

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

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BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Memorial Town Hall

03/22/2021

7:00PM-General Meeting

Broadcast on Georgetown Cable TV via BlueJeans

Verizon channel 42/Comcast channel 9

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

Others Present: Michael Farrell, Town Administrator. Administrative Assistant, Maureen Shultz, Police Chief Donald Cudmore, Board of Health Agent, Deb Rogers, Thom Berube, Town Assessor, Mary McMenemy, Town Accountant.

7:00PM Call to order

Invocation-Douglas W. Dawes

Pledge of Allegiance

Vacant: D. Twiss

D. Dawes 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.

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

D. Rogers, Board of Health agent spoke about the recent none (9) communities that now have vaccine sites, 1100-1200 doses given out each day, vaccine cases are coming way down-vaccines have been given to 105 seniors-DPW Workers can now be vaccinated.

D. Twiss spoke on his personal experience recently at the Double Tree Hotel vaccine site which was very good and organized, asked about returning to school and about pool testing, would like Town Hall open, spoke on unsafe environment when opening a public meeting to outside.

D. Dawes stated that the Town Hall should have a plan in place to re-open.

D Twiss asked D. Rogers on her thoughts of having Town Meeting after schools are closed D. Rogers replied it is very hard to answer, new guidelines coming out from the state, depending if the schools are open, will provide more information when she receives it from the State, she is still here for another 9 nine days.

T Berube, Town Assessor's spoke on two tents to accommodate school lunches. D. Twiss would to take advantage of doing it the right way we will vote on it at the next meeting.

D Twiss spoke about D. Rogers departure from the Town of Georgetown as the Board of Health Agent for many years, so sad to see her go I wish her nothing but the best, owes her a debt of gratitude, she has been amazing to the Town and thanked her.

The members of the Board acknowledged D. Rogers for her many years of dedicated services and wisher the best in her in future.

G. Fowler questioned the plans for Town Meeting and wanted to bring this up so that D. Rogers, Health Agent could have some input on this discussion.

D. Dawes workload and stresses of last year we don't know the amount of work employees have done but does not want to open on the fly.

M. Farrell read aloud the Governor's regulations -no in person in attendance of the public - other towns are allowing people to come into town hall meetings.

D. Twiss stated that school is re-opening on April 5th, 2021 and a conversation had taken place with Carol Jacobs, School Superintendent and she does not want Town Meeting to take place while the children are in class. Town Meeting discussion will take place at the next meeting.

POINT OF ORDER:

C. Durney spoke on a Point of Order to the Board and asked the board members which agenda they were using because the agenda was not posted in a timely manner in order to meet, which did not give proper notice to the public on agenda items and according to Town Council, they could not take any votes or make any motions -C. Durney stated he will drop off the meeting if items are done without Town Council input. G. Fowler asked what was on the original agenda. Per D. Twiss, Baard Chair according to Town Council certain items could be discussed but No Motions or decisions will be made tonight-they would have to be put on another agenda.

NEW BUSINESS: Budget Discussion:

D. Twiss gave an explanation on the budget shortfall which included excise tax shortfall and the Registry of Motor Vehicles informed us that the Town of Georgetown would not receive the second payment on time fiscal 2022 will flow into that budget, spoke on the pandemic and no one buying cars and or traveling -we have a challenge this year to cover the deficit -which will change the 2022 budget not a predictable year before a pandemic hits, challenge fiscally, resolutions are slim -we will have to decide on our short fall at our next meeting, shortage from the stabilization fund we can tap into that looking down the road -we would make every effort after June 30, 2022-to put money /funding money back in the stabilization fund.

The Following Items were discussed:

- *Shortfall of the budget*
- *Spending Freeze Implemented / Staff informed by M. Farrell, Town Administrator.*
- *Motor Vehicle Excise Tax- Cannot predict these in a budget*
- *Reduce the estimate of receipts next year.*
- *Worst case scenario -need to alert people -recovery road / state aid -do not know enough about that.*
- *Fall Town Meeting to discuss the worst-case approach and proceed /supplement our budget.*
- *D. Dawes asked about tax collections from the February billing cycle from excise tax payments, distinction on what we collect and what we bill for.*
- *Motor vehicle commitment that was due in March.*
- *Checks are being processed at the bank which will make the Collectors Office caught up with payments.*
- *Not all current payments have been booked.*
- *Typical bill from the Registry of Motor Vehicles is going to be delayed, overall amount of the commitments is less that last year, still going to be short on what we thought we were going to receive.*
- *Thom Berube, Town Assessor & Mary McMenemy, Town Treasurer updated the Board on the Budget.*

C. Durney asked T. Berube, Town Assessor for a clearer explanation of the shortfall of the budget. T. Berube, Town Assessor gave an explanation to the Board on spending / deficit/ whole in next year's budget/ spoke on a worst-case scenario/ hoping for some help/ suggest a worst-case approach on this, cross our fingers and hope things get better. The Town will have a short fall no matter what happens with this year's budget.

M. McMenemy, Town Accountant spoke about the Motor Vehicles excise tax revenue is down, – waiting on guidance from the DOR no information from them –worst case scenario.

P. Kershaw asked have we made any progress with the checks found in the Treasurer/ Collectors office.

T. Berube possibly a quest of a 100-check from the Treasurers Collector's Office that are going to the bank and will be processed.

D. Twiss spoke on getting the tax payment checks in the bank and get a process going, all checks that were from the Collectors office have been brought to the bank from the Police Department.

M. Farrell, Town Administrator stated one side is creating a problem on the other side, personal opinion would like to see is wait trying wait as long as we can otherwise it's going to be a bloody mess, every department will bleed money, hoping the Town will get some guidance on the Rescue Plan -amount did come out to the 2.1 Million-financial consulting is holding off for now, more information is coming.

P. Kershaw thanked everyone at Town Hall and thinks that Department Heads should weigh in on the opening of Town Hall and wants to hear their voice about what they want to do, questioned who is responsible for putting that plan together. D. Twiss replied it should be a group plan.

D. Twiss informed M. McMenemy, Town Accountant, that himself and P. Kershaw is willing to volunteer their time in the Treasurer's Office to help in that Department.

M. McEnaney, Town Accountant replied February receipts are posted, will get February reports out to the Board and spoke of last year receipts from February to February is about a \$ 100K off from this year and last year.

D. Dawes asked what is the amount of tax bills have we received to date.

Town Hall opening-Continued.

T. Berube, Town Assessor spoke on re-opening of Town Hall and he believes that the Town has been 100% functional since last year with everything being done on-line instead of in person-, he believes it is not a big urgency to re-open Town Hall, bear it in mind from his perspective on opening to ear on the side of caution, and told the Board he has taken a lot precaution in his office.

D. Twiss would like to start having the Board of Selectman meeting in the third-floor conference room going forward and that the opening will be a phased approach of opening and shared with the Board his recent experience traveling to Florida for business-traffic has increased, people starting to travel, does not want to create any harm-maybe a 60 or a 90-day plan assuming the numbers are down.

P. Kershaw agrees on a having a plan going forward which will be discussed at a later meeting.

D. Dawes suggested that Department Heads pull their staff and ask for input that could be shared with when they have a scheduled Department Heads meeting.

D. Twiss asked A. Salamone, Building Inspector how permits are going-A. Salamone, Building Inspector replied that building permits have a steady flow not boomed yet only the beginning of the season.

M. Farrell spoke on the guidance he received from the state last year and spoke on the Town Hall having many procedures already in place might have to have new signage if necessary, managing the flow around the building, taking temperatures coming in the building, contract tracing, in normal times the Town would use a senior from the tax off program- will have to see if that's still a possibility.

BOARD OF SELECTMAN REPORT:

D. Twiss went over agenda items for the next meeting including inviting the Town Clerk to give an update on Town Election. D. Twiss asked Chief Cudmore and A. Salamone, Building Inspector to keep an eye on a recent public safety issue.

ADJOURNMENT: *G. Fowler moved to adjourn with D. Dawes moved to seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously on a roll call vote. Meeting adjourned at 9:30PM. Minutes transcribed by Maureen Shultz*