



engineers are reluctant to take that route. Dave Baczewski thinks it has been valuable to find out what the town requires from a space standpoint. He feels the ARPA money has been well spent to get this information. The next step would be to find a parcel that could fit the footprint of the proposed new building. The study could be used as the basis of site selection. Before we move to another site, Bill wants to know how much the wetlands easement would cost and why the civil engineers are reluctant to suggest that. A quote of what the Town would need to pay and why would be useful in comparing between moving to a new site and staying on the existing site. The potential of the wastewater capacity needed for the site was discussed. Pat asked the board not to forget to add the library's capacity to those considerations. George asked how stormwater treatment/management would play into this situation if the Town were to build in that wetland setback? There would need to be a different kind of stormwater management system that must be away from the setback. The most cost-effective approach would be allowing drainage to a stormwater retention area via gravity. This would also have to be out of the wetlands. Carol Winfield was present. She thinks we need to look at keeping the Town Office in the Town Center and only move it as a last resort. She thinks paying for the wetland would be appropriate. She thinks a third story should be considered. Wiemann and Lamphere explained why they chose not to present a renovation, which would be difficult and did not provide staff with the space they require. Ira Allen was present. He believes part of the equation should be the potential trade in value of the present building for some other purpose because it is a good building.

#### **REQUEST TO MAIL EWSD BALLOTS IN APRIL**

The Essex Westford School District is asking permission to send ballots to all active voters. Lee motioned to send ballots; Dave seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

#### **CCRPC UPWP: POSSIBLE WITHDRAWAL**

George Lamphere was present. The Planning Commission applied to be on the UPWP funding list to continue stormwater management and treatment for the Town Center. The application was received by CCRPC, but they said it does not look like we were ready to move forward with it. Since they have already paid for studies, CCRPC would be looking to fund the UPWP construction for something specific. CCRPC believes that applying in the next fiscal year when they are more ready to move forward would be appropriate as they do not know what is happening with the 1705 property, or if any new owner would want to participate etc. Lee clarified that the stormwater currently drains with a culvert to the 1705 property and into the Brown's River. George further clarified that water comes down Brookside Road, and filters to a drainage system underneath the Common that drains to a culvert. There is a series of catch basins around the Common and Route 128 that are unmaintained and not functioning. Everything then goes to the culvert under Route 128 which goes through the 1705 property and then to Brown's River. There is no good documentation of what is where. There is no ROW for the town for drainage for the Common under Route 128 across 1705. If that culvert were to collapse or fail the state would be involved. George further clarified that CCRPC did not ask us to withdraw but asked us questions that suggest it is not the right time for us to be on this list. Bill agreed, it would be nice if we withdrew until we produce a clearer path. We need to look closely at our other options before we move forward and get on the list again. Bill asked Ben Bornstein, our representative to the CCRPC that if we gracefully withdraw to mention we would want to be on the list when we are ready. Ben would be glad to do so and would coordinate with George and Holly on this. Barb Peck was present. She asked if the Common Stormwater Study was tied to the now defunct 1705 project? Is that why the route to go through 1705 was looked at? George explained this was independent. There was some thought that there would be activity relative to 1705 and potentially with the whole Common

area with wastewater, so it would then be a good time to look at how to manage our stormwater, but nothing was tied together. Ron Rodjenski was present. He clarified that the UPWP helps with planning, so the Common Stormwater Study done by Hoyle Tanner brought recommendations with a cost estimate to the town under the UPWP funding. Their report has a paragraph that indicates they would need further funding if they wanted to go beyond our current state. Bill made a motion to withdraw Westford's UPWP application for 2025 with CCRPC. Dave seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

### **LIBRARY GRANT LETTER OF SUPPORT**

The library provided a letter to sign and answers to questions the Selectboard asked last meeting. Lee had no further questions. Vicky Ross was present and provided more clarification. Bill was still skeptical of the project cost; however, it looks like they have addressed getting more estimates and a clarification on the original quote, so he was content. The grant is due March 12. Bill motioned to approve the library grant letter of support as presented. Dave seconded. Motion passed 3-0.

### **RECREATION COMMITTEE REQUESTS**

The Recreation Committee raised significant funds at the Turkey Trot the last few years, which was originally intended to go to charity. Because of the turnover on the Rec Committee, they have not been able to disperse those funds as they would like but are now looking to do so in earnest. Amanda Gifford, Recreation Coordinator, was present and gave further explanation. Bill asked how much was in the Turkey Trot fund. There is about \$4,500. There have been requests for funds to help local families. Dave would recommend that a statement be formed that captures the spirit of how the money was intended to be spent and guidelines for use. The committee should capture requests, then review the requests and see if they meet the guidelines. They should then bring these to the selectboard to discuss. In the future, the selectboard could charter the Recreation Department approve requests automatically. Bill thought that these should be handled in executive session to maintain privacy of those asking. Amanda also clarified that the Committee was going to nail down procedures. The money comes exclusively from the Turkey Trot revenue. Lee questioned if the Recreation Committee was the right avenue for this. He has confidence in the Recreation Committee's intention, but he would want to make sure things are thorough. The Recreation Committee had discussed holding two meetings per year to decide which charities they would support. One for applications and the other for deciding who gets the money. Barb Peck was present. She commented that since they are allocated other people's donated money, they should have a procedure with criteria on how things are allocated as well as a request form. She agrees with Lee they may need, depending on the amount, to arrange themselves as a nonprofit of some kind or a specific charitable committee. Lee also noted publicizing the availability of funds. The problem they have in front of them is a good problem to have. Bill noted if they structured the turkey trot an annually designated charity recipient, and then they would be covered in the future. Bill thinks they should allocate the current reserve money and let the Selectboard know if it is more than \$500.

Amanda also requested the ability to use recreation funds for a storage shed. The cage in the basement of the Town Office is no longer sufficient to store everything the recreation department needs, notably the ice rink. They were looking for Selectboard input on a possible location. The Committee had concerns about locating it near the Conservation shed due to the gate being locked and the access not being plowed. Dave suggested they start with determining where it could be permitted. He thinks this request should go to the Zoning Administrator first. Bill struck several suggested locations: Town Office Parking Lot, Town

Common and Red Brick Meeting House. He thinks the town garage seems like the best option on their list, but he thinks the road crew is talking about putting a gate across that area. Harmony Cism, Zoning Administrator, was present. She could answer the recreation department's questions if they contact her.

### **FY'24 GENERAL FUND BUDGET STATUS REPORT**

Greg Barrows, Treasurer, went over the FY'24 General Fund Budget Status Report.

### **Review and Approve Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrants**

Greg went over the Accounts Payable & Payroll Warrants.

### **ARPA Update**

Greg presented the ARPA update. Currently, awardees have spent about half of the allocated ARPA funds. Greg inquired if we should move that money into a general fund. The way Dave understands it we are allowed to earn money on ARPA funds, and we do not have to spend that accrued interest on ARPA items. We must allocate the remaining funds by 12/31/2025. Dave does not think reallocating funds from old projects to a new project will be possible after that date. Because the \$150,000 allocated to wastewater doesn't have a timeline for expenditure, it is most at risk. There are many options for what we can spend it on, but it needs to be allocated to something specific. Bill thinks prior to the first Selectboard meeting this October communications should go out to all awardees with unspent funds to let them know the Selectboard wants an update on when they will be spent. Dave offered to help with ARPA even though his time with the Selectboard is ending. Barb Peck was present. She feels they have plenty of time to reallocate funds.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **Certificate of No Appeal or Suit Pending**

This is an annual form submitted to the state that certifies that there are no suits filed against property taxes. It requires Selectboard, Lister and Town Clerk approval.

#### **Westford Country Store & Cafe Liquor License Renewal**

Motioned to approve, second, motion passed 3-0.

#### **CSWD and State Police Annual Reports**

The board acknowledged receipt of these.

#### **Westford Road Signage During Mud Season**

There was an email from a resident hoping to have more signage added to the roads during mud season. Holly had spoken to Sean about this. They feel Westford has a lot of unpaved roads and during mud season you should expect it's going to be rough or muddy. Lee said signage in general is a road foreman responsibility and Sean should let the town know what we should be doing. Bill thought this should be left up to Sean.

#### **Trash/Recycling Complaints**

There had been several trash complaints that Myers was not picking up on days with less than ideal, but not terrible weather. Callie had informed residents to call Myers so Myers can hear the complaints straight from the person that is experiencing it. She also stated that when these instances occur, Myers has not notified the town so that we can communicate with residents. The board suggested starting a trash complaint spreadsheet and seeing if a pattern occurs.

#### **Goats on Brookside**

The farm animals on Brookside Road continue to be a nuisance. Over the past week a woman was confronted by a group of goats while walking on the road. One goat jumped on her,

knocking her over and she hit her head and broke her wrist. The goats currently have no containment at the residence, and the owner has not seemed amenable to controlling the goats. Holly provided a draft livestock ordinance and asked the town attorney to look at it. Since there has now been an injury, it seemed pertinent to get moving on an animal control ordinance. Lee agreed that we needed more tools for handling issues like this in the future. Barb Peck was present. She thinks we are smart to keep the dog ordinance separate because they are considered pets while other species are considered livestock. She thinks we could look at another town that has a different ordinance between livestock and pets. She does not think an ordinance is going to do anything if we have no teeth to back it up. The ordinance gives the ability to charge more fees and to stack fees on multiple occurrences of a problem. There are more teeth in that the recourse is heavier. It could be a deterrent.

### **COMMUNICATION**

Lee and Holly went to a meeting between Essex Rescue and the towns they serve. It was a productive meeting.

Lee also noted that the Town of Essex offices are in Essex Junction in the Essex Junction Town Building. They want to separate themselves, so the Town of Essex purchased a 30-acre lot of land for a new municipal complex at the junction of Old Stage Rd and Route 15. He mentions it because he thinks it will kick off a development push in that area. It is something to note for the future.

Bill expressed his thanks and gratitude to Lee and Dave. He enjoyed working with them during their time on the board and is sad to see them go but is encouraged after watching the candidate forum that the town will be well represented in the future.

### **ADJOURN**

The meeting adjourned at 9:24 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lee McClenny, Chair  
Selectboard

Callie Hamdy  
Minute Clerk

### **GUEST LIST**

Pat Haller  
Dick Lavalley  
Tess Lavalley  
Ron Rodjenski  
Barb Peck  
Ben Bornstein  
Carol Winfield  
Vicky Ross

George Lamphere  
Kim Guidry  
Harmony Cism  
Sheila Franz  
Martha Heath  
Ira Allen  
Bob Hoppe  
Pat Hechmer

Sue Roediger  
Maureen Wilcox  
Paul Birnholz  
Basil Panattu  
Erin Panattu  
Dave Lavalley  
David Roy  
Amanda Gifford