

## Selectmen's Meeting Minutes April 27, 2020

**7:00 PM** Zoom Meeting called to order by Selectboard Chairman, John Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen Kim Roberge and Tim Berry.

Esposito led the meeting in a moment of silence for the first responders, essential workers and the person in Town that is afflicted with the Corona Virus.

Emergency Manager, Chief Kevin Furlong, updated the Board on the newest statistics for New Hampshire.

1864 diagnosed, 779 recovered, currently have Covid-19. Emergency services have been notified as to where the positive person lives so they are aware if there is an emergency call. The Governor extended the emergency order for 21 more days.

Furlong attended a live webinar regarding the FEMA disaster declaration.

Health Officer, Rich Masters, let the Board know that the CDC has added 6 more symptoms to watch out for. FEMA has announced a \$3300 minimum threshold for getting reimbursed for Covid related expenses. The period for gathering expenses is 01/20/20 through 10/03/20.

Masters also let the Board know that the State did a final test of the trailer park water supply. After all of the upgrades made, the sample failed because of high levels of radium. The State feels like it is an "outlier" and will retest soon.

Bonnie Angulas offered that the mailer with contact information on it is finished. It should be in residents' mailboxes tomorrow. The final cost was \$320.00

Masters suggested that the cost of the mailer could be reimbursable by FEMA.

Belinda Yeaton, Town Clerk, asked the board to consider how the Town will count the absentee ballots since the Attorney General anticipates a 4-fold increase in them for the Presidential Election.

Berry asked if the State bears the cost of printing the ballots and was told "yes, for federal elections".

Esposito said that the Town will be responsible for all of the postage.

Yeaton explained that most of her counters/clerks are of advanced age and may not be willing to come out to count. She also said that the DMV is not going to reopen until 01/01/21. She asked if an accu-vote machine would qualify for FEMA reimbursement.

Furlong said that it would not count – not if it is for the long-term benefit of the Town.

Berry asked Yeaton to look into the cost savings of getting a mail meter.

The Board reviewed the minutes of 4/20/20. Roberge motioned, seconded by Berry to accept the minutes of April 20, 2020 as amended. Roberge; yes, Berry; yes, Esposito; yes.

Esposito relayed that the Building Inspector put in for payment on 2 building permits that are 8 and 10 years old where the work was never done. He had disallowed the payment on these as they were so old.

Roberge stated that, even though there was no CO issued, there was still work done by the inspector on these – plans were reviewed, calls were made. It was just an oversight that payment wasn't requested before now.

Berry motioned to accept billing from the Building department 4 years after the permit was issued. The onus is on the Building inspector to get his bills in in a timely manner. From a practical standpoint, I think it is outrageous to expect that money to be paid. That money, at tax time is used to reduce taxes – that money is gone.

Roberge said that she was not looking for a motion, she just wanted to get a conversation going.

Roberge stated that when inspector was hired 11 years ago, it was with the compensation being 75% of permits fees and mileage, there was no time limit mentioned. Roberge asked what account the permit fees go into Jack, since you stated the accounts were closed.

Esposito states those were from 8-10 years ago. Roberge asked did we submit amounts back to the customer? If not, how is the inspector expected to get paid on those. Esposito asked how payments were requested, Roberge stated closed permits and mileage are submitted.

Roberge stated not sure that would work; some permits remain open for an extended period of time. We would need input from the inspector on this before I would be comfortable voting to put something into place. Roberge agreed something needs to be adopted, but not just anything.

After some discussion, Esposito said that they will not be paid, but that the Board will come up with a policy that includes a time limit since one does not exist now.

Esposito referred to a letter from the Fire Chief asking about the sprinkler system required in a home built and now for sale on Salisbury Road owned by Selectman Roberge. The Chief stated that no inspection has been requested on the sprinkler system and no plans have been submitted to the FD. Esposito asked if a sprinkler system was installed in the home.

Roberge answered that the builder is following all criteria set by the Town.

Esposito asked for a yes or no answer on the sprinkler system.

Roberge said that Meridian Fire Protection installed the system. She also said that she finds the questions by the Fire Chief accusatory, as the house has not come up for its CO yet. According to her, no other house has come under such scrutiny by the Fire Chief before.

Roberge stated if the letter submitted by the Chief had started with: has a C.O. been issued, before requesting the clarification, instead of how it read "I have an inquiry as to the house being listed to be sold on Salisbury Rd.

Roberge inquired as why the Chief hasn't requested the same for 3 Bancroft Circle, it has been for sale for well over a year and as far as I know that sprinkler hasn't been inspected. Roberge then inquired as to the Fire Chief reviewing/ keeping plans of all the systems and sprinkler inspections that he has done.

Wilson stated....and then they get thrown out. Roberge said you should check to see what is required by law for length of time to be kept. Is it the same as building permits?

Esposito stated that the Board got involved with this when the State Fire Marshall wrote a letter to the Selectmen regarding it. Also, when the Board gets a letter from the Fire Chief, they have to act on it.

Esposito asked Roberge why she has asked the office to produce salary information for her.

Roberge said that the Board has been asked twice now if they have done a salary comparison to make sure our employees are being reasonably compensated.

Roberge said that the board was asked during Public Budget Hearing and at Town Meeting if we had reviewed all employees' rates of pay to surrounding communities. Esposito stated I don't think that is the reason, I think you have an ulterior motive and we won't get into that now. Roberge stated we have a responsibility to the taxpayers to do due diligence. Roberge stated she mentioned this as one of her goals last March and do to the time involved with Building Renovation Committee didn't have time to get to it. It has been 4 years since reviewed police budget as Submitted by the Chief, I'm sure he is not to scale with other chiefs and we have not looked at the office employees or the Highway Dept. Esposito stated we know we have good benefits. You just won't let that go. Roberge stated once the Town votes to support something, I move on. If you don't think that, that is not my problem. It is our responsibility since we have been asked more than once to do due diligence. Berry stated we have good employees and we don't want to risk anything. Roberge stated it may show, we are not doing enough for some. It is just a comparison and to possibly help for future.

Esposito believes that Roberge has the ulterior motive of going after the employee's benefits.

Roberge denied this and said that once the Town supports something, I move on.

Berry wanted to discuss the information provided by Town Counsel regarding the disposition of property taken by tax deed. Sowerby sent a case study where Bedford had to remit the profit made on selling a property back to the original owner. The owner was willing to pay the back taxes and interest, but not the penalty fee. The Town did not go along with this and sold the property. This is a completely different scenario than what we have as the property was taken approximately 20 years ago. Berry found in the information where there is a 10-year statute of limitations. He asked Brown to check with Sowerby on this.

Roberge brought up a piece of property that the owner passed recently, but no taxes have been paid on in quite some time. She would like to know if we should take it by tax deed now so that the 10 years begins now.

Esposito said that the Board had a public meeting with the Wilton Board of Selectmen at 6:00 tonight to discuss MACC. It was decided to ask to meet with all three Boards to discuss the Intermunicipal Agreement that expires December 30, 2020. The BOG meet tomorrow and will be brought up to speed on this. The agreement that the Mont Vernon and Wilton Boards drew up will be presented to Milford again for signature. The biggest changes in this agreement are: 1) One town / one vote, 2) Funding may go past the current year 3) It has a longer term.

Fire Chief Wilson reminded everyone that Milford refused to sign it the last time it was presented.

Esposito said that if there was a way for us all to meet face to face with the proper social distancing, it would be ideal.

Wilson said it would still need to be Zoomed since it is a public meeting.

Esposito said that the Lyndeborough Chairman, Russ Boland, told him that they will be voting on closing the Purgatory Falls trail on Tuesday night as there was 60 cars parked there this weekend.

Berry said that he was going to attend that meeting. They have one person that wants it closed, one that wants it open and one who wants to change the parking.

**9:00 PM** As there was no further business before the Board, Berry motioned, seconded by Roberge to adjourn.

All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,

Laurie Brown