

APPROVED

**MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY
FRIDAY, April 3, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

RELEASED

SELECTMEN PARTICIPATING: Ballantine, Ford, Howell, MacAskill, McManus.

ALSO PARTICIPATING: Interim Town Administrator, Joseph Powers; Meggan Eldredge, Health Director; and David Guillemette, Chief of Police.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Ballantine opened the meeting at 6:30PM and called to order the Board of Selectmen. Roll-call: Mr. MacAskill – Here, Mr. Ford – Here, Mr. Ballantine – Here, Mr. Howell – Here, Mr. McManus – Here.

OLD BUSINESS

A. Coronavirus – COVID-19 Update

Mr. Powers reported that access to certain areas in the Town will be locked, for instance, Brooks Park. Nets and hoops will be removed to limit social gatherings.

Ms. Eldredge reported that the numbers of positive COVID-19 cases are higher today than they were yesterday. She said it is important to understand that we are not even near the top of the mountain yet. She stressed again the importance of staying home. Ms. Eldredge said there are social services and volunteers who can deliver food and go shopping. She said we are doing the basics of contact tracing through the VNA. Mr. Ballantine asked if the contact tracing is being done by the local communities. Ms. Eldredge replied that although we have a Town Nurse, the VNA starts investigating once the Department of Public Health makes a case active.

Mr. MacAskill asked how many cases are there in Harwich. Ms. Eldredge replied that although the Department of Public Health has said it is up to each Town to

release this information, she suggested this be discussed by the Board of Selectmen, adding that she would not want to make that decision on her own. Mr. Ballantine said we will put it on a future agenda. Ms. Eldredge said half of the Cape Towns are not releasing this information; half are. Mr. Howell asked that it be put on the April 9th agenda. Mr. Powers said he will get the appropriate language for that agenda.

B. Discussion of public safety staffing

Mr. Powers asked Chief Guillemette to review his memo addressed to the Board. Chief Guillemette said the staffing of the Police Department is stable, although there is one Dispatcher and two full-time Patrolmen positions open. There is a Patrolman trainee who will graduate in July. The five on-staff Dispatchers agreed to adjust their schedules, leaving two open shifts per week, and overtime is more than offset by what the salary for the position would be.

Mr. MacAskill asked the Chief if he could provide an overtime estimate and if he could give a sense of when he would looking to fill the Dispatcher position. Mr. MacAskill said it is his understanding that if a Patrolman is pulled in to handle dispatch duties, the hourly rate is \$50. Chief Guillemette said he can email the information to the Board concerning the overtime expense connected with Dispatch. He said hiring could be delayed or the hiring process could start. He said there are challenges to training dictated by social distancing protocol. Mr. MacAskill said he recommends to the Board that the hiring process for a Dispatcher be started now. Mr. Powers said he and Bob Lawton, Interim Assistant Town Administrator, are working on a hiring procedure which will be finalized next week, which will have a social distancing focus and utilize a Webinar from MMA.

CONSENT AGENDA

- A. Vote to nominate Jennifer Harrington, Animal Control Officer, as Animal Inspector for the Town of Harwich
- B. Vote to re-appoint Jacqueline Etsten as Harwich's Representative to the Cape Cod Commission effective April 25, 2020, through April 24, 2023

Mr. Ford moved to approve Items A and B. Mr. Howell seconded. Both Mr. Ballantine and Mr. MacAskill said they have had conversation with Mrs. Etsten concerning her attendance at a future Board meeting to discuss how Cape Cod Commission regulations could affect Harwich. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Howell – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion and possible vote of support by the Board of Selectmen for the Public Advisory Question as it appears in Item B.

Mr. Powers said it is appropriate to address Item B, rather than Item A.

- B. Discussion and possible vote to place the following question on the 2020 Annual Town Election ballot:

This question is non-binding

Shall the Town of HARWICH Direct the Board of Selectmen to communicate to Governor Baker and the State Legislature with respect to the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station on Cape Cod Bay that the Governor and the Legislature employ all means available to ensure that: (1) spent nuclear fuel is secured in better quality dry casks and hardened onsite storage; and (2) spent fuel pool and casks are protected with heightened security to prevent intrusion in order to protect the health, welfare, and economic interests of the Town of Harwich, its inhabitants and visitors.

Yes _____ No _____

Mr. Ford said the purpose of this petition is to get it on the Town Election Ballot so residents can voice their opinion. Mr. Howell commented that the language is defective; he objects to the word “direct.”

Mrs. Diane Turco, one of the proponents of the question, joined the meeting by remote participation. She said all other Towns used the language as presented. Mr. Powers said he conferred with Attorney Giorgio and according to Mass. Gen Laws Ch.53 Sec.18A; this is a non-binding public opinion advisory question. He

said the Board is not compelled to place it on the Ballot, adding if it passes, it still remains non-binding and cannot compel the Board to take any action.

Mr. Ford moved to place the Public Advisory Question as stated above as Item B on the 2020 Annual Town Election Ballot. Mr. McManus seconded.

Mrs. Turco said the question keeps the public engaged and gives them an opportunity to continue the question and help support the decommissioning of the Pilgrim Nuclear Power Station responsibly. Mr. Ford thanked her for all the work she has done on this subject over the year.

Mr. Ballantine said there is a motion and a second. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Howell – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

Following the direction of Mr. Powers, Mr. McManus moved to send the Public Advisory Question, as stated above as Item B, to the Town Clerk for inclusion in the 2020 Annual Town Election Ballot. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Howell – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

C. Discussion and possible vote on proposed April Board of Selectmen Meeting Dates:

Tuesday, April 7th
Thursday, April 9th
Monday, April 13th
Thursday, April 16th
Wednesday, April 22nd
Friday, April 24th
Monday, April 27th
Friday, May 1st

Mr. Powers said the proposed regular meeting schedule does not impact any regulatory board meetings already scheduled. He said there is the mechanism for calling an emergency meeting to convene within 48 hours of the call, providing that at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting that item is re-noticed for additional conversation.

Mr. McManus moved to approve the schedule of regular meeting dates as presented. Mr. Howell seconded. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Howell – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. The motion carried by unanimous vote.

OPEN PUBLIC FORUM

The Chairman opened the Open Public Forum. The public was invited to call in and participate in the meeting to offer comments and/or questions. Scott Tyldesley reviewed the procedure for remote participation. The appropriate phone number was displayed. He said he received three emails; however, following a two-minute waiting period, no one dialed in.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Following a request from Mr. McManus relative to the release of the number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in Harwich, Mr. Powers said he will work with staff to collect the information related to that issue, which will be on the April 9 agenda.

Mr. Ford thanked Mr. Powers and the staff and especially Ms. Eldredge for her clear reports. Mr. Ballantine agreed with Mr. Ford.

Mr. Howell said he is proud to be part of this Town and of this Board. He said the Interim Town Administrator is doing an exemplary job, as is the dedicated work force.

TOWN ADMINSTRATOR'S REPORTS

Mr. Powers reported that trash and recycling services remain “essential services.” Mr. Hooper, DPW Director, has come up with a plan to resume recycling. Beginning Monday, April 6, at 8AM, single-stream recycling will be implemented at the Transfer Station.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McManus moved to adjourn at 7:31PM. Mr. Howell seconded. Roll-call vote: Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy G. Hemmings
Recording Secretary
Pro Tem