

**MEETING MINUTES
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
April 16, 2020**

Consistent with guidance issued by Governor Baker on March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law due to Covid-19, this meeting was held remotely using Zoom technology, Meeting ID 929 449 825.

At 6:30 PM Chair Robyn Hunter called the meeting to order with members John Jeffries and Robert Springett present. Also in attendance were Christopher Dwelley, Town Administrator; Katelyn O'Brien, Assistant Town Administrator, and Mona DiSciullo, Administrative Assistant.

ATTENDEES: State Representative Denise Garlick; Dr. Steve Kruskall, Dr. Kay Petersen, Dover Board of Health; Town Treasurer-Collector Gerard Lane; Town Assessor Amy Gow; David Sullivan

PRESS: None present.

Citizens' Comments

There were no citizens' comments.

I.1 Covid-19 Update

The Town's Preparedness Taskforce has been meeting frequently and working diligently to ensure that Dover is prepared to respond to the challenges of the Covid-19 situation and will continue to provide services to the residents. Following is a recap of the efforts undertaken:

- Over the past two weeks, focus has been on preparation in anticipation of the possible escalation in numbers of Covid-19 cases. Town staff and officials are working with volunteers, which includes a smaller group of medical professionals, to formulate plans and make certain that resources and procedures are in place such as phone check-in, case tracking, case management triage, quarantine protocols, and delivery services.
- There has been dialogue regarding engaging the Medical Reserve Corps. Utilization of the Corps requires some time for implementation including documentation submittal to the State and background checks of medical licenses, but it would allow the Town to

mobilize individuals in the future, if needed. For example, if and when Covid-19 vaccines are available, the Corps could assist the Town with implementation and distribution processes.

- Dover continues its efforts to engage the citizens with on-line programs offered by the Dover Library, the Parks and Recreation Department, and the Council on Aging.
- The Board of Health is planning to assist and expand on the work that the Council on Aging is doing in terms of being available to all residents who call with questions and concerns.
- With regard to the number of Covid-19 cases in Dover, the Selectmen feel strongly that all the numbers and information received by the Town should be reported to the citizens as they have a right to that information and to know what is taking place in their town. Mr. Dwelley will be meeting with the Preparedness Taskforce on April 17, 2020, and he will express the Board's sentiments to the meeting participants.
- Representative Denise Garlick expressed her thanks and gratitude to the Town for their Covid-19 efforts to ensure the health and safety of Dover's residents. She and/or a member of her staff participate in Dover's Board of Health meetings, and Representative Garlick reiterated her support to the Town noting that "we are a whole team moving together." She will be participating in the April 30, 2020 Selectmen's meeting and providing an update on the Commonwealth's response to Covid-19 as well as on the House Ways and Means revenue projections.

On behalf of the Board and Dover's citizens, Ms. Hunter thanked Representative Garlic for her support and guidance and all those working to address the Covid-19 situation for their outstanding efforts and long hours of work.

I.2 Tax Exemption Discussion and Potential Vote

In response to the Covid-19 challenges, the Massachusetts Department of Revenue issued guidance dated April 3, 2020 to local officials regarding changes in municipal finance laws and property tax options available to towns. The following options must be implemented by vote of the Board of Selectmen.

- A. Extend the due date for property taxes up to June 1, 2020.
- B. Extend the filing deadline for filing property tax exemption and deferral applications with the Board of Assessors up to June 1, 2020.
- C. Waive interest and fees on any bill due after March 9, 2020 and paid by June 29, 2020

With regard to Option B, Town Assessor Amy Gow reported that all the expected exemption and deferral applications have been received, and extension of the deadline would allow residents experiencing hardship to apply to the Assessors office for consideration of a hardship exemption or deferral. Option C keeps the due date for all tax bills the same but allows payment without interest if paid by the end of June, 2020. Both Mr. Lane and Ms. Gow recommend implementing Option B and C. The Selectmen are in agreement with that recommendation as they want to ensure that citizens receive needed financial support and relief. Citizens of any age can apply for a temporary hardship deferral due to illness or unemployment, and information on that program is available on the Town's website at doverma.org. Mr. Springett suggested that information on the deferral program be disseminated via the Council on Aging's outreach efforts and Mr. Dwelley's weekly email distribution.

Ms. Hunter moved to implement Option B - Extend the filing deadline for filing property tax exemption and deferral applications with the Board of Assessors up to June 1, 2020, seconded by Mr. Jeffries; it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

Ms. Hunter moved to implement Option C - Waive interest and fees on any bill due after March 9, 2020 and paid by June 29, 2020, seconded by Mr. Jeffries; it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

I.3 Caryl Community Center Lessee Discussion and Potential Vote

Because of the Covid-19 emergency, the Caryl Community Center has been closed to the public, and the three tenants of the building have temporarily closed their businesses. Concerns have been raised by the lessees regarding their monthly rent payments to the Town, and the Selectmen and Mr. Dwelley discussed options to provide the tenants with some financial relief. In preparation for the discussion, Mr. Dwelley and Mr. Lane reviewed revenue projections and local receipts to determine how much of an impact a waiver of rent payments for the months of April, May and June would have on the Town. There would be virtually no impact on the Town's finances, and it was concluded that rent payments would be waived for the months of April, May and June. Mr. Dwelley and Superintendent of Buildings Karl Warnick will be meeting with the lessees to discuss the future of the building and rental options going forward.

Mr. Jeffries moved to approve waiving monthly rent payments to the Town by the lessees of the Caryl Community Center for the months of April, May, and June, 2020, seconded by Mr. Springett; it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

I.4 Owner's Project Manager (OPM) Subcommittee Recommendation of OPM Firm

The OPM Selection Committee has unanimously chosen an OPM for the Community Center Building project, and contract revisions are still being reviewed and revised by both the firm's and the Town's lawyers. Mr. Dwelley has reminded the lawyers that, as noted in the Request for Qualifications, there is a 90-day time frame which expires in mid-May. Once finalized, the Board will be provided with the contract and the details of the selection process and the chosen firm.

I.5 Sustainability Discussion

In early 2020 the Board discussed the possibility of creating a Sustainability Council to implement and oversee sustainability initiatives including energy reduction projects, recycling programs, hydrology studies, and climate change, to name a few. The Town has already implemented several sustainability initiatives, and it was agreed that, rather than create a Council at this time, the broad and complex issue of sustainability will be incorporated into the Board's planning and goal-setting process.

I.6 Board of Selectmen Updates

Mr. Jeffries thanked the Highway, Police and Fire Departments for their exceptional response after a recent storm and the work done to clean up the debris left on the streets and sidewalks.

Ms. Hunter reported that, due to the Covid-19 crisis, the Trustees had to once again close the reopened Woodlands and Peters Reservation due to the high numbers of people visiting the sites, causing an unsafe environment and the need for police traffic control. The Selectmen urged residents to continue following safe practices and social distancing.

Mr. Jeffries reviewed the annual auditors' report of the Town's finances prepared by Melanson Heath and noted that Dover is in an outstanding financial position due, in part, to strong financial management by Town staff currently and over the years. Mr. Dwelley reiterated that Dover remains in a very strong financial position with no concerns now or moving forward resulting from the Covid-19 crisis.

I.7 Town Administrator Updates

Technology Advisory Board - Mr. Dwelley reported the Town signed a contract with Retrofit Technologies, the Town's IT provider, to conduct Phases 2 and 4 of the infrastructure security assessment of the current IT system. Focus will be on domain firewalls, server upgrades, new equipment to replace outdated computers, and replacement of core components to ensure efficient and continuous operation. Work continues on the new website, and web pages have been distributed to boards and committees for review and update of content. The new website is scheduled to be released in mid-May.

Municipal Project Manager – Joining tonight's meeting is David Sullivan who will be starting as the Municipal Project Manager on Monday, April 20, 2020. Mr. Sullivan will be present at the April 30, 2020 Selectmen Meeting to introduce himself and talk about his background and experience. The staff is looking forward to working with Mr. Sullivan

Board of Selectmen Open Session Meeting Minutes
April 16, 2020

Town Meeting – Preparation for Town Meeting continues and presentations are being finalized. A draft of the Warrant Article motions will be on the May 7, 2020 agenda for review.

C.1 Consent Agenda

The items listed comprise the Consent Agenda:

- Approve Agreement for Consulting Services between Dover and Carl Valente
- Approve Open Session Meeting Minutes for February 27 and March 12, 2020 and Executive Session Meeting minutes for February 27, 2020

Adjournment

At 8:12 PM, Ms. Hunter moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Springett; it was unanimously approved by roll call vote.

DOVER BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Robert Springett, Clerk