

Memorial Town Hall, 1 Library Street, Georgetown, MA 01833

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Memorial Town Hall

5/18/2020

6:00PM-General Meeting ~ Broadcast on Georgetown Cable TV via BlueJeans

Verizon channel 42/Comcast channel 9

Selectmen Present: Joseph Bonavita, Chairman; Charles Durney, Clerk; Gary C. Fowler, Douglas W. Dawes, and David J. Twiss (6:30PM)

Others Present: Michael Farrell, Town Administrator; Janet Pantano, Administrative Assistant; Police Chief Donald Cudmore; Health Agent Deb Rogers; Town Clerk Kerri McManus; David Surface, Moderator; Thom Berube, Asst. Assessor; Mary McMenemy, Town Accountant

Absent:

6:05PM Call to order

Mr. Bonavita read the statement listed here:

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Town of Georgetown Board of Selectmen will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the Georgetown website, at www.georgetownma.gov. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to watch the meeting may do so in the following manner: Channel 42 Verizon or Channel 9 Comcast, or on the town website at <http://gctv.georgetownma.gov/>. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that meeting the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Georgetown website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

Roll call attendance 4 members were present, Mr. Twiss was not present.

Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes

Pledge of Allegiance

OLD BUSINESS

COVID-19 update-Police Chief Cudmore & Deb Rogers BoH Agent

Chief Cudmore stated no changes in Georgetown but up to 40 cases in town. He stated the Governor released opening changes and he and Deb Rogers went over today. He stated he, Ms. Rogers and Fire Chief will meet tomorrow and review opening plan. He stated that he had a MEMA and FEMA meeting and can start submitting expenses for COVID-19. He stated that Mr. Farrell received information on Federal funds and we will see if these are combined. He stated as businesses open we will have to review compliance and decide on who oversees these openings.

Ms. Rogers stated that she had an online meeting today with the State and they were able to ask questions. She stated manufacturing and construction open now and next week on 5/25 hair salons, and retail stores will open and this will impact us.

Mr. Twiss joined the meeting.

Mr. Dawes asked about local places of worship. Ms. Rogers stated that they can open with 40% of capacity and after May 25th. She stated that self-certification will be required by all businesses.

Mr. Fowler asked if Ms. Rogers will need more help and if local Boards of Health will be checking certification. He asked if there is someone to check and if the Police Dept. and/or Fire Dept. could help.

Ms. Rogers stated that they only have to go out if there is a complaint, and this is what she is being told by others.

Chief Cudmore stated that if Ms. Rogers has any issues then she can call him and he will take care of and have an officer go out.

Ms. Rogers stated that keeping up with COVID-19 is tough, and she is keeping up but the soil testing, and septic review is her weak area. She stated that the funds that we will receive from the Federal Government CARES Act would help her.

Mr. Twiss asked how many reviews she has now. Ms. Rogers stated she now has 3 and one double lot and has an engineer helping and is paying out of her budget for now.

Mr. Bonavita asked expenses/costs we have now. Chief Cudmore stated a lot of IT, PPE, and some staffing.

Ms. McMenemy stated \$12,000 on the town side and \$18,000 on the School side has been spent, and the BoH has spent \$10,000 from the grant they received.

Mr. Farrell stated that under the CARES Act for Town of Georgetown were allocated \$773,000. He stated that he has a department head meeting on Wednesday to see what the departments need. He stated it can be used for staff, school remote learning, and equipment.

He stated that it will be very helpful and will help us to not have any cash flow problems.

Chief Cudmore stated do we use those funds over the FEMA funds and not lose the 25%.

Mr. Farrell stated that he has to look into which funds to use.

Mr. Fowler stated can we have Ms. Rogers hire someone for the BoH issues and ground work. Mr. Farrell stated that he told her to do what she has to do and we will figure it out after. Mr. Fowler stated does the board need to do anything. Ms. Rogers explained that after May 25 offices may open up with social distancing, masks and town hall would be the same as other businesses and not open to the public as of yet. Chief Cudmore stated he sent out a document on operation after May 25th. He stated that the local BoH is the enforcement authority and his department will work with the BoH.

Mr. Durney stated that for Churches he has that they are starting now. Ms. Rogers stated that what she has says they open after May 25. Mr. Durney stated that we should get some clarification.

Mr. Bonavita stated that he is in favor of opening up trails, parks, etc. He stated that they can open with limited activities. Ms. Rogers stated that gatherings are still at 10 people and with the long weekend this may present some problems. Mr. Farrell stated that it is part of Phase 2 and limited parks and recreation and no contact sports and 10 or less people. Mr. Twiss stated that he has thought of American Legion Park and what that will look like this summer. He stated that he thinks a lot of non-residents use beach, more than residents. Chief

Cudmore stated that the docks were put out at the park. Ms. Rogers stated that she does not know how docks were put in and the BoH has not opened the beach. She stated that they sample the water and put up notices if it is safe to swim. Mr. Farrell stated should docks be removed and posted no swimming. Mr. Fowler stated Park & Rec put in the docks as it is end of budget and put them in while they had the funds and that this is how they normally do this. He stated State parks are open and people are walking, camp grounds, camping and sports, closed until next phase.

Mr. Twiss stated that walking and biking is good, but the beach is a ticking time bomb. He stated to open before July is aggressive. Chief Cudmore stated trash and restroom facilities is an issue and art not open. He stated that we need a decision and cannot be a little bit of both.

Mr. Bonavita asked who has the authority to open or close. Chief Cudmore stated he will refer to Mr. Farrell and he would like a decision. Mr. Bonavita read from the advisory. Ms. Rogers stated that this is fresh off the press and Playgrounds are not on the list and the beach has not been sampled. Chief Cudmore stated other town parks are open and this is a multi-use area. He stated that there will have to be trash pick-up and what is allowed. Mr. Farrell stated that he stated he stands by what he said last week is we stand by the State and can be stricter and must have masks. Mr. Cudmore stated that we have to limit to 10 people.

Mr. Surface stated that even though the parks are open the local community can choose to close the parks, this is a local issue. Mr. Bonavita stated that we can keep the beach closed until the beach is tested and see the legalities of what is legal. Mr. Surface stated if water not tested should not be open. Mr. Dawes stated that the local community can open with guidelines. Mr. Twiss stated if we are the opening authority where do members stand on beach. Mr. Durney stated he does not want beach open. Mr. Dawes stated no beach and playgrounds are not open. Mr. Fowler stated leave it as is for now. He stated that he hopes we can have the concerts this summer with social distancing and would like to see tennis courts open with scheduling. He stated that some towns are posting residents only and have to move to open up eventually. He stated that one dock is a fishing dock and residents should be able to use this dock.

Chief Cudmore stated that some towns are residents only and this is something the town can have control of. He stated during this time this would help to contain crowds. Mr. Twiss stated that he agrees and this will make the management more manageable. He stated he does not want to tax the emergency services and do not want to go backwards. Mr. Bonavita stated this is ALP and there are other parks Camp Denison and agrees to keep closed until the water is tested. He stated that he wants to get to normalcy but agrees that water has to be tested. He stated that Camp Denison is an area to open. Chief Cudmore stated that ALP is visited by other residents and Camp Denison is maned and someone is down there to monitor.

Mr. Bonavita stated how about we go with the assumption that parks are open and review each facility and vote on each. Mr. Farrell stated that it appears that they are open. He stated that the only issue is ALP.

Mr. Durney asked if there was an end date. Mr. Dawes stated that we did not add a date.

Mr. Bonavita stated did the State open. Mr. Fowler stated for now have stay as is.

Mr. Twiss stated he agrees and it is going to be hot this weekend and people will be coming. He stated that we should get ahead of this and keep the beach closed until tested. Mr.

Bonavita stated that there is uncertainty and State has opened parks and no downside to taking a vote. Mr. Dawes stated that the State did not close the State Parks and the guidelines are for the town. He stated that we do not need a vote. Mr. Bonavita stated that Mr. Farrell stated that the State mandates if open. Chief Cudmore stated that we closed 9 locations and given the fact that the board closed and he gets complaints about people sitting on benches. He stated they need clarification on Harry Murch Park and Camp Denison. He stated if open that would be good. Mr. Twiss stated that he would like to get signage up at a minimum. Ms. Rogers stated that on the Mass.gov website it states that towns cannot override the governor on closing but the town can make more stringent rules. She stated that on May 25th the BoS will have guidelines on what areas could open. Mr. Dawes stated leave as is for now and have signs that ALP is closed. Mr. Bonavita stated he does not see a reason not to vote. No vote was taken.

The Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrants for June 15, 2020
Town Meeting Quorum-David Surface, Moderator

Ms. McManus stated North Andover is holding their ATM outside with masks, and other towns have held inside with social distancing.

Mr. Surface stated that he talked to Senator Tarr and the town can have 10 people and can only vote on budget. He stated that if we postpone to July/August the town can use 1/12 town budget. Mr. Farrell stated we can but we need to have our STM as we need to fund our Snow and Ice. He stated that we do have the High School Field and would have to have in daylight. Mr. Surface asked if anything has been posted. Mr. Farrell stated that we have to post by May 28th. Mr. Farrell stated that the State is going to cut our Revenue and we had a long discussion on FY20 budget and will require holding the meeting in 2020.

Mr. Surface stated that the playbook is going to change. He stated that this is a Selectmen decision and if holding outside have to hold earlier and could have mosquito issues.

Ms. Rogers stated that EEE mosquitos are not out until September.

Mr. Surface stated should then look at the High School Turf field and have lights and start at 6PM. He stated will not have a crowd and how about we meet and see how we could use the field.

Mr. Fowler stated that then you are at the mercy of the weather and could use the auditorium and can reduce quorum and do correctly. Mr. Surface stated that will have to clean facility.

Mr. Bonavita stated that we have used the Cafeteria before for overflow. Mr. Surface stated you can set up the cafeteria ahead of time in case it is needed.

Mr. Berube stated that he talked to Mr. Anderson and the auditorium holds about 500 people and at 25% can hold 200. He stated that it is important to hold the meeting before the end of the year. He stated that there is no impetus for the State to change legislation and they will reduce budget.

Mr. Surface stated he will work with Ms. Jacobs, Ms. McManus, and Mr. Anderson to work out a plan and will fill the room from the front out. He asked if they have to establish a quorum ahead of time. Mr. Fowler stated that they have to post notice of quorum change and if this legislation has been acted on is active. Mr. Farrell stated a short window of opportunity. Mr. Surface stated if go to reduced quorum then only budget items. Mr. Farrell stated then will limit warrant to only budget items.

Mr. Bonavita stated he feels the meeting should be keep inside and even with masks people will flip out and not come. He stated he thinks we need to consider a decreased quorum. Mr. Surface stated if decreased go inside with few articles and if the 100 hold outside and the chance of not having quorum. Mr. Farrell stated post as is and if we get the quorum then vote and if not then just vote on budget. Mr. Fowler that we have to publish the notice and then a meeting next week to vote. Mr. Farrell stated publish the whole warrant and only vote on articles allowed. Mr. Surface stated the board could plan to hold the meeting indoors and post notice of reduction of quorum, and then vote on quorum next week.

Mr. Farrell stated that he will put the notice out tomorrow and the board can vote on quorum reduction on Wednesday, May 27th.

Mr. Fowler moved to vote to reduce the Special and Annual Town Meeting quorum for Monday, May 15, 2020 Section 1 of Senate Bill 2680. Mr. Twiss seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Town Election-Polling hours/Town Clerk update-Kerri McManus

Ms. McManus stated that she received the sneeze guards and has PPE and has staff for the election. She stated that the hours are 8AM-8PM and she would like to close for 2 hours. Mike Anderson stated he would fog the building and staff can go home and eat, shower or whatever. She stated that they will wipe down booths between voters.

Mr. Fowler asked if you can shut down. She was not sure. She stated she would check on this. Mr. Fowler stated that he has heard some towns are using teens. She stated last year they had only one teen that showed up. She stated that she and can see if she can find some college students.

Mr. Durney stated that instead of closing and having confusion he would recommend shortening hours. Ms. McManus stated she would need to know the hours.

Mr. Bonavita stated go from 10AM to 6PM. Mr. Twiss asked if they could make some hours for seniors and then open later. Ms. McManus stated that many older folks are requesting absentee ballots. Mr. Durney stated 10AM to 6PM sounds good. Mr. Bonavita stated he is good with 10AM to 6PM. Ms. McManus stated that that would work for her.

Mr. Twiss stated that he is glad we will open the polls.

Mr. Dawes stated that we do not know what the employment will look like in June. He asked for the cutoff for absentee ballots. Ms. McManus stated that June 18th is last day to get a ballot. Discussion on when mailed and postmarked and when that counts.

Mr. Dawes moved to set the polling hours for the Town Election on Monday, June 22, 2020 from 10AM to 6PM. Mr. Twiss seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Annual Town Meeting Warrant

Mr. Farrell stated he would like to ask Mr. Berube and Ms. McMenemy if the town can vote on a deficit. Ms. McMenemy and Mr. Berube stated that the town can.

Mr. Farrell stated he would like to talk about the shortage of revenue and that we do not have levy room, and have to reduce a line item in the budget. He stated that he will recommend to FinCom to reduce the Health Insurance line item by a number which he will not know until the night of town meeting and then add Article 3 “to transfer from available funds to fund Employee Health Insurance Line Item, or take any other action in relation thereto”.

Mr. Berube stated would have to transfer a sum from free cash or Stab Fund and then put back into budget.

Mr. Farrell stated he would recommend Free Cash. Mr. Berube stated that we will not know the exact number until the end of the FY.

Mr. Farrell stated that the board can vote to add article 3. He stated this will have to go after Article 2 the budget. Mr. Berube stated that a deficit cannot be funded in the current FY.

Mr. Dawes moved to add Article 3 to the ATM Warrant to transfer a sum of money from available funds to fund Employee Health Insurance Line Item. Mr. Durney seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

ITEMS NOT REASONABLY ANTICIPATED BY THE CHAIR 48 HOURS IN ADVANCE OF THE MEETING

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Line Item Transfers FY20

Mr. Farrell stated that the FinCom approved the transfers and the Selectmen must also vote on the line Item Transfers for FY20. He explained the transfers.

Mr. Fowler had questions on the Park & Rec. Ms. McMenemy explained the transfers.

Mr. Twiss moved to approve the Appropriation Line Item Transfers for \$208,763.36. Mr. Fowler seconded and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Mr. Farrell asked for a vote so he can sign the Attachment B Certification for Covid 19 funds.

Mr. Fowler moved to approve Attachment B Certification and for Mr. Farrell to sign the document for the board. Mr. Durney seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Park & Rec Status of VFW Park corner of Jackman & Warren St

Mr. Fowler explained the issue and that they are looking to see if the park is it under the jurisdiction of the Park & Rec or the town, as was put in by the VFW. He stated that the board in the past reviewed who was in charge of each park and we should take again. He stated that Highway takes care of some parks, and Park & Rec has funds to manage but Highway does the work. He stated he would like to see what we did in the past. He stated that his came up with Park & Rec because of the fence that is in disrepair. He stated can revisited when we have more information.

Memorial Day

Mr. Dawes stated because of the pandemic we have to reduce attendees and ceremony. He read the letter from the Veterans and American Legion on a modified ceremony. He explained that he worked with Janet Morrissey on filming so they can play recording on Memorial Day.

Mr. Twiss stated that there are campaign signs around the town for/or against an issue and the signs should not be on public land and be put on private property with homeowners permission. Mr. Dawes stated he talked to the Town Clerk and she was going to contact the sign owner.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, May 27th at 6PM, town meeting discussion and an update from the Police Chief and Deb Rogers and then on Monday, June 1, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Twiss moved to adjourn. Mr. Durney seconded the motion and the motion was approved by a unanimous roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 9:06PM.

Minutes transcribed by J. Pantano.

Minutes approve June 29, 2020.

Documents used in this meeting:

- COVID-19 update
- The Annual Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting Warrants for June 15, 2020
- Town Election-Polling hours/Town Clerk update
- Town Meeting Quorum
- Park & Rec Status of VFW Park corner of Jackman & Warren St
- Line Item Transfers FY20