



Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 29, 2020
TIME: 6:00PM
CONFERENCE CALL

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order

This meeting was held to bring the Selectmen and public up to date on the COVID-19 virus. The public meeting was held via conference call. On the phone was Chairman Matthew A. Burrill, Selectmen Lisa L. Gonyer, Kathryn Michaels, Lawrence B. Foote, Charles R. Melvin Sr., Town Administrator Nancy Wrigley, and Secretary Diane Morin. The public session was audio taped. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Secretary Morin.

Other conference call attendees were Tina O'Rourke, Chief Alcaldinho, Trisha McCarthy, Terry Caswell, Pete Gagnon, Chief Jewett, Jack Kozec, and members of the public.

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

II. Scheduled Business

A. Update – COVID-19 virus

Chairman Burrill explained the reason for the meeting was to bring the Board and public up to date on guidelines to combat the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

Mrs. McCarthy briefed the Board with new updates from the State conference calls held on Tuesday and Wednesday, April 28 and 29, 2020.

Should the Town need to adjust the budget the Board has the right to move funds from one departmental budget to another. The Board can also accept grant money or any other money as it comes in per RSA 31:95-b.

The State reiterated that the KN95 masks are not equivalent to the N95 and should not be used in place of.

Town employees cannot be required to be tested for COVID-19 unless they were out on a medical leave. They can be asked questions that pertain to symptoms that might be related to COVID-19 and can have their temperatures taken. The Town can require employees and the public to wear masks when entering a municipal building.

If the Town requires the public to wear a mask and use social distancing when entering a Town building, the rules must be posted outside the building. Allowance must be

made for anyone entering the building that has a medical condition that would not allow them to follow the rules.

Guidance on opening campgrounds has not changed.

Any Town still needing to hold their annual meeting must adhere to the guidance put in place to postpone meetings back in March 2020 if the stay at home order is extended.

Abatements of interest cannot be waived on a case by case basis. It must be done for all delinquency for the time period the Board chose.

The Governor does not need to extend all Emergency Orders. He can selectively choose which ones to extend.

Library staff can be furloughed or laid off only by the Library Trustees. All funds appropriated to the Library by the Town at the annual meeting cannot be moved out of the Library budget.

The State EOC is still at full activation. There are 5 new testing locations. The number of positive cases has increased because testing has increased as well. The number of deaths Statewide went up to 66. The Town has 3 known case of COVID-19.

Mrs. Hughes, Mrs. McCarthy and EMD Foote are attending briefings and working on the application for reimbursement from FEMA.

Drive-thru testing sites are up and running. A Doctor's authorization and an appointment is needed before anyone can be tested.

The Attorney General's office stated that the Governor does not see any need to change the guidance for opening campgrounds.

Mrs. McCarthy reviewed the guidelines the State is recommending for municipal buildings and testing employees. The State recommends that surfaces should be cleaned throughout the day when building is occupied. An employee screening policy should be in place before re-opening.

The State is not doing anti-body testing currently.

Chairman Burrill recommended everyone listen to the Governor's press conference to be held on Friday, May 1, 2020 at 3:00pm. He went on to state that he believes that the current situation will continue for the foreseeable future. Any employee that can work from home should continue and those that can work from home but are not should make arrangements to work from home.

Chairman Burrill stated that he thinks anyone entering Town property should wear a mask beginning May 4, 2020. Mrs. McCarthy stated that the Town bulletin board could be used to keep residents informed about precautions being taken such as masks being required.

Chairman Burrill moved that starting May 4, 2020 to require all employees and the public to wear a mask when on Town property. Seconded by Selectman Foote for discussion.

Chairman Burrill stated that this would give notice to everyone that masks will be required beginning May 4.

Chief Alcainho stated that the Fire Department will need several hundred masks when responding to calls. The members do not wear masks when in the building but are practicing social distance and cleaning surfaces several times a day. They are following the EMS guidelines. Mrs. McCarthy stated that other Towns are applying the requirement to municipal buildings only. Chief Alcainho stated that he has been to several other Fire Stations and they are not wearing masks while in the station. They will wear them if social distancing cannot be maintained. He went on to say that it could hinder their response to calls if a member enters the property without a mask on. Selectman Michaels suggested to change the motion to specific public buildings. She asked if when responding to non-emergency calls are the public wearing masks. Chief Alcainho stated no and that he wears a mask when responding. Selectman Melvin stated that he is in favor of requiring masks for the Library and Town Hall buildings only. Selectman Gonyer stated that not all businesses are requiring masks to be worn.

Chairman Burrill withdrew his motion.

Selectman Michaels would like to see all residents wear masks when going to the Transfer Station. Selectman Melvin stated that surrounding Towns have trash pickup service.

Transfer Station Manager (TSM) Gagnon stated that not all the public are wearing masks when coming to the Station. Selectman Foote stated that if the employees are wearing masks, we should not require the public to wear them to go to the Transfer Station. Selectman Michaels stated that it is not just the safety of the employees but for the public as well. Mr. Kozec stated that he would like to see the Board move forward with the requirement to wear masks when at the Transfer Station. Mrs. McCarthy suggested to wait until after the Governor's press call on Friday.

Selectman Michaels moved that on May 4, 2020 the public is required to wear a mask on municipal and public property for the safety of residents and employees. Seconded by Chairman Burrill for discussion.

Mrs. O'Rourke stated that the local governing body does not have to re-open at the same time the State re-opens.

Secretary Morin asked if employees are required to wear masks. Selectman Michaels responded that it would be in their best interest to wear a mask when dealing with the public. Selectman Gonyer is in favor of employees required to wear mask. However, she is not in favor of wearing masks on Town property. This would require people to wear masks when at Greenie Park, Busch Farms or other open areas.

Chairman Burrill polled the Board to see who was in favor of requiring the public to wear masks when in Town buildings. Selectman Burrill, Melvin, Gonyer, Michaels and Foote are in favor.

Chairman Burrill polled the Board to see who was in favor of requiring the public to wear masks when at the Transfer Station. Selectman Melvin, Foote and Gonyer were not. Selectman Burrill and Michaels were in favor.

Chairman Burrill polled the Board to see who was in favor of requiring employees to wear masks when dealing with the public. Selectman Melvin, Michaels, Foote, Gonyer and Burrill were in favor.

Chairman Burrill moved to require all employees to wear masks when dealing with the public. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer for discussion.

Chairman Burrill asked if there would be enough masks. Selectman Gonyer stated that no specific type of mask was in the motion so a cloth mask could be used.

Chief Alcadinho stated that if employees are required to wear a mask, they should be the correct ones, N95 or surgical mask.

Chairman Burrill asked again if there would be enough masks. Selectman Foote stated that a delivery is expected this week.

Chairman Burrill withdrew his motion.

Selectman Michaels amended her motion to say the following: that beginning May 4 the public is required to wear a mask in all town buildings, when they are open, for the safety of our residents and employees. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote – aye, Melvin – aye

Chairman Burrill stated that we are not going to require all employees to wear masks because the Town does not have enough of the recommended masks at this time.

III. Adjourn

Chairman Burrill moved to adjourn at 7:13pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote – aye, Melvin – aye

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary