

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes
Thursday May 14, 2020
Harpswell Town Office
Approved May 21, 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.

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:** Agenda was accepted after adding a discussion about credit card policy, 4.c
2. **Selectmen's Announcements:** Selectman Chipman reminded pedestrians to walk against traffic when on roads. The Kellogg Church and West Harpswell Baptist Church will be holding a parking lot service, which will be broadcast over community radio, this Sunday at 10:00a.m.
3. **Town Administrator Report:** Administrator Eiane reported that Recreation Director Gina Perow recommended Thomas Mahoney be hired as a Cedar Beach Monitor. Mr. Mahoney is currently an assistant park ranger at Popham Beach and has been a volunteer basketball referee for Harpswell Recreation. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to hire Thomas Mahoney as a Cedar Beach monitor. Motion passed 3-0.
4. **COVID-19 Update:** Administrator Eiane stated that the Town continues to provide service to residents, primarily by phone, online services, a drop box attached to the Town Office and through regular mail. Administrator Eiane thanked Harpswell Community Television and Donna Frisoli for broadcasting Town and committee meetings. Recreation Director Perow will continue to have heavily used Town trails monitored. Cedar Beach will also be monitored as required. The Bandstand Committee met virtually and decided to cancel the summer concert series. There was discussion regarding the dog leashing policy recently put into effect. Administrator Eiane reported that the Town has received requests from residents who would like to see the policy amended, so there is some time for dogs to be off-leash at Mitchell Field. Selectwoman Covey stated that there should be a more formal process including input from the Mitchell Field Committee and residents on both sides of the issue to state what they'd like to have happen as part of their quality of life in Harpswell. MaryAnn Nahf called in to comment requesting more

information, advocated for a committee and clarified that the State of Maine doesn't have a leash law specifically, but has a policy that dogs cannot be 'at large.' Nahf also stated that many residents who own small properties use Mitchell Field as a place to play ball and run with their dogs. Caller Harvey Pough requested a process including stakeholders be established and data be gathered to make an educated decision. Administrator Eiane stated that the Recycling Center is now adding regular business hours on Wednesdays starting May 20, 2020.

- a. **Consider State Order Only Limiting Occupancy and Quarantining:** The Governor has extended the Proclamation of Civil Emergency until June 11, 2020. The Town's current Civil Emergency Order coincides with the date put forth by the Governor. The Town's ban on short-term rentals was due to lapse on May 14, 2020 at midnight. There was discussion among the Board to let the ban lapse and from this point on, residents would solely follow the Governor's Orders. This action eliminates confusion about which orders to follow during the state of civil emergency. Selectwoman Covey suggested the Town put out a list of resources available to people while self-quarantining for 14 days. Caller Heather Allen requested a summary of this topic. Chairman Johnson reiterated that our local ban will end at midnight May 14, 2020 and then the Town would follow State orders.
- b. **Town Office Reopening Guidelines:** Emergency Management Agent Howe, Administrator Eiane and Deputy Town Administrator Sawyer met to discuss a plan to re-open the Town Office. Agent Howe stated that a guiding document was created. The guidelines in the document may change and evolve as the pandemic changes over time. Some of these guidelines include: Town staff will wear face coverings during any public transactions, and the public is strongly urged to wear a face coverings while in the Town office; limit the number of people in the building at any one time; and one-way traffic through the building. There was additional discussion about spacing, signage and other steps necessary to keep both Town staff and visitors safe while in the Town Office. People transacting business at the Town Office should park only in the front of the building. Residents should continue to conduct online transactions. The Code Enforcement Office, which relies heavily on face-to-face conversations, may be limited to appointments for a while. Discussion about guidelines occurred. Selectwoman Covey shared a statement from an email from the Governor's office: people should wear face coverings in public areas where maintaining social distancing can be difficult. In the Town Office, the corridors are narrower than 6 feet. If someone finishes early and passes by another person, they can't be 6 feet apart. Caller Greg Coyne suggested that everyone be required to wear a face covering in the office. Caller Nils Tcheyan asked if we should have a sign-in sheet upon entering. If anyone with the virus enters Town hall, we'd have record of who else was there after and could have been exposed. There was more discussion about tracking vendors, security cameras and tracking out-of-towners who come in for unofficial tasks, such as brochures, which could pose challenges to source tracing.
- c. **Credit Card Policy:** Administrator Eiane shared a statement from the Governor's 53rd policy order, stating that within 30 days, people who have vehicles with expired registrations or that will be expiring, and live in

municipalities participating in the rapid renewal program, should register their vehicles online. The Town's current policy requires people to use their checking account information and does not accept credit cards. Administrator Eiane asked that the Board consider removing 'in-person' from the credit card fee refund policy. The State of Maine has a third-party agreement with *Informe* for online transactions. The Town would like to change the policy to allow for residents to also use credit cards for *Informe* transactions. Selectwoman Covey moved, seconded by Selectman Chipman, to strike 'in-person' from the policy, and that we include language consistent with the State of Maine's *Informe* policy [regarding credit card companies]. Motion passed 3-0. Residents are encouraged to register their vehicles online.

- 5. Board Appointments and Extend Appointments of Committee Members and Officials:** Administrator Eiane stated that several boards and committees have statutory responsibilities with members whose term has ended or will be ending during the pandemic. For most committees, the Town is asking that members have their appointments extended for 30 days after the end of the state of emergency to avoid having members coming into the Town Office to be sworn in during the pandemic, except for the Board of Appeals and Planning Board. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to appoint Jim Knight to the Board of Appeals term ending 4/30/23; Patricia Lawson to the Board of Appeals term ending 4/30/23; Burr Taylor to the Planning Board, as an associate, until 4/30/21; Amy Haible to the Planning Board until 4/30/23; and extend all committees and officials appointments to expire 30 days beyond the expiration of the State of Emergency. Motion passed 3-0.
- 6. Authorize Town Meeting Warrant/Budget for July 14, 2020 Ballot and Public Hearing Date:** Administrator Eiane presented the Board with a budget reviewed by the Budget Advisory Committee. The first draft of the budget, considered for voting at the Town Meeting March 14, 2020, totaled \$5,795,000. On April 2, 2020, the Budget had been reduced to \$5.4 million, (a reduction primarily in the Appropriations area) and again, on May 14, 2020, reduced to \$5,338,134. What was once a proposed 3% increase in the Municipal Budget, is now a 5% decrease. The reductions were considered to minimize the burden on the taxpayers in 2020. Some reductions included: Recycling Budget reduction of \$3,500, there will be no Household Hazardous Waste Day; Recreation Budget reduction of \$3,400, there will be no Camp Harpswell or Summer Swim; Wage and Salary, an increase of 1.5% instead of 2.5%; vacancies in the fire department, a reduction of \$7,500; employee medical insurance benefits, a reduction of \$7,000; Treasurer's wage reduction, \$20,000; Fireworks at Cook's Lobster House cancelled, a reduction of \$1,500; communications consulting, a reduction of \$5,000; and land acquisition and improvements, \$25,000. Discussion occurred among Board Members, ensuring that any additional duties taken on by combining the Deputy Town Administrator/Treasurer didn't overwhelm the position, and that funds were reserved to pay for the additional responsibilities. The Board didn't agree with the reduction from 2.5% to 1.5% in wages and salaries. After adding the full 2.5% wage increase back into the budget, there was an addition of \$7,984, totaling \$5,346,118. Selectman Chipman

moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to accept the budget of \$5,346,118. Motion passed 3-0. Administrator Eiane proposed to have the public hearing date on June 17 or 18, 2020 at 5:00p.m. at Harpswell Community School. In accordance with the Governor's orders, the meeting would be limited to 50 people. There was discussion about holding it fully virtual, showing it on Community Television and radio, and/or having back-to-back meetings to accommodate more people, limiting to one person per family, and phone comments. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to hold a public hearing on June 17 or 18, 2020 at 5:00p.m. Motion passed 3-0. Selectwoman Covey moved, seconded by Selectman Chipman, to accept the Warrant as written with the adjustment of \$7,984, in the operating budget in article 2, as the final draft to be voted on July 14, 2020.

- 7. Consent Agenda: 1. Approval of the Minutes. 2. Authorization of the Warrants.** Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectwoman Covey, to accept the consent agenda [April 2 minutes; warrant #20 in the amount of \$776,077.88 and payroll warrant #19 in the amount of \$19,179.71]. Motion passed, 3-0.
- 8. Public Comment:** Caller Nils Tcheyan called in to suggest a forum or hearing where residents can ask questions to clarify any confusion about voting during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- 9. Other Business:** None.
- 10. Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned without objection at 7:20p.m.

Respectively submitted,

Kayla Matthews
Recording Secretary