

Sarah was thinking before they hear from Doug that the Conservation Commission could put some sort of deterrent to encourage those with motor vehicles not to use the Goodrich Trail. Dale explained that signage and hopefully boulders would help as there has been lots of unapproved ATV usage on this trail.

In Julia's opinion there is no reason not to put signs up. Nanette suggested that any new signage should reference the Trail Ordinance. Sarah referenced the signage at the Machia side of Shultz Trail. Sarah was concerned what sort of punishment can be given to those who use motor vehicles on the trail without permission. Nanette read the Trail Ordinance. Each unauthorized use is a fine of \$50 with a waiver fee of \$35. Sarah suggested that if the motor vehicle use continues to be a problem, she would like to take fines into consideration for offenders. Julia suggested putting the fines on the new signage would be helpful. Julia will keep everybody else connected once she hears from Doug and hopes that they can get this resolved. Sarah asked as far as the schedule for the signs what she can expect. John is going to look and see what signs he has laying around, but if not, it is about a two week turnaround for a new sign.

TOWNWIDE TRASH & RECYCLING COLLECTION SERVICES BIDS

The Town received two bids for collection of trash and recycling, one from Myers and one from Casella. There were also bids for food scraps from Myers, Casella, Grow Compost VT and VT Food Recycler.

Julia opened the conversation for the two bidders to talk about their bids. Michael from Casella said that they would like to work with the Town. Currently they provide service to Fairfax. Michael would like to work with the Selectboard to best figure out what services and methods work for Westford, especially considering the collection of food scraps that goes into effect in July. Part of the bid that was not included was the fact that Casella now has a mobile app that allows greater communication with the Town and residents. Michael is confident this app will be helpful to the Town, not only in communications, but in data. Julia had observed that Casella equips their tires with chains in the winter. She asked if that was something they do now already in Fairfax. Michael confirmed and explained that they work closely with local road crews because they would like to avoid damaging the roads at all cost. Trucks are also equipped with studded snow tires in winter.

Julia opened the floor to Joe from Myers to talk about their bid. Joe explained that they have been servicing the Town for several years. They think that the recent season has been strong. They also have access to a mobile app like Casella, but the Board noted this was not included in the bid. Myers also is very active on Front Porch Forum with residents and feels they have built great back and forth conversations. Myers has also had success with creating private Facebook groups for private groups such as individual towns or Homeowners' associations.

The thing that Myers feels sets them apart is that they are a one truck service for collection of trash and recycling. They pick trash and recycling up with the same truck which reduces traffic and road wear. Last year a 4-wheel drive, one ton truck was used if the larger truck could not get to difficult locations. Joe has found that they have very few residents that have major concerns regarding collection. They have purchased a new automated truck with chains that will be used this winter season. They have circled back to pick up trash that has been missed and take pride in that. When it comes to collection of food scraps, they are not an all or nothing business. It would be on a household basis. Joe pointed out that their new bid is less than the current contract.

Michael from Casella also mentioned that they have containers that they would provide to every resident in town which is a big component to their bid price. If the Town were to say that they didn't need containers provided, that would drastically change the bid pricing.

Bill had a question regarding the spreadsheet Nanette had created that compared the different bids. He asked if the costs for commercial dumpsters was included. It was for the current dumpsters. Anything new would need to be added and this pertained to both Casella and Myers.

Bill then asked Myers if the \$15 per tote town garage weekly price was embedded in the bid amount or if it was separate. This pertained to food scrap collection. Joe explained that this was because he had given a range of bid costs for different composting options. One of those options is a public town compost tote located at the town garage or town office. Residents could come and dump their food scraps there and it would be cheaper.

Julia asked if in terms of containers if it would be an all or nothing issue. Michael explained that it is difficult to put a bid out for only a certain percentage of town when they do not know how many want containers and how many do not. They could also work with the Town so the Town could sell the containers and Casella would brand them, but he thinks the Town does not want to get into that. Myers confirmed that they also do that too, provide containers if residents want them at different sizes.

Allison asked Michael for a ballpark figure to strip the bins out of the bid. In her opinion she would not vote for the Town to buy the residents trash and recycling bins. She explained there was an almost \$30,000 difference between the bids for Casella and Myers. She asked what the bins cost overall. Michael explained it was more than \$30,000 in the two-year period. Each 96-gallon cart costs around \$60. One for trash and one for recycle would cost about \$104,000 over a two-year contract. In Allison's opinion what she is hearing is that if they don't want the bins the bid would go down \$50,000 per year? Allison asked if she removed \$50,000 from their yearly bid price if that would be an accurate bid price without bins.

Bill felt like they were putting Casella on the spot in regard to the numbers, but Allison still wanted an answer. She knows Michael knows his business well enough to give an accurate number. He would be comfortable saying that that is something Casella would look at. It would put the household rate around \$24 per household. Michael explained that the bid given was general since they put it together quite quickly. They are willing and want to work with the Town. The cost of the containers is a big component of their overall cost.

Allison does not want taxpayers to pay for other residents' trash bins. If she does not have that information, she does not feel like she can decide. Nanette explained that bids often come in like this and the Board does not need to decide today. Joe from Myers brought up again that they have put in a bid that is accurate without bins and a bid that is lower than the current contract. Allison said that her decision is not just based on price, but on service. She is just looking at the best way to spend taxpayer dollars.

Julia thinks that ultimately what they had planned on was deciding from their next meeting and they should stick to that. Allison thinks that is certainly possible and thinks that the amount of money on the line in taxpayer dollars between the two bids when the cost of containers is taken out of it is significant enough that it needs to be talked about. She does not feel comfortable not talking about it in depth for taxpayers. Julia and Allison explained that both

service and price was similarly important. Julia proposed giving questions to the haulers that are transparent. For Example, if she asks a question to Casella that question would be transparent to Myers also. It allows the Selectboard to take a fair look at the bids and gives the haulers an insight into what the Town is thinking without leaving anybody at a disadvantage. Bill agrees this is something that can be done, the haulers should be able to put forth new bids no issue.

The food scrap issue had Julia's head spinning. She has no idea how it would work in Westford. There is a lot to work with. The food scrap law goes into effect July 1st, 2020. Nanette explained that in her personal knowledge, a lot of Westford residents already compost so that also must be considered.

Michael explained that the State might need to give the Town a waiver for not having a hauler do food scrap collection since the State does require haulers to pick up food scraps if they also pick up trash.

Allison agrees with Julia, but she also wants compost to be convenient for residents. She thinks having a location that is secure enough for a tote that cannot have trash also put in it is not realistic for the area. In her opinion, the waiver route would be the best way to go. She thinks looking at the bids is helpful, but she does not think residents would appreciate the cost increase.

Julia thanked everybody for their time and attention adding that this is an important conversation for the Town. She and the other Board members will gather their further questions.

FILLING EXTENSION FOR 2020 GRAND LIST

Towns are required to file their Grand List by a certain date. Due to COVID and the impacts on town's abilities to due assessments, the State has said that if the Selectboard agrees to an extension that it is fine to do so.

Allison asked what effect a delay has on what the Town does. Nanette explained that the Listers are almost done their process, but they are not close enough to file by the deadline. It would only be late by a few weeks and would have no budgetary impact. Allison made a motion to support an extension for filing the Grand List. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0. Julia will come in to sign the form.

APPOINTMENT TO CONSERVATION COMMISSION

The Conservation Commission recommended Elias Rosenblatt, a PhD candidate with lots of interest and knowledge about wildlife management, hunting, fishing etc., as a new member of the Conservation Commission. Allison made a motion to appoint Elias to the Conservation Commission. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

4th OF JULY CELEBRATION – EMAIL FROM RECREATION COMMITTEE

The Recreation Committee had a couple conversations about whether to move forward or not with a 4th of July Celebration. The main concerns were with the current COVID-19 restrictions, but not wanting to pull the plug without direction and feedback from the Selectboard.

Allison explained that the Governor has canceled all fairs and festivals for the summers, but some high schools are doing parades for graduation. She feels the two laps around the

common could be feasible, but keeping spectators separate would be difficult. That brings Allison back to the first point. Tonya also thinks that the floats would not be possible. Julia recalls the number of people in gatherings is currently at 10 and she sees it going to 25 soon, but she does not know if gathering hundreds of people right now is the right way to go. Allison offered the idea of four times around the common next year to make up for the cancelation of this year's celebration.

Nanette explained that there is a permitting process that they would have to go through if they did do the parade and she thinks the State would have something to say about that. Tonya said that many towns have canceled, but other towns have continued fireworks displays which is very different than a parade. Bill made a motion to cancel the 4th of July Celebration with an amendment if the COVID-19 conditions improve that the Town can go forward with the celebration. Julia thinks that would be fine, but she does not think that it will happen regardless. It is super disappointing, but if there is a way to do it that would be nice. Allison seconded. Motion passed: 3-0.

WORK PLAN REGARDING EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE FOR 2021

In the interest of moving the topic forward, Julia proposed after the next meeting they have an Executive Session to discuss what is in the survey and plan to move forward. Allison agreed, she does not want this subject to just be her thing, she would like the whole Board involved. Julia agreed, but also thinks that Allison's human resource background is a really important asset in the conversation.

ANNUAL EMPLOYEE REVIEW SCHEDULE

The Board discussed the reviews from last year briefly. Julia would like to have an Executive Session for the Board to meet and to discuss the schedule for this year. They will meet on June 4th to discuss reviews

S.344 LEGISLATION REGARDING PROPERTY TAXES

This legislative action provides towns with the authority to make changes to the system regarding property taxes if deemed necessary. The Town is under no obligation to do so. They can change the tax rate, deadline etc. In Julia's opinion it would be premature at this point, they already have a process in place for people to be heard if they are having trouble paying their taxes. She is not excited about doing something that would impact the Town's revenue. Allison and Bill agree. Bill asked when the next tax installment was due. It is August, but that also depends if they get the bills out on time which is very dependent on the school budget vote next week. Currently the Town has not seen much or any impact from COVID-19 regarding property taxes. Greg advised that the Town is at 98.6% of taxes collected so far according. He noted that we are more likely to see the impact from COVID-19 in August.

COVID-19 UPDATE & LOGISTICS

Nanette advised that the Town Office is opening to the public on June 1st with the exception of Wednesday due to the number of employees in the office that day. People will be able to walk in; however, will not be allowed beyond the counter. Researchers will need appointments to manage how many people are in the office behind the counter at any given time. Masks will be required. Nanette thinks it is a difficult time, but that the office needs to open up to provide services to residents. Julia thinks that Nanette's plan is very good. Bill noted that residents should pay their dog licenses since only about half have been paid.

CORRESPONDENCE

Bill brought up that there was a conversation on Front Porch Forum regarding roadside mowing killing animals nesting in those areas. Nanette advised that she had received an email, which she responded to explaining the Town's perspective.

COMMUNICATION

Communicate office opening: on Front Porch Forum and in the Newsletter.

FY'20 BUDGET STATUS REPORT

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went of the FY'20 Budget Status Report. The Town was currently at a surplus.

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE & PAYROLL WARRANTS

Greg went over the accounts payable.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Allison made a motion to go into Executive Session at 8:50 p.m. for personnel. Bill seconded. Motion passed: 3-0. People in attendance were Julia Andrews, Allison Hope, Bill Cleary and Nanette Rogers. The Board exited Executive Session at 9:23 p.m. There was no action taken.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Julia Andrews, Chair
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy
Assistant Town Clerk

**TOWN OF WESTFORD HIGHWAY DEPT.
ROAD SCHEDULE
May 15, 2020 – May 28, 2020**

Work to be done

- Grade roads.
- Replacing more culverts.
- Continue with FEMA work.

Work completed

- Graded a section of Woods Hollow Rd., Plains Rd., Allen Irish Rd., Bill Cook Rd.
- Changed 3 driveway culverts for residents.
- Changed a cross culvert on lower Covey
- Ditching on Covey and Old # 11 Rd.
- Worked on FEMA paper work.

Approved at the 5/28/20 Selectboard Meeting.

**TOWN OF WESTFORD
SELECTBOARD MEETING
GUEST LIST**

Date: May 28, 2020

The following people attended the meeting remotely via Zoom.

Dale Rodgers
Michael Wright (LCATV)
Dave Lavallee
Joe Sinagra
Elias Rosenblatt
Alex Hayman
Sarah Pinto
Tonya Calley
Michael Sella
Kristen Tyler