

SELECTMEN'S MEETING (ZOOM) - TUESDAY, MAY 26, 2020

Present via ZOOM: Chairman Karl Ekstedt, Selectmen Tim Roche, Kathy Chase, Sean Roche, John MacLeod, Fire Chief Mark Dupuis, Town Attorney Leah Rachin, Social Media Consultant Brittany DiCapua

***Present: Town Manager Jon Carter, Police Chief Jo-Ann Putnam, EMS Director Jim Lapolla
Finance Director Jodie Sanborn, Code Enforcement Officer Jodine Adams***

MUNICIPAL OFFICERS WORKSHOP / BUSINESS / PUBLIC HEARINGS

1. Public hearing to enact an Emergency Ordinance entitled EMERGENCY ORDINANCE TO TEMPORARILY RELAX AND/OR SUSPEND CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WELLS TO ASSIST BUSINESSES SUFFERING ECONOMIC LOSS DUE TO COVID-19 IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE GOVERNOR'S RE-OPENING PLAN.

Ms. Rachin reviewed the key features of the emergency ordinance based on the Governor's re-opening plan while allowing our businesses to expand outdoor activity. Existing businesses can submit a plan to the Town Manager indicating what activities are proposed and where they would occur on the property. Temporary modifications include such items as tents, awnings, signs, outdoor display of goods and seating, waiving building permits for temporary structures and site plans. Hazards to pedestrians and traffic are not permitted. If a business was not previously approved for outdoor seating, the Town will now grant approval to comply with BABLO. Ms. Rachin suggested amending Part 4 Effective Date and Term of Ordinance to make it consistent with the Governor's re-opening plan. The consensus was that the effective dates could be earlier or later than proposed in the draft, based on the Governor's orders.

Public comment was solicited and there was none.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to close the public hearing and enact the emergency ordinance as amended. Passed unanimously.

2. COVID 19 Update

- a. – Update from Town Manager on Town COVID 19 issues from last meeting and BOS continued discussion of Federal and State COVID 19 policies and directions.***

The holiday weekend went fairly well except for Friday when the warm weather attracted a crowd.

- b. Update on Governor Mills Orders***

- i. July 14 Town Meeting and Elections- Absentee Ballots***

We expect orders from the Governor by the end of this week. The State is encouraging absentee ballots. People can also vote in person and we are planning how to do this safely and minimize standing in lines.

c. Update on applicants for the Lodging Facility Advisory Committee

- i. (1) Selectmen- Sean Roche***
- ii. (1) Planning Board-Bob Sullivan***
- iii. (3) Residents # pf Applicants =***
- iv. (1)Lodging Hotel # pf Applicants =***
- v. (1)Lodging Seasonal Cottage -# pf Applicants =***
- vi. (1)Lodging STR-# pf Applicants =***
- vii. (1)Lodging- Campground - # pf Applicants =***

We are receiving applications from members of the lodging community. The cutoff date is June 2, with Selectmen doing ZOOM interviews on June 16.

d. Re-opening the Community discussion of concerns and ideas from the business community

- i. Discussion on re-opening - Beach & Parking Lots –operation – Full Open 5/26***

The lots are open and the meters are working. We have sold 1,562 stickers so far. The automated sale system is working well.

ii. Coastal Community Collaboration

More towns are starting to open their beaches. New Hampshire is expected to open theirs in June, and the North Shore will be “soon.” The beach regulations will be posted on Facebook and there are new signs.

iii. Update on Town Facilities Re-opening

Having the life guards as greeters at Town Hall is working well. Appointments are booked for the next 2 weeks. We are taking some walk-ins but they may have to wait a while in the tent. The backlog of vehicle re-registrations is coming down, from 4,500 to just over 3,000.

The Library will start doing curb-side pick-ups as of June 1. People can order books, videos, etc. on line and an employee will bring them out to the car. The Library Director will meet with the trustees to consider having people safely in the building and how to sanitize materials.

iv. Boards and Committees Restarting

The Selectmen will resume meeting the first and third Tuesdays starting in June and ZOOM meetings will continue.

The Planning Board has decided to come back starting June 15 in person at Town Hall. They have worked out a protocol for public hearings.

The PAC may meet in person. The Energy Committee plans to use ZOOM. The Comprehensive Plan Update Committee has a large group and using the meeting room may be difficult. We are working with Selectmen S. Roche and MacLeod and the Committee chair on interviewing the consultant.

e. Update COVID 19 –We Are Wells Fund

The balance is \$6300.

3. Good News

~We have received a number of letters thanking WEMS and the Town Hall staff for their good work.

~The piping plovers are having a great season, 8 nests at Wells Beach (7 with eggs) and 1 nest on Drakes Island. Once the eggs hatch, the chicks will move down to the food supply and we can reopen the paths. We expect to open ROW #14 this week.

~Mr. T. Roche reported on today's graduation ceremony. Students were spaced apart on the field and received their diplomas. Parents were able to take pictures and there was a professional photographer. The video of the ceremony will be shown June 11 at the Saco drive-in. Planning for the festivities was superb and everything went smoothly. Congratulations to the Class of 2020.

4. Open to the Public

~DECD Commissioner Johnson's quarantine comments were discussed. If someone owns their home, condo, RV, etc. they can quarantine in their unit. If they are renting a unit they must pre-quarantine before they come here. If you rent out your unit, the party coming in has to pre-quarantine. The 14 days is a Governor's order, not the Town's, and the Selectmen can't cancel it. There are no orders from the Town about lodging.

~Will the arcade be open this summer? We don't know yet.

~Can someone come up for the day and sit on the beach and order take-out? The Governor and Commissioners are working on quarantine guidelines which will come out this week.

~Will there be hand sanitizer at the beach and in the bathrooms? It keeps disappearing. We are looking for more secure dispensers.

~Are masks required outside if you can't socially distance? Yes, according to the Governor's order.

~Will the Town consider selling stickers and other permits on line going forward? We are looking at various software programs.

~What if the beach sticker hasn't been received yet? Keep the receipt for your online payment in your car until the sticker arrives.

~When will tickets for Project Stimulus be available? They will be on Facebook tomorrow. The live auction and basket raffle will be June 18.

~When will gyms and health clubs open? The Governor hasn't announced a re-opening date. They are open for 1 on 1 training and outdoor classes with social distancing.

~If you are coming from another Maine town and going into your unit you don't have to quarantine. Renters must pre-quarantine. People from out-of-state who have already been here for 14 days can go to a hotel.

~What if a family comes up for the summer and a parent goes back and forth to work in another state during the week? We don't have an answer from the Commissioner yet.

~Quarantine means stay inside. You can't walk on the beach.

~Some retail stores will re-open June 1. See the State CDC web site for details.

~Day tripping at the beach? We are waiting for an answer from the Commissioner and Governor when they determine what is safe.

~The hotels and motels can start taking reservations in June for July.

~Facility managers should check with the State on opening their pools,

~The Maine CDC web site has a FAQ link that explains quarantines.

~Large sinkholes on Stewart Street. This is a private street and we will work with the residents. The holes are from old deteriorated culverts. Chief Dupuis said that the emergency responders have cordoned off the area and it shows up on their screen. Emergency access is available through Flintlock Village.

~Some of the parks are arranging food deliveries for their people. Check with your park manager. Shaw's in Sanford will deliver for a fee if you order on line.

CURRENT AGENDA ITEMS

1. Update, discussion and action on Committees, Projects, Issues, Purchases and Personnel:

a) Discussion and action on setting informational hearings on the Town Meeting FY'21 Budget and Warrant Articles during the Board of Selectmen regular meetings as follows: June 2 and 16 and July 7 at 6PM.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to hold informational hearings on June 2 and 16 and July 7 at 6 PM in the Littlefield Meeting Room at Town Hall and via ZOOM. Passed unanimously.

b) Discussion and action on Updates, Personnel and Committee Assignments, Resignations and Issues.

1. Town Manager: None

2. Selectmen: None

c) Discussion and action on accepting donations and bequests.

- 1. \$1,718.34 donation from the Scoop Deck to the Town of Wells for the "We are Wells" Fund.***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to accept the generous donation and write a letter of thanks to the donor. Passed unanimously.

2. \$1,500.00 donation from the Friends Supporting Wells Public Library to the Wells Public Library to purchase Kanopy Service.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to accept the generous donation and write a letter of thanks to the donor. Passed unanimously.

3. \$3,000.00 donation from the Friends Supporting Wells Public Library to the Wells Public Library for 2nd quarter programming budget.

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to accept the generous donation and write a letter of thanks to the donor. Passed unanimously.

d) ***Discussion and action on approving minutes of May19, 2020 Selectmen's meeting.***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to approve the May 19, 2020 Selectmen's minutes. Passed unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

1. Open to the Public

~Did we send a letter to the Governor asking her to ease quarantine restrictions? Yes. She hasn't responded yet.

~Will the speeding on Atlantic Avenue be addressed? There will be radar surveillance during the summer.

~Swamp John Road update. Liquid calcium chloride was sprayed to keep the dust down. The entire road, including drainage, has to be rebuilt. Voters will have the chance to vote on the road/bridge/seawall bond at Town Meeting. The road is a primary project for late summer/early fall.

~Mr. MacLeod asked if the Fire Department responds to EMS calls. The three chiefs are meeting tomorrow to review procedures.

~Who is responsible for repairing Stewart Street? The Town has a road betterment program that can help the residents.

~Impact of COVID-19 on taxes. We are into the 4th quarter, starting to catch up on payments. The first 3 quarters were strong and we expect to end the year in the black. The excise tax is due but not collectible now. For FY'21 we will look at operations and capital projects for ways to cut back as we watch the re-opening of Maine and its effect on the economy. There will be no impact on the bond for several years. Interest will be paid by the BAN.

2. ***Town Manager’s Report***

Mr. Carter noted the passing of our long-time employee Christine Pierce. She was hired in 1956 and worked in the Assessor’s Office and as Deputy Town Clerk until she retired in 1990. After retirement she volunteered at York Hospital. Mrs. Chase has fond memories of working with her in the Assessor’s Office, an elegant, kind and professional lady.

Mr. T. Roche described a Facebook page Wells Maine Now and Then with some great stories about Wells residents and photographs going back to the 1800’s. There are some fascinating aerial photos reflecting changes in the beach over the decades.

3. ***Adjournment***

Motion by Mrs. Chase, seconded by Mr. T. Roche, to adjourn. Passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Accepted by,

Cinndi Davidson,
Meeting Recorder