

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES OF MEETING
APRIL 15, 2022**

In attendance were Chairman Carl F. Kowalski; Vice Chairman Daniel L. Salvucci; Clerk Brian J. Bezanson; Member Justin R. Evans; Member Randolph G. LaMattina; and Town Administrator Lincoln D. Heineman. Chairman Kowalski opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman Kowalski asked everyone in attendance to stand and recite the Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence dedicated to the people of Ukraine.

Chairman Kowalski announced the meeting is being recorded and televised by WHCA.

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to approve bill and payroll warrants. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 5-0.**

Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to accept correspondence in the Read File. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 5-0.**

OLD BUSINESS

Town Meeting Warrant

Town Clerk Dawn Varley asked if the Board was holding public forum. Chairman Kowalski advised Mrs. Varley that public forum is not on the agenda. Mrs. Varley advised Chairman Kowalski that it is on the posted meeting notice. Chairman Kowalski allowed Mrs. Varley to address the Board.

Mrs. Varley advised the Board that she was given a password in order to enter the figures for her budget into SoftRight. After adding her figures, she attempted to change them and discovered she was locked out of the system. She notified the Finance Committee and the town accountant the numbers in her budget needed to be corrected and was told by the town accountant that he had been advised not to change them. Mr. Heineman advised Mrs. Varley that he sent her an email earlier this morning notifying her that he would make the corrections. Mr. Salvucci asked which expense lines need to be corrected. Mrs. Varley advised Mr. Salvucci that her salary expense line and the elections and overtime expense lines.

Mr. Bezanson asked if anyone else had an issue with being locked out of the software. Mr. Heineman stated not that he was aware of. He also noted the deadline to enter the information was in early December and he was just made aware of Mrs. Varley's changes yesterday.

Mr. LaMattina asked Mrs. Varley if she notified Mr. Heineman directly. Mrs. Varley advised Mr. LaMattina that she sent emails to the Finance Committee group email address and that Mr. Heineman is part of that group. She falsely claimed the executive assistant to the Board of Selectmen is also part of the Finance Committee group email. She noted she has been sending emails since February and has not received a response. Mr. LaMattina reminded Mrs. Varley the Finance Committee is not a policy setting or operational board; and asked why she did not

contact the IT Director when she realized she was locked out of the program. He also asked why she did not send a direct email to Mr. Heineman.

Mrs. Varley stated she did email Mr. Heineman directly. Mr. LaMattina asked Mrs. Varley to forward him any emails she sent directly to Mr. Heineman regarding this issue.

Mr. LaMattina **MOVED** to approve the May 2, 2022, Town Meeting warrant as presented. **Second** Mr. Evans.

Mr. Bezanson asked for information in connection with the WHRSDC meeting held Wednesday night. Mr. Heineman advised the Board that the School Committee acknowledged there are savings to be had in the busing expense. The committee voted to reduce the non-mandated and operating assessments to both towns and the new assessments are reflected in the warrant. Mr. LaMattina noted it was a collective effort where the methodology was changed to benefit Whitman and Hanson, resulting in a savings of \$583,000 related to non-mandated busing. A savings is also seen in the lowering of the assessment. There is no reduction in the overall budget or services. The District will receive the savings from the state through transportation reimbursement. Mr. Bezanson asked how much savings the town has missed out on due to this methodology not being used until now. Whitman resident John Galvin advised Mr. Bezanson that the methodology came from the Mass. Association of Regional Schools. It is difficult to say how far back it could have been used, but he feels the town lost a lot of money. Mr. Evans stated that he feels other regional school districts will adopt this method and the state will most likely drop the reimbursement rate.

Chairman Kowalski asked about the by-law regarding banning roosters and the town having to transport roosters from town if approved. Mr. Heineman stated he will seek an opinion from town counsel.

When asked by Mr. Salvucci about Article 30, Mr. Heineman stated WHCA can only be paid the funds that are in the account and all receipts for FY22 will be sent to WHCA.

Mr. Evans asked if Article 29 will be amended on the floor to include submitted revenues. Mr. Heineman agreed to ask town counsel and the town accountant for assistance on this issue.

Chairman Kowalski asked for a vote in connection with the motion on the floor. **So voted 5-0.**

At 10:28 a.m. Mr. Salvucci **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting. **Second** Mr. Bezanson, **so voted 5-0.**

Brian J. Bezanson, Clerk