

Town of Washington Select Board Meeting
2/26/2024 7:00 – 9:00 PM Washington Town Hall

1. K. Lew called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. Attending for the Select Board were K. Lew, D. Ellis, and Mike Case. After leading the attendees in the Pledge of Allegiance, K. Lew made a motion to accept the meeting minutes from 2/12/24. M. Case seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

2. Attendants: Sean Curran, Dick Spencer, Jodi Hostetter, Debra Megaw, and Linda Levernoch. Ben Gelb attended remotely. Tykesha Nothe attended remotely to take the meeting minutes.

3. Approval of warrants D. Ellis asked if the part time position of bus driver is eligible for paid vacation. There was discussion on changing the policy. K. Lew said vacation weeks were not paid in the past, but the holiday is covered. J. Hostetter asked the Select Board to consider changing the policy. S. Curran was in favor of making the change. The Select Board agreed to consider for the next fiscal year. The Select Board also asked S. Curran and B. Gelb to look over the current personnel policy to come up with language for a possible change. K. Lew will put the matter on a future agenda and will loop in the Finance Committee. The Board changed the current payroll warrant to reflect the existing policy. K. Lew made a motion to accept the payroll warrant as amended. M. Case seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

4. Approval of Select Board monthly letter: K. Lew made a motion to approve the Select Board monthly letter with amendments. M. Case seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

5. Public Comment: D. Ellis asked if Washington could host Westfield Wild and Scenic on 3/28 from 6pm-9pm. The Select Board agreed and will put the event on the calendar. B. Gelb is moving forward with two tax title cases. The Collector has recently done two more takings which will be coming to the Treasurer. One of the properties is a potential cemetery space and K. Lew would like focus on moving this one forward as quickly as possible.

6. Approval of Primary Election warrant: After reading the warrant. K. Lew made a motion to issue the Primary Election warrant. D. Ellis seconded. Motion passed unanimously. Chief Miller will post and return service.

7. Vote to rehire Treasurer: K. Lew made a motion to rehire B. Gelb as Washingtons Treasurer effective 3/1. M. Case seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

8. Vote to increase Fire Chief inspection fees: K. Lew made a motion to approve the Fire Chiefs request to increase the fees from \$30 to \$40, to become effective at the start of next fiscal year in July. M. Case seconded. The Select Board discussed the current rates of inspections. The last increase in Washington was 15 years ago. The Board agreed to encourage the Fire Chief to charge for the fee for new home construction and the Summit Hill propane tank for consistency. K. Lew will ask the Fire Chief about inspections on woodburning stoves. The motion passed unanimously.

9. Vote to approve Financial Policies & Procedures: K. Lew moved the matter to a future agenda. D. Mages will send a complete document for review prior to the next meeting.

10. Town Administrator report: S. Curran sent the Select Board a draft of the EMS contract from Kathe. The Board will review the contract and discuss at the next meeting. S. Curran will work with Kathe to get a date for the presentation to Washington. K. Lew agreed that the agreement should be signed after the contract is presented to the community. The Board briefly discussed the fact that the contracts states that Washington will pay \$400 per call. K. Lew explained that the alternative is to pay a much larger flat fee. The Board will review further on a future agenda.

S. Curran reported that Zach in the system for his licenses. K. Lew asked S. Curran to follow up with Zach in regards to his testing. G. Campbell agreed to serve as a second signatory for checks. S. Curran reported that the MVP will not pay to clean up trees. S. Curran has been working with the Nature Conservancy in regards to purchasing and sale agreement for the Virginia lakes property. He expects it to be ready within a week. Washingtons insurance carrier MIIA meeting in Northampton on 4/10 they will be discussing firefighters aging out of insurance at 68 years old S. Curran will be attending. MIIA grant for \$5000 for insulation at the Town Hall.

11. Discussion about letter of appreciation to Smitty Pignatelli: D. Ellis will draft a letter of appreciation. The Board will look over and approve the letter at the next meeting.

12. Project priorities for upcoming year: K. Lew listed current project in no particular order Simmons Road cemetery expansion, Saint Andrews Chapel easement, Eden Glen Dam, Virginia Lakes Unit 1, Town Hall ADA accessibility, Climate resiliency hub, 911 signs, police cruiser, EMS regionalization, Lower Valley and Johnson Hill Roads, and general bylaws. The Board agreed that ADA Accessibility at the Town Hall is a priority and S. Curran suggested using One-stop Grant projects for funding. 911 signs are also a doable priority. M. Case said that Eden Glen is a priority K. Lew agreed. D. Ellis also agreed that Eden Glen is a priority because it is a liability as it stands. The Board agreed that Saint Andrews Chapel is not the highest priority. K. Lew said that it is a priority to make progress on Lower Valley and Johnson Hill Roads.

13. One-stop Grant projects for Expression of Interest: K. Lew outlined some of the One-stop process and explained that the grants are not hard to apply for, but a plan for implementation should be in place first. The Board agreed that engineering is a necessary part of the plan. S. Curran will put together an expression of interest for the One-stop grant.

14. Beacon Hill in the Berkshires, MMA Western & Rural MA conference attendance: D. Ellis and M. Case have conflicts. S. Curran and K. Lew will RSVP.

Adjournment: K. Lew motioned to adjourn the meeting at 9:04PM. M. Case seconded. Motion passed unanimously.

Accepted: _____ Date _____

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Respectfully submitted,

Tykesha Nothe

Correspondence:

Correspondence: Bonnie DiTomasso requested to meet with Washington residents in regards to Medicare. The Select Board agreed. K. Lew will put the meeting on a future agenda.