

Town Of Williamstown
Board of Selectmen Meeting

Williamstown Middle High School Library

11/16/2015

7:00 PM

Board Members: **Larry Hebert, Chair**
 Matt Rouleau, Vice Chair
 Francis Covey, Selectman
 Scott Vaillancourt, Selectman
 Ed McGlynn, Selectman

Town Manager: Jacqueline Higgins

Administrative Assistant: Donald Angolano

Present:

SELECTBOARD MEETING

Call to Order: Larry calls meeting to order at 7:00

Set Agenda: Matt moves to accept the Agenda as written. Scott seconds. 5-0. So Voted.

Review of Public Comment: N/A

Selectboard Announcements: Larry mentions the great turnout at the memorial dedication. Thanks all that were involved.

Public Announcements: Rama Schneider (School Board member), makes a call to the public for interested individuals to join a board being developed to discuss the potential merger of Northfield and Williamstown School Districts. All interested individuals should contact the ONSU office at (802) 433-5818.

Review and Approve Minutes: Matt moves to accept minutes. Francis Seconds. 5-0. So Voted.

Review and Approval of Warrants: Scott moves to accept warrants. Ed Seconds. 5-0. So Voted.

Town Manager Report: SEE ATTACHED

New Business:

- **GRO SOLAR PROJECT – McGLYNN ROAD:** Reps from Green Mountain Power (GMP) and GroSolar were present to discuss and provide information on the planned solar project on McGlynn Rd. GMP intends to lease 40 acres of property, 500 feet off the road and produce 4.99 MW. They are currently inside their 45-day notification period and would like feedback from neighbors and the community. GMP plans to apply for a Certificate of Public Good from the Public Service Board. A packet will be filed at the town hall with information and contact persons.
- **Treasurer's Report:** Cliff Rankin the Treasurer is resigning effective January 15, 2015. Cliff mentions a positive tenure here and will miss working for the Town. However, personal necessities require him to seek a different path. He will assist as best as he can with a smooth transition.
- **Dog Hearing:**
 - o **In RE: Kodiak (Beckett St)**
 - o Brandy Todd Kodiak's owner is present, along with her minor daughters Madison Varano and Kayce Varano.
 - o Lisa-Marie Gendron mother of bite victim is present.
 - o Animal Control/Deputy Health Officer Samantha Puchar is present.

Before the Selectboard is a complaint of a two year old child. Lisa-Marie notified the Town Manager's office and the Animal Control Officer of the bite. Lisa-Marie made the report of the bite on November 5, 2015 and provided a written statement of the bite. She reported the bite as occurring on November 4, 2015. She reported in a follow-up telephone call to the Town Manager that Kodiak is constantly at large on Beckett Street that Brandy does not keep the dog contained as she should. Due to scheduling conflicts, Lisa-Marie was not able to provide a written statement until November 13, 2015 concerning the dog being at large. During the Animal Control Officer's investigation, it was found by residents on the street that Kodiak was running at large often. The Animal Control Officer requested they go to the Town Hall and meet with the Town Manager to have statements written and notarized about the misdeeds of the dog. Larry begins to take testimony from the parties involved.

- o **Brandy Todd:**
 - Contends that the hearing is uncalled for as the complaints regarding Kodiak were not made within 48 hours of the incident, as per the ordinance.

- Contends that she always has control of Kodiak. She indicates that she always “has his leash around her neck” ready in the event that a person or animal comes within sight of him, she can quickly contain him. She describes her yard as fenced in and that the area is secure, with no chance of escape by Kodiak.
 - Admits to one recent escape on Beckett Street. She indicates that she regained control of the dog quickly and all of the neighbors were content at the time.
 - Indicates that Kodiak has been impounded for 11 days and references the dog ordinance as only allowing for 10 days.
 - No reports to the Animal Control Officer concerning Kodiak as being “at-large.”
 - Presents “statements” from those who know Kodiak and suggest that Kodiak is not a vicious dog.
- **Jackie Higgins (Town Manager):**
 - Rebutts Brandy’s statement concerning the report not being made in a timely manner and within the constraints of the ordinance. Jackie indicates the dog-bite report was made timely and the investigation into the dog bite has uncovered evidence of disobedience of the previous order of the select board that the dog is to be restrained at all times when outside of her residence.
 - Indicates to the Board that the “statements” Brandy references are unsigned emails or un-notarized letters, all printed on the same type and color of paper. One email references an email address. Others seems suspect and it cannot be concluded they are written by the individual(s). She indicates none of the individuals are present at the meeting.
- **Margaret Phillips:** Voices her concerns that Brandy has not once mentioned that she has any remorse for the incident that did take place and only seems interested in contesting that the dog is not a nuisance or vicious. She feels that this speaks volumes as to what is truly important to Brandy concerning the incident.
- **Madison Varano:**
 - Indicates that she was the only person who witnessed the bite. She indicates that the victim and Kodiak were playing with a rope toy that Kodiak enjoys playing with. She describes that the victim was swinging the rope and calling for “Kody” to play with him. At one point both the victim and Kodiak lunged for the rope at the same time and Kodiak accidentally caught the victim’s face instead of the toy.
- **Ed McGlynn (Selectman):**

- Indicates that he is familiar with the incidents surrounding Kodiak and has participated in the past hearing on the complaints concerning the dog. He is aware of complaints of aggressiveness and the dog being at-large. He recalls the previous order.
 - **Lisa-Marie Gendron:**
 - Tells the Selectboard that the Kodiak is constantly running at-large and is dangerous. She indicates that her 2 year old son was bit in the face by Kodiak and that she doesn't trust the dog or believe that Brandy will be responsible with the dog and keep him contained.
 - **Larry closes the Hearing:**
 - Larry indicates that all testimony has been taken and the board will recess for executive session to deliberate.
 - Matt moves to adjourn to Executive Session. Ed Seconds. 5-0. So Voted. Meeting adjourned and Executive session commenced at 8:20 PM. Select Board leaves room and convenes in hallway.
 - Selectboard reconvenes. Scott moves to rejoin the meeting. Matt seconds. 5-0. So voted. Selectboard meeting resumed at 8:25 PM.
 - Larry refuses further testimony request from Brandy.
- Scott moves to keep Kodiak in impound and under the control of the Animal Control Officer, until a suitable owner for Kodiak can be found outside of Williamstown, per sections 2, 3, and 8 of the Williamstown Dog and Wolf-Hybrid Ordinance. Ed Seconds. 5-0. So Voted.
 - **Brandy Todd:** Stands and announces the Board will be "hearing from her attorneys."
 - **Madison Varano/Kayce Varano:**
 - Wishes to apologize for their mother's actions and the situation that has occurred.

Old Business: N/A

Open Public Comment and Questions:

- Don thanks all of those on the Memorial Board for all of their hard work and dedication in putting the monuments and pavers. The ceremony on Veteran's Day was beautiful and well done. Thank you on behalf of my family and the veteran's within it.

Around the Table:

L. Hebert –

M. Rouleau –

F. Covey –

S. Vaillancourt –

E. McGlynn –

Executive Session if Needed – 1 V.S.A. § 313 –

Matt moves to enter Water/Sewer Commissioner’s Meeting. Francis Seconds. 5-0. So Voted. W/S entered at 8:38 PM. Rivet requests an abatement of their water and sewer after a leak was discovered. Selectboard indicates they typically abate the sewer portion of a bill in this manner. Scott moves to abate the amount to \$813.00. Matt Seconds. 5-0. So Voted. Matt moves to exit W/S at 8:41 PM. Francis Seconds. 5-0. So Voted.

Adjourn: Matt moves to adjourn. Scott Seconds. Meeting adjourned at 8:43 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jaqueline Higgins, Town Manager
Don Angolano, Admin Assistant

Larry Hebert, Chair

Matt Rouleau, Vice Chair

Francis Covey, Selectman

Ed McGlynn, Selectman

Scott Vaillancourt, Selectman