



## **Minutes of the Meeting of the Board of Selectmen**

Date: April 2, 2020 – Special Meeting  
Time: 6:00 p.m.  
Place: Audioconference Broadcasted Live from McCourt Social Hall  
Memorial Town Hall, Spencer, MA  
Present: Administrator Gregory  
Dialing in: Chairman Pepe, Clerk Berthiaume, Members Hicks and  
Woodbury, Health Agent Lisa Daoust, Chief Parsons, and Chief Darrin  
Vice-chair Monette was absent

Chairman Pepe called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Health Agent Lisa Daoust reported:

- A reverse 911 call was sent out today with the total number of COVID-19 cases in Spencer at four; all are in isolation and in full compliance. The current protocol is to make a reverse 911 call with the number of cases every Thursday, although the public health nurse does not recommend releasing numbers of cases in order to protect patient privacy, especially in areas with small populations.
- The State sent nine boxes of personal protective equipment (PPE) and will provide \$8,000 in funding assistance for COVID-19 related expenses to the Board of Health.

Dr. Hicks asked what will be done with the PPE. Ms. Daoust said the equipment will be provided to emergency personnel and shared as needed.

## **Town Administrator Update**

Mr. Gregory reviewed a reduced staffing schedule with employees rotating to work from home on a day by day, or week by week basis. All employees will be paid their full salary during this time and work from home hours do not need to be segregated on payroll sheets, however if an employee is sick, those hours need to be recorded as sick time on the payroll sheet. This information was also provided to the Teamsters representative. Vacation and personal time may be used with prior approval of the Department Head. \$1.2 billion will be available to the State and will be distributed to cities and towns for anything COVID-19 related.

The FY2021 budget calendar has been revised to layout budget and capital hearings beginning in May and leading up to a tentative date of June 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Town Meeting.

## **Review and Act on Coronavirus / COVID-19 Response**

Mr. Woodbury asked if there is a way to forgo use of the Transfer Station trash bags to prevent people from going into stores to purchase. Mr. Gregory will contact the U & F Superintendent.

Dr. Hicks suggested that the Town Planner contact small businesses in Town to aid with obtaining loans. Mr. Gregory noted information has also been posted on the Town Website on available funding for small businesses. Mr. Pepe noted that Cornerstone Bank will be involved in providing loans to small businesses.

Ms. Berthiaume pointed out that the Coronavirus is kept alive for up to 72 hours on cardboard and wants to prevent Transfer Station staff from touching it. Dr. Hicks said residents dispose of it themselves and employees do not need to touch it.

Ms. Berthiaume mentioned a heated email which was sent to the Administrator based on a reporting error in the Telegram and Gazette. After reading the article, she checked with the Health Agent to confirm the facts and stressed the importance for the Board to support each other and work together, even more so given the circumstances with COVID-19. Dr. Hicks acknowledged he sent the email and said he agrees with Ms. Berthiaume, however, feels the public needs to be notified. Mr. Gregory said to call him anytime there are any concerns with information being circulated.

Chief Parsons reported:

- The Fire Department received a shipment of gowns from MEMA which will be distributed between Police, Fire, and the Spencer Rescue Squad (SRS). He suggested Ms. Daoust share the PPE with the SRS.
- He has three employees in quarantine who have not been tested for COVID-19 and one who has tested positive and in self-quarantine at home. He noted concerns over cyber bullying to determine who has the virus and said the Department of Public Health and MEMA both advised that the number of cases not be released by community. People must assume everyone they encounter has the virus and take proper precautions.

Chief Darrin reported that the Police Department is practicing social distancing and noted some activity has decreased, while medical and mental health calls are on the rise, which is placing a burden on Dispatchers.

*A motion to adjourn at 6:43 pm (Hicks/Woodbury) passed 4/0 with a roll call vote: Woodbury-yes, Berthiaume-yes, Hicks-yes, Pepe-yes.*

Respectfully submitted,

Brenda Savoie  
Executive Assistant