

Town of Warwick
Selectboard
November 13, 2018
Minutes

Members present: Lawrence Pruyne, Todd Dexter, James Erviti (arrived 6:40 p.m.)

Others present: Town Coordinator David Young, Town Clerk and Town Secretary Rosa Fratangelo, PVRSD Finance Director Tanya Gaylord, Superintendent Larry Delaney, Fire Chief Ron Gates, Highway Advisory Committee member Kevin Alden, School Committee member Sue O'Reilly McRae, Tom Wyatt, Marcia Dexter, Dawn Magi, Gloria Varno, Diana Noble, Jaylin Dibble, dan Dibble, Jessica Foote, Jennifer Core, Max Marcus (*Greenfield Recorder*)

I. Call to Order

Chair Pruyne called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. in the Town Hall.

II. Minutes

As Jim Erviti was not yet present, and Todd Dexter is the newly elected member of the Selectboard, approval of the minutes of October 29, 2018 were deferred until after Erviti arrived. The traditional reorganization of the Selectboard was also postponed.

III. Presentations and Discussions

1. Ethics Exemptions —Young explained that several people needed to be granted MGL 268:20D exemptions so that they may hold more than one position in Town: Brian Peters Wiring Inspector, Constable and Special Police Officer; Jessica Marshall PVRSD School Committee member and HEART Committee member; Tom Wyatt HEART Committee member and Broadband Committee member. Young noted that all positions had previously been designated Special Municipal Employee.

Dexter MOVED to grant Brian Peters, Jessica Marshall and Tom Wyatt Ethics Exemptions under MGL Chapter 268 Section 20D to be allowed to serve in more than one capacity for the Town. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

2. Appointments—Dexter MOVED to appoint Tom Wyatt to the HEART Committee. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

Wyatt was sworn in by the Town Clerk.

3. Execute MOU between Town of Warwick and FRCOG—Pruyne said that the MOU with FRCOG was for technical assistance for the Green Communities grant. Young explained that the help would include procurement and reporting requirements.

Dexter MOVED to accept the MOU with FRCOG as written and authorize Chair Pruyne to sign the legal agreement tonight. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-0.

4. PVRSD Finance Director Tanya Gaylord—Pruyne introduced Ms. Gaylord and thanked her for coming to the meeting. Gaylord said that she will visit each community to get a feel for the budget and tax-rate setting process. She noted that some information had been given by the Consultant but was unable to give all the numbers to the HEART Committee. Gaylord said that the deficit is under \$600,000.00 and that we should be thinking ahead for capital in the pot to cover the debt and for capital projects. Young reminded everyone that Warwick's share of any assessment is roughly 10%. Gaylord said that the Overseer is now in place and has begun working on a plan. She explained that because there was not an overall deficit in the District the lunch deficit was covered but had to be rectified because the General Fund deficit brought it all to light, because as a whole the District's entire fund balance was no longer enough to cover the school lunch debt. Gaylord said that she is working on projections for school lunch and that there is more still to be done on that.

Gaylord said that she has had the job of PVRSD Finance Director since July of this year. She pointed out that the budget numbers for revenues are now part of the accounting software. She said there are twelve special revenue funds, four trust and agency funds, a capital project fund, and that the District is presently managing and operating on about twenty funds. Gaylord said that the FY 20 budget process has not yet begun but based on the FY 19 numbers Warwick's projected FY 20 assessment reflects a 2.5% increase, which she stated is essentially the capacity. Gaylord said that the \$380,000.00 shortfall could be handled with cuts and increased revenue. She did mention that a school closing study is underway, and that a school closing is likely the only way to cut this amount of expenditures. She alluded to declining enrollment as an ongoing issue and said that she was looking at the budget with all four elementary schools versus just two schools. Gaylord said, "the picture looks bad, but it is getting better".

Gaylord said that she would be letting towns know where the District is at baseline. She noted that school choice students cost the District more in small schools, but that language is being written to allow the towns with smaller schools and smaller populations to pay more on top of the assessment. Tom Wyatt pointed out that it has always cost more per pupil in smaller towns since the District's inception in 1991. Gaylord said that closing schools may only buy the

District another three or four years, characterizing it as essentially a band-aid and not a cure. Erviti brought up the idea of shared costs by PVRSD by way of collaborations or consolidations with other Districts. Gaylord said that the studies will be completed before any budget is voted on, as it is expected to be done by January. She reiterated her needing to know the capacity of each town. Gaylord said that the teachers' union negotiations are set to resume in December and stated that if an agreement cannot be reached mediation may be required. Wyatt said that the Consultant will be providing much more information at the HEART Committee meeting on November 19th.

Gaylord wound up her discussion by saying the total deficit is \$553,793.00 and put forth the idea of moving up the assessment due date from mid-August to early July to prevent cash flow issues when expenses accumulate before revenue. She said that she wanted to know what impact that would have on the towns.

5. Special Municipal Employee and MGL Chapter 268:20D Ethics Exemption—This discussion had to be deferred until Erviti was present because it involved new Board member Todd Dexter.

Erviti MOVED to designate the position of Highway Advisory Committee member as Special Municipal Employee. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-1.

Dexter abstained as he is a member of the Highway Advisory Committee.

Erviti MOVED to grant an MGL Chapter 268 Section 20D exemption to Todd Dexter to hold the positions of Highway Advisory Committee member and Selectman. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 2-0-1. Dexter abstained.

6. Minutes—

Erviti MOVED to approve the minutes of October 29, 2018 as printed. Pruyne SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 20-1.

Dexter abstained as he was not yet a Selectboard member at that meeting.

7. PVRSD Agreement—Sue O'Reilly McRae said that currently there is no language about school closure in the District agreement. She said that the HEART Committee is working on two options and handed out copies of the most current version of those options. Erviti said that he preferred to read and study the documents before entering into a discussion.

Pruyne asked if there would be an alteration to our assessment if we lose our school. O'Reilly McRae said that there will be a meeting with the Consultant on December 5th and that Pruyne should pose his question to him. She said that the current educational model is not sustainable, and that rural districts throughout Massachusetts are struggling. O'Reilly McRae stated that we need to create sustainability over time for ourselves as a town. She emphasized that there is no easy fix, and that adaptation and out-of-the-box thinking will be required to create new,

sustainable solutions.

Pruyne wanted to begin a discussion on legal or legislative remedies for fiscal liabilities at WCS. O'Reilly McRae said that we did receive some rural aid. Young said that the State thinks we are already getting more than our share. Pruyne said that \$5,000.00 per school choice student is woefully inadequate, as the actual cost is three to four times higher. He stated that we do not get credit for the quality of our school. The cost of transportation for special education students was discussed and identified as a large expense. Due to the complexity of the issues, the discussion was lengthy and produced far more questions than answers or solutions.

O'Reilly McRae said that the HEART Committee asked the Consultant to look at administrative structure. She said that Gill/Montague is currently looking at sharing programs and services with other districts including Pioneer Valley. She concluded by saying that the HEART Committee is taking feedback on what is or is not working and wants to address concerns and update the District agreement accordingly. It was noted that the agreement has not been updated since 1993.

8. Selectboard Reports— None this meeting.

9. Coordinator Report— There was nothing added to the written report.

10. New and Other Business Unanticipated at Time of Meeting Posting —Highway

Superintendent Larry Delaney said that he was aware of the pothole in the driveway in front of the new Fire Station, and because it is now a Town building, the Highway crew will fix the pothole tomorrow.

Kevin Alden of the Highway Advisory Committee said that there were elements of the Personnel Policy he would like to see changed to make it mandatory that the Highway Superintendent be given sufficient notice before a crew member takes days off, and to make it a requirement that Highway employees be on call and ready to come in during a bad storm, hurricane or other event. Young said that this could be made a condition of employment for Highway Department members. Alden countered with the suggestion that it be made mandatory for all Town employees.

Young said that he was concerned of the budget impact if we go back to a four-man Highway crew, as the money saved by not having a fourth man has been used to offset the snow and ice deficit. Alden said that he favored a three-man crew and would be hesitant to go back to a four-man crew because it is not sustainable. He said that we cannot keep a four-man crew busy and we don't have the money to afford it. Pruyne asked if temporary workers could be hired for a day or week, or some other short period as needed. Alden noted that it would be difficult to get a qualified person. Erviti suggested getting a laborer without hydraulic licenses for work that does not require the extra qualifications. Delaney pointed out that depending on the project, in some cases properly licensed operators are necessary. Young said that in the winter the crew does not have to come in for straight time when there is no work to be done. He favored paying time-and-a-half when work had to be done outside of the day shift, having them on call and paid something to be on call and ready to come in whenever there is work to be done. Delaney said

that it is an inaccurate perception that the crew sits around doing nothing during the day in the winter time. He said that there is always something to be done and that maintenance work never ends.

Pruyne said we should have a policy that encourages longevity in the department. Delaney said that he was running an ad for full-time help but had received no responses as of yet. Erviti suggested finding two people willing to work part-time. Young directed Delaney to run an ad for full time and part time help.

Alden said that Young and Delaney should team up and write a STRAP grant.

At this point (8:50 p.m.) Fratangelo excused herself and left the meeting.

Fire Chief Ron Gates wanted help getting some phone lines for garage and navigating the state procurement discount system. Fire and Police plain landlines are provided by a competitive local exchange carrier called EarthLink. Since they do not own poles and wires or any actual physical facilities and operate over Verizon's, Chief Gates is having difficulty getting new lines to the new station provision. Young had previously told him the Chief that needed to order from Verizon the incumbent provider and they pointed him at a state bid. Chief Gates came before the Board to ask for advice and help which Young has provided by filling out a state bid procurement form and providing our tax-free status.

11. Public Comment—None.

Adjournment

Erviti MOVED to adjourn at 9:05 p.m. Dexter SECONDED. Motion CARRIED 3-0-0.

Documents consulted at this meeting:

*Draft Minutes of October 29, 2018

*Town Coordinator Report dated November 8, 2018

*Franklin Regional Council of Governments Memorandum of Understanding by and between the Franklin Regional Council of Governments and the Town of Warwick for Green Communities Program Technical Assistance *PVRSD FY 19 Final Budget Revisions 8/9/2018 (partial, Warwick and Leyden did not appear as document failed to print on both sides

*PVRSD FY 20 Budget Projection

*PVRSD School Committee List 2018 – 2020

*Warwick Broadband Service Income Statement July 1, 2018 – October 31, 2018

*Proposed changes to PVRSD Agreement Section IV Location and Lease of the Member Town Schools Option 1 (after 10/17/18 HEART Discussion

* Proposed changes to PVRSD Agreement Section IV Location and Lease of the Member Town Schools Option 2 (based on feedback from Warwick Selectboard)