

Meeting Minutes of the Regular Meeting of Hanover Board of Selectmen held via Zoom conference call on Monday, May 18, 2020 @ 6:00 PM

Present via conference call: Chairman John Tuzik, Vice Chairman Emmanuel Dockter, Selectman David Delaney, Selectwoman Jocelyn Keegan and Selectman John Barry. Also present Town Manager (TM) Joe Colangelo, Assistant Town Manager (ATM) Ann Lee and via conference call Executive Assistant Janet Tierney, and Finance Director (FD) Lincoln Heineman.

At 6:00 p.m. the Chair opened the meeting.

The Chair asked for any public commentary, and informed those watching that they may share their comments or questions by hitting star 9 or raising their virtual hand.

Seeing none, the Chair moved on to the Covid 19 Emergency Management Update from Fire Chief Blanchard. The Chief informed the Board that there are 57 confirmed positive cases of Corona Virus in Hanover residents, of that 43 are reported as recovered and 14 are confirmed as active cases in Town. The Chief noted that while the number is still too high, we are in pretty good shape compared to a lot of other Towns.

The Chief shared that since the Declaration of Emergency TM has conducted daily meetings with the management team to strategize how best to respond to the crisis. The Chief was happy to say that the Town is in a pretty good spot as far as how we have been able to develop a response plan on this, and are comfortable enough to take weekends off now.

The Chief stated that telehealth services began on April 7th and to date they have handled 427 phone calls with residents, assisting people with signing up for telehealth through their own health plans, or assisting those that needed help, including directing them toward the MIH program. The Visiting Nurse staff has assisted volunteers in providing telehealth services and although they have suspended home visits to stable patients, they continue to perform essential in home visits to those most in need. The Fire Department has provided 82 transports of Covid positive or suspected positive patients. The Fire Department has responded to 34 mobile integrated health calls with in home visits. In just one of those visits, more than 30 patients were swabbed as part of a wide spread testing conducted on the Cardinal Cushing Center Campus. The Police Department notes there have been an overall reduction in call volume since the stay at home order has been put in place, however people venturing out in the nice weather has led to gatherings of more than 10 people, where the Police have had to move people along, and also enforcements of the closed playgrounds. In all instances when residents were approached by the Police and informed of the current restrictions, the residents were cooperative. The Emergency Communications Center, (ECC) which operates under the Police Department is in charge of handling the database which informs the first responders of where, when entering homes, they may encounter Covid patients. This enables the first responders to take necessary precautions and is done in conjunction with the Board of Health and the Board of Health Nurse Nancy Funder who provides daily updates so that we can maintain that list. Kevin Short is the Dispatch Supervisor at the ECC and has done an excellent job.

Approved
6/15/20

We've been working with the School Superintendent and the School Nurse to come up with a PPE plan to have sufficient stock in place when schools reopen. DPW and Facilities custodial staff should be recognized. They have been doing an excellent job. The Chief noted that in large part due to their presence in the Fire Station, not only have they been successful so far in preventing Covid from entering the Fire Station, which other towns have not been so lucky, but they also have noted a reduction in sick time usage from other illnesses. The Chief stated that on Elections and Town meeting we have worked as a team to come up with a plan to provide safety for workers and voters when they come to the Town Election in June and working on logistics to provide a safe Town Meeting and provide required social distancing. He shared that obviously this is still a moving target but he expects to have a solid plan in the next couple of weeks on that. The Chief informed the Board that if a gathering of the Town Meeting type, with a government purpose, is allowed, with current guidelines for social distancing then the High School would probably be large to provide adequate spacing between the auditorium, gymnasium and cafeteria.

The Chief informed the Board of the steps they have taken to keep employees safe in the Fire Department. TM informed the Board that June 1st is the no earlier than date as far as reopening the Town Hall, and that opening the Library may take a little longer.

TM feels there is no need to rush into anything. He wants to be sure that we are keeping employees and members of the public safe and will take the time to be sure we are doing it right. TM reminded everyone that Town Hall is staffed and people are here working either in Town Hall or working remotely as much if not more from home, therefore we are doing pretty well.

The Vice Chair asked if we have the ability to proactively reach out to business owners and inform them of what the phase they are in and what steps they need to take under the Governor's new order.

TM stated that the following morning's management meeting discussion will focus on how best to communicate how we will handle this internally and then externally to the business owners. TM hopes to provide everyone with as much individual guidance and service as we are able to.

The Chair pointed out that Mass.gov has a great website that spells out all of this pretty clearly and suggested that the Town provide a link to that website.

The Board moved onto the status of TM's Emergency Declaration. TM commented that he anticipates the Emergency Declaration TM adopted back in March and the Board shortly thereafter ratified, will continue beyond this current Board and it will be in place possibly into the next calendar year. He stated that we will continue with the Emergency Response Plan as it has been working great.

The Chair asked for questions or comments. Seeing none the Board moved on.

DPW Director Victor Diniak via conference call provided the Board with an update on the Disinfection Byproducts Capital Improvement Project. Victor shared the good news that the DPW went live with the chloramines on Wednesday May 13th, last Wednesday, and feels pretty good about where we stand. He is hopeful that future testing will keep us under the Federal standards. The Vice Chair expressed that he did not want residents to think the system is not working if the numbers are high, as there is a lookback, and asked if Victor could include

information on testing since the switchover along with any letter that may be generated from a high number testing.

Victor informed the Board that they hope to beef up the website and possibly use the letter to drive people to the website for up to date information. He is also thinking about sending out a positive notice if the numbers are good, sharing the good news and driving people to the website to track the progress.

Vice Chair commented that, on the Project Management side, this is a good opportunity to take a look at what went well with the project and continue doing that and what didn't go well so that we can be do better moving forward. Victor acknowledged that this is an important step and informed the Board that they are planning to do that in early June.

Victor provided the Board with details of the monitoring, sampling, analyzing and testing of the water conducted by the DPW. Victor informed the Board that DEP has fully signed off on the project. The DEP has not done a site inspection but required the engineers to sign off that everything was installed correctly. Victor noted that the State does a comprehensive sanitary survey of all of the water systems every two years. At that time they look at everything, so this is a constant partnership and all are working towards the same goal of public health.

The Chair asked for questions from the Board for Victor on the water system. Seeing none the Board moved on to the discussion of adopting the Draft Board of Selectman Policy for Transfer Station Rules and Regulations. The Chair invited Victor to stay on the line for this discussion.

TM ran through the nuts and bolts of the policy and noted the only significant changes since last discussed, is that it looks forward to a future moment in time where we can implement some technology which can be used to help with issuing permits and sticker enforcement, as well as reduces human to human contact and falls more in line with a post Covid world where we will look to limit those type of interactions

TM noted that if policy is adopted tonight and effective sometime in the future, that is how we will do it now within the budget that has been established. TM is planning to actively look at technology improvement that will be beneficial to all involved. TM noted that it is what we have built the budget on and a solid step in the direction that the majority of the people he has spoken to want to go.

Selectman Barry thanked TM for his work on this and commented he liked the idea of using technology as opposed to having to have additional staffing there. Victor informed the Board that there has been a higher volume of trailers since doing away with recyclables during the Covid Crisis however this is not sustainable and we will have to return to recycling to satisfy the State, but on average two more trailers per week seems to be the trend.

Vice Chair thanked TM and FD for their work on this and expressed that he has been concerned with whether the cost to enforce stickers at the gate, and he does appreciate the need for sticker enforcement at the gate, would outweigh any financial benefit. His understanding now is that staffing the gate would break even if there were a 10% reduction in the household waste pit and TM believes we will see that reduction. He supports this policy but wants to be sure that we look back in a year or so to be sure we are seeing the savings from it that we hoped.

TM proposed June 1st would be a good effective date. The elimination of the C&D which is part of this policy is something we want to give people time to prepare for. It's too late now that the

warrant is set, to include something about a fee we could charge to dispose of C&D and any fee would need to be approved at Town Meeting.

TM informed the Board that June 1st would be a good date to work towards for accepting recycling again.

Selectman Barry suggested that we start to phase in recycling with cardboard recycling over the next couple of weeks with plenty of signage for people to observe social distancing in order to cut down on the trailer loads.

Selectwoman Keegan expressed that sooner is better than later for phasing in the recycling.

Victor informed the Board that C&D has been closed since recycling was closed.

Selectwoman Keegan expressed that in that case she has less hesitancy with keeping C&D closed as opposed to giving people time to adjust but she thinks it is important to share information on where residents can find C&D disposal. Victor shared his intentions to have staff reach out to those who provide that service and offer to include them on a list that they will provide for residents.

TM expressed his trust that between Chief Sweeney and Victor, people will be effectively educated over the next two weeks, before enforcement starts.

The Chair noted that they take a fair amount of cash at transfer station. Stating that it would be great to see if there is another way to do those transactions thereby lessening human to human interactions and the passing of money. He stated that this is an opportunity to kill two birds with one stone by ratcheting up safety as well as using technology to be more efficient. He requested that TM and Victor begin to look into this.

The Board voted to adopt the Transfer Station Rules and Regulations Policy as posted on the agenda effective June 1st, 2020.

Victor informed the Board that the Flag at Forge Pond Park has been put back up. It had been taken down when the gate was closed for the winter, and it was an oversight that it had not been put back up, however, it is up now.

The OCPC presentation was postponed to a later date, TM informed the Board that the presentation is posted online and invited people to review it.

FD provided the Board with a status report on the FY2020 Budget including an update on where we are in a general sense with revenues and expenditures for current fiscal year 2020. He informed the Board that we are reconciled through March 31st one could expect that, as 9 months of fiscal year having elapsed, 75 percent of revenues would be received at this point and 75 percent of expenses approved at town meeting last year will have been spent. FD shared that on a high level we continue to be in a healthy position despite the challenges of the pandemic. One area of revenues collected at less than 75 percent is the motor vehicle excise tax. FD reminded the Board that TM decided to delay due date until June 1st, therefore Town has not yet receive 75% of that but expect them to be collected after the new due date. FD detailed a few areas where expenditure beyond 75 percent, noting the Veterans Services expenditures. He informed the Board that 75 percent of those expenditures are reimbursed by the state, and the increase is a testament to the outreach performed by the Veterans Service Department. He noted that if there is a deficit it will be minimal but there is a possibility that the municipal relief transfer will be requested to make up for any deficit we may see this year. FD noted that in the

TM proposed budget this item is increased to reflect the fact that veterans services has been successful in providing outreach and identifying veterans and their spouses that are eligible for this benefit. The cost of the workers compensation and risk management insurance which we receive from MIIA have been going up, but FD expect funds will be available in other Town wide accounts to make up for any deficit in that area. FD went on to say that in the pension and retirement line the town makes a large payment at the beginning of the fiscal year, namely July of each year, to the Plymouth Country Retirement Association for the Town's portion of that expense and so that line is extended beyond the 75 percent because we paid it all up front, and we have saved money for doing that. FD went on to say that on Covid19 related issues,

FD went on to discuss the collection rate for real estate taxes due on May 4th, noting that the vast majority of those taxes were collected. 89% have been paid as opposed to last year's almost 92%. Slightly off, but nowhere near the level it could have been and had been a source of concern. The Town is in a cautiously optimistic point in terms of this fiscal year. FD did not yet have any updated expectations in terms of State aid. The Chair proposed that the Board invite Representative DeCoste to an upcoming meeting to provide an update, and also offered to reach out to Senator Brady as well. The Chair asked for questions or comments on FD's status report.

Seeing none, the Board moved on to talk about the Concept of a 1/12th budget for FY2021. FD informed the Board that in the case that the Town is unable to hold Town Meeting in the month of June there is a process that has been passed by the legislature and approved by the Governor whereby if a city or town is unable to pass their budget due to Covid 19 reasons at Town Meeting prior to July 1st, then in our case, the Board of Selectman may approve an interim budget based on 1/12th for each month of Fiscal Year 2021. That amount per month must be no less than 1/12th of the current fiscal year's budget. That approved 1/12th budget then goes to the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services to be approved on a month to month basis in order for the Town to spend any money after June 30th. FD intends to prepare a draft of the 1/12th budget for the next Board of Selectmen's meeting and once approved it will be sent to the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services to be approved. He noted that hopefully there won't be any need to use it. FD expressed that there is concern regarding how quickly the approval will come back from the Department of Revenue. FD informed the Board that if the 1/12th budget is approved by the Board and then approved by the Department of Revenue and then Town Meeting is held and the budget is passed before July 1st the 1/12th budget will be vacated. FD informed the Board that the draft of the 1/12th budget created over the next two weeks, will certainly in FD's opinion, include the large pension payment to the Plymouth County Retirement Association in order to reduce the Town's liability to the pension system. In FD's opinion, the first month of the 1/12th budget will be larger than 1/12th of the entire FY2020 budget because of this.

The Vice Chair expressed a desire to get the 1/12th budget passed, in a thoughtful way, sooner rather than later to be sure that we receive the Department of Revenue approval in time to spend money in July should the Town be unable to hold the Town Meeting and approve the budget in June.

The Board discussed the fact that an attendance of 100 people is currently required for a quorum at Town Meeting. The Vice Chair noted that with recent legislation he Town is able to change the number needed for quorum. TM clarified that it is the Moderator's decision as to whether or not Town Meeting is held on the 29th. The Moderator will make that decision more than likely in

consultation with Chief Blanchard and Chief Sweeney and decide what we are able to do. TM emphasized that the Board needs to move forward and approve this 1/12th budget as a safeguard in case it Town Meeting cannot happen in June. TM and FD plan to move forward and have a draft of the 1/12th budget available for the Board at their next meeting and if it can't be approved on that date then certainly it will need to be approved by June 15th so that it can be adopted and sent off to the Department of Revenue for their approval.

FD provided the background and details of the requested approval of the \$5,900,000.00 Bond Anticipation Note.

The Board voted to approve the \$5,900,000.00 Bond Anticipation Note as described on the Agenda. TM and FD requested that the Board Members come by the Town Hall and sign it by end of business day tomorrow and offered if need be, to bring it to the Board Members to sign.

The Board went on to discuss the Annual and Special Town Meeting Warrants.

The Board agreed that the Vice Chair will draft some commentary language for Article 7 of the Annual Town Meeting warrant regarding the CPA Home Rule Petition for the Board's approval. The Board agreed that there is no need for commentary from the Board on any of the other articles.

The Chair asked for any commentary from the Board on the Town Manager's work agreement.

The Vice Chair clarified for the public that under the Town Manager's current contract he was to receive in essence a raise this year starting on July 1st. This contract that is before the Board for approval tonight will keep TM's salary flat from FY20 to FY21. The Vice Chair stated that he knows we have been talking about potential difficulties in FY22 and trying to prepare for that, and he wanted to thank TM for moving forward with this adjustment and showing leadership on this issue. The Vice Chair informed the Board that they have the ability with this contract, to adjust this in the future, if the financial and economic situation is not as bad as we feared, the Board can make an adjustment to some of the payments made through this contract. If it is as bad as feared, this gives the Board some leeway. The Vice Chair stated that he is appreciative TM's agreement of this and would support approval of this contract.

The Board voted to approve the work agreement of the Town Manager. The Chair noted that they will get a copy of this approved agreement up on the website shortly.

The Board voted to appoint Tammy Murray Delegate to the Old Colony Elderly Services Advisory Board.

TM shared that he has provided a link to the upcoming Board of Selectmen appointments for review.

Selectman Barry mentioned that he had been contacted by Frank Teixeira of University Sports Complex. Mr. Teixeira had asked if in general the Town was going to offer any support to local businesses who are suffering due to the protracted shut down. Selectman Barry said that he did hear that there will be an update on the website, and proposed forming a subcommittee to creatively discuss different ways the Town could offer assistance and be a resource for local businesses in interpreting the new guidelines. Selectman Barry proposed developing a call center. The Vice Chair noted that there is some great information on the Mass.gov website and mentioned that it would be good for us to be proactive in how we deal with these businesses. He suggested pushing out best practices to aid businesses in opening in a safe way as soon as

possible. Selectman Barry informed Joe that he would be looking for someone from the Planning Office and someone from the Board of Health so that businesses could reach out and get the reopening process streamlined. His hope is that we can be very responsive in helping people open up as soon as the Governor says they can open.

TM affirmed that the Town will work to be as responsive as possible.

Selectwoman Keegan offered her assistance to TM.

TM mentioned that the next couple of weeks should be a big lift, probably as big of a challenge as when we were winding down, but its better news that we are getting back to a little bit of normal.

The Chair mentioned that Ann Lee had sent out language for the Annual Town Report.

The Board voted to approve the language for the Board of Selectmen's FY19 Annual Town Report.

The meeting adjourned at 7:34 pm