

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
March 23, 2020
Minutes**

7:00 PM

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Todd Bedard and Michael Rolfe

Others Present Deputy Fire Chief Robert Seling, Police Chief Ray Pelton, Town Administrator William Herman and Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary

Call to Order – Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Election of Board Chair and Vice Chair

Mr. Bedard nominated Mr. Leclair as Chair of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 2-0-0.

Mr. Leclair nominated Mr. Bedard as Vice-Chair of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Bedard seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 2-0-0.

Approval of Payroll Manifest for the Week of March 16, 2020 - \$46,004.79

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Payroll Manifest for the week of March 16, 2020 in the amount of \$46,004.79. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest for the Week of March 16, 2020 - \$34,064.80

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of March 16, 2020 in the amount of \$34,064.80. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Accounts Payable Manifest for the Week of March 23, 2020 - \$212,366.43

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Accounts Payable Manifest for the week of March 23, 2020 in the amount of \$212,366.43. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Approval of Consent Agenda for the Week of March 23, 2020

Mr. Leclair read out loud and offered for inspection a copy of the Consent Agenda for the Week of March 23, 2020 some of which included: two (2) Void Check Registers, three (3) Application of Property Tax Credit/Exemptions, and three (3) pistol/revolver licenses.

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the Consent Agenda for the Week of March 23, 2020. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Appointments with the Board

Gary & Pamela Gramatikis – Application for Restoration of Involuntarily Merged Lots –
20 Appletree Road – POSTPONED UNTIL APRIL 6th.

New Business

Town Response to COVID-19 and State of NH Emergency Declaration

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a copy of the Emergency Release to the Town of Auburn proposed for March 24, 2020 until further notice. Mr. Herman indicated the Governor issued a State of Emergency for the State of New Hampshire on March 13, 2020 due to COVID-19.

Police Chief Pelton reported one officer was quarantined after exposure and will be out for up to 14 days. Equipment bags have been put together for the patrol cars with PPE equipment. He indicated the department had approximately a two-week supply of masks and goggles. The Chief noted Manchester Water Works consulted with the Department about closing the parking lot to the Front Park as too many people were congregating. Jails are restricting access. Scheduling is being alternated to limit exposure. Candia and Chester are being communicated with for mutual aid. A sewing network is working on cloth covers for the masks so they can be re-used. He indicated Melissa Gates will be reaching out to Parks & Recreation to work on a Town-wide buddy system for seniors and high-risk individuals to have assistance with shopping, etc., during this time period.

Mr. Rolfe arrived at the meeting at 7:15 PM.

Police Chief Pelton advised the Board overtime has reached \$2,558 and expenses will probably be reimbursed by FEMA at some point, but the budget will likely go over. Mr. Herman noted the Town will be able to make it work and bring the anticipated revenue from FEMA in against the budget expenditures. Mr. Leclair indicated the Town can apply the use of the Town's undesignated fund balance for unanticipated expenses, while Mr. Herman also noted Primex will cover employees under Workers Compensation who have been quarantined or have tested positive from job-related exposures. Mr. Leclair advised Chief Pelton to keep good records so they can make sure everyone is whole at the end of this.

Deputy Fire Chief Selinga indicated fire calls were down. Likewise, the department does not have enough PPE gowns and about 50 masks. Station 2 will be set up as a quarantine zone separated from the apparatus bay. The State is setting up a hotel in Portsmouth as a long-term quarantine site for first responders. Chief Williams met with Candia and Chester about mutual aid. Chester has about 100 masks and is willing to share. There will be another meeting on Thursday possibly by teleconference. Mr. Leclair will attend on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Leclair questioned whether the next Board of Selectmen's meeting should also be by teleconference and the Board agreed the April 6th meeting would be held by dial-in for the public while the building will remain closed to the public. Mr. Herman noted they will verify the Right-to-Know law compliance for the plan. Mr. Herman will provide the information to other Boards and Committees who may need to meet.

Mr. Leclair advised, in consultation with the Emergency Management Director, the administration is proposing closing the Town Hall to the public effective March 24th other than by appointment, with no more than three members of the public in the building at any one time.

Business will be conducted online, via phone, emails or drop box; and as a last resort by appointment. Police & Fire will have some modifications and ask that callers identify symptoms when placing a call for service. The Library was closed beginning March 17, 2020 and will remain closed until at least April 4th. Mr. Herman indicated the Governor has issued an Emergency Order to allow Notary Services to be done by special procedure online.

Mr. Bedard motioned for the Town Hall will operate in virtual mode with limited public access for the duration of the State of Emergency. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The order signed by the Board of Selectmen, Fire Chief, Police Chief and Town Administrator will be put out early on the morning of March 24th through the Facebook pages of the Police Department, Fire Department, Parks & Recreation and the Auburn Community page; it will be posted on the Town webpage and AVS Principal Lori Collins will put the information out through the School's notification system.

Mr. Bedard noted the NHDMV is extending license renewals and new license plate registrations through April 30, 2020.

Mr. Herman noted four Town employees, system-wide, are currently under quarantine, with two of them exhibiting symptoms of Covid. He also noted they are in the process of installing temporary plexiglass separators for four of the customer service windows at the Town Hall, in addition to installing a drop box at the front of the Town Hall.

Designation of Ex-Officio Members to Town Boards, Committees and Commissions

Mr. Herman noted the open Selectmen's Representative's positions with terms to expire in March 2021 include the Budget Committee, Highway Safety Committee, Parks & Recreation Commission and Planning Board.

Mr. Bedard indicated a preference to remain on the Parks & Recreation, and Mr. Leclair was interested in remaining on the Budget Committee. Mr. Rolfe noted he was currently an elected member of the Planning Board and would like to serve as the Selectmen's representative on the Planning Board.

The Highway Safety Committee was discussed, and Mr. Bedard indicated he was willing to serve on that committee.

By consensus, the Board agreed their ex-officio representatives for 20201 include:

Budget Committee – Keith Leclair

Highway Safety Committee – Todd Bedard

Parks & Recreation Commission – Todd Bedard

Planning Board – Michael Rolfe

Mr. Rolfe indicated he will also resign his position on the Police Commission and asked how the Board would fill the vacancy. Mr. Leclair indicated they will solicit interested candidates and the Board can make a selection from the volunteers. Mr. Herman reported an item will appear in the April edition of the Auburn Village Crier asking for volunteers so the Board should be able to make an appointment by the end of April.

Annual Appointments to Town Boards, Committees and Commissions

Mr. Herman provided a Memorandum dated March 16, 2020 outlining the Annual Appointments to Town Boards, Committees and Commissions for 2020.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Paula Wright as Deputy Town Clerk with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Walter Milne as Deputy Tax Collector with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Jeffrey Porter, Edward Fehrenbach, as regular members, and Stephanie Hanson, as an alternate member, to the Conservation Commission with terms to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Daniel Carpenter, Michael DiPietro and Dennis Vieira to the Highway Safety Committee with terms to expire in March 2021. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Patricia Rousseau and Patrick Kelly to Parks & Recreation with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Bedard motioned to reappoint Michael DiPietro and Kevin Stuart to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire in March 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2019 COLA Adjustment

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a Memorandum dated March 13, 2020 relative to the COLA adjustment for the Town & Library payroll which reflects a 1.5% Cost of Living Adjustment pursuant to the Collective Bargaining Agreement and Town Personnel Policy effective April 1st.

Mr. Bedard motioned to authorize the issuance of a 1.5% Cost of Living Adjustment for all Town and Library positions effective April 1, 2020 as included in the FY 2020 Town budget approved by the voters on March 10, 2020. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Library Expansion Evaluation Project RFP

Mr. Herman reported that he has issued a request for proposal for the evaluation of the library building and property included in the FY 2020 budget with a submission deadline of April 2nd. He indicated five or six inquiries have been received so far. The advertisement was placed in three trade publications, direct mailed to five firms known to focus on municipal work and posted on the websites of the Town and the Griffin Free Public Library. He indicated he may extend the deadline for submissions by a couple of weeks due to various restrictions from the State of Emergency.

Old Business

Update on Status of HB 1105 and HB 1460

Mr. Herman reported HB 1105, which was the bill to require when warrant articles are amended that the original and amended versions appear on the ballot, was killed by the House. He indicated the House Committee clearly read the Selectmen's letter concerning the bill as it was paraphrased in the Committee's majority report on the bill.

Mr. Herman advised HB 1460 brought by Representative Piemonte of Sandown originally required spreadsheets be provided was amended to only provide to the Budget Committee if requested.

Auburn 175th Anniversary

Mr. Herman provided the Board with a Memorandum dated March 19, 2020 regarding planning for Auburn's 175th Anniversary. Invitations were sent to all of the local entities for possible inclusion on a coordinating committee.

Five responses were received so far. Mr. Leclair indicated the event may need to be combined with another event such as the Duck Race or postponed until the Fall.

Report/Comments of Ex-Officio Board Representatives

Mr. Herman reported the Highway Safety Committee attempted to meet last Wednesday evening, but only Michael DiPietro and Road Agent Dross present.

Other Business

Mr. Herman indicated the Town received an email dated March 23, 2020 from Jim Tenn regarding his performance bond for the development off Cedar Crest. He is having difficulty getting his surety renewed on time for his Letter of Credit and is requesting a two-week extension. Mr. Rolfe had no issues with him. Mr. Leclair indicated Mr. Herman should talk to the Building Inspector about holding the Certificate of Occupancy and stay in touch with both.

Mr. Bedard questioned how the Gramatikas application would be heard. Chief Pelton recommended their application be held by appointment only to keep within the under ten persons guidance.

Next Meetings/Events

Monday, April 6, 2020 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM by Teleconference
Tuesday, April 14, 2020 – Recognition of AVS Art Contest Student – School Board – 6:00 PM
Monday, April 20, 2020 – Board of Selectmen's Meeting – 7:00 PM

Mr. Leclair noted the Board of Selectmen would likely be unable to attend the School Board meeting on April 14, 2020 due to the restriction of no more than ten people present at one event.

Minutes

- March 9, 2020 Public Meeting

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2020 Public Meeting. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken with two in favor (Mr. Leclair and Mr. Bedard) and Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion was approved 2-0-1.

- March 9, 2020 Non-Public Meeting (x2)

Mr. Bedard motioned to approve the minutes of the March 9, 2020 Non-Public Meeting (x2). Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken with two in favor (Mr. Leclair and Mr. Bedard) and Mr. Rolfe abstained. The motion was approved 2-0-1.

Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) - reputation of someone other than a member of the board.

Mr. Leclair motioned to go into Non-Public Session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (c) at 7:59 PM. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken Mr. Leclair – yes, Mr. Bedard – yes, Mr. Rolfe – yes. With all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was closed to the public at 7:59 PM.

Mr. Bedard motioned to come out of non-public session at 8:12 PM. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

The meeting room was reopened to the public at 8:12 PM.

Mr. Bedard motioned to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Adjourn

Mr. Bedard motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:13 PM. Mr. Leclair seconded the motion, with all in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy J. Hoijer,
Recording Secretary