

RELEASED

APPROVED

**MINUTES
SELECTMEN'S MEETING
REMOTE PARTICIPATION ONLY
THURSDAY, March 26, 2020
6:30 P.M.**

SELECTMEN PARTICIPATING: Ballantine, Ford, MacAskill, McManus.

ALSO PARTICIPATING: Interim Town Administrator, Joseph Powers; Meggan Eldredge, Health Director; Dana DeCosta, FinCom; Paul Fox, Harwich Paint and Decorating Center.

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. McManus joined the meeting at NEW BUSINESS, Item D.

WEEKLY BRIEFING

A. Coronavirus – COVID-19 Update

Mr. Powers discussed Guidance Document #9 was released jointly by Meggan Eldredge, Health Director, and him, which advises seasonal visitors and residents of Connecticut, New Jersey, and New York, to self-isolate for fourteen (14) days, as directed by the White House Taskforce. Signage to this effect will be placed on Route 6 at exits 10 and 11.

Mr. Powers updated the Board on the progress of the department head Working Groups. 1) As of March 27th there will be a drop box/lock box on the outside of the Town Office Building to facilitate work flow. The box will be accessible from Main Street and it will be handicapped accessible. 2) Employees are being retained at minimum staffing levels and are rotating between working remotely or in their physical location.

Mr. Ford asked about a family from New Jersey who self-isolated for two weeks. They plan to come to their HarwichPort home this weekend; do they have to self-

isolate again? Ms. Eldredge replied if they are coming from another area, they would still have to start the isolation period of 14 days all over again in their Harwich house.

Ms. Eldredge reviewed the current numbers of COVID19 cases, adding that there are six confirmed cases in five households in Harwich.

- B. Sewerage Work Improvement Phase 2 – Contract #1 and #2 – Construction Schedule – Weekly Update – To be discussed under OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

- A. Mr. MacAskill moved to approve a one-day Wine and Malt License for the Harwich Cranberry Festival Summer night in the Courtyard Series event to be held at the Cultural Center Courtyard, in the Auditorium if it rains, on the following dates: July 9, July 16, July 23, July 30, August 6, August 13, and August 20, all in 2020, contingent on the understanding that the Cranberry Harvest Festival Committee will be responsible for setup, cleanup, and any costs to the Town. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-Call vote: Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by a vote of 3-0.
- B. Mr. MacAskill moved to approve a one-day Wine and Malt License for the Harwich Cranberry Festival event to be held at the Harwich Community Center September 19, 2020, contingent on the understanding that the Cranberry Harvest Festival Committee will be responsible for setup, cleanup, and any costs to the Town. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-Call vote: Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by a vote of 3-0.
- C. Mr. MacAskill moved to approve a one-day Wine and Malt License for the Harwich Cranberry Festival event to be held at the Harwich Community Center September 20, 2020, contingent on the understanding that the Cranberry Harvest Festival Committee will be responsible for setup, cleanup, and any costs to the Town. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-Call vote: Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by a vote of 3-0.

Mr. MacAskill asked if the Festival Committee could present a financial statement to the Board at a future meeting, to include an explanation of the use of the money realized from their many fund-raisers. Mr. McManus said yes.

- D. Based on the recommendation of the Interim Town Administrator and the Interim Assistant Town Administrator, Mr. MacAskill moved to accept the recommendation of the CPC Chairman, Dave Nixon to increase the CPC's board secretary's hourly rate \$2.04 – Hourly rate will now be \$22.05, with the understanding that funds would come from CPC accounts. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-Call vote: Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried by a vote of 4-0.

OLD BUSINESS

- A. Discussion and possible vote regarding ongoing Sewer Construction work for Phase 2, Contracts 1 and 2 including but not limited to work in and around the Route 137 corridor.

Mr. Powers said work under Contract 1 is proceeding north to Pleasant Bay Road. The staff, the contractors, and the Town Engineer do not see a need to institute night work, which would be 9PM to 6AM. Standard contract language is 7AM to 4PM with travel lanes open wherever possible. He noted that many businesses are closed and the Lighthouse Charter School is closed at least until May 4th, resulting in a drop off in traffic.

Mr. Ballantine said he would have no objection if they extended the end of their working day from 4PM to 5PM. He added that he would like to see Robert B. Our Company devote their resources to the Route 137 corridor. Mr. Powers agreed.

Mr. Ford asked how this will affect the businesses there that have deemed essential, like the hardware store. Mr. Ballantine said there is always one lane open. Mr. Powers said the majority of the businesses have modified their hours. The present travel lane is working well and is manageable in daylight hours. He said an update from the contractor on the timeline is mandated.

Mr. MacAskill said he visited the area and walked around and talked with the businesses and the contractors. He was told the workers are interested in working 7AM to 7PM, at a cost of \$3,000 a day, with a timeline reduced by one week.

Mr. Fox joined the meeting. He said his business has gone to curb-side pickup in response to the ever-changing fluid times. Mr. Fox said his plan is to do what works for the Harwich community and he is going a day at a time. His hours of operation are presently 7:30AM to 4PM, and he said he is getting a good response. He said he would have no problem if the contractors extended their working day to 7PM. Mr. MacAskill thanked Mr. Fox for his patience with this project.

Mr. Powers said this is a short period of decision making, since by April 7th, the Governor may have eased up and essential vs. non-essential will be reassessed. He said his recommendation to the Board tonight is to approve the regular hours of operation of 7AM to 4PM with the understanding that there is no objection to going to 7PM, providing there is always a travel lane open.

Mr. MacAskill moved to approve work going forward under Contract #1 with a time extension of the 7AM to 4PM work day to 7AM to 7PM effective March 27, 2020, with the understanding that there will always be a travel line open and that the contractor will provide the information required by the Interim Town Administrator regarding the development of a new plan and updated time line. Mr. Ford seconded. Roll-call vote: Mr. McManus – Yes, Mr. MacAskill – Yes, Mr. Ford – Yes, Mr. Ballantine – Yes. Motion carried 4-0.

Mr. Powers advised the Board that a request was made from the Contract #2 contractors that would impact the water mains near Church Street. The action would knock out water service and have an adverse effect on residents who are sheltering-in-place. Mr. Powers said he rejected the request and told the contractor not to do any work that would impact the water mains at this time. Mr. MacAskill said that was a smart decision. Mr. Ballantine told Mr. Powers he has the Board's support.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORTS

A. Selectmen's Proposed Meeting Schedule

Mr. Powers asked for the Board's consent to the following proposed Selectmen's meeting dates with remote participation: Monday, March 30, at 6:30PM; Wednesday, April 1, at 6:30PM; Friday, April 3, at 6:30PM; and Tuesday, April 7, at 6:30PM. The purpose is to have more frequent and shorter meetings with the flexibility to handle COVID19 specific items as they come up. Mr. Powers said if she is available, Anita Doucette, Town Clerk, will participate in the March 30th meeting to discuss potential dates for the Annual Town Meeting and the Annual Town Election for 2020.

Mr. Ballantine polled the Board and said there is consensus of the Board to adopt the schedule of meetings.

B. Departmental Reports

Mr. Powers advised the Board that Town Departments, with the exception of the Library, the Water Department, and the Public Works Department, will experience an outage in their Email system beginning Friday, March 27, at 12Noon. The system will be back on line as soon as possible.

PUBLIC COMMENTS/ANNOUNCEMENTS

The public was invited to call in and participate in the meeting to offer comments. No calls were received during a two-minute wait period.

SELECTMEN'S REPORT

Mr. MacAskill said he received a question concerning the barricade at Red River Beach. He will ask Amy Usowski, Conservation, to respond.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. McManus moved to adjourn. 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 Temp