

**MINUTES OF THE SELECT BOARD**  
**Monday May 18, 2020, 7:00 PM**  
**Via Zoom**

**Present:** Damon Frampton, Chair, Tom Maher, Selectman, Bill Stewart, Selectman, and Bette Jane Riordan, Secretary.

**Also present:** Pam Cullen, Administrative Assistant to the Select Board, Christiane McAllister, Town Accountant, Ken McDonald, TAPC, Dave McGuckin, Tom Smith, Darcy Horgan, Anne Miller, Andy Schulte, Fire Chief Ted Hartmann, Jim Rini, and Mary Pat Gibson.

Selectman Stewart explained the nature of the meeting, indicating it is considered an Emergency Meeting which meets all the State requirements of posting, and noted the availability of a phone number to call if a participant could not connect via Zoom. Selectman Stewart explained the criteria for Emergency Meetings, and stated that all votes by the Select Board would be roll call votes.

Chair Frampton opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

**1. Approve Select Board minutes of May 4, 2020**

Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the May 4, 2020 minutes of the Select Board meeting as amended. Selectman Stewart seconded. Chair Frampton voted yes, Selectman Maher votes yes, and Selectman Stewart voted yes. Motion carried.

**2. Public Questions and Answers.**

**a. Tom Smith:** Public Hearing for the Budget. All items for discussion are posted on the Town Website.

**b. Green Waste:** Dave McGuckin brought up the issue of using the School Parking lot in lieu of the usual site which currently has staging. If the Board agrees he would check with the School Board. He noted that Jim Rini would be happy to organize this, and will arrange for safe distancing. Selectman Maher believes it's a good idea but stated he felt the Select Board should be the entity to address this with the School Board. Jim Rini was asked by Selectman Stewart to address this issue. Jim explained the process and restrictions he would employ. The Board thanked Jim.

**c. Pam Cullen:**

She noted that the Town Warrant has also been posted at the Post Office as well as Town Hall.

She noted that Priscilla Hodgkins, Town Clerk, had asked her to check with the Select Board and request the Select Board to approve her hiring of Joanne Ireland to help in the Town Clerk's office with the upcoming Town Election and Meeting and the abundance of absentee ballots. Pam has the paperwork necessary and requests the Board appoint Ms. Ireland. Chair Frampton asked Pam to clarify, and she stated

that Ms. Ireland will be appointed as an additional Assistant Town Clerk. Chair Frampton stated he assumes this appointment is temporary, and has to do with voting, and Pam agreed. Chair Frampton agreed with this and asked for a Motion or Select Board discussion. Selectman Stewart stated he understood the need during this election time, and made a motion to temporarily appoint Joanne Ireland. Selectman Maher seconded the Motion. Chair Frampton voted yes, Selectman Stewart voted yes, Selectman Maher voted yes and the Motion carried.

Pam asked for more direction on the gift certificate for Tom Bolko, and suggested \$150 as the amount. Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve \$150 as the amount for the gift certificate. Selectman Stewart seconded. Chair Frampton voted yes. Selectman Maher voted yes, and Selectman Stewart voted yes. Motion carried.

### **3. New Business.**

#### **a. Ian Silberman re: Phone and Internet services.**

Ken McDonald introduced Mr. Silberman who works for Consolidated Communications. His goal is to present a unified solution to the Town for Internet and telecommunication services. Selectman Maher led the questioning and asked about fiber optics and how the level of service would be improved and provided which he feels is necessary to improve operations. Mr. Silberman outlined his plan for services, noting that any outages would be fixed within 20 minutes, and both telephone and internet services would be provided. Both he and Ken spoke about the increasing problem of dropped calls in Town Hall. Both Pam and Priscilla noted the increased volume of dropped calls.

Mr. Silberman explained the level of service, and the company's site review process. Selectman Maher explained the needs of the Supervisors of the Check List and their interest in improving service. Selectman Stewart questioned the decision points and overall timelines for this overhaul. Selectman Maher wants an onsite review by Consolidated. Mr. Silberman agreed to the site review and will make whatever modifications necessary and submit to the Select Board.

Chair Frampton brought up the issue of Library's needs. Ken McDonald talked about other relevant issues such as how to accept credit payments at the Common and he will continue to work on these issues.

Selectman Maher stated the Select Board review the proposal and put on the Agenda for June 1.

Dick Spaulding asked about how the School could possibly benefit from Consolidated services. Ken McDonald stated he will contact the School and try to facilitate communication between the school and Consolidated.

#### **b. Green Bean: Seasonal Liquor License.**

After discussion, Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the liquor license application as presented. Selectman Stewart seconded. Chair Frampton voted yes, Selectman Stewart vote yes, and Selectman Maher voted yes. Motion carried.

**c. Great Island Garden Club.**

Mary Pat Gibson, member of Great Island Garden Club, requesting permission from the Town for a beautification project related to the upcoming 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary, which will be fully funded by the Garden Club. It involves the Town land near the Coast Guard Station and would consist of a narrow garden bed planting plan. They would start in June and complete in July. Daffodils would be planted in the fall. She explained all aspects of the planting plan and provided written detail to the Board. She has obtained assistance from the Fire Department for watering in the initial stages. Pam Cullen expressed some concerns regarding the Federal Land and Parks jurisdiction in this area, and suggested consulting with them. She asked Ken McDonald to comment and he explained the jurisdiction issue and his prior experience dealing with them. He offered to work with Mary Pat Gibson on this matter.

Selectman Stewart stated he has no problem with the project. Selectman Maher feels there should be a check in with Federal Parks and Lands, but is supportive of the project.

Selectman Maher made a Motion to Approve the request as presented, conditioned on approval of Federal Parks and Land. Selectman Stewart voted yes, Selectman Maher voted yes, and Chair Frampton voted yes. Motion carried.

**d. Sue Chase letter: 7 Cape Road Water Access.**

Pam Cullen explained the essence of the complaint by the homeowner who is upset about people drifting onto her property on the beach. The issue involves waterfront property owned by Sue Chase and the Marvin's. The Town also owns 33 feet. The owner (Chase) put up a No Trespassing Sign. Darcy Horgan remarked that it is incumbent upon the owner to get a survey done, as it is not clear what affect the sign has legally. Further discussion ensued with the view that this is most likely a private property matter; however the Select Board took the matter under advisement.

**e. Public Hearing Process and Meeting Schedules.**

Selectman Stewart stated there are procedures in place for Public Hearings. There are going to be a couple of hearings (Budget and ZBA) in May which will be done electronically. He hopes to have in person hearings restarting in June. Carol White asked if Cemetery Trustees could meet in the Gazebo. The committee is in favor and Selectman Stewart noted as long as there was social distancing and not more than 10 people total. Selectman Maher agreed.

Darcy said she has scheduled a Planning Board meeting for June 3, 2020 and wondered what the rules were in terms of public in person hearings. Selectman Stewart explained the need for public availability, and how the Select Board got

permission to do some hearings. He stressed it is preferable to do the meetings in person and in public, and perhaps waiting until after June 1 is the best way to go. Darcy said there will be a lot of presenters June 3, and is not comfortable doing it at Town hall. She wondered if the Rec Building could be set up with each member having their own table six feet apart. Selectman Stewart suggested other ways to stagger the participants to maintain social distancing. Because of posting deadlines for Planning Board, the decision to move it from Town Hall to the Common will have to be made by this Wednesday. Town Clerk asked if this over to the Rec Building provides an avenue for having all future meetings moved to the Rec Building. Selectman Stewart supported the use of the recreation building. The Town Clerk feels it is a very good idea.

**f. Safe Path.**

Chair Frampton stated that a path issue had been discussed a few weeks back, and he had asked a member of the Safe Path group to come before the Board and explain what the proposed additional path (within the gate) was all about. Maryann Driscoll addressed the Board. She explained the project, which would involve working with Rye Landscaping and getting cost estimates. Selectman Maher weighed in in support of the process in place and suggested the process go forward. Chair Frampton had some questions about the Federal Lands and Parks entity needing to give permission and requested that the group contact them. Ms. Driscoll agreed. Both Selectman Stewart and Selectman Maher agreed to explore the various options presented and decide which makes the most sense.

**g. Administrative Assistant to BOS.**

Chair Frampton announced that Jennifer Smith will be coming on as the Administrative Assistant, and will be working with Pam, and believes she will be a great fit. Selectman Stewart stated she will be starting June 1st and Pam's last day is July 1. The month of June will provide a time for training. Selectman Maher stated the Board had 3 great finalists and Pam's shoes would be tough to fill.

**h. Fire Department.**

The Chief was asked to talk about the readiness of the department in dealing with Covid related issues and overall status of the department. Chief Hartmann reported that at present, there are 15 total members, 10 are certified. The Department continues to offer 24-7 coverage. There continues to be open recruitment and the Department is providing training. They continue to monitor the Covid issues and have a new electronic message board. He reported the state of readiness is good. Carl Roediger asked how many of the 15 members are residents of New Castle. Chief responded that there is one, the Deputy Chief.

**i. Covid 19: Town's response.**

Selectman Stewart asked Chief White for updates on traffic and parking and dealing with the beach closure and traffic management. There is no parking on Rte 1-B, and traffic has been average 3000 cars per day. Selectman Stewart stated there is no

parking on Wild Rose Lane; no parking on Ocean Street and resident only parking by the Coast Guard and Piscataqua Street. There is 15 minute parking on Main Street.

The Board discussed the critical functions of the Town requiring public contact and the Board has tasked the employees to identify how to minimize public contact as the Town looks to reopen processes. Less face to face contact is being explored and policies developed, and may evolve into permanent change.

The Town Clerk thanked Ken McDonald for working with her and providers to explore initiating on -line motor vehicle renewals, noting that 100 NH municipalities currently do this. The extra cost to the registrant would be \$1.50. Overall working by mail and by appointment has worked well. Ken will draft a proposal for Select Board review.

Selectman Stewart stated the Board is looking at new ways to do business and enhancing efficiency.

Selectman Stewart noted he is in touch daily with both Police and Fire and Selectman Maher talked about more changes coming as the State reopens. He stressed the need to work together and the need to be cautious. Chair Frampton agreed and stressed the importance of the need to communicate.

With respect to beach closure, Selectman Maher stated the Governor is working on seeking an agreement among stakeholders on a set of rules for opening area beaches, which is a real challenge for New Castle.

#### **Financial Update:**

Selectman Stewart discussed potential revenue losses and some increased expenses related to COVID-19. He indicated that the Board had done some modeling to identify levers and expenses in the budget that could be reduced to mitigate shortfalls. He also discussed the warrant articles being presented for the 2021 budget and the ability to make modifications to them on the floor of Town meeting if based on information available at the time it looked necessary to do so. In any event the board is closely monitoring the income streams and potential revenue shortfalls.

The subject of contact tracing was raised by Dick Spaulding. Selectman Maher said that was within the purview of the State; however Anne Miller noted she believed the Town's Public Health Officer may have a role to place in contact tracing.

#### **j. Water Sewer Update:**

Selectman Stewart stated the water crossing connection has been made from Pierce Island to Shapleigh. Andy from Underwood was present to update, as well as Norm Houle from the Water and Sewer Commission. Andy reported that the crossing is completed and spoke about the next phases. He updated the Board on the projected and discussed the looping portion of the project. The Looping portion of the project

was originally intended to address water quality and to a lesser extent some localized water flow concerns. He indicated the cost projection for the loops is significantly higher now than the estimates given the Town previously. Anne Miller had additional questions concerning the pricing of the loops. Andy indicated that in 2017, the price for the looping portion of the project was estimated to be \$1,172,000. Based on current calculations (increased construction costs and minimal inflation indexing) the number exceeds the apportioned amount significantly. The bottom line is that at present the total cost of the loops exceeds available funding. Selectman Stewart expressed the need for caution about pricing figures as they have not been done with engineered plans and they haven't vetted through any type of bidding process. Andy also addressed the schedule. Norm Houle speaking for the Water and Sewer commission said the Town had made a promise of loops and stressed the need to keep them in the project and that the Town should look to raise additional funds through a warrant article or other means. . He also discussed the Sawtelle Bridge sewer line which was recently studied. At present, The line looks serviceable. They are looking at replacing the brackets for the line rather than replacing or slipping the line.

**Chairmanship.**

Chair Frampton said that the normal practice is to change chairs at the end of Town Meeting. He would prefer to stay Chair until then. There was some discussion about the 12 month term as Chair, which is customary and a general unwritten rule. In these circumstances, Chairman Frampton will serve as Chair for 13 and half months and his successor will be Chair for 10 and half months. After discussion the Board agreed to move on and retain the current Chairman through Town Meeting.

Motion to Adjourn was made by Selectman Maher, which was seconded by Selectman Stewart. Selectman Maher voted yes, Selectman Stewart voted yes, and Chair Frampton voted yes. Motion carried.

Meeting Adjourned at \_\_\_\_\_.

Respectfully submitted,

BJ Riordan  
Recording Secretary.