

**TOWN OF WINCHENDON
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
INCLUDES TRI-BOARD MEETING
WITH SCHOOL COMMITTEE and FINANCE COMMITTEE
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2020 6:15 P.M.
Town Hall, 2nd Floor Auditorium
109 Front Street, Winchendon, Mass.**

Board of Selectmen

Present:

Audrey LaBrie, Chairwoman	Keith R. Hickey, Town Manager
Barbara Anderson, Vice-Chairman	Linda Daigle, Executive Assistant
Amy Salter	Lindsay Kuchta, Recording Secretary
Rick Ward	
Mike Barbaro	

School Committee

Present:

Greg Vine, Chairman	Joan Landers, Superintendent
Larry Murphy, Vice-Chairman	Carolyn Hendricks, Executive Assistant
Felicia Nurmsen	
Roanne Demanche	
Pam Smith	

Finance Committee

Present:

Tom Kane Jr., Chairman	Douglas Delay
David Alexander	Charles Corts

Absent:

Maureen Ward
Keith Kent
Philip Levine

Special guest:

Anthony Roselli, CPA
Roselli, Clark & Associates

List of Documents Presented at Meeting:

- Keith Bussiere Letter of Resignation from Winchendon Community Park Committee (filed)
 - Email From Planning Agent Alison Manugian dated 1/22/2020 Re: Warren Field's Class III License (filed)
 - MEMO From Planning Agent Dated 11/13/2019 Re: Warren Field's Class III License (filed)
 - Pam Smith Letter of Interest of Appointment to School Committee (filed)
 - Report of the Town Manager (attached)
 - Minutes approved:
 - Monday, January 13, 2020 Regular Meeting
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LaBrie called the meeting to order at 6:15 P.M. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America.

Doneen Durling announced she was audio recording the meeting this evening.

1. **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no Selectmen's comments this evening.
2. **PUBLIC COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:** There were no public comments this evening.
3. **PUBLIC HEARINGS:** There were no public hearings this evening.
4. **APPOINTMENTS/RESIGNATIONS:**
 - 4.1. Winchendon Community Park Committee Resignation – Keith Bussiere- LaBrie noted that Keith Bussiere was resigning from the Winchendon Community Park Committee, and thanked him for his dedication to the Town.

Barbaro moved the Board of Selectmen accept the resignation of Keith Bussiere from the Winchendon Community Park Committee, and thanked him for his service, seconded by Anderson.

LaBrie asked if there was anything further to which Anderson noted she wanted to thank Mr. Bussiere for all of the time he spent at the Winchendon Community Park.

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

5. PERMIT/LICENSE APPLICATIONS:

- 5.1. Class III License Review and Expiration Extension – Delfi Excavating, Inc., d/b/a Like New Auto Parts, 401 School St.- Warren Field came forward regarding his license. LaBrie noted there were some concerns and asked if they had been taken care of. Hickey replied that everything apart from the fence that the Planning Board would like to be put in place has been addressed.

LaBrie asked Mr. Field if he had any questions or comments, to which he replied no.

Barbaro moved the Board of Selectmen approve extending the Class III license expiration date for Delfi Excavating, Inc. to January 1st, 2021, seconded by Anderson.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion, to which none was heard.

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

Barbaro moved for a ten minute recess, seconded by Anderson. With a vote of all aye the Board entered recess at 6:20 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 6:30 p.m.

**6. BOARDS/COMMISSIONS/COMMITTEES/DEPARTMENT
JOINT MEETING WITH BOARD OF SELECTMEN, FINANCE COMMITTEE AND
SCHOOL COMMITTEE:**

Kane called the Finance Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Vine called the School Committee meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

- 6.1. School Committee Appointment – Pam Smith- Pam Smith came forward and LaBrie noted Ms. Smith had the privilege of coming before both the School Committee and Board of Selectmen today. LaBrie asked Ms. Smith why she was interested in joining the School Committee, to which she replied she had noticed that the vacancy that had been posted still wasn't filled, and she had been considering joining for some time. LaBrie thanked Ms. Smith for stepping forward.

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Vine asked what Ms. Smith's background is to which she replied she has a son who has special needs and has been in the district since kindergarten. Vine thanked her for expressing interest; he continued noting if she is interested in running again for the seat she now holds on the Committee, she will have to take papers out at the Clerk's office and get signatures. Papers are due back by March 6th.

Nurmsen asked Ms. Smith to give more detail about her background as it is interesting and makes her a great candidate for her position on the School Committee. Ms. Smith noted that she grew up in Templeton, graduated from Narragansett and continued onto the University of Massachusetts. She studied nuclear engineering but ended up changing her major to Radiological Science and received her Bachelor's and then Master's degree in that field. Since coming to town, she, along with Sam Oliveira have restarted the Special Education Parent Advisory Committee (SEPAC). She attends regional SEPAC meetings with directors and parents from schools in the area. Additionally, she has had the opportunity to be on the interview selection committee for the last two Directors of Pupil Services. She currently is working as a Senior Health Physicist with Oak Ridge Associated Universities.

Barbaro noted Ms. Smith has quite the diverse background and she would be a great asset.

Barbaro moved to approve the appointment of Pam Smith to the School Committee and thanked her for stepping forward, seconded by Vine.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion,

With a vote of all aye, from both the Board of Selectmen and School Committee, the motion carried.

The Board thanked Ms. Smith.

- 6.2. Presentation of the Annual Audit Management Letter for FY19 with Roselli, Clark and Associates, CPAs- Tony Roselli of Roselli, Clark and Associates came forward along with Mike Barbaro of the Audit Committee and Larry Murphy.

Barbaro noted they are before the Boards to present the management letter from Roselli, Clark and Associates. There are a lot of areas that need correction but we have continued to move in a positive direction, and a lot of hard work has been put in. Additionally, Barbaro gave kudos to those who put the work into closing the grants that needed it.

Roselli noted the Town has made a lot of strides in the last few years. Things are looking positive and bright, everyone is working together with the Town as the common goal in mind. Last year the Deficit Legislation was paid off six years early, and the town has now managed to accumulate an unassigned balance so hopefully things will be easier to manage.

The school has hired a new superintendent, as well as a new business manager who has a lot of experience and should be able to do the job efficiently once they get through the first steps. The Town Accountant office has also seen some changes, the previous Assistant Town Accountant is now the Town Accountant, and the current Assistant Town Accountant also worked for the Town in years past.

Roselli then applauded the Board for having departments come before them and give updates on their departments; it allows them to bring positive news and updates, it is indicative in the progress the town is making.

There were a few things on the School's side that needed correction, but currently, good things are happening and going in the correct direction. The previous business manager for the school resigned just before the end of the year, and the closing of the year was a bit choppy. It is difficult to just pick up the ball and run with it in the last minute. These types of things are unavoidable when it comes to the report.

Roselli continued, briefly overviewing the Network Security portion of the audit. He stated that he did not want to go into detail due to the sensitivity of the topic, but after a quick assessment some recommendations were made in Executive Session at an Audit Committee meeting to the IT Director and Town Manager to make things more secure.

Roselli then reviewed the Long-term obligations portion of the management letter, noting that these are the hidden obligations the town has. Obligations such as payments that are made to Worcester County, fees for annual assessments; these fees are scheduled to be fully paid by the year 2035, but beyond that there will be a normal cost of retirement and it will be significantly less than what the assessment is.

Anderson asked that Roselli explain the long term obligations a bit more, to which he replied when someone works for the Town, they are earning health insurance and pension benefits, pension which they do not collect until they are retired, which is an accruing cost for the Town. With medical advancements people are living ten years longer now than they were twenty-five years ago, and costs are large for retirees. If the Town does not plan now, they will not be able to make the payments necessary in Fiscal Year 28. About thirty years ago, the State passed a bill that said towns have to have a pension obligation, and those costs have to be saved up and in a plan in order to pay those who have earned pension years down the road.

Also under long-term obligations is OPEB, Other Post-Employment Benefits. There currently isn't any funding being put towards OPEB but down the road the State will eventually be forcing payments of OPEB once pension becomes more manageable. OPEB is regarding health insurance that must be available for retirees of the Town. With money freeing up in the Town, it wouldn't be a bad idea to start funding the OPEB, many towns are going that direction.

Roselli continued, noting that Single Audit requirements have changed; municipalities are now required to disclose within ten days if there is a financial material event or lease that is above a certain amount. He advised the town to refer to their financial advisor UNIBANK in the case of large purchases or material events to ensure they are properly reporting these things.

Under Findings and Recommendations, the workarounds that the accounting office uses are not what Roselli would typically recommend, but it was discussed that it is the most efficient way for the town to handle their accounts, and Roselli supported the town's use of workarounds.

It was then noted that things were being resolved as far as prior issues with School Grant Management goes. Previously reports were not filed timely, but since this finding, has been improving. Town Accountant Goguen noted that we took roughly \$130,000 of funds from old grants to Free Cash, and have sent back roughly \$30,000 in unused grant funds earlier this year and probably another \$30,000 or \$40,000 will be going back on the next warrant.

Roselli closed out by noting there will be more information in the single audit report, but he wanted to bring this information before the Boards. He then asked if there were any closing questions or remarks.

Nurmsen stated that the three boards meet and go through certain issues, but she wanted to ensure that they are all aware of what the School Committee does, and that Landers has really taken things into her hands. The School Committee has asked Landers to put internal controls in place on certain things and she has done so.

LaBrie asked if there was anything further, to which no comments were heard. She thanked Mr. Roselli and the Audit Committee.

- 6.3. Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School Report by Representative Moe Ward- Selectman Rick Ward noted his wife Moe Ward, the Montachusett Regional Vocational Technical School representative for the Town, was unable to make this meeting so he would be taking her place in presenting her quarterly

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report. He continued noting that it is important that the people in town be made aware of the students who attend Monty Tech and what they have achieved during their studies. He then proceeded to read from Ms. Ward's report, which can be found at the Town Manager's office.

Barbaro moved for a two minute recess, seconded by Ward with a vote of all aye.

The Tri-Board reconvened at 8:02 p.m.

- 6.4. Presentation of Five Year Financial Forecast- Hickey provided a presentation for the Tri-Board to review the Five Year Financial Forecast for FY21 through FY25. He noted that he made some modifications based on historical data and trends that have occurred over the past year. In the Board's packets, he continued, there is a detailed analysis of past years as well as the future, information on long term debt schedule, and some detail information on receipts revenues. Additionally, he stated his projections were conservative, though he is hopeful we may be receiving funds from marijuana sales, they were not included in his calculations.

Hickey's presentation began with a Summary of Estimated Revenue; the estimated revenues consist of Local Taxes, State Aid, Available Funds, Local Receipts, and Enterprise Funds. They total up for the next five years as follows:

FY20 – \$34,007,465
FY21 - \$33,694,231
FY22 - \$34,166,438
FY23 - \$34,458,459
FY24 - \$ 34,950,959
FY25 - \$35,502,268

The summary of Estimated Expenditures consists of Municipal Administration, Public Education, Public Works, Community Services, Undistributed, Debt Services, Non-Appropriated, Warrant Articles, and Enterprise Funds. They total up for the next 5 years as follows:

FY20 - \$34,007,465
FY21 - \$33,377,184
FY22 - \$34,083,807
FY23 - \$34,767,008
FY24 - \$35,554,150
FY25 - \$36,177,324

Other Known/Unknown Factors that would Impact Future Budgets consists of Budget Surplus (deficit), Additional PILOT Revenue, and Eliminate PILOT Revenue to School Department, totaling as follows:

FY21 – \$317,047
FY22 –\$278,500
FY23 – \$(107,783)
FY24 – \$(397,405)
FY 25 - \$(464,126)

Out of District SPED Transportation costs for the next five years are as follows;

FY21 - \$535,050
FY22 – \$545,751
FY23 - \$556,666
FY24 - \$567,800
FY25 - \$579,156

Hickey notified the Board that the governor has proposed that they reimburse communities for SPED transportation, it is something that will be phasing over time. In FY21 the plan is to reimburse 25%, FY22, 50% is slated to be reimbursed, FY23 75% is slated to be reimbursed, and FY24 and FY25 100% is slated to be reimbursed.

Vine asked for further information on the SPED reimbursement, to which Hickey replied figures don't reflect the funds as the funds will be coming back into the community. It is great for the schools as they will have an additional half million from the reimbursement. There may be opportunities to discuss some options as to what to do with the additional funds. Hickey added that in the next year, half of the funding from Solar PILOT agreements with the Town will go to the School Department as well. The goal is to improve funding of the schools, and this is one way to do it.

Other Budgetary Impacts included in the FY21-25 projected budgets are as follows;

CIP Purchases- Spring Town Meeting:

FY20 - \$185,000

FY21 - \$297,592

FY22 - \$312,010

FY23 - \$314,667

FY24 - \$319,308

FY25 - \$313,276

OPEB Trust Fund Contribution:

FY21 - \$50,000

FY22 - \$50,000

FY23 - \$50,000

FY24 - \$50,000

FY25 - \$50,000

The CIP Purchase figures represent 1% of the Town and School operating budgets. At the FY20 Fall Town Meeting, an additional \$1,069,417 was appropriated from Free Cash for capital items.

Kane noted that the debt services decreases but does not presume any new debt. The Capital Planning Committee has been talking about replacing vehicles as they are paid off; once one dump truck is paid off we would lease another and so on, it strikes him that the figures would be greater than projected. Hickey stated that is a fair statement, it makes more sense to try and maintain a level amount of debt services as you pay off a dump truck or another thing; the Capital Improvement plan will keep it consistent so we will not see increases or decreases. He did not want to presume what the amounts would be, and would like to have additional conversations with the Capital Planning committee to see where they think he should be.

Hickey then noted that although the deficits proposed are concerning, they are also two and a half years away, and he believes there are revenues coming to town that will hopefully address a large part of those deficits.

Lastly, Hickey continued, there will be local revenue collected from marijuana sales. There were three applicants that have all sent their paperwork in to the Cannabis Control Commission, two of which who have been reached back out to by the CCC for more information. There is also one growing facility who has already received their initial approval from the CCC, they just have to make some modifications to the building. Once improvements are completed in compliance with the CCC, they will be inspected by the State and will be issued their licenses shortly thereafter. Hickey stated he believes money from marijuana will come as early as the end of this year, or early Fiscal Year 21.

For the last several years, the Capital Planning Committee has been dependent on Free Cash for capital items; Hickey has included \$185,000 for capital needs in the FY20 budget suggesting that moving forward we will not be dependent on Free Cash for the Capital Planning Committee funded projects and needs.

Hickey then suggested that the Town start putting \$50,000 a year into an OPEB trust. It will help soften the blow of impact in the future and offset the spike in retirement costs in the future and will show lending companies that we are trying to do the right thing and may help our bond rating in the future.

LaBrie asked if there were any questions, to which Greg Vine asked what the Town's bond rating was. Hickey replied the Town's bond rating is AA.

Nurmsen noted that the best way to keep Winchendon residents as students in the school system is by having more programs. This requires more funding and it is important to figure out a way to help the school get more funding to achieve this. Hickey replied that he and Landers speak on a regular basis and are doing everything they can to try and improve the school system.

LaBrie added that she would like the School Committee to have something prepared to show what they would do with additional funding if it was provided.

Barbaro moved to approve the Five Year Financial Forecast for Fiscal Year 2021 through 2025 as presented by the Town Manager this evening as amended, seconded by Ward.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion,

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

- 6.5. Schedule Special and Annual Town Meeting – May 18, 2020; Approve Town Meeting Schedule, Schedule Dates to Open and Close the Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants- Hickey noted the Town meeting will be same time as prior years, we are looking to have it on May 18, 2020.

Ward asked that rather than having Hickey present to the Board of Selectmen on February 10th and then Finance Committee on February 11th, why not present to both as a joint meeting. Hickey believed the charter stated both the Finance Committee and Board of Selectmen need to be presented to separately.

Ward then noted that he would like for the Board of Selectmen to vote on articles after the Finance Committee so they can be fully informed on how others feel about the articles. Hickey replied he is not sure if it is against the charter or not, but he will check with legal counsel regarding the matter and get back to the Board.

LaBrie asked if there was anything further, to which Hickey stated he will look into everything and all of it will go on the next Board of Selectmen agenda.

Barbaro moved to open the Special and Annual Town Meeting warrant today, and that the warrant be closed April 7, 2020 at 10:00 a.m.

LaBrie asked if Barbaro would amend to schedule town meeting, then asked that he rescind his motion.

Barbaro rescinded his motion.

Barbaro moved the Board of Selectmen schedule the Special and Annual Town Meeting for Monday, May 18, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at Murdock Middle High School and to open the Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants today, January 27, 2020 and to close the warrant on Monday, April 7, 2020 at 10:00 a.m., seconded by Anderson.

LaBrie asked if there was any further discussion,

With a vote of all aye the motion carried.

LaBrie noted that starting at this next Town meeting, elected officials will be part of their Board's immediately after Town Meeting rather than July 1st, to which Hickey replied yes, the last order of business at the Town Meeting is to swear in any elected officials.

ADJOURNMENT OF JOINT MEETING

The Finance Committee adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

The School Committee adjourned at 8:51 p.m.

Barbaro moved for a 5 minute recess, seconded by Anderson. With a vote of all aye the Board entered recess at 8:51 p.m.

The Board reconvened at 8:54 p.m.

7. **NEW BUSINESS:** There was no new business discussed this evening.

8. **OLD BUSINESS:** There was no old business discussed this evening.

9. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT:

1. Financial Updates-

- a. No financial updates this week.

2. Personnel Updates-

- a. Public Works employee Mike Breau has submitted his letter of resignation. Mr. Breau has accepted a position with Homeland Security. His last day is February 7th.

Hickey added that he is happy Mr. Breau has moved on to bigger and better things, he was a good employee.

3. Project Updates-

- a. Tracy Murphy, Al Gallant and I met with property owners on Railroad Street to review the draft road reconstruction plan and listen to any comment or concerns raised about the project. A few business owners attended the meeting and all but one were in support of making Railroad Street one way and creating 13 parking spaces. One business owner would like the street to remain a two way street and provide parking. When it explained that the road width would not allow a two lane road with parking, he seemed to understand but did agree with the one way recommendation. A public hearing is scheduled for the February 10th Selectmen's meeting. Property owners will be formally invited to the public hearing.

Hickey added that all abutters are invited to the February 10th Board meeting. He hopes the Boards will finalize and approve plans that evening

4. Miscellaneous Updates –

- a. Town of Winchendon has been awarded a Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness program grant in the amount of \$36,400 to complete the community resiliency planning process that will examine the city's vulnerability and strengths and identify priority actions to build resilience as

the climate changes. The award includes completion of a Winchendon Hazard Mitigation plan as currently the town is only part of a regional plan.

- b. The Winchendon Fire Department has been awarded \$3,965 for Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) and \$2,348 for Senior SAFE grant. Grant funding will be used to purchase various fire prevention items for both children and senior citizens. Throughout the year many programs are conducted for both of these groups to ensure the community is as safe as possible.

The Fire Department will visit the schools and Senior Center to educate the students and seniors on how to be safe in their homes.

Ward asked if Hickey has heard anything back from Tighe and Bond regarding the Senior Center, to which Hickey replied he has reached out to Tighe and Bond numerous times but hasn't heard back. He is looking to get information back by next Thursday.

10. **MINUTES:**

10.1 Monday, January 13, 2020 Regular Meeting-

Anderson moved to approve the Board of Selectmen Regular Meeting Minutes of January 13, 2020 seconded by Salter. With Barbaro abstained and all others aye the motion carried 4-0-1.

11. **COMMUNICATIONS:** There were no communications this evening.

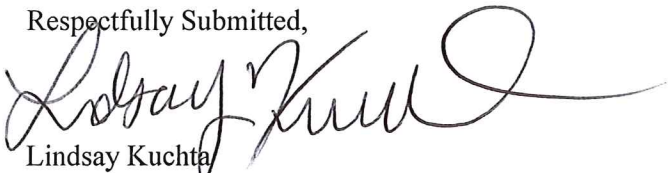
12. **AGENDA ITEMS:** LaBrie noted the Board's next meeting will be held on February 10th at 6:30 p.m.

13. **EXECUTIVE SESSION:** There was no Executive Session this evening.

14. **ADJOURNMENT:**

Barbaro moved to adjourn, seconded by Anderson. With a vote of all aye the meeting adjourned at 8:58p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,



Lindsay Kuchta
Recording Secretary