

APPROVED

RELEASED

**MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY
TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020
12:00 P.M.**

SELECTMEN PARTICIPATING: Ballantine, Ford, Howell, MacAskill, and McManus (who joined the meeting prior to the vote).

ALSO PARTICIPATING: Interim Town Administrator, Joseph Powers; and Finance Director, Carol Coppola

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. The Chairman declared a quorum is present.

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Discussion and possible vote on Emergency Expenditures Related to COVID-19
- B. Vote to authorize the Chairman to sign a letter to the Director of Bureau of Accounts regarding emergency expenditures

Mr. Powers and Mrs. Coppola introduced the proposed letter and subsequent discussion included the following points:

- Approval from the Bureau of Accounts is required to allow the Town to incur liabilities in excess of voted appropriations for FY20 (deficit spending) and will provide the following positive benefits
 1. COVID-19 expenses can be segregated
 2. Reimbursement will not be coming in FY20, but in FY21
 3. Deficits can be set aside in hopes of having some reimbursement
- If reimbursement is not received, deficits can be covered in the next fiscal year from free cash, an increased tax rate, or borrowing
- Anticipated estimated COVID-19 costs are \$250,000
- Getting some reimbursement is anticipated

- Specific extraordinary expenses covered under this authorization are in the following areas:
 - a. Cleaning and sanitizing costs
 - b. Custodial wages
 - c. Costs associated with the preparation and delivery of meals to elderly population in need
 - d. Personal protective equipment (PPE)
 - e. Overtime for public safety and health departments
 - f. Retrofit town buildings to ensure the safety of employees and the public

Mr. MacAskill voiced concern that necessary resources are being made available to the Council on Aging (COA) and the Board of Health and asked if there is anything that the Selectmen should be doing. Mr. Powers said all operations are proceeding as needed, and staff is doing all the things they need to do. He said despite the COA Social Worker position having been vacated on April 24, and in view of the hiring freeze in place, at present that position is not essential to operations related to COVID-19. Mr. MacAskill said he would like to hear thoughts from Emily Mitchell, COA Director, at the next Board meeting, since, in his opinion, any position at the COA should not be considered in the hiring freeze.

At this point Mr. McManus joined the meeting by remote participation.

Mr. MacAskill moved to approve Item B, with one edit to the letter. Mr. Howell seconded. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Howell – Yes, and Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Respectfully submitted,

Dorothy G. Hemmings
Recording Secretary
Pro Tem