

Meeting Minutes of the Special Meeting of Hanover Board of Selectmen held via Zoom conference call on Monday, May 4, 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 comment or questions by hitting star 9 or raising their virtual hand.

Seeing none, the Chair went on to mention that today is International Firefighters Appreciation Day as well as Teacher and Nurses Appreciation Week and during these circumstances and these times, we have a lot to appreciate. The Chair stated that we are certainly thankful and appreciate you all.

The Board moved on to Agenda Items 3-9 and voted to approve the following meeting minutes: February 24, 2020 – Executive Session, April 6, 2020, April 6, 2020 – Executive Session, April 10, 2020, April 10, 2020 – Executive Session, April 13, 2020, and April 13, 2020 – Executive Session. Selectwoman Keegan abstained from voting on the meeting and executive session minutes from April 13th as she was not present.

The Board voted to approve the following Junk Dealers License Renewals:
Avitabile Inc. dba Avitabile Fine Jewelers, located at 1774 Washington Street
Ms. Jean W. Winn dba Hanover Coin & Jewelry, located at 803 Washington Street, and
Hajnasr Jewelers Inc. of Hanover dba NASR Jewelers, located at 280 Columbia Road

Fire Chief Blanchard provided an update on Covid 19 Local Emergency Management. The Chief informed the Board that safety concerns for employees revolve around Personal Protective Equipment or PPE. The Chief stated that the Town has been successful in obtaining a sufficient short term supply of PPE, however with the Governors order requiring everyone to wear masks in public, we are going through a lot more masks than expected. The Chief will be looking for a more long term supply and source for PPE going forward.

The Chief informed the Board that they had an old supply of 600 N95 masks but on Tuesday when they were handing them out they realized that the straps had degraded. The Chief saw a news clip about New Balance, a Massachusetts Company, helping out Brigham and Women's Hospital in a similar situation. The Chief reached out and New Balance agreed to help. By Saturday the repaired masks were hand delivered to the Fire Department by Hanover resident and Director of New Balance Global Communications, Courtney Finnegan.

Approved
6-15-20

The Chief stated that the Board of Health, visiting nurses, volunteer nurses, police and fire, everyone is working really well together on the MIH program which is performing 1 or 2 Mobile Integrated Health calls per day.

The Chief informed the Board that he had attended a meeting with Town officials at the High School to see what changes need to be made for voting in the end of June. They prepared to protect workers and the people who come to vote and are working to secure and satisfy the PPE the workers will need to conduct the voting safely.

The Chief offered guidance on when to wear a mask stating that the idea of members of the general public wearing a mask is to protect others from yourself if you are symptomatic or asymptomatic, and there are a lot of people out there that are asymptomatic and do not realize they have the virus. The best way to accomplish this, is wear a mask and limit or eliminate the possibility of your exhalation carrying the virus to another person in close proximity.

When asked about Town Meeting, the Chief offered to take a look at the guidelines that are given today, but is not sure what will be in place when Town Meeting comes around. He thinks we could probably have a plan in place to accommodate a large crowd and still provide social distancing. The Chief said that in the scenario where Town Meeting would be held outside, the main concern would be the weather.

TM informed the Board that once the warrant is signed the responsibility of deciding whether or not it is safe enough to hold Town Meeting will fall on the Moderator. TM assumes the Town Moderator will have to work hand in glove with Chief Blanchard and his team in terms of any modifications to Town Meeting once the warrant is signed.

The Chair asked Chief Blanchard if he had any concerns with the shortened election hours the Board voted on at last week's meeting.

The Chief stated that the one concern would be that by shortening the hours you are concentrating the voters into a shorter period of time, so however many voters who do come out to vote, now have a shorter period of time to do that. That will create longer lines and put people in closer contact.

Selectwoman Keegan expressed that she believed that the intent was to encourage people to vote by mail and keep the numbers down at the polls, and asked for confirmation from the Board.

The Chair stated that he felt the intent was to give people the option to vote by mail, but does feel it is his role to mandate how people should vote.

Selectman Delaney asked if the Town Clerk's office is being manned at all. FD stated that the Assistant Town Clerk is in the office on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and has graciously offered to be there more as needed. He went on to say that if there is a request the Assistant Town Clerk will handle it. Selectman Delaney asked if requests should still be addressed to the Clerk and then the Assistant Town Clerk will handle it. FD informed the Board that any applications received in the Town Hall via UPS, FedEx, USPS, or hand delivered will be directly delivered to the Clerk's Office and a staff member of the Clerk's Office will handle it. When asked if Clerk will not be there, FD stated that the Clerk will have to answer that for herself. Selectwoman Keegan mentioned that she did not believe people should be encouraged to personally drop

things off to Town Hall. Selectman Delaney clarified that he was asking if someone is not there, should the request be addressed to someone who is actually going to be there working.

With no questions or comments for Chief Blanchard on the Emergency Management update, the Board moved on to the next agenda item.

FD provided the Board with an update on expenditures related to Covid-19.

\$100,000.00 was approved from the reserve fund for use to address non payroll and payroll Covid expenses, The Finance Director gave special kudos to Town Accountant Chelsea Stevens and the Department Heads for tracking those expenses on a weekly basis. FD informed the Board that the expenses are being tracked to both update the Board and also to be ready to submit reimbursement applications when possible reimbursements funds become available.

FD state that at a high level, so far there has been \$92,348 .00 in Covid 19 related expenses, of which, \$59,000.00 is non payroll expenses and \$33,000.00 in largely overtime payroll. The largest non-payroll expense has been for the decontamination unit. By department approximately \$59,000.00 has been spent for the Fire Department including the Mobile Integrated Health Program, \$11,000.00 for the DPW including Facilities, and the necessary cleaning supplies, and the remaining \$22,000.00 is spread across various other departments in town, each responding in their own way.

Selectmen Barry asked with regards to the Integrated Mobile Health Program if there were to be reimbursements from South Shore Hospital. Chief Blanchard informed the Board that the license they hold is a temporary approval for the MIH Program specific to Covid 19 and that response, and it is operating under South Shore hospital's license. They are supplying the test kits and some supplies to support that effort. The agreement specifically states that we are free to try to obtain reimbursement from whatever means, meaning we could and can bill patients but at this point under the ambulance billing policy there is no mechanism to bill MIH patients. The Chief stated he would be happy to present the Board with a proposal for a fee for that. However the Chief does not think the Town would receive a lot of money from it. Most of the patients they see are Medicare patients so that amount is capped and the billable amount is small. It is not thought that we would be compensated for those with private health insurance. The Chief does think that going forward, either through the FEMA disaster declaration or cares funds when they are distributed, they can seek reimbursement that way. The Chief feels that in the future the insurance industries will develop mechanisms for reimbursement for offering these services because they will have had the chance to see the benefit of Mobile Integrated Healthcare.

Selectwoman Keegan offered to send Chief Blanchard some information she has come across on billing for the telehealth call portion of the service. The Chief thanked Selectwoman Keegan and welcomed her sharing the information with him.

The Chair thanked the Chief, FD, New Balance and Courtney Finnegan.

The Chair recognized the Clerk who had raised her virtual hand.

The Clerk wanted to address Selectman Delaney's concerns regarding the handling of early ballots by mail. She informed the Board that early voting ballots by mail will be processed as soon as possible and requested understanding that Town Hall is closed to the public and people are discouraged from coming into Town Hall. The Clerk expressed that is fortunate that she is afforded the ability to work from home and recognized that not everyone can do that.

The Chair clarified that even though the Town Hall is closed; the folks at Town Hall are showing up to work at Town Hall. The Clerk agreed and stated that showing up to work might be in your kitchen, your living room or at town hall if you don't have the ability to work from home but are all showing up to do our jobs.

The Board moved on to the next agenda item, Annual and Special Town Meetings and Local Elections. TM stepped through the articles with the Board and FD.

The Chair took a moment to confirm with the Board that all were good with the shortened election hours. The Chair saw no comments from the Board.

The Board voted to open the Annual Town Meeting Warrant.

The Board voted to approve the changes to the draft document dated today, with the two additions of in article 11, changing the reference from article 9 to article 8 and in article 18, adding the Town Manager as a sponsor.

The Board voted to close the Annual Town Meeting Warrant

The Board voted to open the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The Board voted to approve the changes to the Special Town Meeting warrant shown in the draft dated today.

The Board voted to close the Special Town Meeting Warrant.

The Chair informed the Board that the Board Members will be granted access to the Town Hall to come in and sign the Warrants.

TM informed the Board that once they sign the Warrants, the Clerk will be starting mail in voting. He informed the Board that so far the Town had received 150 or so requests for mail in ballots and those ballots will go out as early as tomorrow. The process will start.

The Chair asked for questions or comments from the Board.

Selectman Delaney emphasized the importance of the appropriate amount of attention being given to the mail in voting process, given the fact that the election hours have now been shortened, thereby possibly denying some residents of their opportunity to vote.

The Board further discussed their varied feelings and concerns surrounding the plan for handling the mail in voting process and the Clerk's requested and granted shortening of election hours.

At the Chair's request, TM informed the Board that, as he interprets their vote, the hours of the election are now set. The Board agreed to move on from this topic and discuss the Fireworks Site.

TM informed the Board that he; Vice Chair Dockter and Selectman Barry were on a phone conference with DEP last week.

Vice Chair Dockter informed the Board that his understanding is that DEP has concerns with mercury removal from the sediment around the dam in the existing draft of Phase III plan, and are putting forward a few options to the responsible parties, one option was to remove the dam and one was to bolster up the dam.

TM stated that the important thing is that people know that removing the dam is part of the discussion.

The Vice Chair shared that part of the discussion was that if dam was removed there would be a small stream and the pond would become more of a marsh or wetlands, not suitable for passive recreation. Ultimately it is a decision that is going to be made after multiple discussions with multiple parties.

Selectman Barry shared that they have just heard of the possibility of removing the dam within the last couple of weeks, and they have been in ongoing discussion and communication with respect to the Phase III draft going back to last summer. They were not expecting this to come up at this late hour. They were expecting to have a final draft of Phase III. This is now opening up a discussion that is going to further delay the completion of Phase III and that is concerning. Also, not being able to completely clean up the sediments closest to the dam only came up within the last couple of weeks. DEP also shared letters from the North River Watershed and the Division of Fisheries supporting the removal of the dam. Selectman Barry cautioned that we want to be sure that the move afoot around the country to remove dams is not getting tied into the clean up. He stated it is an issue to be discussed for certain, but he wants to be sure as a Community that the removal of the dam is going to be done only if it makes economic sense and mechanical sense with regards to the complete clean up, and not because it is being driven by some other agenda. The Town wants to see Phase III moving forward but certainly we have other options to satisfy the MCP. Selectman Barry stated that they will continue to advocate for a completed Phase III and get the clean-up of the contamination moving.

The Vice Chair expressed frustration in hearing, in this late hour, that there are concerns with the clean-up of the sediment and that the Town was not notified earlier. He mentioned that we still have years to go and the more this gets pushed out, the more time and money this will take. He stated that we need to keep pushing to move this forward.

Selectwoman Keegan expressed that it would be good to hear from the local community on this topic as it sounds like the removal would change the look and feel of the space. The Board clarified that the dam referred to is the one behind the ski shop at the Broadway underpass. Selectwoman Keegan expressed a desire to build awareness around this issue in the community.

The Chair asked if TM or the Board members had any updates to share.

Selectman Delaney shared that the Board of Assessor's office is getting some long overdue renovations and he thanked TM and FD for moving the project forward.

The Chair informed all that Candidate's Night is scheduled to take place via Zoom this Wednesday night, May 6th, at 7:00 pm.

The Chair shared that as the Liaison to Plymouth County he had attended a meeting with the Plymouth County Commissioners, who were successful in applying for and obtaining \$90 million dollars from the Federal Government through the Cares Act. This has been met with displeasure from the State, who would like the Commissioners to return the money. The Chair commented that the story is still unfolding but congratulated the Commissioners on their success.

Vice Chair Dockter congratulated Hanover Resident and Plymouth County Commissioner Dan Pallotta on his success and thanked him for his hard work in getting the money.

TM provided follow up on the presentation DPW Director Victor Diniak recently gave. He informed the Board that a letter will be going out Wednesday to all water users letting them know that the switch will be flipped on the Disinfection Byproduct Project on May 13th.

Extra care will be taken to remind people with fish tanks or aquariums that they'll need to install a bio filter or take similar actions or their aquatic friends may be impacted. TM stated the project is ready to go and May 13th is the date.

The Chair had two things to mention before the meeting closed.

He first thanked everyone on the Board, everyone at Town Hall, and all who volunteer on the various Boards and Committees for coming up with a budget that works in a short amount of time and putting together an abridged version of the warrant. He stated that everyone pulled together and even though we don't always all agree, sometimes that spurs on creativity.

He expressed the hope that we have a town meeting and can put this thing to bed.

The Chair then informed the Board that he would like to move back to the Board's regular and traditional schedule, not the regular meeting space, but back to regular meeting times. The Board agreed to meet next on May 18th, then June 1st and then on June 15th prior to Town Meeting. The meetings will begin at 6:00 pm.

Meeting adjourned at 7:14pm