

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2020

Harpswell Town Office

Approved May 7, 2020

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

Staff Present: Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator; Terri Sawyer, Deputy Town Administrator; and Paul Plummer, Harbormaster and Marine Resources Manager

Members of the Board and staff were participating by Zoom. The meeting was also being broadcast live on Harpswell Community Television. The meeting link was published on the Town's website with instructions on how the public could participate.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00pm.

Kristi Eiane, Town Administrator, stated that due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this is the first time the Board and staff are meeting remotely via software.

Last week, Emergency Management Agent Art Howe asked the Board Chairman to sign an order declaring a civil emergency in Harpswell. The Order helps relay the gravity of the situation, may position the Town for certain resources and provides certain authorities to the Board of Selectmen during the time frame such as flexibility in the purchasing policies and extending licenses. The request tonight is to extend the emergency proclamation that the Chairman Signed on March 18 and extend commercial shellfish license to 30 days beyond the State of Maine's Emergency.

Paul Plummer, Harbormaster/Marine Resources Manager, stated he submitted a memo to the Board with the request from the Marine Resources Committee to extend the commercial shellfish licenses. The market is shut down and the harvesters would appreciate the extension. Selectman Chipman moved, seconded by Selectman Covey to adopt this Order Extending the State of Emergency in the Town of Harpswell, which renews and extends the emergency proclamation made by Board Chair Kevin Johnson on March 18, 2020, and which extends the deadline for renewal of certain commercial shellfish licenses, due to the COVID-19 public health emergency; motion passed 3-0.

Administrator Eiane reported the Emergency Management Agent, Town Administrator and Deputy Town Administrator have been at the office each day and the Town Clerk, Code Officer and Tax Collector has been in to check messages and conduct what business they can. Popular questions are: is the Recycling Center open; how do I register my vehicle; and questions for the Code Office. The Manager proposed the Recycling Center be open 3 days a week, Tuesday, Friday and Saturday and closed on Wednesday. The Board was in agreement with the Facility's new schedule. Vehicles can be registered on-line. However, the Governor's declaration extends all registrations through the State of Emergency. The Code Office is attempting to conduct inspections with social distancing. We plan to train staff on how to check phone messages and emails from home. Staff will post updates on the Town's website. During this public health crisis, Agent Howe is monitoring activity and working to ensure that first responders have the support and personal protective equipment they need. Essential meetings will be conducted virtually beginning with the elected officials. Committees should not be meeting or conducting email meetings. Staff will work with each Town Department on how best to improve the online services information. Town trails are being heavily used and people seem to be trying to follow the CDC guidelines on social distancing. The Board asked the Recreation Director to consider some outdoor guidelines and monitor property use.

Administrator Eiane thanked the Town Clerk and her staff for their work at the March 14 annual Town Meeting election. Over 200 people came through the polls and everything went smoothly.

These are unusual times and Administrator Eiane thanked the first responders for their work.

At 5:22 p.m. the meeting was adjourned without objection.

Respectfully Submitted,

Terri-Lynn Sawyer
Deputy Town Administrator