



**Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 17, 2020
TIME: 6:00PM
CONFERENCE CALL

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 6:04pm.

As Chairman of the Board of Selectmen for the Town of Newton NH, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe or listen contemporaneously to this meeting which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are:

Utilizing Zoom Conference Call for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone #929-205-6099. Meeting ID number is 86907536632. Or using the link provided here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86907536632>

We previously gave the notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the conference call via phone.

If anyone has a problem, please email BOSSecretary@newtonnh.net. In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Utilizing Zoom Video Conferencing was Chairman Matthew A. Burrill, Selectmen Lisa L. Gonyer, Kathryn Michaels, and Secretary Diane Morin. Utilizing Zoom Audio Conferencing was Selectmen Lawrence B. Foote and Charles R. Melvin Sr. The public session was videotaped. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Secretary Morin. Town Administrator Nancy Wrigley was excused this evening.

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

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 that she attended. She reviewed the Statewide statistics for COVID-19 which included First Responders.

The Governor has a new website with a timeline for opening industries and with specific guidelines. Some industries are still limited in the number of people that can gather at one time such as a gym.

On one of the conference calls Mrs. McCarthy and EMD Foote attended, they asked if the Town would be held liable if anyone contracted the COVID-19 virus from handling items at the Transfer Station swap pile. The recommendation is to not open the swap pile because it is still unsafe.

Towns can still utilize online meetings as well as hold live meetings if social distancing is maintained. The live meetings can use online applications such as Zoom simultaneously. Separate areas need to be designated for those with health issues and those that do not wear a mask.

On the outside of any Town building, guidelines need to be posted so the public understands what they need to do before entering the building. They also suggest posting the guidelines on the Town's website.

All microphones need to be disinfected after each use as well as the podium if used.

Town's may be liable if they allow organizations to use Town property. The organizations should have liability insurance as well.

The task force had asked if a public restroom is required to re-open the Town Hall. Mrs. McCarthy made some phone calls to State agencies asking for guidance. The State Health Department was noncommittal on whether a public restroom was needed. They recommend that the restroom/s be cleaned and disinfected frequently.

New guidelines for Libraries were released earlier in the week.

The glass panels and aluminum channels are on back order. Once the vendor receives the materials, he expects to have enough to complete the Town Hall only. He will need more materials to be installed at the Library.

The EOC has completed one GOFERR grant for \$29,929.86. Employees that were unable to work due to buildings being closed were not covered. They are working on a new GOFERR and FEMA grant. Any donations of time or materials can be counted towards the 25% FEMA match.

EMD Foote has ordered over \$10,000.00 PPE supplies at no cost to the Town.

Chairman Burrill thanked both EMD Foote and Mrs. McCarthy for their work on the grants.

Mr. Kozec stated that he saw an article about transmitting the virus through fecal matter and will forward it to Mrs. McCarthy.

Secretary Morin asked if the Town allows the Baseball League to use Greenie Park ball fields would the Town be liable if someone contracts the virus? Mrs. McCarthy stated that a sign needs to be posted warning people that they use the area at their own risk. Chairman Burrill stated that posting signs will help to mitigate the possibilities of lawsuits.

Selectman Melvin asked who has authority to allow the Planning Board to hold a public meeting. Selectman Burrill stated that the Planning Board would have authority to hold their own meetings.

Selectman Foote stated he has a request from Rockingham Circuit Rider Jennifer Rowden to hold an emergency Planning Board meeting in the Town Hall parking lot. Chairman Burrill stated that in her email she would like to have a meeting without a quorum but with a representative from the Planning Board, Board of Selectmen and Board of Appeals. Chairman Burrill and Selectman Foote will attend if needed.

Chairman Burrill reminded everyone that it is recommended a mask be worn when in public and when social distancing is not possible.

Mrs. McCarthy stated that the task force is working on a flyer with the requirements the public must meet before entering the Town Hall.

III. Adjourn

Selectman Michaels moved to adjourn at 6:30pm. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary