



Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 3, 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 and to address nonpublic issues. The nonpublic session was held via a private conference call. The public meeting was held via public 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 Alcainho, Trisha McCarthy, Terry Caswell, Pete Gagnon, Chief Jewett, Jack Kozec and members of the public.

Selectman Foote and Mrs. McCarthy were in the same room at the Fire Station. Chief Alcainho was in his vehicle. All other attendees were at their place of residence.

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.

Selectman Melvin moved to accept the public minutes dated March 27, 2020 as written. Seconded by Chairman Burrill. Burrill – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote –aye Melvin – aye

Selectman Melvin moved to accept the public minutes dated March 30, 2020 as written. Seconded by Chairman Burrill. Burrill – aye, Gonyer –aye, Michaels – aye, Foote –aye Melvin – aye

Mrs. McCarthy briefed the Board with new updates from the State conference call held on Thursday, April 2, 2020.

The State is not considering limiting the number of people allowed into a building depending on the square footage.

Local governmental bodies can use electronic signatures for legal documents, but a policy must be in place.

If a patient volunteers' information that they have tested positive for COVID-19 that information can be documented by local EOC but must be removed after 21 days.

Land Use Boards do not need to have a quorum in order to postpone or cancel a meeting. If the meeting is being rescheduled, then a quorum is needed to set the date.

Part-time employees working more than their schedule hours should be handled on a case by case basis on whether their benefits should be extended.

If the Towns are going to use electronic signatures, a policy must be in place and a reputable software application should be used.

Health providers need to inform their patients and Public Health Department if the test is positive.

Towns that have not had their business meeting should use their previous year approved budget for expenditures until such time the business meeting is held.

Marriage licenses can be done online or phone and if not possible, an appointment would need to be setup.

If a patient refuses transport and does not sign the waiver, the First Responder should write on the paperwork that the patient refused transport and to sign the waiver.

NHMA is working with the Governor's Office to allow Town Moderators to postpone Town Meeting for 30 days instead of the current 72 hours.

Mrs. McCarthy briefed the Board with new updates from the State conference call held on Friday, April 3, 2020.

She reviewed the latest Statewide number of cases related to COVID-19. The Governor has renewed the Executive Emergency Order for another 21 days. There are temporary hospitals setup around the State. Shipments of PPE's are going out as quickly as possible.

Reminder to wash and disinfect common areas in Town Buildings.

There are several Convenient MD testing sites in the State. First Responders using a Convenient MD for testing can bring their sample to the State lab for quicker response.

The State is looking into a waiver to allow alternative vehicles to be used for transporting patients.

The State is looking at models to try and predict when the peak might hit the State.

Secretary Morin stated that the Building Department web page has been updated with online permits and fee schedule. She also reported that the Board was sent via email the list of employees not able to work due to COVID-19.

Chairman Burrill went into the Town Hall and found employees working in their offices. Chairman Burrill stated that working in the Town Hall needs to stop now. He stated that the door codes could be changed to just those that need to be there. Mrs. O'Rourke stated that she needs access to the food pantry in order to help her clients. Town Administrator Wrigley stated

that she enters the building in order to pick up documents to be worked on at home. The Board would like to know what the Bookkeeper needs to be able to work from home. Planning Board Administrator has been going in and should not be.

ACTION ITEM: The Board wants all Department Heads to report back to Town Administrator Wrigley or Secretary Morin by Monday, April 6, 2020 6:00pm who, length of time, and why employees need access to Town Hall.

Selectman Michaels asked how the food pantry distribution was working. Mrs. O'Rourke stated that she gathers the list of food requirements from the client and notifies them that the food is ready for pickup outside the Main Hall door.

Town Administrator Wrigley asked the Board to email her with approval to sign on their behalf any document needing Board signatures. Selectman Gonyer would prefer to use electronic signatures. The other Board members are fine with emailing approval to sign on their behalf.

Chairman Burrill moved to allow the Selectmen to sign manifests and all other documents necessary to continue the operation of local government either electronically or an email with approval to sign on their behalf. Seconded by Selectman Michaels. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Mrs. McCarthy stated that she and the Bookkeeper are revising the spreadsheet for COVID-19 tracking.

Town Administrator Wrigley asked how to proceed with getting the Board to sign the legal document. Chairman Burrill would like to have all 5 members sign the document. Secretary Morin will hand carry the document to the Selectman's home for signature.

III. Adjourn

Selectman Foote moved to adjourn at 6:49pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous. Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Melvin -- aye

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary