

SELECTMEN'S ZOOM MEETING
April 22, 2020
6:00pm

1. CALL MEETING TO ORDER / PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. TOWN ADMINISTRATOR WEEKLY UPDATE

- What the Town is doing to keep business moving forward while maintaining safety protocols for residents and staff:
 - 1st week the Town Hall was closed with everyone staying away.
 - Systems are in place to make appointments, receive and conduct business via emails and telephone calls.
 - Taxes were due 4/15/2020
 - Questions have been raised as to whether interest will be waived for those who could not pay on time due to pandemic. The Selectmen have no authority to change the date of when taxes are due because that date is set at Town meeting. The Selectmen may wish to visit the interest question at the June meeting on whether to waive or refund interest depending on how many taxes are paid late by those who normally and consistently pay on time.
 - Staff has worked diligently to input all tax payment received and are caught up.
 - Registrations for vehicles, motorcycles, boats, trailers, and dogs are not being done at the Town Hall at this time owners have up to 30 days after the state of emergency is lifted to get these registrations done. The Town's inventory for stickers, plates and forms cannot be replenished at this time if it is depleted. There is an online registration process available online, however, with the State shutdown, the current backlog is over 30,000 registrations to be done. The State is just now opening up 1 day a week for essential staff to come in and start working on the backlog. A few have been completed by the Town Hall based on need to travel for essential business out of State as other states do not all have the same registration guidelines as Maine.
 - Staff working in the town hall has been done to keep critical business moving forward and is staggered so that there are not too many people working in the office at any given time. Code Enforcement is working on inspections as needed; Deputy Code Officer is working from home on a large database project; Land Use Secretary works on weekend; Treasurer has worked when other staff is not in to prepare and pay all financial obligations; and Town Administrator and staff are inputting taxes and fielding all incoming emails, calls and voice mails. The Town Administrator is in constant contact with the Selectmen regarding business.
 - Neighbors Helping Neighbors
 - The Town Administrator asks residents every few days how they are doing. Everyone being checked in on are stating they are in good shape. To date, fourteen \$100 gift cards have been sent out to assist residents. A \$1,000 donation was received from a program supporter and all who have been recipients are grateful and thankful for the assistance.
 - Every town seems to be in the same place as Acton as all are shut down. Wakefield did however send an email regarding a discussion concerning a bridge and that was forwarded to the Selectmen.

- The Town must abide by what the government rules and unfortunately means no meetings until further notice.
- Selectmen Ed Walsh commented the Town of Acton was doing a great job to keep everyone safe.
- Selectmen David Winchell reiterated that Code Enforcement was making it work regarding inspections to keep things moving forward; The Transfer Station is functioning on projects since recycling is suspended and everything is working fine to get through this.
- Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn commented the Town is doing well with all the challenges presented.
- Selectmen David Winchell asked for clarification of how long the state was shutdown. Town Administrator responded order ends at the end of day April 30, 2020.
- Selectmen Ed Walsh commented that Maine's reopening is impacted by surrounding States and their process to reopen as well; Maine's population is a benefit and we are not in horrible shape as more congested states are.
- Town Administrator stated and that it is also attributed to people staying home.
- Selectmen Ed Walsh stated, "One never knows if we did too much, but will definitely know if we don't do enough.

3. WARRANTS/BILLS

4. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Selectmen David Winchell made a motion to approve the agenda; seconded by Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn. No discussion. All in favor.

5. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

Tabled

6. DEPARTMENT HEAD / COMMITTEE CHAIR UPDATES

Tabled

Selectmen Ed Walsh stated for the record that this was their first attempt with the ZOOM meeting format and they were still working out the bugs.

7. OLD BUSINESS

Tabled

8. NEW BUSINESS

- 1) The Selectmen were courteously asked for their opinion on whether the foot of the lake should be opened to the public. Intentions were to put the portable potty in and reopen access. After discussion, the Selectmen were in agreement that the portable potty should not be put into place as it would welcome congregation of the public and that the association should follow the State of Maine on what it does and when. The Town Administrator will pass on the Selectmen's opinion.
- 2) June Elections and Town Meeting
 - A. There are candidate papers for 2 Board of Selectmen and 2 School Committee members. The process timeline, parameters and deadlines stayed in effect.
 - B. The State of Maine has moved the June 9th Primary Elections July 14th.

- i) The Town Administrator presented to the Board of Selectmen impact of this decision with regards to Town elections and whether the Selectmen wanted to push Town election back in conjunction with the State or not. Also presented was the work needed to be done to hold an election in June with limited time, impact of changed date and Bourque & Clegg; opinion on the matter. Discussion ensued. Under consideration was the following:
- Meetings which need to be held
 - Budgets
 - Election worker safety
 - Absentee Balloting
 - Gathering of a large amount of people
 - Term expiration dates

Selectmen David Winchell asked if the Town Administrator was in contact with the Superintendent. Response was yes. One discussion regarding terms was that the School would be down 2 committee members with the push back. There may be a legal way to do an appointment but that might take longer than the actual delay of the elections. Candidates indicated they would be ok with a push back.

With regards to term of Selectmen, the Town Administrator believes the term is until the election; she will verify and have a firm answer next week.

The Selectmen were in agreement to push back the Town elections to match the State as there is a lot of prep work to be completed. The Town Administrator will prepare an order for the Selectmen for next week's meeting.

3) Gym

- A. Selectmen Ed Walsh asked that this item be put on the agenda. Currently it is shutdown along with everything else; however, looking forward, it is hard to keep this facility open. With all the issues it had going into the pandemic and all the items layered on top for compliance, it might be feasible to keep it in shutdown. The Town does not have the cleaning staff or money to move forward. Right now financially we are set and can return fees collected, return equipment and keep it locked up.

Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn commented that she wished they did not need to do that.

Selectmen David Winchell asked about the enrollment and whether it improved before the pandemic shut down.

The Town Administrator will have numbers for the Board next week to review.

Discussion ensued regarding current financial situation, finances moving forward and lack thereof to do all that is needed to be done, work currently done by members trying to save the gym, volunteers who clean, development of a committee and bringing via secret ballot a warrant article to Town meeting and letting the residents decide, noting that it may then become a separate department with a budget, staff, standard hours and no membership fees.

Item tabled until next week; Town Administrator will get enrollment numbers to be reviewed and prepare a mechanism for taking public comments. Currently public comments and questions will continue to be through emails to the Town Administrator.

9. PUBLIC COMMENT:

The Town Administrator received two emails to read under public comments:

1) Would the Board please reconsider opening the Transfer Station and not compromise the environment?

Selectmen Ed Walsh responded it was better to temporarily compromise the environment than to compromise someone's life. A study he has read has shown that there are no cases via touching but does not want to jump the gun as it is not verified. Other Transfer Stations have stayed open but they are non touch point facilities whereas Acton is completely hands on. It is safer to continue doing what is being done.

Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn agreed and stated the Board should wait until the end of the month and then discuss.

Selectmen David Winchell explained what he has read regarding virus live hours on different substances and the reason why gloves are recommended. He also doesn't want to see anyone get sick and stated we are lucky to be able to do what is currently being done.

2) What is the Board of Selectmen doing for the residents of Acton during this pandemic?

Selectmen Ed Walsh responded that the Board is maintaining weekly telephone calls to keep informed and aware of what is going on with Town business. He is continually staying informed via reading and reviewing podcasts from Maine and NH CDCs. They implemented and followed through with required shutdowns. He has checked on his neighbors and works on keeping staff safe.

Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn indicated she is learning as much as she can relating to the pandemic, she is checking on neighbors and telling anyone who is in need to contact the Town Administrator. She herself is running grocery runs and assisting elderly as needed and is available to help out and keep all safe.

Selectmen David Winchell reiterated the Board is maintaining constant telephone conversations. Stating he has had opportunities to take care some calls and work with the Sherriff on general assistance needs. The Board is keeping everything transparent and is reacting to any changes as they occur. Warrants are being signed and finances are being attended to appropriately. Fire Station and Transfer Station needs are all met. The Town Hall Departments are doing a really great job. Zoom is a tough way to make decisions but the Board will do what they need to do.

The Town Administrator responded with Neighbors Helping Neighbors, she is doing what the Board is directing her to do without disclosure of names to anyone except herself and the Treasurer, but the Board is approving, directing and supporting all efforts.

In closing, the Board is working closely with the Town Administrator via telephone; there have been no meetings except for a few directly with the EMA Director and Health Officer under Executive Session as was deemed necessary to set thing up appropriately. Once guidelines were provided, those meetings were discontinued to telephone only.

10. ANNOUNCEMENT

Next Board of Selectmen meeting via Zoom, April 29, 2020 at 6 pm.

11. MEMBERS PRESENT

Selectmen Ed Walsh, Selectmen Kimberly Stacey-Horn, Selectmen David Winchell and Town Administrator Jennifer Roux.

12. ATTENDANCE