

**TOWN OF WALPOLE
EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE SELECTBOARD
MARCH 17, 2020**

Selectboard Present: Steven Dalessio (Chair); Peggy Pschirrer; Cheryl Mayberry

Also Present: Mark Houghton, Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Jan Galloway-Leclerc, Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA) Chair

CALL TO ORDER: Mr. Dalessio called this emergency meeting of the Selectboard to order at 7:00 PM in the Walpole Town Hall. He advised this meeting is being recorded and asked anyone wishing to speak to identify themselves for the record.

NOTICE OF TOWN OFFICES CLOSED TO PUBLIC:

The following notice was reviewed.

Town Offices Closed to Public Due to COVID-19

In response to COVID-19 Federal and State declarations of emergency and to protect Town of Walpole citizens and personnel, the Selectboard has enacted the following interim measures:

- Walpole Town Offices will be closed to the public through April 4, 2020.

- Town personnel will be available by phone and/or email to answer questions or to set-up any necessary appointments.

- All Town meetings, excluding the Selectboard, are suspended through April 4, 2020.

- The Selectboard recommends and encourages all people to use the online options for registrations with the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office.

- The Selectboard Office and Town Clerk/Tax Collectors offices will be staffed for regularly scheduled hours. Phone first to determine if an in-person meeting is required.

- There will be no functions held at Town Hall until after April 4, 2020. Any fees already paid will be refunded.

- The Recycling Center-Transfer Station will be open as regularly scheduled and the Highway Department will continue normal operations.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Mark Houghton (EMD) likes the draft noticed since it covered all the key points. It was confirmed that the Selectboard planned to hold public meetings on Thursdays. The meeting would be held in the larger meeting room with social distancing. Per the Governor's order, there are to be no gatherings over 50 people.

Mr. Houghton asked what was happening with the Police Department. Peggy Pschirrer, Selectboard Liaison to the Police Dept., informed the group that the lobby of the Police Department building will be closed to the public. The police have to be able to respond to emergencies.

At 7:05 PM, Dr. Chuck Shaw, the Town Health Officer joins the meeting.

Mrs. Pschirrer requested adding that the library would be closing at noon tomorrow (Weds.) to the list.

Jan Galloway-Leclerc, the ZBA Chair, gave her set-up plans for meeting to be held the next night, 3/18/2020. The same rules that applied for the Selectboard Meeting with social distancing would need to be used for this meeting per Mr. Houghton.

Mark Houghton stated that a decision was made today to move the Walpole Fire District (WFD) Meeting. The WFD has been moved to Weds., April 29th at 7 PM. It was not an easy decision to make.

Mr. Houghton asked Mrs. Galloway-Leclerc if it would be detrimental to the ZBA not to hold its March meeting. It was noted that several applicants were seeking approvals so that they could move forward with their projects and business plans. Given that, the ZBA wished to hold the meeting.

The Selectboard, EMD, the ZBA Chair and the Health Officer discussed measures needed in order to hold the 3/18/2020 ZBA meeting. The meeting can be held if precautions are taken. There must be 2 chairs widths between all chairs. There must be defined buffer space between the ZBA members and the audience. Tables and chairs are to be sanitized and hand sanitizer is available.

Best practices for cleaning and sanitizing the Town Hall were discussed such as wiping doorknobs.

Steve Dalessio ran down the list of items on the notice. Town Hall employees would continue to come to work. The group discussed how car registrations are \$2.50 cheaper if processed at the Town Clerk's Office and not online through E-Reg. Dr. Shaw recommended that the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's Office be open by appointment only. Mr. Dalessio noted that the list included, "call first to make an appointment." Visitors could be staged without an outside waiting line.

It was agreed that the Town Hall would reopen on April 5th. That is when schools are planning to reopen. However, as Mr. Dalessio commented, everything is subject to change which can happen by the hour. The Town is only responding to directives from the State or from the Emergency Management Director.

Mark Houghton asked if the Selectboard was receiving information from the NH Dept. of Safety, NH Homeland Security & Emergency (HSEM) and the Governor's Office. The Selectboard is not receiving this information. Mr. Houghton is getting flooded with information. He is picking and choosing the most important information to forward to his people. The Selectboard asked to be copied on these e-mails of updates, online meeting notices and directives so that they can stay informed.

Mark Houghton was to reach out to Lt. Sanctuary to discuss Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) to ensure that police officers have eye protection, gloves, N95 masks, etc.

Dr. Shaw was to send information to the group about a CDC webinar that was to happen tomorrow.

The Selectboard agreed to cancel the 3/19/2020 Staff Meeting. The Selectboard also requested that the Hooper Board of Directors cancel their upcoming meeting.

The Highway Department could keep working with social distancing. The Town Hall reservations were reviewed. Events through the end of March into April were cancelled. The Players Board meeting will need to be cancelled. They will be contacted.

It was agreed by all parties that the Recycling Center could stay open with social distancing applied. This group, like the Highway Department, works outside much of the time. There cannot be any volunteers present. Ms. Mayberry will call Mr. Hoy, the manager of the Recycling Dept. to discuss.

There was discussion about recommending that residents cancel travel plans. People need to stay home. Mr. Houghton noted that this is just the beginning of the COVID-19 situation.

Dr. Shaw gave a time-line recap of what happened with the virus in China. This is a novel virus that no human has experienced before.

There was a general discussion of local changes with businesses and that churches were closed.

COVID-19 testing and how this virus is different than the Flu A or B was presented by Dr. Shaw. Mr. Houghton said that if a pandemic happens, they will need to re-evaluate. There may be the need for an emergency management meeting if the situation changes.

The Local Emergency Management Plan Update Meeting scheduled for Monday, March 30th will need to be cancelled and rescheduled.

An updated notice will be sent to the group to review before posting.

ADJOURNMENT:

Ms. Mayberry moved to adjourn this Selectboard meeting. Seconded by Mrs. Pschirrer. Mr. Dalessio asked if there was any discussion. There was none. With Ms. Mayberry, Mrs. Pschirrer and Mr. Dalessio in favor, the meeting was adjourned at 7:54 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Sarah Downing, Recording Secretary Pro Tempore



Steven Dalessio, Chair



Peggy L. Pschirrer



Cheryl Mayberry

(**Note:** These are unapproved Minutes. Corrections will be found in the Minutes of the April 2, 2020, Selectboard meeting.)