



Office of the Board of Selectmen
2 Town Hall Road, Newton, NH 03858
Tel: 382-4405 Option 5 Fax 382-9140
www.newton-nh.gov

NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: MONDAY, MARCH 30, 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 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

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 6:01pm.

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 call held on Sunday, March 29, 2020.

Mrs. McCarthy informed the Board that the State has come up with memorandum of understanding (MOU) with Rockingham Dispatch and the State Health Department which will list the communities that they service. The MOU will allow the State and Rockingham Dispatch to share information on a patient that has tested positive for COVID-19 virus. The Towns will not have access to the list only First Responders. They want to emphasize that the information is strictly confidential and cannot be shared with the public. Another MOU may be signed by the Fire Chiefs and/or Police Chiefs between Rockingham Dispatch should the Chiefs want to upload information to Rockingham Dispatch.

Mrs. McCarthy briefed the Board with new updates from the State conference call held earlier today, March 30, 2020.

The State has come up with a plan to quarantine and shelter the homeless if needed.

The State is looking into funding Surge Centers ongoing costs for Towns/Cities that might need them. Town's need to keep track of any activity related to COVID-19 in order to be reimbursed.

Mrs. McCarthy asked the State who should sign the MOU between the Towns and Rockingham Dispatch. The answer was only Fire Chiefs and Police Chiefs should sign and not the Board of Selectmen.

There are 79 First Responders in quarantine and 8 tested positive for the COVID-19.

The State is working on correcting misinformation that has been posted on Social Media.

Chairman Burrill stated that the State will provide information on COVID-19 cases on Town by Town basis. He stated First Responders should be the Board's priority. If asked about COVID-19 cases in Town, we should point them to the State Human Health Service website.

Mrs. McCarthy stated the State is refining the definition of "social distancing" to help with crisis counseling. The State is setting up hospitals around the State.

Chairman Burrill informed the public that the Board has a non-public session scheduled for April 1, 2020. The Board agreed to start the non-public session on April 1, 2020 at 5:30pm using an undisclosed conference call number. The public portion of the meeting will begin at 6:00pm using the published dial in information.

Chairman Burrill stated that Department Heads concerns will be reviewed at the April 1st meeting.

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign vendor manifest dated March 30, 2020 in the amount of \$874,267.25 of which \$777,877.00 goes toward the April Sanborn Regional School District payment and \$88,575.00 goes towards payment number 6 of 7 for 8 Merrimac Road per the 2012 Town Warrant Article #6. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign payroll manifest for pay period March 15-28, 2020 with a pay date of April 2, 2020. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Selectman Melvin move to sign the public minutes dated March 25, 2020 as written. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Secretary Morin asked if the Board's April 7, 2020 meeting will be audio only. The Board agreed to continue utilizing audio conferencing only. Secretary Morin will look in to posting the audio to the Town's website.

Selectman Gonyer asked what the Planning Board is doing about meeting. Town Administrator Wrigley stated that they are working with Rockingham Planning Commission on holding meetings. Secretary Morin stated that she worked with Planning Board Administrator Doggett and Vice-Chairman Hamel setting up a conference call.

Selectman Gonyer stated that each department should post their status on their Town's webpage.

Selectman Gonyer asked how the Board of Appeals are handling meetings. Mr. Jack Kozec stated that the Board of Appeals have canceled April meetings due to the amount of people attending. Chairman Burrill stated that the Board of Appeals can meet using the same format as the Board of Selectmen are using.

Mrs. McCarthy spoke as a Conservation Committee member about Earth Day. She has several potted plants that the Conservation Committee purchased prior to the pandemic. Mrs. McCarthy asked if the Committee could meet like the Board of Selectmen using audio conferencing. Secretary Morin will investigate setting up conference call account.

Selectman Melvin asked if the Board of Appeals have enough funds in their budget to re-notify abutters if a meeting is cancelled. Mrs. McCarthy stated that the applicant will not be charged, and the Town can use regular postal mail to notify abutters. Town Administrator Wrigley stated that if the meeting is continued then using regular postal mail is fine.

Selectman Foote announced that he will be picking up more PPE in Concord. Selectman Melvin will deliver 2 bottles of hand sanitizer for the Police and Fire Departments that he received from State Representative Deb Hobson.

III. Adjourn

Selectman Melvin moved to adjourn at 6:36pm. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary