Virtual Selectmen’s Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 4, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

Virtual through Zoom

Chairman Ruth Mooney called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

Chairman of the Board Ruth Mooney read the following statement: As Chair of the Belmont Board of Selectmen, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor, this public body is authorized to meet electronic means.

We gave public notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting using Zoom or telephonically. If anybody has a problem with access, please call 603-387-5770 or email townadministartor@belmontnh.org.

Let us start the meeting by taking a roll call attendance, each of you will state your name, and where you are and if there is anyone else in the room with you during the meeting.

Present virtually were Selectman Claude Patten, Selectman Jon Pike, Town Administrator Jeanne Beaudin, Assistant Town Administrator Alicia Jipson, DPW Director Craig Clairmont, Fire Chief Mike Newhall, Assistant Fire Chief Deborah Black, General Assistance Director Donna Cilley, Parks and Rec Director Janet Breton, School District Superintendent Michael Tursi, and School Board Member Sean Embree.

Abatements, Manifests, Exemptions & Credits

The appropriate abatements, exemptions, credits and manifests will be signed by all attending Board members electronically after this meeting.

Selectman Pike moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on March 16, 2020 as written; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motion passed unanimously.

Selectman Patten moved to approve the minutes of the meeting held on April 1, 2020 as written; seconded by Selectman Pike and the motion passed unanimously.
New Business

Conservation Commission Appointment- Scott Rolfe is seeking re-appointment as a full member to the Conservation Commission; this would be a three-year term starting on May 1st, Selectman Patten motioned to re-appoint Scott Rolfe to serve on the commission; seconded by Selectman Pike, and the motion passed unanimously.

Dearborn Street- TA Beaudin mentioned that we have been in talks for some time now about merging the 3 lots on Dearborn Street that the Town has recently taken for Tax Collectors Deed. We had Spears Brothers’ demo and remove all the buildings and Building & Grounds along with Public Works has been cleaning up the property further removing any other debris left behind. Land Use Tech Rick Ball has prepared the application to merge the lots to bring forth to the Planning Board. Once the lots are merged, we are looking to sell the property to collect for the owed back taxes. TA Beaudin does not think we will get all that we are owed as it is a significant amount owed. There was a recent court ruling that we are no longer allowed to keep any proceeds from the sale after the three-year waiting period. Any profits above what we are owed will need to go back to the former owners. Selectman Patten asked what we are looking to sell it for. TA Beaudin responded that at the time of the deeding they owed $83,000 therefore a minimum bid will require at least that. Selectman Patten motioned to merge the three lots owned by the Town located on Dearborn Street; seconded by Selectman Pike, and the motion passed unanimously.

Old Business

Summer Camp- With the new guidelines put in place and the stay at home orders extended till May 31st Selectman Mooney asked Janet if it was even possible to pull together camp by the end of May? Janet responded that if she is able to conduct interviews by zoom, she may be able to staff. The issue is we still do not know yet from the Governor what the expectations will be as to how many kids will allowed in a room at a time. M. Tursi spoke stating that 2.0 did not address schools and summer camps and that guidance is to come shortly within the week. We are anticipating some guidance as to closing out the end of the year for teachers to come soon. School programs would take preference first before summer camp, and do not really see the guidelines being relaxed any more than what is now set in place. Selectman Mooney expressed that expense wise we are watching funds and questions is it really feasible to open up summer camp at this time? And is nervous about liability. Selectman Pike expressed that his thoughts are that summer camp will not be opening up this year, and it was his opinion that we do not open up. Feels that the orders from the Governor will come too late in order to make sufficient plans on opening. TA Beaudin asked Janet what her plans on opening day would be? Janet is thinking end of June, adding that like the Governor says if parents are to go back to work there needs to be childcare. Selectman Mooney added that if we hold off too long it will
be too late for parents to find childcare. Selectman Pike motioned to put summer camp on hold this year; seconded by Selectman Patten and the motioned pass unanimously.

Town ongoing COVID-19 Guideline and Re-opening Plans- TA Beaudin commented that after listening to the stay at home 2.0 guidelines technically as a municipality we were not subject to the closure but choose to for public safety, as we look forward to re-opening, it is her suggestion that we look at May 18th, giving us enough time to put certain precautions in place. Over the weekend TA Beaudin has placed an order through the state for PPE for our employees and for the public visiting Town Hall. TA Beaudin has spoken with Steve Paquin the Code Enforcement officer about a potential 1-way entry and exit into the building, limiting the # of people standing in the hallway and at the counter. We also talked about installing plexi glass at the counters safeguarding the clerks, also requiring visitors to wear masks in the building. Fire Chief Newhall added that staff temperature testing is very cumbersome and time consuming and not a recommendation. TA Beaudin agreed and added that we have not been doing it and all employees are practicing social distancing in their offices. Selectmen Pike added that he feels that TH will see more than 25 visitors a day in the building with people wanting to come in and take care of business once they know we are open. TA Beaudin feels we should still maintain that only 2 people at the counter at a time. Donna Cilley added that she feels we are moving too fast towards re-opening, commenting that this last weekend it was a mad house in the state with people not adhering to the social distancing orders and not wearing masks. Donna agrees that the only viable option was to have them enter the side door and out the front door and to set lines in the floor to keep distancing. TA Beaudin noted that she isn’t pushing for May 18th that it is merely a suggestion on her part as she is just keeping in mind that tax bills will be out May 15th and residents will want to be coming in to pay. Selectman Patten thinks that we can make this happen if we set the appropriate means in place and agrees that we do need to reopen. The Board asked for M. Tursi to come back at the next meeting on May 18th to discuss questions about the school and what actions they are taking towards their budget. Selectman Pike thinks we will need to have someone outside controlling the traffic and handing out masks for those who do not have their own. Selectman Mooney voiced concern about how we are going to properly protect both staff and visitors safely. TA Beaudin suggested that we schedule another meeting next week to discuss further on re-opening and hold off on the May 18th date.

Police Station- TA Beaudin reported out that we have received 11 RFQ’s for the Police Department Project. Selectman Mooney commented that she has spent a lot of time going through all of the RFQ’s and has chosen four companies and is leaning towards choosing a NH based company. Selectman Pike narrowed his choices down to two companies, and Selectman Patten feels he needs more time to continue to read through them all, another week will be needed before he can decide on his choices. TA Beaudin responded that the Board can defer this decision and discussion till next week, adding that four firms have reached out as to our decisions and has informed them we are still in the decision process.
Selectman Pike asked if we can have a meeting at a public place? Stating issues with hearing all participants on the zoom call is difficult. TA Beaudin responded that the issue is limiting it to 10 people and keeping the safe distancing and allowing the public to attend in a public space. Selectman Mooney suggested what about having it at the Pavilion. TA Beaudin responded that we can try it out. Selectman Mooney concluded that if we are going to interview potential companies for the PD project, she wishes to have in person interviews and not on a computer screen.

Non-Public

Chairman Mooney moved to enter non-public session in accordance with RSA 91: A:3 II (b) at 11:30 a.m. Those present and voting were Ruth Mooney, Claude Patten and Jon Pike. Also present was TA Beaudin and TC/TC Cynthia Deroy.

Following the non-public session, the Board agreed that TC DeRoy could allow her Deputy to work an additional 6-hours per week.

The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Ruth P. Mooney, Chairman

Jon Pike, Vice-Chairman

Claude B. Patten, Jr., Selectman