

TOWN OF WENHAM
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of March 17, 2020
Town Hall, 138 Main Street

Pursuant to the Open Meeting Law, M.G.L. Chapter 30 A, §§ 18-25, written notice posted by the Town Clerk delivered to all Board members, a meeting of the Board of Selectmen (BOS) was held on Tuesday March 17, 2020 at 6:30 pm in the Selectmen Chambers, first floor.

The Town of Wenham has a three-member Board of Selectmen elected for three-year terms with one seat up for election each year. Catherine Harrison (2020); John Clemenzi (2021); Jack Wilhelm (2022)

The Board of Selectmen serve as the chief executive body of the Town. The board's duties include in part appointing the Town Administrator and other board/committee members, developing goals and policies, preparing the town report, the annual budget, and presenting the warrant for Town Meeting.

The Board typically meets the first and third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 pm in Town Hall. The BOS meetings are posted on the Town calendar. All meetings are open to the public and may be viewed on local cable channels HWCAM.org or You Tube HWCAM.

Please be advised that this open meeting is being broadcast live and recorded by HWCAM for playback on Comcast channel 8 and Verizon channel 36. It will also be available for on-line, video on-demand viewing at hwcam.org. The listings of matters are those reasonably anticipated by the Chair 48 hours before said meeting, which may be discussed at the meeting. Not all items listed may in fact be discussed. Items may be taken out of order and at times that differ from those listed below. Other items not listed may also be brought up for discussion to the extent permitted by law. All audience members wishing to address the Board of Selectmen must go to the podium microphone and give their name and address.

Due to the Covid19 Virus, "social distancing" was instituted and this meeting took place virtually on zoom video.

Call to Order - With a quorum present, Mr. Wilhelm called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm.

Selectmen present: Jack Wilhelm, Chair; John Clemenzi, Vice Chair; Catherine Harrison, Clerk

Also present: Anthony Ansaldi, Town Administrator; Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

Participating remotely via Zoom video conference: Attorney Lauren Goldberg, Town Counsel; Dr. Andrew Ting, Board of Health Chair; Marybeth Ting, Public Nurse

Present not participating: Nicci Roebuck, Executive Assistant Town Administrator Office; Gary Cheeseman, Community Member

Announcements

- Postponed: Resident Budget Forums by the Finance & Advisory Committee scheduled for Wednesday, March 18 10:00am, Council on Aging, 10 School St. & 7:00pm, Wenham Town Hall, 138 Main St. This will be rescheduled to a later date.

- Mr. Ansaldi announced that a statement would be posted on the town's website for the public regarding the decision to close all town buildings to the public at this time. All town activities have also been cancelled. Town hall will service resident's and businesses on line, by phone or in person by appointment.

- Ms. Harrison shared an announcement regarding the superintendent search. On-line forums to meet the finalist candidates will be scheduled beginning Wednesday March 18. This information is on the HWRSD schools. This process will continue virtually. Finalists named:

1. Mary Beth Banios, Superintendent Windsor Central Supervisory Union Woodstock, Vermont
2. Philip Conrad, Principal Andover High School – this candidate has worked in the HWRSD at the high school
3. Julie Kukenberger, Interim Superintendent for HWRSD
4. Daniel Richards, Georgetown High School Principal

- Maribeth Ting, Public Health Nurse for the towns of Wenham & Hamilton, prepared an update on the corona virus disease with significant increase and referenced a slide presentation included coronavirus disease symptoms as identified on the CDC.gov. Ms. Ting reviewed the DPH update on the coronavirus as of March 17, 2020. This included guidance on social distancing and self-quarantining. The BOH continues to participate in conference calls with the local Boards of Health, consult with Hamilton / Wenham officials, maintain updates on the town website, and work with the Council on Aging to identify vulnerable members of the community that may need assistance.

The Board of Health is available to answer questions.

The following recommendations were reiterated: stay home, wash hands, maintain 6 feet of social distancing.

Those that are concerned with Covid19 symptoms should call their doctor before going to the emergency room and only call 911 in an emergency. Public Safety has protocols in place during this pandemic.

- The Fire department was recognized for their timely response to a house fire on Eaton Road that started in the garage.

Consent Agenda

- Meeting Minutes – Open Session: December 10, 2019; January 7, 2020 AM; January 7, JC 2020 PM; February 10, 2020; February 11, 2020 Executive Session: February 11, 2020

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to approve all items in the consent agenda and to hold ES minutes of February 11, 2020, not to be released at this time.

New Business

- Appointments

- Anthony M. Feeherry – Interim Town Moderator

Trudy Reid, Town Moderator, submitted her resignation. Ms. Reid was recognized for serving the past two years.

Ms. Harrison reviewed the 2016 Interim Town Moderator Appointment Process as developed by the BOS, February 23, 2019.

This included for the BOS to request letter of interest from registered voter that will not be a candidate for election and who must participate in preparatory meetings prior to town Meeting. The appointed Interim Moderator would be introduced at Town meeting. It was noted that an interim Town Moderator would be required for the next two years in order to replace the open seat on the ballot in 2021.

Anthony Feeherry has accepted the request to service as an interim Town Moderator.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to appoint Anthony M. Feeherry as Interim Town Moderator for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

- Angelo P. Salamone – Inspector of Buildings: Per zoning bylaw 13.1.1 must be appointed in March.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to appoint Angelo P. Salamone as Inspector of Buildings for a term beginning April 1, 2020 and ending March 31, 2021.

- Jacqueline R. Bresnahan – Director of Administrative Services

Ms. Harrison reviewed that the town did a class and wage study about 6 years ago. This included a table of all positions and employees. Ms. Bresnahan's job has expanded since this study and this updated job description, grade and salary reflects Ms. Bresnahan's present job responsibilities at a market rate.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to approve the Director of Administrative Services job description as presented, and appoint Jackie R. Bresnahan to said position at Grade 6 of the Town's compensation and classification system with an annual salary of \$73,775.99 effective February 25, 2020.

- Public Hearing on potentially adopting and/or make changes to the Employee Handbook
 1. Equal Employment Opportunity, Anti-Discrimination and Harassment (including Sexual Harassment) Policy
 2. Electronic Communications and Information Technology Acceptable Usage Policy
 3. Family Medical Leave Act

This agenda item was delayed and postponed until the public can attend and provide comments.

- Discussion & Potentially Approve Consulting Engineering Service Contract with Weston & Sampson for Longfellow Road Improvements Project.

Mr. Ansaldi reviewed that this contract would allow the project to begin this project in the 2020 construction season. It was noted that this is pending with the current situation with the pandemic.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to authorize the Town Administrator to execute the contract with Weston and Sampson for Longfellow Road Improvement Project engineering services, in the amount of \$94,300.

- Discuss Options & Potentially Approve the Direction for Wenham Veterans Services

This agenda item was deferred to a future meeting.

It was noted that Hamilton voted to leave the Eastern Essex District of Ipswich. Towns must be contiguous to be a part of a regional office. Wenham BOS will need to discuss the options.

It was noted that the change would be for FY21. The Veteran's Committee will be consulted.

- COVID-19 (Coronavirus) Discussion

- **Wenham Declaration of Emergency** - Mr. Wilhelm read the declaration as of March 17, 2020 to declare a State of Emergency in the Town of Wenham due to the Covid-19 Virus.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to declare the State of Emergency as read by the Chairman.

Approved 04.13.2020

The BOS recognized Mr. Ansaldi for his leadership the past few weeks relative to the town's actions specifically in response to the Covid18 Virus.

- Discussion and Potential vote to delay the Annual Town Meeting (ATM) – It was noted that the 2020 ATM warrant has not been posted and in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 39 section 9. This allows the BOS to delay the date of the ATM to a date deemed appropriate before June 30; this is subsequent to the Governor's actions.

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to postpone the ATM to a future date in accordance with M.G.L. Chapter 39 Sec 9.

- Discussion and Potential vote to delay the Annual Town Election

Vote: The BOS voted unanimously to postpone the annual town election until the first Thursday following the ATM.

Attorney Goldmberg was consulted about the details of delaying town meeting and the elections. It is anticipated the Governors' legislation would address this specifically for towns, otherwise, the Governor would be asked to expedite a Special Act on behalf of the town.

The Town of Hamilton has also postponed their Annual Town Meeting and Annual Town Elections

- Discussion about holding non-essential Public Board Meetings.

Mr. Ansaldi recommended that that non-essential board/ committee meetings not be held at this time.

Mr. Wilhelm opined that the BOS does not have authority to tell appointed/elected boards /committees what is essential to them and whether or not they should meet and did not support meetings be approved through the Town Administrator.

Mr. Clemenzi did not support micromanaging other boards and boards / committees need to decide what is important.

Ms. Bresnahan responded that both the Hamilton and Wenham Board of Health have stressed the importance of social distancing and to hold virtual meetings.

Ms. Harrison supported the BOS recommend essential boards/ committees meet remotely.

Attorney Goldberg interjected that remote access for these meetings was important and to balance controlling meetings reduces public exposure. She suggested meetings that are essential are coordinated with the Town Administrator to assure the meetings are held in accordance with the emergency protocol and that there be an effort to reduced public meetings. She recognized the challenges that are in place in the upcoming weeks and referred to the Open Meeting law changes made by the Governor to ease the burden on municipalities to hold remote meetings.

KP Law encourages quasi adjudicatory boards that have ongoing public hearings to request an extension of 90 days when possible in the event an act is not filed to address these deadlines.

Vote: BOS voted unanimously to recommend that nonessential public board/ committee meetings be postponed until further notice. In addition, those meetings that board/ committees deem essential should be coordinated through the Town Administrator. This directive expires April 30, 2020 to be reconsidered at that time.

- Discussion regarding Town Hall continuity plan & prioritizing essential functions

Even though town hall is closed to the public, employees are still working in town hall at this time; this is subject to change.

The following agenda items were deferred:

- Annual Town Meeting, April 4, 2020
- Update on Citizen Petition from Counsel
- Discuss and Potentially make Article Recommendations
- Recommendation for Presenter for two Articles on Recodification of General and Zoning Bylaws (Article 15 & 16)

Other matters, as may not have been reasonably anticipated by the Chair (Discussion Only)

The BOS will meet next as needed.

Adjournment - *The BOS unanimously adjourned at 8:11 pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley 3.24.2020