

**Kingston, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting of the BOARD OF HEALTH
March 16, 2020
FINAL MINUTES**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM in the Meeting Room at the Town Hall.

PRESENT: Kevin St. James, Donald Briggs, Jr., Phillip Coombs, Richard Wilson, Electra Alessio, Selectmen; Fire Chief Graham Pellerin; Road Agent Rich St. Hilaire

RESPONSE TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Vice Chair Kevin St. James opened the meeting by saying that there was a teleconference at noon today with state Emergency officials and the Governor to update communities on the status of the virus and related response. These calls will be continuing at noon every Monday, Wednesday and Friday. He said the Selectmen felt a meeting of the local Health Board was called for.

Fire Chief Pellerin said that the teleconferences came about to keep local departments informed on the situation, which is changing rapidly. He said that there is a public information line available by calling 2-1-1. Selectman St. James said that today the state mandated that restaurants and bars close to sit-down business, effective at 6:00 PM today. He added that these measures are not meant to cause panic, that the State is trying to flatten the curve of the spread of the virus, which is especially dangerous to people who are elderly and/or have underlying health issues.

Chief Pellerin said that anyone who thinks they may have been exposed to coronavirus should call their own physicians, but if they have cause to call 911 for any matter, they should let the responders know about the exposure, for their protection.

Selectman Alessio said that decisions need to be made about the Town Hall, with regard to posted changes and reduced hours. Chief Pellerin said that he had learned that the Portsmouth town hall will be closed and working on a skeleton crew. A grace period for car registrations may be offered, depending on how severe this gets. Selectman Coombs recommended that as many registrations as possible should be done online; he said the only things that can't be done online is a new car registration. Hunting and fishing licenses also must be done in person. He said he thought the Town Hall should be open but locked, and residents can make an appointment if they don't have online access. He said a new plexiglass divider for the Town Clerk's window to protect the staff.

There was a discussion of other departments, such as the Selectmen's and Assessing/Building departments, and how to continue to function while staying safe. There was a suggestion that Assessing/Building Clerk Tori Dobrowolski could work out of the Town Clerk's office as there are no protections in the Assessing office. There was a suggestion that the phone numbers could be posted on the door, and before allowing

anyone in on a limited basis, health questions could be asked, and gloves and wipes supplied.

Selectman Wilson said he thought the Town Hall employees should be totally isolated and that he felt the building would be shut down completely soon. Selectman Briggs said that at the Police Department a room at the back of the building has been set up with tables and plexiglass so that the public can be met with to take statements or to conduct other police business that needs to be done in person.

Selectman Alessio suggested meeting with staff tomorrow, to map out a plan for how to proceed that will work for everyone and keep them safe. She said logistics of office procedure, and what constitutes an emergency that can't wait, need to be discussed. She said that the town clerk handles money, checks and credit cards all day long and many transactions are not imperative and most can be done online. The software company used for credit card transactions may waive the fee for online transactions.

Personal protection equipment such as gloves and sanitizer will be supplied, and the full glass divider for the Clerk's window will be installed. Access will be restricted to one window. All were agreed to restrict access for all but necessary business. Building permits can be submitted via mail or email, and it was agreed that applicants will need to understand it may take some time to get to an inspection; submitting payment and licenses will need to be worked out.

Rich St. Hilaire said that Senator Jon Morgan has reported that the State Senate and House are looking to pass an omnibus bill to extend car registrations and dog licensing. He said they are trying to make it so people have access, and meetings need to be looked at. He also pointed out to the Board that the town has only one town clerk, and if she is exposed she will be gone a minimum of two weeks. Likewise, he said if the police chief is exposed and exposes others, soon there will be no police department. Selectman Alessio said she thought that the barriers and other safety measures may be for this week only; she said she thinks that next week the town hall will need to be closed and only offer minimal service.

There was a discussion of keeping the town buildings disinfected. Wipes and disinfectant spray are supplied to employees, and Mr. St. Hilaire said that the building crew comes in to clean the Town Hall every morning at 6:00 AM. Other buildings are on a less frequent cleaning schedule, but Mr. St. Hilaire said that if additional time is needed, this is a reimbursable expense related to the emergency response. Selectman Alessio said that she believes the Library Trustees will be discussing closing the library at tonight's meeting.

Adam Faulconer asked if the front door of the building would be locked, as welfare recipients need to come in that way for privacy reasons. It was agreed that if the building is locked, both doors need to be locked and welfare inquiries will need to be by telephone the same as other departments.

Land use boards were discussed, and it was acknowledged that they are independent boards that the Selectmen can't dictate to. Mr. St. Hilaire said that the Selectmen can close the building though. Selectmen Alessio pointed out the issue that the ZBA and Planning Boards need to post the meetings and notify abutters in a certain time frame. She said the ZBA has not been noticed for April yet and she can make the determination to postpone; however, she said, the Planning Board has a full agenda, already postponed tentatively to April 21. Selectman Coombs said they will need to teleconference, look into Zoom or other platforms.

Fire Chief Pellerin said that the fire station is posted at both doors, and entry is restricted to essential personnel. He said that burn permits are now available only from the state website. He said if non-emergency business can't be done over the phone, they will figure it out.

It was decided to continue to call in during the Monday-Wednesday-Friday Emergency Management meeting. Chief Pellerin suggested the library for these conference calls, as the building will be closed.

Information will be posted to the Cable bulletin board and shown regularly.

The Board of Health adjourned at 7:02 PM.

