

TOWN OF WARWICK
In Person & Virtual Meeting of the Warwick Selectboard
Warwick Community School
May 8, 2023
6:00 p.m.
MEETING MINUTES

Selectboard Members Present: Brian Snell, Chairman; Alan Genovese, Vice-Chairman; Keith Ross, Clerk

Others Present: David Young, Town Coordinator; Amanda Carey, Selectboard Secretary; Susan Hollins, Senior Education Consultant; Bruce Kilhart

Present via Zoom: Diana Noble, Finance Committee Chair; Zac Marti, Firefighter; Claudia Lewis, Janice Starmer

I. CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Brian Snell called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Vice-Chairman Alan Genovese was absent at this time, he joined the meeting later at 6:06p.m.

II. MINUTES

Ross MOVED to approve the minutes of the April 24, 2023 meeting as amended. Snell SECONDED. Motion CARRIED. 2-0-0.

Ross MOVED to approve the minutes of the May 1, 2023 meeting. Snell SECONDED. Motion CARRIED. 2-0-0.

III. APPEARANCES

a. Janice Starmer – Pavilion

Starmer reports on the recent meeting with Bensonwood regarding design and build options for the pavilion at the school. Bensonwood is going to provide us with a quote on a pavilion design that they recently built. It is a post and beam design. Bensonwood does not suggest pouring a pad until the posts are installed and the pavilion is built. They suggest pouring the pad after all of that is complete.

Young explains that we have a grant contract with Mass Cultural Council for funding the pavilion. Under the terms of the grant, we have until December 31, 2023 to complete this project.

*Alan Genovese joined the meeting at this time.

IV. ITEMS UNANTICIPATED AT THE TIME OF POSTING

a. Bruce Kilhart explains that he heard from another Town Administrator that ARPA money is going to be rescinded by the government if the funds are not under written contract. He is concerned that we will lose the funds and wanted to bring

it to the Board's attention. The Board will hold an emergency meeting if needed for this item.

- b. Susan Hollins gives an update on what she has been working on for the opening of the school. She has been doing a lot of policy work for the School Committee, needs to discuss with Young what is needed for the intermunicipal agreement, and also needs to discuss the non-profit. Hollins feels that the new School Committee is doing a terrific job. It is important that we are able to show the State that we will be financially stable going forward and able to keep a small school going. The Board needs to have a long-range sustainability plan in place. Hollins suggests the Selectboard have a long-range sustainability "philosophy" to share with the School Committee.

Ross suggests having a liaison from the Selectboard to the School Committee and having periodical joint meetings.

Genovese feels that the School Committee has ownership of the long-range plan and needs to formally adopt it. He suggests they use the Town's benefit/hiring policies and mirror them.

Young has concerns with the cost of health insurance/benefits for all the additional full-time employees being hired for the school. He feels that our budget might not be sufficient and points out that the original plan was to have some employees do more than one job.

Genovese has concerns with paying the school staff a fair and deserving wage. There are other concerns with the wages growing each year and the sustainability of that. The starting pay is very important because it is the base wage for future years. The Selectboard is in charge of managing the grant, that does not change even though there is a School Committee in place now. The School Committee makes hiring recommendations to the Board as it is the Selectboard's authority to hire within the grant.

Noble explains the second round of the New Schools Grant. If we are to be awarded, the grant would provide us with \$1,000 per student, awarded over three years. If awarded, we would receive 50% the first year, 25% the second year, and 25% the third year. The full capacity of the school is 60 students. We currently have 30 students enrolled.

Snell would like to discuss this at a future meeting.

V. ACTIONS

a. **Marcum contract renewal vote for outsourced accounting for FY24**

Young points out that the contract is about a \$3,000 increase from the previous year.

Ross MOVED to approve the renewal contract with Marcum for outsourced accounting services for FY24 in the amount of \$56,000. Snell SECONDED. Motion CARRIED. 3-0-0.

b. Appoint Acting Constable for the Town Election if needed

Not needed, no action required.

c. Vote \$1,410 ARPA funds to assistance to firefighter

Genovese MOVED to appropriate \$1,410.00 of ARPA funds for assistance to a firefighter. Ross SECONDED. Motion CARRIED. 3-0-0.

VI. DISCUSSIONS AND REPORTS

a. Review of year-to-date financial operating statements

Young provided the Board with current budget balances. Young has reviewed the budget and reports no concerns at this time.

b. Solar electric at Highway Department and Green Communities Grant

Young explains that construction for solar electric at the Highway Department can begin in the very near future if the Board signs the contract. There has been an donor that is going to pay for the Town's share of the cost of this project.

Upon reviewing the contract, Ross points out that it does not state that the donor will pay the vendor directly, it states that the Town of Warwick is the owner and liable for payment. He suggests the contract to be altered to reflect the that the donor is responsible for payment.

c. Selectboard Reports

Ross reports on a recent Highway Commission meeting. They discussed culverts, paving and capital needs. The Police Chief also requested to meet in the near future to review his capital needs list.

d. Coordinator Report

Young had nothing to add to his Coordinator Report dated May 4, 2023.

VII. ITEMS UNANTICIPATED AT THE TIME OF POSTING

a. It is the consensus of the Board for Young to reach out to the Building Inspector regarding response to building permits and monthly reporting of building permits to the Board of Assessors.

b. Genovese provides a draft letter from the School Committee to the Selectboard regarding a request of pay increase for Jessica Marshall, Administrative Assistant at the school. There are many tasks that need to be completed for the opening of the school that Marshall has taken on. There is confusion about the amount that is being requested and the tasks that will be expected. The Board will revisit this at another meeting after the School Committee has had time to review and clarify their request.

- c. Genovese explains that Founding Superintendent, Carole Learned-Miller, has brought Patrick Brandon Murray's resume forward in hopes to hire him to work on multiple HR issues. Patrick would work for two months on a retainer of \$2,500 from the New Schools Grant. Young points out that our original plan had this work assigned to the Town Treasurer. He would like to try to incorporate school tasks with existing Town staff as much as possible. Genovese explains that this is not intended to be a permanent position, it is just work that needs to be completed to get the school opened.

Genovese MOVED to appoint Patrick Brandon Murray as a Human Resources Consultant for the amount of \$2,500.00 from the New Schools Grant for the items identified in Carole's letter and request that he consult with the Town's Treasurer's office. Snell SECONDED. Motion CARRIED. 3-0-0.

Ross MOVED to adjourn at 7:40p.m. Genovese SECONDED. Motion CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted,

Amanda Carey
Selectboard Secretary

Documents consulted at this meeting:

- *Meeting agenda dated May 8, 2023
- *Coordinator Report dated May 4, 2023
- *Draft Selectboard meeting minutes April 24, 2023
- *Draft Selectboard meeting minutes May 1, 2023
- *Norther Tier Briefing Flyer
- *Executed – Capital Grant Agreement v29 – Town of Warwick
- *ARPA Project Summary Warwick 5.4.2023
- *PE Report-Annual March 2023 filed 4.28.2023 ARPA Warwick
- *Warwick FY24 Outsourced Accountant Contract
- *B v a March 2023