



**Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021

TIME: 6:00PM

**LOCATION: NEWTON TOWN HALL, 2 TOWN HALL ROAD and
ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING**

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 6:01pm. In attendance were Selectmen, Matthew A. Burrill; Chairman, Lawrence B. Foote; Vice-Chairman, Lisa L. Gonyer, Kathryn Michaels, Town Administrator Nancy J. Wrigley, and Selectmen's Secretary Diane M. Morin. The non-public session was audio taped. The public meeting was audio and video taped; the public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Secretary Morin. The non-public session minutes were transcribed Chairman Burrill and typed by Town Administrator Wrigley.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) – Reputation

Selectman Gonyer moved to go into non-public session at 6:01pm under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) -- Reputation. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous roll call vote: Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye.

Selectman Gonyer moved to close the non-public session at 6:27pm. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous roll call vote: Burrill – aye, Foote – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye.

Chairman Burrill called the public portion of the meeting back to order at 6:33pm. Selectman Charles R. Melvin Sr joined the meeting at 6:33pm.

II. Scheduled Business

A. Fire Department – Physical for new hires

Chairman Burrill stated that the Fire Department is looking to hire new firefighters. To help with the hiring process, Chief Alcainho is recommending that if a new hire is currently working for another town, that the new hire provide their physical report to the Chief. This will help to speed up the hiring process. Chief Alcainho addressed the Board and recommends that the background check be done by the Newton PD. The Board agreed.

Selectman Gonyer moved to authorize the Fire Chief to hire new fire personnel utilizing a current fire department physical from another town in place of the Newton physical and to use a background check performed by the Newton Police Department background. Seconded by Selectman Foote for discussion.

Selectman Melvin asked how do we get the physical report? Chief Alcainho stated the new hire would need to provide the report.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

B. Update on quote for shoveling and sanding at Town Hall and Library

Secretary Morin reviewed the answers she received from the vendor that the Board had asked at the January 5, 2021 meeting. The cost to shovel and sand at the Town Hall and Library for the remainder of the season is \$3,500.00. This would include clearing snow if less than 2".

Chairman Burrill stated at this point we need a temporary solution.

Selectman Melvin suggested a current employee might be interested but had not spoken to said employee. Selectman Gonyer stated that the employee would still need to do their regular job and not exceed their work hours. Chairman Burrill suggested that we offer all employees the opportunity to take on the snow removal tasks. The Board agreed to have an email sent to the Department Heads, Boards, Commission and Committees asking if any employee is interested in the task. Any employee that is interested should respond to Secretary Morin by January 26, 2021. Selectman Michaels stated that a more permanent solution is needed.

C. Road Agent – Request from Town of Merrimac to exclude heavy commercial trucks from Wentworth Dr, W. Hadley, and Hadley Rd

Road Agent Pivero addressed the Board. The Town of Merrimac is looking to make Bear Hill Road the truck route instead of using Wentworth and Hadley Roads. He stated that Bear Hill Road is a State road, and the Town does not have any authority. The Town of Merrimac reached out to NHDOT about the proposed route. The NHDOT had no issues with the proposed route. The proposed route will funnel traffic from route 110 in Merrimac down Bear Hill Road.

Chairman Burrill asked if the Town would need to hold a public hearing before a decision can be made. Road Agent Pivero stated that a public hearing is needed when you change the speed limit but is unsure if one is needed to exclude heavy commercial trucks.

Chief Jewett stated that a new sign will be going up on Massachusetts route 495, Broad Street exit, informing truckers which route to take. He stated that in the past trucks have a difficult time negotiating the intersection at NH route 108, Maple Ave and Amesbury Road. Although he is not in favor of the proposed route, it would lighten the traffic on Wentworth Drive which is a Town road.

Secretary Morin stated that the signage would be provided and maintained by the Town of Merrimac, MA per the letter sent to the Selectmen.

Mr. Robert Dezmelyk addressed the Board. He stated that the proposed route will increase the amount of traffic that residents on Bear Hill Road must contend with. The proposed route will take the trucks through more of the Town's residential area and less of Merrimac. He expressed concern because trucks would be taking a rural route instead of staying on major roads and does not believe the Town should encourage trucks to use rural roads.

Chairman Burrill favors having a public hearing to allow residents to speak on the proposed route.

Selectman Gonyer stated that in the letter received from Merrimac, MA, it states that their roads are deteriorating, and she is concerned that Newton's road would suffer as well.

Selectman Melvin asked Road Agent Pivero who placed the no parking sign on Wentworth Drive. Road Agent Pivero stated that it was not the Highway Department.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recess the meeting at 7:00pm. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

D. Assessment Certificate

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign the 2020 Equalization Municipal Assessment data Certificate. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

E. Land Use Change Tax

Secretary Morin stated that 26 & 28 Thornell Road now have homes on them. Town Administrator Wrigley stated that the properties are being taken out of current use and this is the tax penalty that is due.

Chairman Burrill moved to change the tax usage of 26 Thornell Road, 1.81 acres, tax map 12-2-22-5 at a value of \$120,000.00 sold on June 3, 2020. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Burrill moved to change the tax usage of 28 Thornell Road, 1.81 acres, tax map 12-2-22-4 at a value of \$120,000.00 sold on June 23, 2020. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recess the meeting at 7:13pm. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Burrill called the public portion of the meeting back to order at 8:18pm.

F. Deliberative Session and Polling location

Chairman Burrill proposed to hold the Deliberative Session at the Town Hall as in previous years. We would use Zoom Video Conferencing and broadcast on Comcast channel 20. The one issue is if a vote is called. The voter would need to be in the Town Hall to cast their vote. If there are more than 30 voters, the parking lot could be used as the overflow. A speaker system would be setup so that those in the parking lot could hear what is going on in the Town Hall. If a vote is called for, someone would go to the parking lot to count their votes. In prior years, we have not had more than 30 people at the Deliberative Session unless there is a warrant article drawing voters out. Chairman Burrill continued and stated his reasoning for his proposal is that broadcasting on Comcast channel 20 would not be available at another site. He believes because it would not be broadcasted more people would attend.

Town Moderator Robert Dezmelyk addressed the Board. He stated that if voters can participate it should work. He stated that the law about having to hold the session within town limits was changed to allow the session to be held elsewhere. He is not in favor of moving the session to another town. He announced that he will not be moderating the session this year. He has appointed Mrs. Trisha McCarthy to be the moderator for this year. His only concern is if there are more people than can be safely accommodated in the hall.

Selectman Melvin asked if portable air exchangers could be used? Town Moderator Dezmelyk suggested opening the windows.

The question was asked how many people attend the session? Town Clerk McCullough stated on average there are 30 plus people. Of those 12, are officials so at the most 19 voters could be in the main hall. Selectman Gonyer stated that department heads who are not town residents

could participate via Zoom. Town Moderator Dezmelyk stated that if the capacity is reached, 2 of the Selectmen could participate via Zoom from the Selectmen's Office. Mrs. Julie Lemere stated that there only needs to be one Supervisor of the Checklist present to check voters in. Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that another possibility is to have the overflow at the Fire/Rescue Station. Mrs. McCarthy stated that if attendees wear a mask then the 6' social distancing rule could be reduced. Town Moderator Dezmelyk stated that a second location will require a link between the 2 sites, a moderator, which could be appointed, and a Supervisor of the Checklist to check voters in.

Chairman Burrill stated that an email could be sent out to residents to find out if they will be attending so we have an estimate.

Selectman Michaels stated that we should make it as safe as possible for everyone to attend whether utilizing a second site or the parking lot option.

Chairman Burrill moved to hold the Deliberative Session at the Town Hall with an overflow in the parking lot. All votes must be taken in person. The session will utilize Zoom Video Conferencing for participating but not to vote. Broadcasting on Comcast channel 20 will be used to listen and view. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Burrill stated that the voting went well at the Fire/Rescue Station and would like to keep it at the station.

Selectman Gonyer moved to set the polling location on March 9, 2021 at the Fire/Rescue Station located at 8D Merrimac Road. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Michaels asked if absentee ballots would be available. Town Moderator Dezmelyk stated that absentee ballots will be available as was with the November 3, 2020 general elections.

G. EOC Update

Mrs. McCarthy updated the Board with the latest numbers given to her by the State for COVID-19 cases which included the Town and school district. The Governor extended emergency order 74 to March 26, 2021.

There have been several conference calls dealing with vaccine distribution. The EOC has been fielding calls from residents about getting the vaccine.

The State has sent out more PPE to be used for the elections.

The EOC has posted on their website the phases for vaccine distribution. Priority will be given to first responders. Those 65 and older will be able to register for the vaccine on January 22, 2021. People can call 211 or utilize the website to register.

III. Other Business

A. Marshall House Roof

Chairman Burrill reviewed that at the last meeting the Board voted to not exceed \$1000.00 to cover the roof but the quote came back at \$1,200.00 Selectman Foote recommends moving forward with the repairs instead of covering the roof.

Selectman Foote moved to repair the Marshal House roof at a cost of \$4,500.00. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer for discussion.

Selectman Melvin stated that from the photos it looks like there are rotted boards. The Board agree that if the cost is more due to rotted wood, the Board will need to take up the matter again.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

B. Manifest

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign vendor manifest dated January 6, 2021 in the amount of \$397.43. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign vendor manifest dated January 18, 2021 in the amount of \$33,974.98. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign Cable Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated January 18, 2021 in the amount of \$233.90. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign Police Special Details Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated January 18, 2021 in the amount of \$1,177.20. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Gonyer moved to sign payroll manifest pay period January 3-16, 2021 with a pay date of January 21, 2021. Seconded by Selectman xxx with a unanimous vote.

IV. Announcement

Chairman Burrill announced that the 2021 Town Warrant will be available by January 25, 2021. The Deliberative Session will be held at the Town Hall on January 30, 2021 beginning at 9:00am. Voting will take place on March 9, 2021 at 8D Merrimac Road the Fire/Rescue Station.

V. Approval of Minutes

Selectman Foote moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated January 5 and 14, 2021 as written. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer for discussion.

Selectman Gonyer amended the January 14, 2021 minutes to include a record of who recommended placing the full amount from the proceeds of the old fire station sale before her recommendation of \$300,000.00.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote as amended.

VI. Adjourn

Selectman Gonyer moved to adjourn at 8:57pm. Seconded by Selectman Michaels with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary