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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: FRIDAY, APRIL 17, 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 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. Selectman Lisa L. Gonyer was excused this evening.

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 Thursday, April 16, 2020.

The State distributed mental health awareness documents and updated guidelines on cloth masks.

The Military is working with State and Local police on delivery of PPE's.

The statistics that are being seen on local TV stations is not accurate. It takes time for the data to get updated. The Town was listed as having 5-10 cases of COVID-19 the actual number is between 1-4.

Mrs. McCarthy stated that the Town's EOC has been updating the State EOC daily as required by the State.

There are concerns that the Governor is holding conference calls with select mayors and not involving Towns without mayors. They are concerned that these cities will have

access to information prior to Towns. The State will bring this to the attention to the Governor's Office.

Campgrounds are still a major concern and Towns are asking the Governor to re-think his decision to allow them to open. The Towns are concerned on how they would enforce social distancing. The State responded that it would be up to the owners and the local Police to enforce the no more than 10 people at a gathering order. Educating the guests should be the first step and only issue citations as a last resort. They also reminded everyone that the owners should request their guest to self-quarantine for 14 days.

Tax abatements are at the discretion of the local governing body.

Restaurants are not allowed to have picnic tables for outside dining. Take-out only is allowed.

The State reminded everyone that short term rentals are not allowed.

Towns/Counties and Cities should reference the State's guidelines when dealing with campgrounds. Campgrounds could be shut down by local authorities if there were other violations such as a health issue.

Mrs. McCarthy briefed the Board with new updates from the State conference calls held on Friday, April 17, 2020.

There are now 3 new call centers opened to help with calls to 211. Use this number to refer questions from anyone concerned with COVID-19.

Senator Hassan is working at the Federal level to help with any needs the State may have.

Governor Sununu issued several Executive Orders. One executive order closed the schools for the remainder of the year. Remote learning will be continued for the rest of the school year.

Mrs. McCarthy reviewed what different State departments are doing to help fight the pandemic.

Security has been enhanced at different sites around the State.

The State reminded everyone that they should clean working surfaces at least twice a day.

The Federal Government is looking at increasing the level of funding to States and small businesses.

Mrs. McCarthy reviewed the State statistics for COVID-19 patients including First Responders.

Another shipment of PPE's will be arriving on Saturday and will be distributed to needed sites.

Hospitals are being asked to test patients for COVID-19. The oxygen supply level statewide is not an issue.

An employer is responsible for notifying employees that they may have been exposed to COVID-19 by another employee. The Public Health Investigation Unit will do a contact tracing on the infected employee.

Chairman Burrill recommends that everyone review the proposed proposal the White House has announced for re-opening States.

Chief Alcadinho thanked EMD Foote and Mrs. McCarthy for the masks they delivered.

Transfer Station Manager Gagnon stated that the Transfer Station will begin taking bulk items from residents who have vouchers. No checks or cash will be accepted.

Selectman Foote moved to accept the public meeting minutes dated April 13, 2020 as written. Seconded by Selectman Michaels. Burrill – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote – aye, Melvin – aye

III. Adjourn

Selectman Michaels moved to adjourn at 6:36pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote – aye, Melvin – aye

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary