

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

DATE: Monday, March 16, 2020
TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Public Works Facility, 74 Lockehaven Road

PRESENT: Katherine D.P. Stewart; Meredith C. Smith; John W. Kluge

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

OTHERS: Emily Curtis, recording secretary; Jim Bonner, videographer; Dan Kiley, Roy Holland, (Chief of Police); Jerold Theis DVM; Cecilia Aufiero

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Kluge called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm.

ORGANIZATION OF THE BOARD

The Board of Selectmen (BOS) discussed the organization of the board roles for 2020. All Board members remained in their roles from the previous year, with the exception of Ms. Stewart becoming the Select Board Chair.

Mr. Kluge made a motion to appoint Kate Stewart as the Chairman of the Enfield Board of Selectmen. Ms. Smith seconded. Ms. Stewart abstained. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (2-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES - March 2, 2020

Mr. Kluge made a motion to accept the minutes as published. Ms. Smith seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

COMMUNICATIONS

No communication items were presented.

BOARD REPORTS

Planning Board

Mr. Kluge noted that the Planning Board met and is in the process of reviewing three proposals received from their RFP.

Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee

Ms. Smith noted that the Lakeside Park hasn't met in recent weeks due to COVID-19, but that an e-mail was received from Shirley Green, a representative of the Eastman Foundation, requesting to donate a spruce tree to be planted at Lakeside Park. The BOS was requested to vote to accept the tree as a donation, with the intention to plant it at the Lakeside Park. The communication and coordination of the gift was delegated to the Town Manager.

Ms. Smith noted that she will be meeting with the new Upper Valley/Lake Sunapee region lead on the Enfield Shaker Village Scenic Byway on March 30th regarding ways to involve AVA, as well as the Shaker Museum, and other businesses that will be on the byway.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Aylesworth noted that he and department heads are in the process of finalizing annual performance evaluations. He noted that since the new operating budget has not been approved due to the delay of Town Meeting, any annual merit-based wage increases will not take effect until after budget is approved. He added that the plan would be to have wage increases retroactive to April 1st, but this is all subject to change based on how things ultimately play out with the pandemic.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that he and Ms. Bonnette are finalizing the Town's employee personnel policies with the goal of presenting them to the Board in the month of April for final review and approval.

Mr. Aylesworth noted Ms. Bonnette has been asked to complete a review of all existing local ordinances so that the Town could make progress toward compiling all ordinances into a cohesive document with standard formatting. He noted that they would be trying to identify ordinances that are out-of-date and requiring revisions, or suggestions related to the possible need for new ordinances if there are obvious gaps.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that he and Mr. Rob Taylor met with senior staff from Senator Hassan's office to talk about various issues the Senator's office might be able to assist the Town with; which included upcoming federal grant applications as well as improved high-speed/fiber internet access. He noted the meeting was very positive and productive.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee met on March 9th, and will be meeting again on March 26th. He noted the group is scheduled to tour the Canaan Public Safety Facility prior to the 6:30pm meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Dr. Jerold Theis, a member of the Conservation Commission, noted that on Sept. 6, 2019, he submitted a requested for revision of the Town ordinance 600, related to the Conservation Commission. He noted he had not received a response regarding his request.

Mr. Aylesworth requested that he please forward the information to him via e-mail and that his request would be reviewed with other ordinances.

BUSINESS

COVID-19 Discussion/Municipal Operations

Mr. Aylesworth spoke to how Town Hall operations are evolving in response to COVID-19 and state and federal recommendations. He noted that Town Hall will be closed to the public effective Tuesday March 17, 2020. He noted that most transactions and payments can be completed online, with the exception of things like new car registrations and marriage licenses, and stated they would be installing a plexiglass window to allow for those functions to be scheduled and completed in a more safe manner. The Community Building will be closed to all outside groups and nonessential activities. He added that Governor is in the process of temporarily relaxing the provisions of RSA 91-A so that meetings can take place remotely and eliminate the need for groups of people to congregate in a physical space.

Chief Holland noted that the Police Department will suspend performing fingerprinting for employment, and VIN checks will be on a case by case basis to manage the contact. He noted that the lobby will be closed and whatever can be managed via phone calls will be done. If people need person to person for non-emergency reasons, people will be brought in individually in order to have less contact. The EOC is set up in the Police Department.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the library has made the decision to close and will reevaluate on April 4th. They are currently trying to find a way to continue to provide services to the community, but do not want residents turning in their materials. It was noted that all fines will be forgiven for this period of time to encourage people to hold on to their materials under the pandemic is under control.

Chief Holland has been working with the Food Pantry and as of March 17th, the Food Pantry will NOT be open at Whitney Hall, but will be located at the pavilion in Huse Park. Volunteers will box up items prior to the pick up to have as little contact as possible. Police have PPE and can offer deliveries to residents who are at risk and should not interact with the public at all.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the state is considering practicing a grace period for registrations. It was noted that online ACH payments, which have a small fee for processing, are one way to continue these services.

Transfer station will be open; however, employees are discouraged from helping people move their personal items from their vehicles to the compactors. It is highly recommended that residents utilize curbside pickup at this time to reduce exposure and contact with other people.

The BOS discussed alternatives to meeting in person, including doing virtual meetings or conference calls until the situation improves. It was noted that these methods will be tested prior to the next meeting.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that meeting laws pertain to all boards and each board will have to make a decision on how to implement remote meetings and/or the ability to practice responsible distancing measures during meetings.

Chief Holland noted that NH Police Academy training is put on hold, and Mascoma School District has been pushed back to April 20, 2020. He added that the White House pushed from gatherings of 50 people down to 10 people. As of right now, restaurants will have no in-dining, but can do take out or pick up.

Chief Holland noted that if someone has the COVID-19/flu like symptoms that they should not call 911, but that they should call their personal medical provider for assistance or call 211 which can offer resources for the best way to get assistance.

Mr. Aylesworth added that many Enfield resident EMT/AMT's are presently out of their work and there may be more availability for responders during the day.

Mr. Kiley inquired if the town was considering telling Committees not to meet.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that if there is not essential business that each Committee is discouraged to meet, but noted that some Committees, such as the Planning Board, will likely need to continue to meet once per month based on statutory requirements.

Mr. Kiley noted the Planning Board is mandated to meet once per month by law.

The BOS and members of the public discussed the specific regulations regarding meetings and the COVID-19 recommendations and how to meet all of the needs and requirements.

Ms. Smith noted that Lakeside Park Committee meetings are cancelled until further notice.

Chief Holland noted that the emergency declaration currently in place by the Governor was issued through April 6th; and at that time, he can change and/or extend as necessary. The Presidential recommendations can be issued similarly regarding updates or changes.

Chief Holland noted that the actions being taken now will save lives. While the virus is treatable, it does require medical services.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the town is already tracking the expenditures due to the EOC and will hopefully collect for FEMA reimbursement under the Stafford Act.

The BOS discussed the laws regarding the extension of Town Meeting and the possibility it could be extended beyond May.

Chief Holland noted that, in conversation with the Governor, there are discussions about how electronic voting might be implemented, if absolutely necessary.

Mr. Aylesworth added that there would need to be an alternative way to execute the deliberative session of Town Meeting.

Ms. Stewart noted that there are platforms available that could assist in implementation.

Mr. Aylesworth added that all members of the community would need to be able to access the platforms to be able to utilize them.

Ms. Stewart noted that she received questions regarding the timeline for budget approval.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that the public hearings for bonds and notes will need to be redone.

Ms. Bonnette added that the bonds and notes need to be held 15-60 days prior to the meeting.

Ms. Stewart noted that she had reached out to New Hampshire state representatives regarding her concerns and encouraged others to communicate to state representatives as well.

Mr. Aylesworth noted that funds can be expended to operate 'within reason', based on the prior year's budget, but noted that it is important to operate conservatively.

Chief Holland and Mr. Aylesworth noted that the Town website would have the most recent and up-to-date information relating to COVID-19 posted on an ongoing basis.

Arbor Day 2020 Proclamation

Ms. Stewart read the Arbor Day proclamation for April 26, 2020. The BOS unanimously approved the proclamation.

Ms. Smith made a motion to accept the Eastman Foundations gift of a tree to be planted at Lakeside Park. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0)

Donations to Mascoma Lakeside Park Trust Fund: \$100 in aggregate – Vote Required

Mr. Kluge made a motion to accept the \$100 for the Mascoma Lakeside Park Trust Fund. Ms. Smith seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**Elderly Exemption Application**

Mr. Aylesworth shared documentation regarding an elderly exemption application. The BOS approved and signed the exemption application.

Certification of Yield Taxes Assessed

Mr. Aylesworth presented documentation regarding the current tax year as filed by MK Properties Enterprises based out of 43 Bank Street, Map 6 Lot 43 and 7/1B.

Kelleher Water & Sewer Connection Request (vote required)

Mr. Aylesworth presented information regarding a water and sewer connection request at 71 Main Street.

Mr. Kluge made a motion to approve the water & sewer request. Ms. Smith Seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

OTHER BUSINESS

None

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Kluge made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:51 PM, Ms. Smith seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Katherine D. P. Stewart, Chair

Meredith C. Smith

John W. Kluge
Enfield Board of Selectmen

TOWN MANAGER REPORT – MARCH 16, 2020

General Information and Updates from Departments

- As everyone is aware, COVID-19 is a primary area of focus and concern right now. Local officials continue to do what is needed to help reduce the incidence of spread in both our community and the region. This included postponing the annual Town Meeting. We have been able to increase the Town's supply of PPE (personal protective equipment) if/when the need arises for larger scale distribution in the community. The Town Manager, Emergency Management Director, Health Inspector, and other public safety personnel are also participating in regularly scheduled conference calls with the Upper Valley Multi-Agency Coordinating Entity (UV-MACE), and NH Division of Health and Human Services. Now that the President of the United States has formally declared a state of emergency, it will be possible for the Town to pursue reimbursement for costs directly attributable to the COVID-19 response. This will include the procurement of supplies and personnel time. We are in the process of preparing a more integrated communications strategy to ensure that necessary information (including links to the latest information and guidance being prepared by entities like the CDC and Department of Health and Human Services) is being disseminated to our residents and hopefully reduce the spread of misinformation. Staff are also working through our plans for continuity of operations if/when it becomes necessary to close the doors on municipal facilities for a period of time. This includes ensuring that the maximum number of employees are able to work from home and that residents are aware of the ways in which they can conduct their business with the Town (i.e., register a car, apply for a building permit, etc.) online to reduce incidence of exposure.
- The annual performance evaluation process for employees will be completed by the end of March so that merit-based pay increases can go into effect April 1, just as they do each year. The overarching goal of this process is to promote the continued professional growth, improvement, and fulfillment of our municipal employees.
- It is the intent of the Town Manager and Assistant Town Manager to finish the comprehensive review/update process for the Town's employee personnel policy during the month of April and have the Board of Selectmen review/approve the updated policies immediately thereafter.
- At the request of the Town Manager, the Assistant Town Manager has begun to review all existing local ordinances with a goal of moving towards the development of a singular document where all town ordinances are housed for more convenient access (which will of course be available online). During this process the Assistant Town Manager will also be identifying ordinances that are highly out-of-date and in need of revision, as well as identifying issues that may necessitate the development of an ordinance that does not currently exist.
- On March 13, the Town Manager and Land Use & Community Development Administrator met with senior staff from Senator Hassan's office to talk about various issues the Senator's office might be able to assist the Town with. This includes upcoming federal grant applications and improved high-speed/fiber internet access. It was a productive meeting with many promising possibilities that the parties agreed will be further explored.

- The deadline for applying for the vacant water/sewer system operator position is March 16. There were five qualified candidates. Candidate interviews will now be scheduled.
- The Highway Supervisor underwent a successful second knee surgery and if physical therapy and post-surgery recovery go according to plan he should return to normal duties in early-April.
- The Police Department continues to search for the right individual to fill the vacant full-time patrol officer position. Although four of the nine candidates invited to complete a physical fitness test was able to pass this test, no candidate was able to satisfactorily pass the subsequent phase of the selection process (which included review of criminal background and employment history). At the request of the Town Manager, the vacancy is now also being advertised on the job boards and alumni email distribution lists of criminal justice programs of various colleges and universities New England. Additional candidates will be screened as appropriate until a final hiring decision is made.
- The Town's application for funding under the "Assistance to Firefighters" Grant Program (administered by the federal Department of Homeland Security) will be submitted in the coming days. The application deadline was extended to March 20 (previously March 13) as a result of COVID-19. The Town has the potential to receive funding to offset up to 95% of the cost of purchasing a \$600,000 fire rescue-pumper to replace Engine 4 (an approximately 30 year old apparatus, which is housed in the Union Street Fire Station and serves as a secondary/backup apparatus to Engines 3 & 5). Once finalized and submitted, copies of the grant application will be shared to the Board of Selectmen for informational purposes.
- The Water/Sewer Department will be reading meters beginning March 23 for first quarter 2020 billing. This is the first billing that is subject to the new rates that were approved at the December 16, 2019 BOS meeting.
- The Town Manager has informed the City Manager of Lebanon that the City needs to provide additional expenditure data relative to the operations and maintenance of various components of the sewer system that are shared. In response to the Town's stated objections to the City's recently imposed Sewer Development Charge, the City suggested an alternative means of calculating the Town's annual financial obligations with respect to capital expenses. The City then provided the Town with certain information pertaining to upcoming capital improvements and anticipated costs, however, it was pointed out that additional information would need to be furnished in order for the Town to make a fully informed decision and determine whether the alternative means of calculating costs was more favorable/equitable. The City has agreed to compile the additional information. It is the City's expectation that the Town of Enfield will amend its Municipal Sewer Ordinance by early-April in order to remain in compliance with the provisions of the Intermunicipal Sewer Agreement (which requires the Town to amend its ordinance whenever the City of Lebanon amends a corresponding section of the City Code).
- Now that the Board of Selectmen has authorized the use of CIP Capital Reserve Funds for the purpose of upgrading the Town's IT infrastructure, the Town Manager has executed the associated contracts and SymQuest (the Town's managed service provider) has initiated the process of configuring the new hardware and software.

Project Updates

- The CIP Committee and Town Manager have nearly finalized the current 6-year CIP Plan (2020-2025) and a working draft has been posted to the Town's website.
https://www.enfield.nh.us/sites/enfieldnh/files/uploads/cip_2020-2025_draft_v1.5-merged-revised5.pdf
- The Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee (MFAC) last met on March 9 and will be meeting again on March 26. During its March 9 meeting, Bread Loaf's architect provided the MFAC with a completely updated set of conceptual designs and draft site plans for both the Whitney Hall property and the contemplated new public safety facility. The MFAC is very pleased with the progress on the updated conceptual designs and interior layouts of the buildings.

A sub-committee of the MFAC recently met with members of the Shaker Bridge Theatre Board of Directors to discuss possible outcomes of a Whitney Hall renovation project. Challenges associated with having a renovated third floor simultaneously accommodate the needs of both the Town and theatre were discussed. The SBT board members expressed their immense gratitude that Town officials were thoughtfully considering the needs of the theatre, and conveyed their recognition that it would not be reasonable to expect taxpayer dollars to be used to renovate a space that would be used exclusively by the theatre. Members of the SBT Board expressed its opinion that a better solution would be the construction of a separate "black box" theatre on the Whitney Hall property. The funds for such a project would need to be raised via a SBT capital campaign, and the SBT Board of Directors is organizing a retreat for this purpose during the month of April.

On March 26, prior to its regular business meeting, members of the MFAC and Bread Loaf will participate in a tour of the Town of Canaan's public safety facility for comparison purposes.

- Chris Olsen of Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) will be organizing a final meeting of the Fire-EMS Working Group on March 17. It is MRI's intent to meet with the Board of Selectmen on April 6 to present the preliminary findings of the report Chris has prepared as part of the fire/EMS transition planning process. As of March 11, oversight and control of the Fire Department formally shifted from the firewards (now dissolved) to the Town Manager.
- As was previously reported, the Town recently reissued an RFP relative to the master planning process. The deadline for submissions was March 9. The Town received proposals from three qualified firms. These firms are Resilience Planning & Design (based in Plymouth, NH), Place Sense (based in Windsor, VT), and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission (based in Lebanon, NH). The proposals were initially reviewed by the Town Manager, Planning Board Chair, and Land Use & Community Development Administrator. Each proposal came in at or under the anticipated \$35,000 budget for the master planning project. The proposals were then shared with the Planning Board as a whole and principals from each of the three firms were invited to the March 11 Planning Board meeting to make a presentation. These presentations were very helpful in terms of enabling the Planning Board to differentiate between the three organizations. The Planning Board will meet again on March 25 to make a final determination of which firm they would like to engage on the project.

- As was previously reported, with pro bono assistance from Architect Paul Mirski, the Town has prepared final plans for the Mascoma Lakeside Park pavilion and reissued a corresponding invitation to qualified contractors to transmit a letter of interest by March 6. At this time, three contractors have expressed interest in the project. One of the key considerations will be the ability of each contractor to schedule the work to be completed during the summer of 2020, as there are a variety of reasons why it would be advantageous to fully expend the Northern Border Regional Commission grant funds by the spring of 2021.
- After a series of informative meetings between local officials and area contractors, a streamlined scope of work for the structural repairs to the Enfield Center Town House was finalized and the project has been officially rebid. The deadline for interested firms to submit their proposals is March 25, 2020. The intent is to stabilize the building for at least a 5-year period to enable the Board of Selectmen and other local officials to deliberate on desired future uses of the building. Structural repair work will be funded by two Moose Plant grant awards. A complete/detailed copy of this RFP, including relevant pictures of the building and surrounding property, has been posted on the Town's official website:
https://www.enfield.nh.us/sites/enfieldnh/files/uploads/enfield_center_town_house-final6.pdf

Recent/Upcoming Meetings

- The Town Manager and Land Use & Community Development Administrator met with staff from Senator Shaheen's state office on March 13.
- Representatives from the UVLSRPC and Town of Enfield are organizing a stakeholder meeting relative to the NH Route 4A Corridor Transportation Plan on March 20. The meeting will take place at the DPW Facility beginning at 10:00 AM. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the plan, data collection, public outreach, and deliverable goals.
- The Town Manager will take part in the next monthly meeting of the UVLSRPC Executive Committee on March 25.
- The Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee last met on March 9, and will next meet on March 26 (3:30 PM site visit in Canaan; 6:30 PM business meeting).
- The Town Manager has accepted an invitation to join the Infrastructure, Development and Land Use Policy Committee of the NH Municipal Association. The Committee's first meeting is April 3.