

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Thursday April 2, 2020
Harpswell Town Office
Approved May 14, 2020

Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance: Meeting was called to order at 6:00pm.

Selectmen Present: Chairman Kevin E. Johnson, Selectman David I. Chipman and Selectperson Jane G. Covey

Staff Present: Town Administrator, Kristi Eiane; Deputy Town Administrator Terri Sawyer; Emergency Management Agent, Art Howe; Recreation Director; Gina Perow; Recycling Center/Transfer Station Manager Chuck Perow

Members of the Board and staff were participating by Zoom. The meeting was also being broadcast live on Harpswell Community Television and live streamed. The Chair read aloud the procedure for how members of the public could participate; such instructions were also included on the published agenda and on the website.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda:** Selectman Chipman noted there was an additional warrant for Group Dynamic under item 5, Consent Agenda.
2. **Public Comment:** None.
3. **Selectmen's Announcements:** None.
4. **Town Administrator's Report:** Administrator Eiane stated that in these uncertain times, the Town is considering additional actions to take in order to protect the health of the community and prevent overwhelming our healthcare system. As a result of the Governor's 'Stay at Home Order', changes have been made at the Town Office. Staff has been equipped to work remotely by accessing email and voicemail from a remote location, and for essential business staff can check with the administration to use the building, this will limit the number of staff in the Town Office at any one time. The bulk of services will be conducted online, please check the town website www.harpswell.maine.gov for a list of available services. Residents may call the Town Office and leave a voicemail also. An Emergency Operations Center has been created on the second floor of the Town Office. Emergency Management Agent Art Howe, Deputy Town Administrator Terri Sawyer and Administrator Kristi Eiane comprise the team. The Emergency Operations team monitors daily briefings of the Maine CDC, communicates with resource entities and agencies, and provides information to the community, Town officials, and first responders. Administrator Eiane stated that the Recycling Center/Transfer Station has reduced its schedule down to three days per week; Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays, with a fourth day being added in May, if and when circumstances allow. This action protects the health of both employees and the public. Administrator Eiane and Agent Howe remotely meet weekly, with chief emergency personnel, including our three fire departments and the head of the paramedic's service. The information shared is invaluable towards the protection of not only our community,

but our first responders as well. Administrator Eiane expressed a deep appreciation to our first responders. Communications with the public are primarily posted on the Town website, the COVID-19 section is updated regularly with links to the Maine CDC, Governor's orders, and the Town's COVID-19 response plan. Residents can also look for a new link to Mid Coast Hospital's COVID-19 information. A postcard will be sent out to non-resident tax payers, informing them of changes that have been made by the Select Board. The Town will be working closely with Harpswell Community Television to create and broadcast a public service announcement. Administrator Eiane expressed the community's concern with short-term rentals and non-residents returning to seasonal homes, specifically the lack of quarantining, which could overload our local healthcare system. Local outdoor spaces, Cliff Trail, Mitchell Field, and the Giant's Stairs, have been reported to be very busy, partly as a result of the closure of State Parks, and this issue will be further discussed in the recreation director's report. Administrator Eiane stated that economic strain on the community is just beginning; as a result, the Town will be putting together a list of resources to assist residents. Mid Coast Hunger Prevention has added a second food mobile for the month of April, deliveries are scheduled for next Thursday, April 9, 2020 and April 23, 2020. A donation of food cards has been made to Mid Coast Hunger Prevention, specifically for shellfish harvesters. Harpswell Aging at Home has been very active and has changed its meal program to 'meals-to-go' program. Recreation Director Gina Perow will be working closely with Harpswell Aging at Home to get the message out, strengthen the partnership, and provide service to the seniors living in Harpswell. Administrator Eiane urged residents to do what they can to stay healthy, keep the community healthy and help 'flatten the curve' so we don't overwhelm our local healthcare system. Our local hospital has 93 beds, 11 of which are ICU beds, which could be raised to 25 ICU beds. Greg Coyne stated that weekly Zoom meetings are held by local hospitals and EMS providers each Thursday for sharing updates and information.

- 5. Consent Agenda: 1. Approval of the minutes 2. Authorization of the Warrants:** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey to approve the consent agenda [March 5 minutes; warrant #14 in the amount of \$278,576.58, warrant #14a in the amount of \$4,000 and payroll warrant #13 in the amount of \$18,803.10]. Motion passed 3-0.

- 6. COVID-19 Update/Discussions**
 - a. Staff Reports:** Recreation Director Perow relayed community concerns about overuse and crowding on public trails and spaces. Director Perow met with Harpswell Heritage Land Trust (HHLT) representatives, Julia McLeod and Reed Coles, to discuss the trail usage in Harpswell. An overall consensus to keep the trails open was reached. Outdoor recreation is important for stress management, physical and mental health. An informational graphic will be placed at all trailheads and parking areas, outlining safe trail use during the pandemic. Chairman Johnson suggested altering the parking lot at the Town Office to limit crowds on the Cliff Trail. Director Perow stated that she would use monitors and volunteers to gather parking lot data the following Saturday and report back to Selectmen. Director Perow stated that with the additional human traffic on the

trails, there has been an increase in dog traffic on the trails. Director Perow asked the Selectmen to consider temporarily requiring all dogs be leashed on the weekends and other high usage times on the trails. Director Perow requested placing additional signage at various parking lots to discourage illegal or dangerous parking. Director Perow relayed the desire of the Community Garden to move forward for the 2020 season. The Community Garden Committee has begun to create guidelines for usage that align with the Town's emergency order. Administrator Eiane suggested that the Community Garden Committee look into the steps required to be deemed 'essential'. Emergency Management Agent Art Howe reported first responder staffing issues; three of eight of the first responders were required to quarantine. Agent Howe discussed the challenges for the health and safety for local first responders and volunteers, particularly minimizing contact with individuals when responding to calls. Agent Howe reported the success of the mobile food pantry at the Recycling Center. The Harpswell Aging at Home will operate on Tuesdays from the Orrs Island School House. Agent Howe will be meeting weekly with local chief emergency personnel. Recycling Center/Transfer Station Manager Chuck Perow updated the Board about the changes at the Recycling Center. Manager Perow urged residents to adhere to social distance guidelines with staff, and other residents, and limit one person per car to dispose of trash. Manager Perow thanked his staff for their ideas, resourcefulness and flexibility during these trying times. Manager Perow listed the current services available: trash, recycling, disposal of rechargeable batteries, compostable materials, and bottles and cans. These services could change depending on the availability of outside vendors.

- b. Consider additional orders/recommendations during State of Emergency:**
- i. Closing trails/public spaces and/or creating more limitations:** See above section: Staff Reports.
 - ii. Recommendation on short term-rentals:** Administrator Eiane presented the Board with two options regarding short term rentals and non-primary residences: 1) a ban on short term rentals (including but not limited to: hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, campgrounds, mobile home parks, housekeeping lodges, and any other type of transient accommodations) or 2) an advisory approach, strongly recommending that visitors refrain from entering Harpswell. Both options include language that non-primary residents remain at their primary residences. If non-primary residents do choose to enter Harpswell, they are required to perform a 14-day self-quarantine upon arrival. Discussion among Board Members yielded a strong desire to protect residents from COVID-19 by limiting unnecessary visitations by non-residents. Board Members urged cooperation with this order to avoid any additional need for enforcement. Administrator Eiane gave a summary of the suggested ban. Exceptions of note: individuals who are providing care for residents who are unable to care for themselves, medical or healthcare professionals, first responders who are utilizing properties while serving the Town or neighboring community, active military personnel and their family, or to remove a non-infected person away from a person infected with COVID-19, to escape domestic

violence, government agencies that ensure the continuing operation of the government and provide for the health, safety and welfare and lastly those workers engaged in essential businesses, as defined by the Governor's March 24, 2020 Order. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to adopt the order to prohibit short term rental agreements. The Board opened the topic up for discussion: Callers Nils and Karen Tcheyan requested information regarding the timeframe and possible extension or reissuing of our local Emergency Order based upon the Governor's Emergency Order. Karen Tcheyan also asked how the Town will communicate the ban to non-primary resident taxpayers. There was discussion about effectively communicating with realtors and property managers. Other suggestions for effective communications included: local newspapers, bulletin board postings at post offices and contacting local associations to get the information to residents and visitors. Administrator Eiane clarified that the order would be in effect moving forward, anyone already in a rental wouldn't be asked to leave. Motion passed 3-0.

iii. Extend mooring registrations similar to shellfish licenses:

Administrator Eiane and Town Clerk Rosalind Knight recommend to the Board to extend mooring registrations and waive any associated late fees until 30 days beyond the Governor's Order. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to extend mooring registrations and waive any associated late fees until 30 days beyond the Governor's Order. Motion passed, 3-0.

7. Mackerel Cove Clean Up: The Board discussed the removal of abandoned trailers and boats left at Mackerel Cove. The Harbormaster will further investigate to determine the owner of the trailers and vessels left on Town property in hopes that the owners will voluntarily remove them from the area.

8. Contracts:

a. Midcoast Humane: Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to authorize the Town to enter into a contract with Mid Coast Humane at last year's contracted rate, until the 2020 Town Budget is approved. Motion passed, 3-0.

b. Extend Mid Coast Paramedic contract: Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to extend the contract with Mid Coast Paramedic until the end of June 2020. Motion passed, 3-0.

c. Extend Cumberland County Law Enforcement and Marine Patrol: Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to extend the contract with Cumberland County Law Enforcement and Marine Patrol, at the current rate, until June 2020. Motion passed, 3-0.

9. Authorize Issuance of Tax Anticipation Note: Administrator Eiane indicated that Treasurer Kelly proposed sole sourcing with Androscoggin Bank for the Town's annual tax anticipation note borrowing on a taxable basis. Androscoggin's proposal includes

borrowing \$2.8 million with an interest rate of 1.87%. Selectwoman Covey moved, seconded by Selectman Chipman, that the vote entitled, "Vote to Authorize Issuance of a Tax Anticipation Note for Fiscal Year 2020," be approved in the form presented to this meeting, and that an attested copy of said Vote be included with the minutes of this meeting. Motion passed 3-0.

10. Consider Options for Adoption of 2020 Budget: The Board discussed possible options for adoption of 2020 Budget. Administrator Eiane provided the Board with Kennebunk's voting method, where the entire operating budget was in one article, followed separately by bonding articles. Staff will work to combine articles in such a way that allow for secret ballot voting. Any required public hearings for secret ballot voting will be held virtually via Zoom. Administrator Eiane, Deputy Administrator Sawyer and Treasurer Kelly had previously met and discussed the plan to finance the Recycling Center project. As a result, Administrator Eiane recommended to the board that rather than raising taxes and appropriating the money, the project be funded by borrowing the money and spreading the payments out over a 10-year period. Administrator Eiane stated additional recommendations that will be brought forth to the Board for consideration. An official draft of these changes will be given to the Board for approval at its next meeting.

11. Appointment to the School Board: By consensus vote, the Board appointed Eric Lusk to fill the remaining appointed term for Molly Perry until the end of June when he will begin the elected term to serve on the School Board.

12. Public Comment: None.

13. Other Business: Administrator Eiane requests approval to submit for a historical properties grant for \$15,000 to paint the Old Town House at Harpswell Center and have its shingles treated with preservative. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to approve the submission of the grant application. Motion passed 3-0.

14. Administrative Matters: Selectwoman Covey suggested the Board meet weekly for the month of April. Meetings will occur Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. Town Staff will create a public service announcement.

15. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 7:40 p.m. with no objections.

Respectively Submitted,

Kayla Matthews, Recording Secretary