

**TOWN OF ENFIELD  
ENFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES**

**DATE:** Monday, April 20, 2020  
**TIME:** 6:00 PM  
**LOCATION:** via Zoom video conference

**PRESENT:** Katherine D.P. Stewart; Meredith C. Smith

**EXCUSED:** John W. Kluge

**ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF:** Ryan Aylesworth, Town Manager; Alisa Bonnette, Assistant Town Manager

**OTHERS:** Emily Curtis, recording secretary; George Pennacchi; Cecilia Aufiero; Dan Kiley; Jim Bonner; Joe Gasparik; Lindsay Smith; Dr. Dave Beaufait; Dr. Jerald Theis, Conservation Commission; Bridget Labrie

**CALL TO ORDER**

Ms. Stewart called the meeting to order at 6:01 pm.

Ms. Stewart began by reading information regarding utilizing an electronic meeting platform and the government regulated guidelines associated with online based public meetings, as follows:

*As Chair of the Selectboard for the Town of Enfield, due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu'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 and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, this is to confirm that we are:*

***a) Providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video or other electronic means;***

*We are utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. All members of the Board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone # and using the password provided or by clicking on the following website address: that has been provided in email.*

***b) Providing public notice of the necessary information for accessing the meeting;***

*We previously gave notice to the public of how to access the meeting using Zoom, and instructions are provided on the Town of Enfield's website at: <https://enfield.nh.us>.*

***c) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access;***

*If anybody has a problem, please call 603-309-6379 or email at: [raylesworth@enfield.nh.us](mailto:raylesworth@enfield.nh.us).*

***d) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.***

*In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, we will adjourn the meeting and have it rescheduled at that time.*

*At this time, I also welcome members of the public accessing this meeting remotely. Even though this meeting is being conducted in a unique manner under unusual circumstances, the usual rules of conduct and decorum apply. Any person found to be disrupting this meeting will be asked to cease the disruption. Should the disruptive behavior continue thereafter, that person will be removed from this meeting. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by Roll Call vote. Let's start the meeting by taking a Roll Call attendance. When each member states their presence, also please state whether there is anyone in the room with you during this meeting, which is required under the Right-to-Know law.*

She noted that the meeting would be recorded and requested that each member of the public introduce themselves as present for the meeting, including anyone in the room with them. She requested that all members of the public state their name prior to speaking, and to please wait until public comment was requested for each topic.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES -April 6, 2020**

Mrs. Smith made a motion to accept the public and non-public minutes for April 6, 2020 as printed. Ms. Stewart seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

**COMMUNICATIONS****Wetlands Permit by Notification: Edson, Crystal Lake Rd., Map 46 Lot 27, Retaining Wall Repair**

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the application was completed and submitted to the Conservation Commission for comment since the last Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting.

Dr. Theis noted that the Conservation Commission hasn't met since February. He noted that the Conservation Commission members haven't seen the application.

Mr. Aylesworth indicated he would confer with the Chair of the Conservation Commission to check the status of the Commission's review of the application.

**BOARD REPORTS****Heritage Commission**

Mrs. Smith noted that the Heritage Commission will be having their first Zoom meeting on Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

**Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee**

Mrs. Smith noted that the Lakeside Park Committee is waiting on further information from Requests for Proposals (RFP's) regarding the construction of the pavilion.

**TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT**

- Mr. Aylesworth noted that communications between Enfield and Lebanon regarding the new Sewer Development Charges were included in the information packet presented to the BOS. He noted that while the matter is still being mediated, it would be in the town's best interest to begin collecting the fees; however, he noted the fees would not be turned over to the City of Lebanon until the ongoing

mediation is completed. He noted that Enfield had requested additional financial data from Lebanon regarding the operations and maintenance expenses incurred on an annual basis to maintain the portion of the system that Enfield uses, however, Lebanon has not fulfilled the request as of yet, and it does not appear that Lebanon will be fulfilling this request.

- Mr. Aylesworth noted that the town's current Grounds Crew Leader, Jason Darling, interviewed and was offered the position for the vacant Water/Sewer System Operator. Mr. Aylesworth noted that Mr. Darling had previously served three years in the position before moving over to the Buildings and Grounds Division. He noted that the vacant Grounds Crew Leader position was advertised as of April 16 and that the Town had already received a number of applications.
- Mr. Aylesworth stated that as of April 17<sup>th</sup>, the Town officially submitted two USDA Rural Development funding applications. He noted that Horizons Engineering assisted in the application process. He added that with the delay of Town Meeting, and the delay for approval to borrow funds for these projects, the likelihood of the Town being selected may decrease.
- Mr. Aylesworth noted that the Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee (MFAC) is continuing conversations with Bread Loaf regarding the latest conceptual designs for the Public Safety Facility and Whitney Hall. He noted that a subcommittee of the MFAC held a Zoom meeting with Pathways Consulting (a civil and environmental engineering firm) regarding a proposed scope of work to be completed on the Mascoma Regional School District SAU property.

Mrs. Smith questioned whether further work and expenditures should be completed in the current state of affairs.

Ms. Stewart supported that the current phase should be completed.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the proposed work with Pathways Consulting is a component of the overarching conceptual design process and that it was anticipated that civil and environmental engineering services would be needed during this phase. He noted that it is anticipated to be the last expense for this phase of the project.

- The Planning Boards met on April 8th and the consensus was that the Planning Board would be hitting the pause button on the Master Plan and no forward progress would be made on the Master Plan process until the middle of May. The Board agreed to reevaluate the situation at that time. Mr. Aylesworth noted that Town Meeting was necessary to approve the project budget.
- Mr. Aylesworth stated that as of April 2<sup>nd</sup>, the Town reissued RFP's for the Mascoma Lakeside Park pavilion including final plans, drawings, and bid specifications. He noted that the deadline was May 1<sup>st</sup> and added that at least 3 local contractors that seem interested in bidding on the project.

Ms. Aufiero inquired about the water and sewer upgrade and how the areas were selected.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the first phase of the water system improvements would be on Maple Street. He noted that one element would be constructing a new production well located in that area and that there is going to be further investigation on areas of where the sewer needs are, including using closed circuit TV to get information regarding areas of inflow and infiltration that should be prioritized for repair.

Dr. Theis inquired if water can seep into the sewer system would it also be possible for sewage to seep out.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the question had come up when the engineers from Horizons Engineering presented at previous BOS meetings, and that they noted it was highly unlikely. He stated he did not have the information immediately available, but knew that the question had been addressed previously and that assurances were given that the Town did not currently have sewage leaking into the adjacent soils or groundwater. Mr. Aylesworth said he believes this is because water is often entering the system toward the top portion of gravity sewer mains and sewage would therefore not leech out of the system because the gravity sections of pipe are only partially filled.

## **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ms. Stewart requested public comment for items not on the agenda.

### **Dan Kiley – Shaker Recreation Field**

Mr. Kiley inquired if the Shaker Fields were closed for recreation due to COVID-19.

Mr. Aylesworth confirmed that the Shaker Fields were closed for recreation.

Members of the BOS and public discussed seeing people in the area gathering in small groups, on the Huse Park basketball court and at the Shaker Fields.

Ms. Stewart noted that she would like to see residents abide by the Governor's order, which includes avoiding non-essential public meetings, such as exercise or recreational activities.

### **Jerold Theis – Master Plan**

Dr. Theis inquired if the BOS had selected a proposal for the Master Plan.

Ms. Stewart noted that the BOS would not bypass the Planning Board in the proposal selection. She noted the BOS has not received a recommendation from the Planning Board and no decisions would be made prior to that communication being received.

## **BUSINESS**

### **COVID-19 Local Response Updates**

Mr. Aylesworth noted he has been a part of many communications regarding the COVID-19 response, including a phone call from Senator Shaheen to discuss possible federal funding that may become available.

Mr. Aylesworth and Chief Holland participated in a "fireside chat" with Enfield TV, which included them answering questions regarding the local response to COVID-19. The segment aired on local access cable and will be available for viewing online.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that Municipal Departments are carefully documenting expenses related to COVID-19 so they can be filed for reimbursement from FEMA under the Federal Stafford Act.

Ms. Stewart inquired if the public had any questions regarding COVID-19 response.

### **2020 Budget and Capital Improvement Plan – Review and Adjustments**

Mr. Aylesworth has reached out to all municipal department heads to request that they review their operating budgets, as approved by the Budget Committee in February, and identify possible adjustments that could be made as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. He noted that there are many items

programmed for funding in the Town's 6-year Capital Improvement Plan that could be acted on now since they do not require borrowing. He added that items that are new initiatives or require borrowing funds would be paused for the time being. He noted that items relating to the Department of Public Works (DPW) that were on the town warrant may be requested to be tabled until next year.

Mr. Aylesworth stated that the CIP Committee met virtually on Tuesday and, with input from department heads, revised a tentative plan for 2020, as well as 2021-2025.

Dr. Beaufait expressed appreciation for the work the departments are doing and wondered if there was any way to change the proposed budget.

Mr. Aylesworth explained that there was no mechanism to re-do the previously proposed warrant. He added the budget would have to be altered via an article by article amendment. He noted there could not be a complete redo on the proposed budget.

### **2020 Town Meeting – Timing and Format**

Mr. Aylesworth noted that many conversations have been held regarding possible alternative Town Meeting formats. The goal is to have options to present to the Governor for approval of one or two alternative formats. He added that May 9<sup>th</sup> was not looking like it would be possible at this time, but alternative formats might include a remote meeting or the possibility of what amounts to a deliberative session in advance of voting with a mail-in paper ballot.

Mrs. Smith noted that when considering alternative formats, it should be kept in mind how discussions would take place, how a virtual platform such as zoom would manage with a large number of people, and how to handle the operations of such. She noted that there were some other formats that may be possible, but emphasized the importance of the discussion element of Town Meeting. She stated that she did not know the statutes regarding how long voting could be open, who makes the ballots and how to ensure that votes are only filled out by registered voters.

A discussion among members of the BOS and the public was had regarding concerns for alternative methods for holding Town Meeting and recording votes. It was noted that mail in ballots are possible, but there are three parts and the process is fairly complex. It was questioned whether we have the resources to do that ourselves. Members also noted that difficulties with connectivity could become an issue and how it might be addressed if someone's phone shuts off or if their internet loses connection.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that Hanover has expressed confidence in their ability to facilitate their Town Meeting virtually, but he personally had a number of reservations about this approach in practice even if the concept had all the best intentions.

Ms. L. Smith noted that there would be some discrimination on not being able to attend due to lack of internet availability.

Members of the BOS and public discussed concerns for vulnerabilities in a remote electronic voting system.

Dr. Beaufait noted that there may be technical limits as to how many people could attend a Zoom meeting, which would need to be addressed. He added that if things were cut down to a minimum to address a segment of a Town Meeting, it would be difficult to narrow down what would be on the limited warrant.

Mrs. Smith noted that it may be more important to prioritize the budget and then table all other items until a later date.

Dr. Beaufait noted that there are some money articles that are time critical – particularly water and sewer.

Mr. Aylesworth stated that there must be a process to amend articles on the warrant, which also must be voted on, prior to the final Town Meeting vote taking place. He noted that there would still be difficulties in facilitating the two-phase process which would be necessary for amendments to be made.

Ms. Stewart noted that the town is in the process of updating to Office 365 and that the town IT provider, SymQuest, should be asked to see if they have more information on options for hosting large virtual meetings. She added that Washington State has a paper ballot for local voting and everyone is sent their ballot with a series of affidavits. She added that perhaps the Town could do something where we facilitate the meeting with an option to provide printed packets upon request.

Dr. Beaufait recommended looking at early to mid-June to further postpone Town Meeting.

Mr. Kiley noted that the other possibility is to operate on a default budget with no Town Meeting.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that there were different interpretations of the statute and if the town can still function off of the prior years' budget in an event where a Town Meeting doesn't take place in 2020.

Ms. L Smith noted she knew of five towns who didn't have Town Meeting.

Ms. Labrie noted that this was a conversation that came up with the School Board as well, and the idea of a hybrid with a broadcast meeting – which could be broadcast on Zoom, with availability for people to be present if they cannot connect to Zoom. She inquired if Town Meeting could be held at the high school where people would have the ability to be more spread out. She added that states like Wyoming held a caucus and stretched it over a week and utilized mail in ballots.

Ms. Aufiero noted that the warrant articles need to be able to be debated, which is what the townspeople will want.

Dr. Beaufait noted that running on the default budget might be a possibility, but that there are some fairly large budget items, such as water and sewer, which are a high priority for the town, and may or may not be ok to put off for a year.

Ms. Labrie noted that she had received an e-mail discussing the possibility that a surge of COVID-19 cases may occur sometime in late May and/or early June, and that the current order until May 9<sup>th</sup> could be extended again.

Ms. Stewart commented on the concerns for the expenses of how to remotely host a Town Meeting. She noted that postal costs would run around \$1,600-1,700. She noted that utilizing mail in ballots would take a significant amount of manpower to complete and suggested a cost benefit analysis of the different methods available.

Mrs. Smith requested that a concise list of options for Town Meeting be collected for further analysis.

Ms. L Smith noted that she needs to look at all the options available and noted that postponing Town Meeting until July 11<sup>th</sup> may be the next best choice. She added that there are many considerations including: costs, how to host a robust discussion, and how to pare down the articles. She added that, as the

moderator, she has to make the decision on Town Meeting, and she needs to gather more information. She noted that there were many ideas which need to be vetted.

Members of the BOS and residents present at this meeting discussed the possibility of utilizing a larger space to allow for more room for people to spread out with respect to the 6-foot distancing guidelines. It was noted that the only space possibly large enough was the high school auditorium, which is located in Canaan.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that RSA 39:1-B included information that would guide whether a voting station outside of the town would be possible to facilitate.

Ms. L Smith added that any suggestions could be emailed to her at: [linz410@gmail.com](mailto:linz410@gmail.com).

Ms. L Smith left the meeting at 7:43pm.

#### **Mascoma Sailing Club practices/activities as a result of COVID-19/ Private Moorings**

Mr. Aylesworth stated that he had discussed impacts on the Sailing Club with regard to the current COVID-19 and stay at home orders. He asked Dr. Beaufait to speak on behalf of the Sailing Club.

Dr. Beaufait stated that the Sailing Club has come to the BOS for continued use of the corner of Lakeside Park as a taking off point for the dinghies and mooring field, as well as the access path down to the water to minimize erosion for small boats to access the lake.

He noted the sailing club is being affected by COVID-19 and at this time has decided not to put in boats or dinghies for access to bigger boats until the stay at home orders have been rescinded. He added that the economics for the Sailing Club are lower than anticipated and that the club would still commit to payment of \$2,000 as previous years, but requested permission from the BOS to pay the first half now and pay the second half after things are back up and running.

Dr. Beaufait requested a position of the town with regard to private boats that are not part of the mooring field anchoring in that location. He noted that the Sailing Club has not technically 'rented' space from the town and thereby have not had any authority to tell people whether they can or cannot utilize the shoreline. He added that the authority was dependent on permission of the landowner by the access. He acknowledged that it is difficult to discern as the park is public access, and the lake is state owned.

Dr. Beaufait noted that once things are open and functioning that the Sailing Club anticipates continuing their regular community programming.

Mrs. Smith noted that Kate McMullen mentioned the issue of whether the moorings would be put in or not. She noted concerns that power boats might anchor there without them in place and inquired why it wasn't happening as of yet.

Dr. Beaufait noted that the moorings, which are usually installed at this time of the year, are very heavy and take 3-4 people to implement. He noted there are no households large enough to be able to facilitate their placement during the current shelter in place orders.

The BOS and members of the public moved on to discuss other points of concern about the park.

Mrs. Smith noted that there is a veteran's group that utilizes the Lakeside Park for lake access for outings for veterans and there had been an inquiry regarding getting an ADA compliant port-a-potty at the site.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that changes to port-a-potties may be deferred until a later time when there is no more shelter in place. He noted that picnic tables had been removed from the Lakeside Park area to discourage people from convening there.

Ms. Stewart noted that the Sailing Club is doing a great job keeping an eye on safety.

#### **City of Lebanon Sewer Development Charge – Mediation**

Mr. Aylesworth noted he covered updates in the Town Manager's report.

Ms. Stewart asked if anyone had a public question regarding the Lebanon sewer development charge or mediation

Dr. Beaufait inquired if the Town of Enfield has the highest water rate in the state.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the town does not have the highest water rate in the state. He added that the town's sewer rates are temporarily increased due to deficit reduction. He added that there were factors such as the size of the collection system, the number of customers, and a large body of water that complicates the facilitation, and which affect the cost to the town to facilitate. He noted that comparisons should be made specifically to towns similar in terms of size, customers, and that have a lake to contend with.

Mr. Aylesworth has fielded suggestions regarding the possibility of Lebanon owning and maintaining the system, and he noted that Lebanon is not at all interested in the possibility of such an arrangement.

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**

##### **Abatements**

Mr. Aylesworth noted that Mary Kelly of 96 Route 4A, Map 18-2, stated that the property was treated as a waterfront lot when in fact is more akin to a water access lot. After making the appropriate adjustment, the contracted assessor Norm Bernaiche agreed that the property should be reduced to from \$311,000 to \$238,200.

Mr. Aylesworth enclosed communications, in which the property owner agrees to the new amount.

It was noted that the document did not need to be voted on, but need to be signed in Town Hall.

Ms. Stewart expressed intention to sign the abatement document in Town Hall.

Mrs. Smith agreed that she intended to sign the abatement document in Town Hall.

##### **28 Budmill Road, Map 20 Lot 20**

Mr. Aylesworth presented a document relating to abatement of 2019 lien notice fees in the amount of \$19.50 for four days' worth of interest based on the postmarked date of payment versus the date of receipt.

Ms. Stewart expressed intention to sign the document.

Mr. Smith agreed to intention to sign the document.

##### **11 Marsten Lane #37, Map LVC Lot 37 in the amount of \$19.50**

Mr. Aylesworth presented a document relating to abatement of 2019 lien notice fees in the amount of \$19.50 for three days' worth of interest based on the postmarked date of payment versus the date of receipt.



Ms. Stewart expressed intention to sign the document.

Mr. Smith agreed to intention to sign the document.

**Conkey – Intent to Excavate**

Mr. Aylesworth confirmed with Ms. Bonnette that the intent to excavate was a different form but related to the previous paperwork presented at the April 13<sup>th</sup> BOS meeting.

Ms. Stewart expressed intention to sign the document.

Mr. Smith agreed to intention to sign the document.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Mrs. Smith made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:55pm. Ms. Stewart seconded. A roll call vote was taken. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

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Katherine D. P. Stewart, Chair

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Meredith C. Smith

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John W. Kluge  
Enfield Board of Selectmen

## TOWN MANAGER REPORT – APRIL 20, 2020

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### *General Information and Updates from Departments*

- The local and regional response to COVID-19 continues to be the primary area of focus and concern right now. A detailed accounting of local, regional, and statewide actions taken to-date – including explanations for how municipal operations have been modified in the interest of reducing possible exposure of our employees and the public – can be found on a section of the Town website that was developed specifically for COVID-19 updates:  
<https://www.enfield.nh.us/covid-19-your-town-government>
- The Town Manager participated in multiple statewide conference calls this past week relative to the financial impacts associated with COVID-19. More information is included in the “Recent/Upcoming Meetings” section of this report.
- The Town Manager and Police Chief took part in a second “fireside chat” with Enfield TV regarding the local response to COVID-19. This roughly 45-minute segment primarily features a Q&A session whereby the Town Manager and Police Chief answer COVID-19 related questions submitted by residents. The segment aired for the first time on local access cable on Saturday (airing daily over the next week) and will also be available for viewing online.
- Municipal departments continue to carefully document expenses directly related to the COVID-19 pandemic that will be eligible for reimbursement (at least 75%) from FEMA under the federal Stafford Act.
- The recently enacted federal CARES Act included a provision for healthcare providers (including municipal ambulance services) to receive lump sum payments in lieu of being able to charge its typical fees to an uninsured person for a COVID-19 related transport during the pandemic. All facilities and providers that received Medicare fee-for-service (FFS) reimbursements in 2019 are eligible for this initial rapid distribution. The Town of Enfield received its distribution (approximately \$1,400) this past week.
- Sturm, Ruger & Co. graciously donated 24 face shields to the towns of Enfield and Canaan emergency services departments this past week.
- The Fire Department has been trying to do its part to lift people’s spirits by mobilizing some vehicles to do a “drive by” to celebrate the birthdays of children in our community. The homes of four children were visited this past week. Members of the Fire Department are doing this strictly on a volunteer basis.
- The Fire Department recently enacted an addendum to the existing Protective Gear Policy relative to the use of PPE by members of the department during the COVID-19 pandemic. This policy has been enclosed separately.
- DPW removed the road postings from all town roads on April 16 with the following exceptions:
  - Shaker Boulevard
  - Hazen Road

- Rice Road
- Smith Pond Road
- Legal counsel for the City of Lebanon recently served the Town of Enfield with an official mediation demand letter (separately enclosed) pursuant to the intermunicipal agreement governing Lebanon's collection and treatment of Enfield's wastewater. This is being done as a result of Enfield not yet amending its Municipal Sewer Ordinance to adopt the new Sewer Development Charge recently enacted by Lebanon. The Board will recall that Enfield is disputing the validity of this new charge and a formal request was placed with Lebanon over a month ago for additional financial data relative to the operation and maintenance of those components of Lebanon's municipal sewer system that serve Enfield. Lebanon has not provided this information to Enfield. Enfield's Town Counsel has since issued a response letter (separately enclosed) explaining the Town's position and proposing next steps for mediation.
- Finalists for the vacant water/sewer system operator position were invited to interview with the Town Manager, DPW Director, and Leader Water/Sewer Operator the week of April 6. The position was ultimately offered to Jason Darling, who presently serves as the Town's Grounds Crew Leader and previously served as water/sewer operator. Given that Jason performed this same job for approximately three years, he will not have to navigate a learning curve. This of course leads to a vacancy within DPW's Buildings & Grounds Division. This vacancy was officially advertised on April 16. The detailed job announcement can be found here: [https://www.enfield.nh.us/sites/enfieldnh/files/uploads/grounds\\_crew\\_leader\\_-\\_april\\_2020\\_0.pdf](https://www.enfield.nh.us/sites/enfieldnh/files/uploads/grounds_crew_leader_-_april_2020_0.pdf)
- Quarterly water and sewer bills were mailed this past week. There has been some critical public feedback posted to ListServ about the rate change and the timing of the bills coinciding with the COVID-19 pandemic, but, for the reasons that were discussed at the last BOS meeting, delaying billing or lowering the rate for the duration of this public health event will lead to financial problems for the Town (i.e., the Town will be more likely to have to borrow money in order to pay its own bills, such as the Lebanon wastewater treatment costs, which results in interest payments that are ultimately borne by the residents)
- Scott Johnston, the Highway Supervisor has been cleared to return to full duty (following two knee replacement procedures) effective April 27.
- Now that the conditions have improved, the DPW Highway Division will commence with gravel road grading the week of April 20.
- The Enfield Brush and Yard Waste Recycling Facility is scheduled to reopen on May 2, 2020 but COVID-19 may cause a delay and/or the operating procedure (which involves inspection of loads by Town personnel) may need to be adjusted to limit potential exposures.

### ***Project Updates***

- The status of the 2020 Town Meeting, including the timing of the meeting and potential alternative format considerations, is on the agenda for discussion at the April 20 BOS business meeting. The Town Moderator will be taking part in this discussion.

The Town Manager has been working with a number of other municipal managers across the state to submit an advocacy package to the Governor's office seeking to grant towns the authority to either: (a) conduct a 100% virtual Town Meeting or (b) vote by mail (paper ballot).

The virtual approach has the merits of theoretically enabling a deliberative process more analogous to what people expect from the traditional in-person affair. At the same time, communities that are technologically limited/averse would probably feel exponentially more comfortable going the route of voting by mail (basically SB2 style, except without a physical polling place). An obvious potential rub with the paper ballot voting is figuring out how to get the rich content one would expect to present in a deliberative session in front of the voters. However, Towns could conceivably pre-record presentations and post them on their websites and/or hold a virtual deliberative session but leave the actual voting to the mailed paper ballots.

- On April 11, the Town Manager directed Department Heads to review their 2020 operating budgets (as approved by the Budget Committee in February) and identify possible adjustments that could be made as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Here is that message:

*Hello all,*

*As the COVID-19 situation progresses it becomes increasingly evident that the implications of the pandemic on the local, regional and national economy are likely to be pretty severe and long-lasting. Obviously we are all rooting for a swift recovery and I am a naturally optimistic person, but, we can't afford to wear rose-tinted glasses either and assume that unemployment claims will evaporate overnight, financial markets are going to soar, and bring everything back to the where it was a couple of months ago.*

*So, while we all will hope for the best, we need to plan for the worst (and be ready to settle for something in between).*

*As everyone is aware, our 2020 operating budget and funding dedicated to capital improvements and special projects will continue to be in limbo until we convene Town Meeting, and, while that was initially postponed from March 14 until May 9, I think we can anticipate that Town Meeting will be postponed yet again and it will be June before Enfield voters approve an operating budget and other items on the warrant*

*Most of you probably know that the Budget Committee vote on the 2020 operating budget was quite split (5 in favor; 3 opposed; 2 abstentions) back in early-February. Several committee members felt that the budget should have been closer to level-funded rather than the approximately 2% increase that was ultimately recommended by the BOS and approved at the annual Budget Hearing. Just to remind everyone, this splintered vote transpired at a time when very few people were thinking about COVID-19 here in the U.S. and the economy was performing pretty well. Everything is of course very different now.*

*Below is a message I sent to the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee on April 3. In it I try to outline our current and projected future financial situation. At this precise snapshot in time we are generally looking OK, but, I fully expect things to start changing soon. The lag effect with declining revenues in particular hasn't caught up to us yet.*

*To put it simply, I believe it is essential for us (collectively) to revisit the proposed operating budget and capital item requests and rethink our needs in light of the new world we are occupying. I'm not directing departments to go on a budget slashing spree. But, I do want everyone to give thought to how spending patterns/priorities have already been changed due to COVID-19 and how that will continue to play out as the budget year progresses. If the writing is on the wall that certain things we budgeted for some months ago is simply not going to take place this year, then we can propose some corresponding adjustments. Likewise, we might have reason to believe that the costs associated with a particular good or service a department budgeted for is going to be substantially lower (or higher) as a result of the pandemic. Let's factor that new information into our budget numbers so that corresponding amendments can be offered at Town Meeting (whenever that is).*

*The outcome will be best, in my view, if we proactively complete our own internal review and demonstrate a desire to make some concessions as needed to help our neighbors through what has all the makings of another recession.*

*To this end, I have attached year-to-date expenditure and revenue reports to this email (both summaries and detailed breakdown). These reports reflect all revenues and expenditures that have been posted between January 1 and April 10. Please use this information to help inform your analysis and transmit a set of written recommendations to me by April 16 (next Thursday). I will of course be completing my own department-by-department review and we can then compare notes before any decisions are made.*

*Thank you in advance for your efforts on this front. These are unprecedented times, and I am very proud of the job our team continues to do in the face of exceedingly challenging circumstances.*

*Onward,  
Ryan*

- On April 17, the Town officially submitted two USDA Rural Development funding applications (one for the municipal water system totaling \$1.85 million and one for the municipal sewer system totaling \$1.9 million; both projects are eligible to receive up to 45% grant funding) with assistance from Horizons Engineering. The applications were rigorous undertakings that involved the preparation of preliminary engineering reports (PER), environmental reviews (ER), and completion of the detailed application itself. The delay of the 2020 Town Meeting may negatively impact our competitiveness for USDA funding given that we will not be able to indicate that Town Meeting granted the authority to borrow the funds, but it would be a mistake to delay our application for an additional year given the pressing nature of the issues facing both the water distribution and sewer collection systems.
- The CIP Committee and Town Manager met on April 16 to revisit the current 6-year CIP Plan (2020-2025) in light of COVID-19 and associated impacts it may have on the Town's financial condition and economy more broadly. Prior to this meeting, the Town Manager met with department heads to review their capital requests and identify equipment purchases and projects that could be reasonably deferred and/or reduced in cost to reduce some potential strain on the Town's finances resulting from this previously unanticipated public health crisis.

This included the DPW Director offering his concurrence with deferring action on the Oak Hill Road bridge (\$150,000), replacement of a one-ton pickup (\$48,000), upgrades to sidewalks in the village area (\$40,000), and replacement of the DPW facility above-ground gas tank (\$12,000). Furthermore, the CIP Committee expressed its support for replacing the cruiser with the most mileage (150,000) and engine hours via a CIP-CRF cash withdrawal that can be approved by the BOS. This would leave Town Meeting to determine the date of the remaining three cruisers that had been proposed for acquisition this year. A summary table of the adjustments the CIP Committee has proposed to the 6-year Capital Improvement Plan is enclosed separately.

- The Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee (MFAC) last met on April 13 and will be meeting again on April 27. The project lead architect from Bread Loaf provided the MFAC a detailed overview of the latest revised conceptual designs/layouts for both a renovated and expanded Whitney Hall and new public safety facility. This particular conversation focused more heavily on the public safety facility and the meeting on April 27 will focus more heavily on Whitney Hall. Steady progress continues to be made in refining the conceptual designs.

The MFAC also reviewed a proposal prepared by Pathways Consulting related to site investigations to evaluate the suitability of a portion of the Mascoma Valley Regional School District SAU building property for a public safety facility. The MFAC expressed general support for the proposed scope of work, with the condition that the Town Manager get clarification on a few items. The MFAC also reached the conclusion that Pathways should be engaged to complete site investigations for the Whitney Hall property and adjacent Consolidated Communications property (which has been of interest for some time for the purpose of expanding municipal parking) to ensure the feasibility of these sites for accomplishing the objectives associated with a renovated and expanded Whitney Hall project. The Town Manager was subsequently in contact with Pathways and a follow-up subcommittee meeting is being planned for the week of April 20.

- The Planning Board met on March 25 to discuss possible “next steps” with respect to the master plan in light of the fact that approval of a project budget had been delayed as a result of postponing Town Meeting, and of course the impact that COVID-19 will have on the ability of the Planning Board to successfully launch a master planning effort at the present time. After much deliberation, consensus was ultimately reached that – even if there are theoretically a number of ways that the process could move forward in lieu of an approved budget (i.e., the master planning task force could be formed and stakeholder engagement efforts could be launched via online surveys and video conferencing) – it would be imprudent to attempt to move forward with the master plan at a time when the focus and attention of Enfield residents is understandably on COVID-19. It was decided that the Planning Board would revisit the matter at its May 13 meeting and reevaluate the situation at that time.
- On April 2, the Town reissued a request for proposals (RFP) and associated final plans/drawings and bid specifications for the construction of a new pavilion at Mascoma Lakeside Park. The deadline for contractors to submit proposals is May 1. Multiple contractors have already contacted the Town Manager to pose follow-up questions and/or arrange a time to visit the site with the Building Inspector (who the Town Manager has tasked with serving as the “owners rep” for the project). Copies of the re-issued RFP and associated plans can be found here: <https://www.enfield.nh.us/new-enfield-projects/pages/requests-proposals-rfps>

### ***Recent/Upcoming Meetings***

- The Planning Board met on April 8 to discuss the master plan and will be meeting again (to act on application filings) on April 22.
- The MFAC last met on April 13, and will next meet on April 27.
- On April 15, the Town Manager joined local officials from across the state on a conference call with U.S. Senator Jean Shaheen to discuss the economic implications of COVID-19 and ask questions about a potential additional federal stimulus package specifically intended to fund “shovel ready” public infrastructure projects.
- The CIP Committee met on April 16 and will meet again once a Town Meeting date is confirmed.
- On April 17, Town Manager joined the leadership of the NHMA and municipal leaders from across the state on a conference call with the newly formed (pursuant to Executive Order 2020-06) stakeholder advisory board that is providing the Governor's Office for Emergency Relief and Recovery (GOFERR) with insights into the impacts of COVID-19. This call focused specifically on the financial impacts of COVID-19 on municipal governments, and the NHMA and its representatives provided a comprehensive presentation that drew on expenditure and revenue data the NHMA had collected from municipalities via an online survey earlier in the week.