

TOWN OF WASHINGTON
Board of Selectmen
Minutes
April 16, 2020

Meeting held Video Conferencing.

Minutes are subject to the approval of the Board of Selectmen.

Present: First Selectman James L. Brinton; Selectmen Jay Hubelbank and Michelle Gorra. Public: Donna Alex, Dan Sherr, Tony Bedini, Susan Branson, Leslie Anderson, Rocky Tomlinson, Joan Lodsin, Chris Charles, Linda Saxon, Margaret (?).

Call to Order: First selectman James Brinton called the meeting to order at 5:30p.m.

Approval of Minutes:

- **Motion:** To approve the minutes of the April 2, 2020 meeting of the Board of Selectmen. By Michelle Gorra, seconded by Jay Hubelbank and unanimously approved.

Communications: None.

Appointments/Resignations: None. Jim Brinton is waiting for more information from an interested person for an Inland Wetlands alternate vacancy.

First Selectman's Report: Jim Brinton reported the following:

- **COVID-19 Confirmed cases:** 14. May be a couple of cases not yet confirmed by the Health Department.
- **Food Delivery Program:** This is going very well, thanks to the volunteers who have signed up. Number of residents using the program continues to increase.
- **Monday's Wind/Rain Storm:** 800 + residents lost power as a result of the storm. Thank you to Eversource personnel and the Highway Department, most had power restored within hours and the roads were cleared for safety.
- **Steep Rock Association:** Steep Rock Executive Director, Brian Hagenbuck, and Jim Brinton have been communicating at least twice a week to discuss protocol for visitors to the 3 preserves. As the weather gets warmer, and more begin to use the trails, may have to readdress.

OLD BUSINESS:

- **Region #12 Building Project:** Jay Hubelbank reported with the school being closed, inside "punch list items" are being taken care of. Paving and landscaping has begun in the exterior areas. Project still coming in under budget.
- **WiFi in the Depot:** Due to Ed Advance's limits resources at this time, there is no update.
- **WBA, Economic Development Committee:** Michelle Gorra reported that work is being done to update websites: Town of Washington, Washington Business Association, and Explore Washington. Businesses are being promoted by listing their individual offerings, business protocol, etc. and people are being urged to support the local businesses and to continue to shop local.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Employee Health Insurance:** Several phone conferences have been held with the McKellan Insurance Group, the Town's insurance agent, to review available options for the upcoming fiscal year. Currently the Town employees are insured through Anthem. However, to continue with Anthem would mean an increase of over 26%. McKellan's Art Mulligan has presented an option using Untied Health Care which would provide the same benefits as the present plan with only a 7.9% increase. Employees are being asked to provide information on their physicians to see if they are in the United Health Care network.
- **Governor's Tax Assistance Program:** Tax Collector, Donna Alex, presented a synopsis of Governor Lamont's Executive Order No. 7S requiring municipalities to participate in a deferment or low interest rate program. **Motion:** Be it Resolved, by the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Washington as follows: 1) That pursuant to the Governor's Executive Order 7S, beginning and including July 1, 2020, the Town of Washington shall participated in the deferral program and will offer to all eligible tax payers, businesses, industries, non-profit and residents a deferment of 90 days for any taxes on real estate, personal property, or motor vehicle from the time such taxes first become due and payable. 2) Eligible tax payers shall not include financial institutions escrowing taxes for residential, commercial, or industrial properties. 3) The Board of Selectmen directs the Tax Collector to proceed with implementation of the resolution as directed for eligible applicants only. By Jim Brinton, seconded by Jay Hubelbank. Discussion: The importance of providing information on the deferment program as widely as possible was discussed. The motion passed unanimously.
- **Vote on 2020-2021 Town of Washington Budget:** Jim Brinton will put together a time-line of the process that will be sued this year to pass the General Fund and Nonrecurring Budgets.

Visitors:

- **Linda Saxon**, VOICES reporter introduced herself.
- **Dan Sherr** inquired as to the process of "re-opening" the Town. Jim Brinton explained that this would be carefully thought out and most likely done on a gradual basis and will be based on Governor's orders and health department recommendations. Jim cautioned that opening too soon or too quickly could be dangerous.

Adjournment:

- **Motion:** To adjourn the meeting at 6:12p.m. as there was no further business for discussion. By Jay Hubelbank, seconded by Michelle Gorra and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Mary Anne Greene
Selectmen's Assistant