

**Hardwick Board of Selectmen
Myron E. Richardson Municipal Building
307 Main Street
Hardwick, MA 01031**

Meeting Minutes February 28, 2022

Location of Meeting: Myron E. Richardson Municipal Building, 307 Main St, Hardwick, MA 01031

In Attendance: Kelly Kemp, Chair, H. Robert Ruggles, Vice Chair, Julie Quink, Clerk, Nicole Parker, Town Administrator

Other Attendees: Anne Barnes, Eileen Leahy, Comcast, Jessica Crawford, Treasurer, Linda Dell'Olio

Meeting called to order at 6:30pm

Pledge of Allegiance

- Anne Barnes asked if she could get courtesy cable for the library? She was told yes but not internet.

Covid 19

- Motion (HR) seconded (JQ) to remove the mask mandate as of March 1, 2022, and allow in person meetings, if possible, recommend that boards/committees have a virtual component. All in favor.

Comcast Cable Renewal – Eileen Leahy

- Contract expires October 29, 2022.
- Seven remote homes without service and this would cost \$25,000 to connect.
- Subscribers monthly fee of \$0.50 still in place.
- No Senior discount – but (EL) can look into.
- No free access for Town buildings.
- Percentages to Town can be negotiated.
- Corrected the Town's address.
- Public Hearing will be April 25, 2022.
- Will investigate Springfield stations for viewers.

Collector Position

- (NP) No qualified candidates found to date. DLS recommends combining collector/treasurer positions. Will need special legislation but can appoint the same person to the position prior to legislation. Would like to appoint Jessica Crawford,

currently the Treasurer but would like to appoint for both positions and hire a clerk in the future. Still using Mass Muni for assistance and would like to have Sara (Mass MuniFin) train Jessica.

- BOS concerned that combining the positions will put too much pressure on Jessica and not being able to find a qualified clerk for long term assistance.

Warrant Process

- Currently everyone submits all the bills to treasurer and then over to the accountant. Accountant states that we can review for approval prior to payment. (NP) would like to see more oversight of expenditures and would like to include purchase orders. Accountant confirmed that the expenditures are reviewed, and questions asked of the departments if expenditure not clear. (NP) was not aware of this and is satisfied with current procedure.
- (NP) Would like to present the financial policy to the BOS for adoption.

Town Administrator Report (Directly as written by NP)

- Zen Acres Farm, LLC still seeks to secure a Host Community Agreement (HCA) with the Town of Hardwick for 228 Barre Road, Hardwick, MA. Zen Acres Farm is still working on their HCA. They are anxious to get in front of the Board, but they have many change requests through Counsel. We are still working through it.
- Confidential Mediation with USDA is ongoing. I received a call from EPA on Thursday afternoon. They are keeping a close eye on our progress and reminding the Town of the potential sanctions re: judicial actions and fines.
- Town audit is ongoing. Staff continues to assist with documentation.
- You Tube for viewing meetings at home has been created. Supplies have been delayed. I hope to have it up and running by the end of March.
- Town Census has gone out. Please keep an eye out for it and please fill out and return. These forms are extremely important when we are considered for Grants, etc.
- Second Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness meeting was this past Wednesday evening at 5PM. We established who will be invited to our charettes which will be at Town Hall March 24 and 31st from 5-8PM. I will give updates shortly thereafter.
- Planning Board is finalizing Solar by-law for Town Meeting.

- Ambulance committee will be meeting March 7. I will give a formal update and invite the Chair to give recommendations on Emergency Medical Services at the March 14 meeting.
- Tuesday, March 1, the East Quabbin Land Trust and Mass Division of Ecological Restoration will be facilitating a meeting regarding the proposed Wheelwright Pond dam removal on the Ware River. I've agreed to be here at Town Hall to host the meeting. Anyone interested is encouraged and welcome.
- I will be meeting with Finance Committee March 7. I will hopefully have the budget to present to them by then. I have been busy as our Tax Collector has been out sick. It will be my priority over the coming weeks.
- Our IT contract is coming due. I will have an IFB for your review at the next meeting.
- Saturday, March 12, Town resident Grant Biggs will be presented with his Eagle Scout rank at Ware HS. The Board is invited to attend. I will have a proclamation for you to present.

Motion (JQ) seconded (HR) to adjourn meeting at 8pm. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol L. Riches

Carol L. Riches
Executive Assistant