

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

Ph. (978) 352-5755 □ Fax (978) 352-5727

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

11/23/2020

6:00PM-General Meeting

Broadcast on Georgetown Cable TV via BlueJeans

Verizon channel 42/Comcast channel 9

Selectmen Present: *Chair David Twiss, Douglas W. Dawes, Clerk; Peter J. Kershaw
Charles Durney and Gary Fowler.*

Others Present: *Michael Farrell, Town Administrator. Administrative Assistant,
Maureen Shultz, Police Chief Donald Cudmore, Board of Health
Agent, Deb Rogers, Fire Chief Fred Mitchell, Erin Duggan, Anala
Guertin .*

6:00PM Call to order

Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes

Pledge of Allegiance

D. Twiss 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 that.

TAX CLASSIFICATION HEARING FISCAL YEAR 2021.

Town Assessor, Thom Berube spoke to the Board on the residential factor, open space discount, residential exemption and small commercial exemption. Classified Open Space: The Board of Assessor's has determined that Georgetown does not have any Classified Open Space land-No Vote needed. Residential Exemption: Move to adopt a residential exemption -a factor of 1 (single tax rate) The Department of revenue strongly recommends Towns have a minimum of 15% total C/I properties before considering or implementing a split tax rate. Georgetown's total is currently less than 9%. No Small Commercial Exemptions: None were approved.

G. Fowler motioned to adopt a residential factor of “1”, No Open Space Discount, no residential Exemption and No small Commercial Exemption for the fiscal Year 2021, seconded by C. Durney. A roll call was taken -all Board members unanimously approved.

OLD BUSINESS:

COVID-19 update-Police Chief Cudmore & Deb Rogers BOH Agent:

D. Rogers spoke on recent cases of COVID, which are now around thirty-three (33) new cases, D. Rogers believes it is going to get worse before it gets better, the Town is moving into the red zone, but believes the Town is moving in the right direction and this is the highest count of cases since March and with gatherings increasing in the home the number of cases are going to rise. D. Twiss thanked D. Rogers, Chief Cudmore and Chief Mitchell and their staff for their efforts and hard work. Chief Cudmore stated his Department is getting all the same information and playing it day to day. Chief Mitchell spoke on his AFG COVID-19 grant that he applied for and looking to be reimbursed in the amount of \$65K, Chief Mitchell spoke on a donation that the Town will be receiving from a prominent individual from Massachusetts who made a significant donation through the Fire Chiefs Association.

FIRE RADIOS:

Reserve Officer Tyler Deschene spoke on his own professional opinion on Motorola Radios that the Police and Fire Departments use. T. Deschene responded on how these radios have been great with everything from clear communications to reliability.

G. Fowler requested this topic be added to the agenda and thanked Chairman Twiss for adding it to the agenda and will now look at this differently and or manor now. G. Fowler asked how much of a monopoly does this company has (Motorola) -presented as a monopoly -move forward if I can look at this in a different manor now-life expectancy –reasonable -hard thing to swallow knowing what electronics cost much stretching over the years brings cost down, G. Fowler asked about repairs and their cost, T. Deschene responded most repairs are normally for batteries, antennas microphones, service plans are available and most pay for this extended service.

Chief Cudmore spoke on his department communication equipment and the need to replace the equipment, eight units in police vehicles, several companies that make radios, T. Deschene will be installing these radios -deal of a life time to have him install , T. Deschene offered a few comments on different vendors , spoke on his twenty years ' experience in public safety and has used several different products and Motorola outstands other equipment, moving forward with enhancing what we have, other equipment does not to hold up , Motorola is a benefit and there - equipment holds up .

D. Twiss asked what Motorola 's life span was - life span of equipment with Motorola is approximately 15 years. T. Deschene gave an example on radios to compare with other products, replacing products is less expensive, product holds up longer.

Chief Cudmore & Chief Mitchell both recognized G. Mello for a donation they just heard about and thanked the Community, Finance Committee and the Board of Selectman for their support. D. Twiss commented that he is reluctant to spare expenses when it comes to public safety and thanked G. Mello for their donation to the Town, best equipment possible, saved the Town a lot of money which is appreciated by the Board

Chief Mitchell spoke on a 911 report and issues with communication with another brand and ran into the same problems with Motorola but those have been addressed, Chief Mitchell informed the Board of a MIA grant he was just awarded.

NEW BUSINESS:

Discussion / Request 15-minute parking spot in front of your CBD store -a request was received regarding parking at the CBD Store -Chief Cudmore explained the parking procedures to the Board. It was recommended that the Traffic Board get reappointed and after those appointments have been made that the Traffic Board re-look at this request to limit the parking to 15 minutes at this location, it was suggested by a monkey survey that was done with these new and old businesses in the downtown area. G. Fowler was going to reach out to the Town Planner and see if he remembered how many were on this committee. There were some conversations about how many were on the Traffic Board -after a brief discussion it was determined it was moved to a three-member Board from a five-member Board. It was suggested that the Police Chief should be on the traffic committee and Chief Carmody believes the business would not benefit from that appointment and suggested he not be appointed but a Police Department representative be on the Traffic Board. G. Fowler moved to vote to have this request go to the Traffic Board seconded by D. Dawes, a unanimous roll call vote was taken.

*D. Dawes asked if the jersey barriers are planning on being removed in front of the Spot Restaurant on Main Street. M. Farrell stated they will be down tomorrow on November 24, 2020. D. Dawes stated this will clean up two parking spots. Appointment of members to the Traffic Board will be made at the next Selectman's Meeting, G. Fowler suggested he could stay on the Board if that was something the Board would like. need to
G. Fowler Motioned to move the 15-minute parking spot request to the Traffic Committee once that has Committee has been appointed at the next meeting, D, Dawes seconded motion. A roll call vote was taken all unanimous.*

G. Fowler suggested there may be a candidate from the business area in downtown that maybe interested in serving and or a member from the Economic Development Committee / group.

NEW BUSINESS:

Erin Duggan, New Director of the Georgetown Youth Community Center spoke on a plan for an outdoor winter park, looking for an outside ice-skating rink to be built behind the Public Library which will have on line registration. D. Rogers from the Board of Health believes this is a great idea in the future but not now, additional exposures, not being supervised does not recommend this idea at this time. P. Kershaw suggested maybe a limit of hours might help, someone to volunteer , agrees with the mental health part of it, kids need engagement and supports the Board of Health, G. Fowler believe it is good to see things being done for the youth in the Town but also supports the Board of Health , G. Fowler respects everyone's thoughts and believes kids will find things to do but mental health should be considered , cures could be worse than the disease, D. Dawes supports this program but also respects the Board of Health's decision not to support at this time, no policing and the Town doesn't have the funding for staffing, C. Durney thinks the idea is a fantastic idea but thinks the timing of this event is awful and can't agree more with D. Rogers and the Board of Health that at this time it could be a recipe for disaster and does not support this idea at this time. C. Durney asked about insurance liability if someone got hurt. D. Twiss thinks it is a fantastic idea but we need to flatten the curve and

believes we are asking for trouble, thinks not all kids wear the mask like they should at all times, thinks this will be worse than good and can't see this being successful at this time.

CITIZENS COMMUNICATION DISCUSSION:

D. Twiss questioned certain items and why things are not moving forward and or item's being approved such as National Avenue, there is a lot of comments, texting and e-mail strings which is where we need to be in front of these conversations, having a positive flow of information is important, we have many good things coming up and we need better communication.

M. Farrell has set up a meeting with John Guilfoil Public Relations Firm and D. Twiss would like to be invited to that meeting. Police, BOH and Fire are all using their service and if we decide to carry their services it could be a saving if we all get on Board. D. Twiss wants some Selectman representative in attendance at the meeting, M. Farrell needs to have things worked out, combined virtual newspaper, if there was two stories it could get costly, questioned who the editor is going to be, the Town does not have money in the budget so that could be a problem but still want to sit with them, G. Fowler spoke on the sign outside of Town Hall, G. Fowler thinks the Town should come up with some rules, needs some more discussion and spoke about an example of the Veterans Day information and if it was posted on the Town website it would have been nice, we need an outlet besides the sign out front of the Town Hall. Chief Cudmore has worked with this group John Guilfoil Public Relations Company for many years starting in 2013 at which time this company had started. Chief Carmody believes the meeting will be successful and does use this company sparingly, a lot of communities are using this group. Chief Mitchell spends \$200.00 a month to use this firm -permits on line in the future which will not cost us any extra, the offices can be all connected together, happy with this firm.

P. Kershaw thinks it's a great idea -social media can present conflicting info and lack of transparencies -that is really hurtful that some believe this Board is like that, what is the best way to get the right information out there he questioned, P. Kershaw supports G. Fowlers idea on having working sessions for the Select Board, it is important getting the right messages and information out there, support moving forward and see what the company can provide us. Chief Cudmore & Chief Mitchell requested to be invited to this future meeting, M. Farrell will invite both Chiefs.

D. Dawes believes the Town needs a central source out there, information is on the Town's Website and the sign out front of Town Hall but he believes some people just don't see what is out there but is willing to go forward to see what can be done.

TOWN ADMINISTRATORS' REPORT.

M. Farrell has informed the Board that Department Heads will be in the process of putting their budgets together soon.

APPOINTMENT & APPROVALS.

D. Dawes moved to approve the October 19, 2020, November 4, 2020, and November 12, 2020 meeting minutes as presented and with adjustments made, seconded by P. Kershaw. The Board voted unanimously on a roll call vote.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT:

G. Fowler asked about the recent unemployment fraud and Lt. Hatch had spoken at a prior meeting on what he was doing on this subject, M. Farrell stated it is a nation-wide problem and he is waiting for the state to make adjustments so the Town can afford to pay which they cannot at this point. Mr. Farrell explained to the Board if the unemployment fraud was something the Town was hacked on Insurance -Cyber Insurance would cover but the Town did not get hacked. The question was asked if employees would be covered if it was an identity theft and the answer was that employees would not be covered. G. Fowler asked for an update on the Fiber Optic and Chief Cudmore informed the Board that the grant has been submitted and waiting on an answer.

ADJOURNMENT

D. Dawes moved to adjourn G. Fowler seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously on a roll call vote to adjourn -all in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM. Minutes transcribed by Maureen Shultz

Documents used in the meeting:

Classification Info submitted from the Board of Assessors

Meeting Minutes from 10/19/20, 11/4/2020, 11/12/2020.