

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
3/2520
Open Session – Remote meeting**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2020 APR -9 PM 1:57
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Present: Ellen Allen, Bruce Graham, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Joe Rull, Peter Morin,
Town Counsel Bob Galvin

Open Session

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:33pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting is being recorded and the audio file will be available on the Town website.

Approval of Agenda

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda as presented. Unanimously voted by roll call vote

Citizen Comments - None

BOS Reports

Today was the last day to take out papers for the upcoming election. Ms. Demong wished Jason Brown a Happy Birthday! Ms. Demong reminded all that Norris Reservation is now **closed** due to the corona virus. Conservation lands are open but please respect the social distancing parameters! Mr. Rull thanked the staff at Town Hall for their hard work.

Town Administrator Report

Mr. Morin reported that essential Town Hall employees were told to work from home this week, coming in to Town Hall on a rotating basis to staff each department, answer phone calls and conduct regular business. Remote access to Town Hall computer files was set up for each department. The library project construction was allowed to continue with social distancing regulations, as confirmed by Town Counsel for the OPM.

Request from Not Your Average Joe's – change of manager

The board will give Town Administrator Peter Morin the authority to approve these changes during this state of emergency. Mr. Morin noted that the if the legislation passes all licenses will be tolled to allow business to continue as usual.

7:40pm - Public Hearing – C.V. Perkins; CVAA applicant, 430 Washington Street

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham; to reopen the public hearing for a CVAA license application for CV Perkins, 430 Washington Street, at 7:41pm. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, that the board continue the hearing to April 22, 2020, at 8pm. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Per Mr. Morin, their current business license has been reinstated within the last 10 days. They are not an essential business, and Mr. Morin will confirm that they are currently closed. There was no public comment.

COVID-19 update from Health Agent Ben Margro

Mr. Morin read an update statement from Mr. Margro. The statement is attached to these minutes, and gives the particulars on the Town's safety measures for essential retail services and trash regulations, updated to address the current stay at home status of many residents. Kudos to Mr. Margro for his hard work with this crisis. Ms. Demong noted that the schools are now closed until May 4th and currently there are 4 confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Town.

Appointment of two special police officers

In order to supplement his patrol staff, Chief Ross has asked the board to appoint these two officers, who have successfully completed the in-service training and pre-employment checks. Per Chief Ross, he will be able to have additional manpower available on each shift with these appointments. Questions were asked and answered about this additional cost to the Town for the remainder of the fiscal year. Per Mr. Morin, the cost of special police officers is much lower than that of regular officers and will be a nominal cost to the Town.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to appoint Robert Lorraine and Elias Ditullio as special police officers. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Temporary authorization by the board of the Town Administrator to perform the following actions

Per Town Counsel Bob Galvin, the time period for this temporary authorization will be for the duration of the state of emergency declared by Gov. Baker. He advised the board to make one motion to include the four line items as listed below in the motion. Mr. Morin expanded on emergency expenditures, including parameters from the Division of Local Services (DLS). He added that there is currently a good balance in the Town's reserve fund. The board is comfortable with the four line items, but discussed Mr. Graham's reservations with line item #4 on spending parameters. Mr. Morin reminded the board that the Advisory Board approves any reserve fund transfers, which provides a good check and balance for spending. Both Atty. Galvin and Mr. Morin referenced DLS authorization memos for possibly needing to expend funds in FY21 before a budget is approved at Town Meeting. The board considered additional wording for item #4, but opted for the original line item language.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, that the board temporarily authorize the Town Administrator to perform the following actions, until the Governor removes the state of emergency, for the four items listed as follows:

- *Road Race approvals*
- *Hawker and Peddler license approvals*
- *Owner/manager changes for all licenses requiring a vote of the Board of Selectmen*
- *Emergency Expenditures related to COVID-19, per the Mass Municipal Reform Act*

Unanimously voted by roll call vote

Potential postponement of the following:

Atty. Galvin noted that town elections can be postponed to any date certain before June 30th. Current elected officeholders would remain in office until the election takes place. The only obligation is to consult with the chief election official and the Town Administrator.

The postponement of Town Meeting is still waiting for the pending bill in the House. The options are as follows: until the Warrant is posted (if the Town Meeting is posted only the moderator may postpone the meeting for up to 30 days, but the meeting is not yet posted). The BOS may move the meeting to any date they choose. Atty. Galvin suggests before fiscal year end.

Ms. Allen conferred with Town Moderator Bill Coffey for alternate dates to hold Town Meeting; Monday/Tuesday, June 15th and 16th were chosen. The Town election would be held on June 27th, the second Saturday after Town Meeting. The Town Clerk, School Superintendent and Recreation Director also approved these dates. In response to Mr. Rull's question about other towns who have postponed their annual town meetings, Atty. Galvin named some towns that have done this or are scheduled to discuss this at their next Selectmen's meeting. He opined that probably most towns with scheduled May meetings will postpone. He noted again that this legislation has not yet passed the House but is expected to do so. The board asked if this would create problems for Mr. Morin with regard to fiscal year end. He stated that this postponement will actually allow the the Town to have better ability to forecast using updated state budget

numbers prior to closing the books at the end of June. Departments will be a little jammed up but will still be able to get everything done. The FY2021 budget may have to be redone allowing time before the vote in June.

In response to the board's question about the deadline for nomination papers, Atty. Galvin answered that although a formal request was made, the current answer is that the deadline stands.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, pursuant to Mass. General Law Chapter 39 section 9, that the Board of Selectmen reschedule the annual Town Meeting to Monday, June 15th at 7:00pm at the Norwell Middle School Goldman Gymnasium. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, pursuant to section 1 of Chapter 45 of the Acts of 2020 that the Board of Selectmen, having consulted with the Town Clerk and the Town Administrator, reschedule the Annual Town election to June 27, 2020. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The board will approve all outstanding meeting minutes at the next meeting.

Future meetings

The board decided to meet every other week. Topics will include spending freezes for some FY21 planned projects. The board will meet next on 4/8/20 at 7:30pm.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to adjourn to executive session, not to return to open session, to discuss a potential land acquisition at 8:19pm. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Ms. Allen polled the board, Brown voting yes, Demong voting yes, Rull voting yes, Graham voting yes, Allen voting yes.



Ellen Allen, Chair

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