

TOWN OF WENHAM  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting of April 28, 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 April 28, 2020 at 5:30 pm virtually on zoom.us meeting ID 912 5028 8512.

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 YouTube HWCAM.

*Please be advised that this open meeting is being broadcast live via Zoom and recorded for playback 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 participants wishing to address the Board of Selectmen must indicate so in the Zoom meeting chat.*

*In response to the Covid19 Virus pandemic, the Massachusetts Governor closed all non-essential businesses and issued stay at home advisory. To comply with the Governor's orders that there be no gatherings, this meeting took place virtually. It was confirmed all could be heard and votes would be taken by roll call.*

**Call to Order** - With a quorum present, Mr. Wilhelm called the meeting to order at 5:32 pm.  
Selectmen present: Jack Wilhelm, Chair; John Clemenzi, Vice Chair; Catherine Harrison, Clerk  
Also present: Anthony Ansaldi, Town Administrator; Catherine Tinsley, Recording Secretary

**Executive Session** Police Department Captain; FY20

*VOTE: The BOS voted unanimously by roll call vote to enter into executive session under M.G.L. Ch. 30A, § 21 (2) To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel regarding the Police Captain DiNapoli's Contract and Fiscal Year 2020 and to and return to open session.*

The selectmen adjourned from Executive session at 6:08 and recessed until 6:30 pm.

Also present at 6:30 pm: Jackie Bresnahan, Director of Administrative Services; Nicci Roebuck, Executive Assistant; Chris Holak, Interim Finance Director; Sherrie LeBlanc, Treasurer/Collector;  
Public Nurse Maribeth Ting; Board of Health members Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Gerald Donnellan  
Police Chief Perkins and Captain DiNapoli; Fire Chief Kavanagh and Deputy Chief Baxter  
Dianne Bucco Town Clerk; Margaret Hoffman, Planning Coordinator; Jim Reynolds, Council on Aging Director; Steve Ozahowski, Assessor; Erik Mansfield, Water Superintendent  
Gary Cheeseman, selectman candidate

## Reports

- Departmental Weekly Updated during COVID-19 Crisis – April 28, 2020

## Consent Agenda

A. Meeting Minutes

*Vote: The Board of Selectmen voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve all items in the consent agenda including the Meeting Minutes –Open Session – February 13, 2020 Joint with FinCom; March 11, 2020; April 1, 2020 Joint with the Board of Health and Vote to approve and release executive session minutes of July 9, 2019 February 25, 2020*

## New Business

B. Discussion and potential vote regarding Food Project Easement Request.

Approved 05.19.20

HELD - National grid has to submit a license to access town property to install the pole and this agenda item was deferred.

- Email from M. Berry re Food Project Easement April 22, 2020
- Site Plan Sketch National Grid – Electric Distribution Construction Easement, April 8, 2020
- Grant of Easement Town of Wenham & Massachusetts Electric Company & Verizon New England, Inc.

The Food Project is working with National Grid to install an electricity pole on the property they lease from the Conservation Commission on Larch Row (Map 20, Lot 1). The Conservation Commission has already met with the Food Project to discuss the location of the pole, and they have agreed to a spot between the main driveway and the train tracks.

### C. COVID-19 Discussion

#### 1. Joint Meeting w/BOH - Update from the Public Health Nurse & Board of Health

- Determine and vote if outdoor facilities closures should extend beyond May 4th
- Any unanticipated COVID-19 related discussion

Ms. Ting reported that there were four additional positive COVID-19 cases in Wenham.

Ms. Ting noted that the Governor extended the stay at home order through May 18 and reiterated the importance for residents to stay home, use a face covering when leaving home for essential needs, wash hands, and practice physical distancing. Ms. Ting reminded residents that if their doctor has told them to quarantine at home with COVID symptoms, to please give her a call so she can assist those residents.

BOH Meeting: Call to order - *Dr. Ting called the Board of Health called to order at 6:44pm.*

Present: Dr. Andrew Ting, Chair; Gerald Donnellan

With Governor Baker extending the “Stay at Home Advisory” past May 4<sup>th</sup> to May 18<sup>th</sup> the Board of Health requested the BOS extends the Town’s order to extend public outdoor facilities closures including but not limited to playgrounds, parks, trails, the Rail Trail, and Pleasant Pond.

*BOH Vote: The BOH voted unanimously by roll call vote to extend the outdoor facilities closures of public parks playgrounds, trails as discussed to remain in effect with the Governor’s state of emergency.*

*BOS Vote: The BOS voted unanimously by roll call vote support the BOH vote to extend the outdoor facilities closures of public parks play grounds, trails until the Governor’s State of Emergency order no longer exists.*

Under discussion it was noted the rail trail is not closed in adjoining towns but due to close parking and unsafe parking along Route 97 in Wenham, and that there are sections of the trail in Wenham that physical distancing is not possible, the trail in Wenham will remain closed.

Vote: BOH adjournment-*The Board of Health voted unanimously by roll call to adjourn at 6:52 pm*

#### 2. FY20 Budget Discussion

- Discussion and Potential vote on FY20 Cost Reductions Interim Finance Director Revenue Report
  - Memo from A. Ansaldi re reduced budget identifying additional functions/departments for possible cost reductions for the remainder of FY20 (May and June 2020).
  - Revenue Overview – Interim Finance Director Chris Holak

By majority vote, the Board of Selectmen requested that the Town Administrator present FY20 cost reductions.

At the last meeting, the selectmen approved \$114,877 in budget cuts.

Since that meeting the following potential additional cuts have been recommended for added savings totaling \$56,504:

- The BOS chair reduced his stipend by 25% for savings of \$554.79.
- Mr. Ansaldi voluntarily took a 10% cut by returning one-week vacation for savings of \$2,000.
- The Department of Public Works vacant position will remain unfilled for savings \$18,388.40.
- Town Clerk will use volunteer election workers for savings of \$2,395.
- Not issuing merits this year (non-union employees) savings \$33,165.96
- Selectman Harrison also volunteered to forgo her entire selectman stipend as well for the remainder of FY20 (amount to be calculated)

Total 138,215.19 cuts plus the additional amount of Selectman Harrison’s stipend.

*Vote: The BOS voted unanimously by roll call vote to approve additional cost reductions in the amount of \$23,338 plus the balance of one selectman stipend.*

➤ Working Draft of Potential Expense Reductions

Mr. Holak referenced a spread sheet to show revenue comparison of the past two fiscal years with FY20.

The town is slightly under revenue collections for FY20 but Century 21 Bank is still catching up with deposits after many of their employees had COVID-19; it is anticipated deposits will be up to date by the end of the week.

Mr. Holak provided a cash flow analysis spread sheet. Historically the town's collection rate of real estate tax is 98%. Along with Motor Vehicle Excise, assessment payments from Hamilton, and state aid it is estimated the town will have collected \$2,306,758 in revenue by May 1, 2020 and total revenue collection for FY20 at \$3,664,190. Mr. Ansaldi observed that 40% of residents pay their real estate tax through the mortgage companies; the major mortgage companies have confirmed payments will be made as usual.

Mr. Holak went on to review the preliminary estimated expenses for the remainder of FY20 including salaries, general finance, and (2) school payments for a total of \$3,238,054. This potentially leaves the town finishing FY20 with an estimated net of \$426,136. These spread sheets will be updated weekly through June 30.

### 3. FY21 Budget

➤ Working Draft FY21 - List of potential cost implications if override (\$361,000) does not pass

Mr. Ansaldi reviewed a working draft list of potential cuts if the town's override of does not pass for a total of \$598,444.98.

This was for discussion purpose only and was subject to change.

On a side note, Mr. Ansaldi noted that de-regionalizing the veterans service for Wenham requires a vote by May but has a potential cost savings of \$16,000 or more if other communities leave the district i.e. Hamilton. Mr. Wilhelm suggested the Vet Committee should hear the Town Administrator presentation and make recommendation to the BOS if not for this year for next year.

Mr. Ansaldi noted that the Eastern Essex Veteran's Service Office budget included Free cash and questioned if towns are being overcharged. Wenham's assessment included Gordon College students in the population count and Wenham's assessment will be adjusted.

Ms. Harrison requested additional information to clarify the situation.

A joint meeting with Hamilton BOS may be held to discuss joint programs and town meetings.

It was noted that more than half the town's budget is the school. The school committee has a meeting on May 6, 2020 but the agenda does not specifically identify budget discussions. The schools have been asked to provide a list of cost savings.

The next BOS meeting will be discussions on the annual town meeting warrant articles and preparation for an annual town meeting.

Mr. Wilhelm and Mr. Ansaldi discussed possibly holding a truncated meeting for those items that need to be approved by June 30 and schedule a special fall meeting for all other articles; this will be on the next BOS meeting agenda for further discussion.

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

Mr. Clemenzi noted the recent passing of retired Police Captain Jeff Toby who served on the Wenham Police Department for 32 years before retiring in 2016.

**Adjourn** - *The BOS unanimously adjourned by roll call vote at 7:39pm.*

Respectfully Submitted By

Catherine Tinsley

5.1.2020