

Approved 12/30/20
TOWN OF WEST TISBURY
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
December 16, 2020 4:30 pm
Virtual meeting

Present: Selectmen Cynthia Mitchell, Kent Healy, Skipper Manter, Jen Rand

Also Present for part or all of the meeting: Joe Tierney, Mary Kenworth, John & Keya Cain, Alan Strahler, James Klingensmith, John Christensen, Kate Warner, Alex Elvin, Ben Robinson, John Rau, Eric Peckar, Elizabeth Durkee, Richard Andre, Matt Gebo, Richard Toole, Faren Worthington, Dan Doyle, Marc Rosenbaum, Hunter Moorman, Rebekah Thomas, Louisa Hufstader, Brian Dowd, Janice Haynes

Cindy called the meeting to order at 4:30pm

Minutes:

Kent moved to approve the minutes of December 9th with no changes. Skipper seconded. Roll call vote; all in favor.

New Business:

- **Building Inspector Access to Counsel – merged lot question:**

Joe explained that he had someone apply to build on a lot they owned and in his research he had found that the lot had been merged with their other lot. He said that in the interim the owner had applied to the ZBA and received set back relief, which they do not need because the lots have merged. He is concerned that he might need to take some action to preserve the merged status of the lots, he said he is not sure if the action by the ZBA would somehow cause the lots to no longer be considered merged.. He is requesting access to counsel to clarify the issue. Kent doesn't believe anything Joe does can change the zoning. Jen said she had already spoken to Counsel briefly and they had said it's not an easy answer.

Skipper made a motion to approve access to Counsel for the Building Inspector. Kent Seconded. Roll call vote; all in favor.

- **Lambert's Cove Inn re: October Wedding:**

Skipper said he had requested that they look into whether the owners had done all they should regarding Covid safety during the wedding in October that resulted in a cluster of cases. Keya Cain spoke and explained the procedures they had followed. She said the

wedding was small, only about 40 people, outdoors, and they had understood that many of the attendees had been living together in a house before and after the wedding. Everyone was told they must wear masks and advised of the regulations. The Cains were not present the day of the wedding but defended their manager who they said did what they were supposed to. They said with Inn guests, they have always complied with the travel rules, but as none of the wedding guests were staying at the Inn they were unable to regulate that. Next year they intend to work with wedding planners more closely to enforce the travel regulations. Skipper said that the photos they had seen had shown many people unmasked and sitting close and he did not believe all 40 people had been living together in one house. He said they are having this conversation to educate other people. Cindy said in the future they need to be more aggressive with enforcement and if need be reach out to authorities, even during the event.

- **Marthas Vineyard Commission Energy Policy:**

Alex Elvin introduced Ben Robinson who gave a presentation outlining the committee's new Energy Policy for Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). He spoke about climate change past and future, and about some of what they are trying to do. He explained the policies and how the info was broken down. He said that more info and all of the documents presented can be found on their website and they are soliciting comments to be presented to the full commission in late January. They would like comments submitted by the first week of January. Skipper thought the presentation was very informative and thanked them for coming to speak with them. Cindy opened the discussion up to comments. Kent thinks it's a good idea to judge building projects by the energy used as shown in one of the graphs. He also pointed out that part of the cost of projects is in the 'stuff' bought for houses, like furniture, that is produced and shipped. Kate Warner wholeheartedly supports the project. Cindy said they should all be applauded for the work and also thanked Ben for a good presentation. No action needed to be taken by the Board. (*Presentation is incorporated as part of these minutes*)

- **State Road Restaurant request to close for an extended period:**

Jen said they had received a letter from Mary & Jackson Kenworth and Mary was there to speak with them. Mary recapped the situation saying that for 11 years they had closed in the winter for 4 -5 weeks for cleaning and such. Because of the pandemic they are requesting to close for a bit longer this winter, from about January 3rd until March 30th. It will help them recover some costs and be able to come back strong in the spring. Jen pointed out that to retain their year-round license per the ABCC, they would have to be open by April. Mary said they do not want to change to a seasonal license, it's just for this year, and they would be open on time.

Skipper made a motion to allow the extended closure with the understanding that they were retaining their Year-round beer and wine license. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- **Police Chief Contract renewal:**

Jen said that the Chief could not be here tonight, but the new contract was the same as the old and just a renewal for the next 3 years with pay increases matching the current three year contract. Skipper recused himself from the conversation.

Kent made a motion to approve the new contract for 3 years. Cindy seconded. Roll Call vote: 2 in favor, 1 abstention.

- **Fire Chief Hiring process:**

Manny is retiring June 30, 2021. He has been Chief for 30 years. Jen asked the Board for their thoughts on the hiring process. She said she had a letter from Manny with a recommendation for an in-house candidate. Skipper wanted to acknowledge Manny's many years of service. He also pointed out that there have only been 4 Fire Chiefs in town so far. He also said that they need the best person for the job and that if they say 'In-house candidate' in the advertising it may exclude others and keep them from applying. He suggested they advertise right after the first of the year as it will take time to go thru the process. Jen asked how broadly? It was agreed that they advertise locally, in the Cape Cod Times and State wide, no further. They spoke about a screening committee and Jen suggested one of the Selectmen, a member of the Police Dept., a member of the Fire Dept. and a member of the public. She has some people in mind and will let them know what she comes up with at the next meeting. She will also look at the calendar and come up with a time line. Skipper had small corrections to the job description and also brought up the possibility of combining the positions of Fire Chief and Emergency Manager as some other municipalities do. He thinks it's worth looking into.

- **Fiscal Year 2022 Budget Review:**

Jen needed to run a few budgets by them and explain changes.

- Town Building: she explained that she had dropped the maintenance number as she had been having trouble getting work done and had not yet spent the money already budgeted. Skipper said they need to figure out how to get the work done.
- Selectman's Budget: up 11.3% and the expenses number is up too. She explained that partly it is because of the lease payments for the town cars; they had been paid by a grant before. Advertising was also up as they have been so busy. The line for training is also up because most things are being done online now and Jen said she may take advantage of more training than usual since she won't have to travel and they will save on the travel line.

Skipper made a motion to approve the budgets mentioned. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- Highway Superintendent Stipend: it has increased every year and this year would go up by \$7500. Jen wonders when they stop increasing. Upping it this year will bring it to \$57,000. Skipper said he is doing an excellent job and when he retires that will solve the problem.

Skipper made a motion to approve the Highway Department budget as presented. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- Legal Services: Jen says this year is up, but most of that is Covid related and will be covered by CARES funds. As the last couple of years have been down, Jen wants to drop the amount of the line item down from \$40,000 with the caveat that if something comes up they may need to do a funds transfer. Skipper said he does not think it's too much; he'd rather have more money available.

Skipper made a motion to approve the Legal Services budget line at \$40,000. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- Property Insurance: Jen said she raised the line item by 9% on the recommendation of the agent.

Skipper made a motion to approve the Property Insurance budget line as presented. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- Cemetery Budget: Jen said it is almost unchanged. Skipper asked how the new Superintendent is doing. So far so good.

Skipper made a motion to approve the Cemetery budget as presented. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- Public Officials Liability: Also raised the line item by 9% for the same reason

Skipper made a motion to approve the Public Officials Liability line as presented. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

Jen said that lastly, the Municipal Hearing Officer, Town Clock and Town Reports budgets were all the same as last year, no changes.

Skipper made a motion to approve the budgets mentioned. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

- **ACO Vacation Carryover – 59.1 hours:**

Skipper made a motion to allow. Kent seconded. Roll call vote: all in favor

Old Business/ Topics not anticipated:

Jen said in case there was any doubt that Zoom meetings work; there had been 36 people at last week's meeting and nearly that many this week. Skipper asked about the conversation they had had about the legality of extending the zoom meetings past the State of Emergency. Jen said that many Town Administrators have signed onto a letter sent to the State requesting the extension. Skipper also asked about allowing some Town Hall employees to work from home if they choose. Cindy thought it was ok as long as the Board of Health is OK with it.

Skipper reminded everyone about the Zoom Holiday Party on Friday night, 12/18/20 at 4:30 pm. There will also be entertainment.

Skipper also said that he was going to try a 'Drive By' contactless eggnog service at his house on Saturday evening, between 5:30 pm – 7 pm or until the nog was gone. Bring your own cup.

Correspondence: There was none.

Public Comment: There was none.

With no further business Skipper made the motion to adjourn. Kent second. Roll Call: all in favor.

Adjourned 5:58 pm

Respectfully Submitted by Janice Haynes, Administrative Assistant