts in the Common" Flyers in the Summer Tax Bills / Lynn Watts

Ms. Watts came before the Board to request permission to add the Arts in the Common flyer to the tax bills. This will be the event's fifth year and Ms. Watt's provided a sample flyer.

Selectman Emery's motion to approve allowing the Arts in the Commons tax bill stuffer for the upcoming tax bill was seconded by Selectmen Drewry. Vote: 5-0

Request to Appoint Youth Members to the Youth Commission / John Badenhausen

Mr. Badenhausen and the youth members of the Commission came before the Board. The Article was passed at Town Meeting allowing the four youth members to become voting members of the Commission and the next step is for the Board to make the appointments.

Selectman Emery's motion to appoint Casey Collins and Pranit Lahoty to a one year term on the Youth Commission and Jack Chuma and Matt Murch to a two year term on the Youth Commission was seconded by Selectman Drewry. The Board thanked them for volunteering and participating in Town Meeting. Vote: 5-0

Request to Approve Change of Manager for Courtyard Marriott, 3 Technology Drive / Sandra Miller

Ms. Miller, General Manager, came before the Board. All the paperwork is in order.

Selectman Drewry's motion to approve the Change of Manager naming Sandra Miller the Manager of Record for Courtyard by Marriot at 3 Technology Drive was seconded by Selectman Emery. Vote: 5-0

DPW Snow Budget / John Walden

Mr. Walden requested approval to deficit spend an additional \$50,000 for the expense portion of the snow budget to cover any outstanding bills.

Selectman Drewry's motion to approve the additional \$50,000 for the snow budget expenses was seconded by Selectman Emery. Vote: 5-0

Senior/Disabled Tax Relief Fund / Selectman Dodd

Selectman Dodd reviewed the Massachusetts General Law allowing municipalities to qualify disabled residents or seniors for tax relief. Applications would be reviewed and approved by a committee consisting of the Chief Assessor, Treasurer and three residents appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The fund would be listed on the tax bill for residents to make donations and donations would also be solicited from various civic organizations and businesses. If there is interest, Selectman Dodd proposed the creation of an ad hoc committee consisting of two Selectmen, Ms. DeManche, Council on Aging Director, an at-large member, the Assistant Town Manager, Chief Assessor and Treasurer to work on a proposal to present at the October Town Meeting and for implementation shortly thereafter.

Selectman Dodd's motion to create an Ad Hoc Tax Relief Fund Review Committee with the purpose of evaluating the establishment of a tax relief fund for the disabled and seniors in Westborough with the membership to include two members of the Board of Selectmen, the Director of the Senior Center, the Chief Assessor, Treasurer, and an at-large member appointed by the Board of Selectmen was seconded by Selectman Drewry. Discussion: The committee would report back to the Board in June or July. Vote: 5-0

Town Counsel Report

No report

Town Manager Report

Mr. Malloy informed the Board that he met this afternoon with the Town's fiscal advisor to discuss refinancing some of the debt. The debt to be refinanced is currently at a 4.4% interest rate and will decrease to 1.66% for the remaining eleven years, saving the Town interest charges totaling \$182,000 for the Water and Sewer Fund and \$2,941,000 for the General Fund. The yearly savings is approximately \$280,000 in interest. The Treasurer will have documentation for the Board's signature in July. Mr. Malloy pointed out that he changed the rate in his debt service analysis from 3.5% to 2.5% today for the Fire Station and Town Hall, which is conservative according to the fiscal advisor. The Board thanked Mr. Malloy and Ms. Savignac.

Issues and Correspondence of the Selectmen

The Selectmen received the Reservoir Water Report and asked when it would be addressed. Mr. Malloy will email it to the Board and it will be added to a future meeting agenda. Selectmen Barrette suggested that as he is a member of the Municipal Building Committee (MBC) he could update the Board on their progress at the Selectmen meetings if the Board agrees to add it to the agenda. It was agreed that he would provide an update once a month. The meetings are open and posted and Mr. Malloy pointed out that he updates the website regularly. Mr. Malloy informed the Board that the Fire Station has been reduced to just below 27,000 square feet, which meets the program needs. He also reviewed the meeting held today with Ms. Williams and Mr. Stockman regarding the Town Hall move and the issue of telephone systems and data

communications. Mr. Malloy has requested Mr. Stockman's presence at the next MBC meeting as his input is crucial.

Selectman Drewry asked that the men and women overseas protecting our country be remembered in everyone's thoughts and prayers. The second annual Veterans of Foreign Wars Golf Tournament will be held at Highfields Country Club on May 9, 2013 with a 1:00 p.m. shotgun and dinner after.

Executive Session

Selectman Barrette's motion to enter into Executive Session to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real property as an Open Session would have a detrimental effect on the Town's negotiating position.

A Roll Call vote was taken: Selectman Drewry – yes; Selectman Emery – yes; Selectman Johnson – yes; Selectman Barrette – yes; Selectman Dodd – yes.

Submitted by Paula M. Covino

Chairman Johnson

Vice Chairman Barrette

Selectman Dodd

Selectman Emery

Selectman Drewry