

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES– Final
Public Health Emergency Response Update Virtual Meeting Pursuant
to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of
Open Meeting Law.
Zoom Meeting ID# 472864415
Tuesday April 14, 2020
6:30 P.M.

PARTICIPANTS: Jennifer Glass, Selectmen Chair
(Virtually) James Craig, Selectman
Jonathan Dwyer, Selectman
Tim Higgins – Town Administrator
Trish McGean – Public Health Nurse
Kevin Kennedy – Police Chief
Brian Young – Acting Deputy Fire Chief
Fred Mansfield – Board of Health Chair
Patricia Miller – Board of Health
Peggy Elder – Administrative Assistant

WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS:

- Ms. Glass opened the meeting, noting that this meeting is being held remotely in a way that is consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 in order to mitigate the transmission of COVID-19 virus. The order suspends the requirement to hold meetings in a publically accessible physical location and it allows bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as there is reasonable public access. Ms. Glass noted that this evening a public comment portion has been built into the meeting that will take place after they have gone through the discussion items on the agenda. She respectfully asked that the public participants keep their video and microphones off until that time. Ms. Glass reported that in addition to Zoom, this meeting is being broadcast on Comcast channel 8, Verizon channel 33, and is available through the Town website at www.lincolntown.org. She noted that this meeting is being recorded and that attendees are participating via video conference.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Mr. Dwyer announced on behalf of Parks & Recreation that the Memorial Day Celebrations have been postponed until possibly the Fall. He added that some of the veterans will be doing a wreath laying on Memorial Day and it will be recorded and available for the residents to view.
- Ms. Glass commented that it's been about a month that we have been living in this very different world. It is a milestone, noting that we might not have been able to envision us functioning in this way for months, but that we are adapting to it.

DISCUSSION:

- Public Safety Update

Mr. Higgins reported that he asked Chief Kennedy to sit in on the meeting because there was a challenging situation for both the police and a neighborhood over the weekend. Chief Kennedy reported that at 2:00 AM Sunday morning they received two phone calls from residents reporting gunshots in the area of Route 2A and Bedford Road. Officers Moran and Armata responded and while they were checking the area, another call reporting gunshots came in from the Lexington Road/Page Road area of Town. When they went to investigate that area, they came across a motor vehicle with two occupants in it. They identified them, had a brief conversation with them, and as a result of information were able to do a search of the vehicle. They discovered two firearms, roughly \$46,000 in cash, and various drugs, some of which were packaged in a way that was consistent with possession with intent to distribute. Chief Kennedy added that it was a situation that could have gone badly, but the officers used their good judgement and their training. Chief Kennedy wanted to thank the Massachusetts State Police who arrived; in the end, the total of 4 officers really made a difference. He added that the suspects were arrested on multiple charges including firearms and drug charges. One of them was also charged with resisting arrest. Both were processed at the station, charged with those crimes, and released on bail pending arraignment at Concord District Court on May 4th. Mr. Dwyer praised the professionalism of the officers involved and the fact that they were able to secure the firearms and take the suspects into custody without incident.

Acting Deputy Fire Chief Brian Young reported that right after the stay at home order was enacted there was a slow down of medical calls, noting that in the first two weeks they had only 15 medical calls which is pretty slow for them. In the second two weeks they had 43 calls, which is more in line with usual statistics. He added that they have not had any known COVID positive patients in their ambulance. They continue to treat everybody as a positive using full personal protective equipment. He reported that with the help of MEMA, they currently have enough PPE to last for a few months.

Chief Kennedy reported that they have also seen an increase in the medical calls. He went on to recognize Public Helath Nurse Trish McGean, noting that she has been a wonderful resource for everyone in the Department who has questions. Knowing that they can give her a call and she answer any questions has really helped. He extended the thanks and appreciation of everyone at Public Safety.

Mr. Craig extended his thanks to both the Police and Fire Departments for their handling of yesterday's windstorm that wreaked havoc on the Town. He added that with so much that has happened this spring, he really wanted to express the gratitude of the Board for all that they have done and continue to do on a daily basis.

- Public Health Emergency Response – Update

Mr. Higgins reported that he wanted to start the Public Health Update with Trish McGean reporting on the cases and statistics. Ms. McGean reported that as of this evening there are 16 cases in Lincoln. Unfortunately, there were two COVID-related deaths at The Commons over the weekend. She added that she has spoken to Mass Department of Public Health (DPH) and that they are anticipating a surge in the next two weeks. The other towns that she works with are seeing an increase in the number of cases, so it is likely that Lincoln will also trend that

way. She added that she cannot overemphasize the importance of social distancing and staying home. If anyone needs food or medication they can reach out to her or the Council on Aging. They have lots of resources to get things to you.

Patricia Miller reported that she, Fred Mansfield, and Steven Kanner of the Board of Health (BOH) have been working with Trish McGean to lend as much support as possible to the people at The Commons. She noted that on Monday morning when they were informed of the deaths, they were extra concerned about the situation and how they could help support them. What we have all been hearing on the news regarding COVID-19 outbreaks in nursing homes or skilled care facilities are very real. The goal is to assist The Commons as much as possible.

- Ms. Miller reported that The Commons is creating a COVID-19 isolation area within the facility so that if they have a patient that tests positive they can isolate them in this wing of the skilled nursing area. This is what hospitals are doing and the BOH supports this protocol.
- They also strongly support everyone in the facility being tested, both residents and staff members. They have numerous positive cases among residents and staff members. The number of cases has been escalating over the past week and is concerning. Coordinating the recommended testing is definitely a challenge. The BOH has recommended that the Medical Director at The Commons reach out to the National Guard Hotline to sign up for the resources that are available through the National Guard. They have discovered that appointments with the National Guard are running at least two weeks out. She added that the BOH recommends that The Commons get in the queue immediately for the onsite testing. Everyone would have to be tested twice within a 48 hour period.
- The Medical Director at The Commons is affiliated with Mt. Auburn Hospital which could help facilitate both the testing and the processing of the samples. She added that they would be looking at testing roughly 500 people and processing those samples locally would be the best scenario. Benchmark (owner of The Commons) offered to process the samples in a lab in South Carolina, but this would just add to the turnaround time. Ms. Miller added that they will be meeting with The Commons weekly.
- Of the staff that tested positive, two have already recovered and have been cleared to return to work. The others are on paid leave and will return when cleared to do so. One of the challenges with the staff of The Commons is that they are not working just at that facility. They rotate through other Benchmark communities across the Commonwealth. There is no clear correlation indicating where the staff contracted the virus.
- The National Guard will only test once, but they will provide the tests free of charge. In addition, the National Guard will only test the people in the skilled nursing and assisted units and would not test the people in the independent living units.
- Mr. Craig asked if this was a Board of Health order to test everyone or if it was just a suggestion, and would an order from the Board of Health aid in expediting the process of facility wide testing. Ms. Miller responded that it was a strong suggestion at this point. Mr. Mansfield added that the best thing they can do is to continue to urge them to move as quickly as possible towards universal testing and to help them coordinate the necessary resources to make it happen.

- Mr. Higgins commented that Brian Young had reached out to his counterpart in Weston as they have a facility there that is trying to work with their managers to do systematic testing. The Town and the Medical Director at the facility are working together and this has been the best approach. In order to streamline things, Mr. Higgins reported that they have invited the members of The Commons Management team to join the Public Health conference every Monday at 10:00 AM. Ms. Glass asked about the other group homes and hospice in town. Ms. McGean reported that if anyone in a group setting in Town tested positive, she would be contacted by the epidemiologist and they now have a communication protocol in place. If they contact the Board of Health, Elaine Carroll will notify Ms. McGean.

- Town Meeting and Election

Ms. Glass reported that there was not anything further to report on Town Meeting or the election since last week. Town Moderator Sarah Cannon Holden made her declaration last week to move Town Meeting to the 23rd of May because that is as far out as she may legally postpone. However, as was discussed last week, we will not be holding the meeting any earlier than May 30th. She added that we will continue to take our cues from the Governor and public health officials. Mr. Higgins noted that while it is pretty unlikely that we will be proceeding on May 30th, we need to proceed as if we are. The motions, the consent calendar, and Warrant have been updated. We have a timeline that leads to a town-wide mailing going out on May 20th. He added that he and Colleen Wilkins, Finance Director, will be in conversation with the Finance Committee about the budget, adjusted revenue projections, and options for responding in a responsible way. Mr. Higgins noted that they will be looking at this week by week and the Board and the Moderator will be getting guidance from the team they have put together. He added that the “go/no go” date is May 12th because that is the date the Board would need to sign the Warrant so that we can get to print and meet the May 20th mailing deadline.

- Liaison Reports

School Building Committee – Ms. Glass reported that the SBC is meeting tomorrow night via Zoom at 7:00 PM and will be looking for answers regarding the June 1st deadline and will be finalizing the Guaranteed Maximum Price. More to be reported on next week.

OPEN FORUM:

- None

ACTION ITEMS:

- Battle Road Scenic Byway Support Letter – Mr. Higgins reported that years ago Lincoln and several other towns joined together to form the Battleroad Scenic Byway Committee. Their latest objective is to apply for designation as an All-American Road. The national park and the Byway Committee are asking the Select Boards in Lincoln, Bedford, Concord, and Lexington to sign the letter. Mr. Dwyer added that the designation is supported by the United States

Department of Transportation and that to be designated All American, these roads must, in addition to being scenic, must also have some type of historical, archeological, or recreational significance. He added that there are over 120 scenic byways nationally and just a fraction of those are All American roads. There are 9 scenic byways in the Commonwealth. Mr. Dwyer made a motion to sign the letter of supporting the application for the Battlefield Scenic Byway to be designated as an All American Road. Mr. Craig seconded the motion. With no further discussion, it was approved unanimously by roll call vote: Dwyer: Aye; Craig: Aye; Glass: Aye.

- Extending the Due Date of Real Estate Taxes – Mr. Craig made a motion to approve the utilization of Section 10 of the emergency legislation signed by Gov. Charlie Baker to give cities and towns the option of extending the fourth quarter FY20 due date for real estate taxes to June 1. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no additional discussion, it was unanimously approved by roll call vote: Dwyer: Aye; Craig: Aye; Glass: Aye.
- Waiving late Fees and Interest on late Real Estate Tax Bills - Mr. Dwyer made a motion to approve the utilization of Section 11 of the emergency legislation signed by Gov. Charlie Baker to give cities and towns the option of waiving fees and interest if paid by June 30th. Mr. Craig seconded the motion. With no additional discussion, it was unanimously approved by roll call vote: Dwyer: Aye; Craig: Aye; Glass: Aye.

WARRANTS:

- None

MINUTES:

- April 6, 2020 - Mr. Craig moved to approve the minutes of the April 6, 2020 meeting. Mr. Dwyer seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Dwyer: Aye; Craig: Aye; Glass: Aye.

OTHER BUSINESS:

- On behalf of the Board and the Town, Mr. Craig extended condolences for the two individuals who passed away at The Commons over the weekend as a result of this terrible situation with COVID-19 and to offer condolences during what must be a very difficult time.

Mr. Dwyer made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Craig seconded the motion. With no further discussion, the motion was approved unanimously with a roll call vote: Dwyer: Aye; Craig: Aye; Glass: Aye. The meeting adjourned at approximately 7:25 P.M.

Submitted by Peggy Elder
Approved 04/20/20