



**Town of Swampscott**  
**Select Board and Board of Health Emergency Joint Meeting Minutes**  
Wednesday, April 15, 2020 - 6:00 PM  
Virtual Meeting

**SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT**

Peter Spellios (Chair), Naomi Dreeben (Vice Chair), Don Hause, Polly Titcomb, Laura Spathanas

**BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT**

Marianne Hartmann, (Chair), Emily Cilley, Stephanie Goodman, Board of Health Member

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

None

**OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT**

Sean Fitzgerald, Town Administrator; Allie Fiske, Assistant to the Town Administrator; Jeff Vaughan, Health Director; Ron Madigan, Police Chief; Neia Illingworth, Public Health Nurse; Ron Mendes, Assistant Town Administrator – Administration and Finance; Tim Dorsey, Chair of the Finance Committee

The meeting was called to order at 6:03pm

**COVID-19 UPDATE**

Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald provided an update on the Town's response to COVID-19. The Swampscott State of Emergency and Stay-at-Home Order is still in effect. Swampscott has passed an order requiring masks in retail establishment sand common areas of residential and commercial buildings.

Public Health Director Jeff Vaughan provided an overview on why it is important to obey the face mask order. He stated that over the weekend relevant businesses were made aware of the new mask order and signs were distributed. He issued a reminder that dog owners need to follow basic rules that always apply and continue to practice social distancing.

Neia Illingworth provide dan update on cases of COVID-19. As of 4/13/20 there are 56 though the Public Health Dept. believes the number is much higher so everyone must continue to practice social distancing and wear masks.

Marianne Hartmann provided a summary of the face mask order, including where they are required (retail establishments, medical offices, common areas of residential and commercial

businesses) and where they are recommended (outside when in contact with others). Ms. Hartmann clarified that Swampscott does not currently have a curfew in effect.

Select Board Vice-Chair Naomi Dreeben provide dan update on the food program. To date, over 1,700 meals have been delivered/provided to Swampscott residents with an additional 1,000 a week through the school distribution program. Anchor Food Pantry has been packing up 100 bags each week and whoever wants them can get them.

There are 11 volunteers who are currently making masks and donating them to the community. Contributions to the anchor food pantry and the masks program are appreciated. Laura Spathanas described what ways the Anchor Food Pantry accepts financial and in-kind donations.

Board of Health member Emily Cilley asked if there is a support fund that people can donate to in order to help people in need in Swampscott. The Town is in conversation about creating something and also providing other financial relief to residents.

The Board of Health portion of the meeting completed.

On Board of Health **MOTION** (Cilley) and **SECONDED** (Goodman), it was **VOTED** by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll call – Cilley (YES), Goodman (YES), Hartmann (YES)

## **FY21 BUDGET UPDATE**

Assistant Town Administrator Ron Mendes and Sean Fitzgerald presented a summary of adjusted budget recommendations. The adjustments presented were made prior to COVID-19 and it is anticipated that there may be additional changes.

There are several themes for suggested changes being recommended. Originally, the budget included non-union personnel salary raises in the salary reserve. Now, these raises are included in Departmental budgets and if additional funding for raises is needed at a later date, there could be a request for free-cash transfer to fund those. An increase in solid waste is funded in part by reduction in salary reserve. Some contingency will be taken out of Employee Group Health and Non-Contribution Pension Contribution.

Ms. Spathanas asked what other changes we will see prior to a final vote on the budget. Mr. Mendes anticipates sales taxes will decrease as well as meals tax. Local aid will be determined by state and may be impacted by COVID-19. Excise tax may also be impacted due to fewer car sales. Ways that these shortfalls could be mitigated are raising property taxes, decreasing revenue side, or using reserves.

There was discussion prompted by Chair of the Finance Committee Tim Dorsey that the administration begin to look into reserve funds and how these will need to be utilized during the unprecedented budget time. It was reiterated that free cash should not be utilized to support the operating budget.

## **UPDATE ON FY21-FY25 CAPITAL PLAN**

Mr. Mendes reviewed updates to the Capital Plan since the first discussion on the topic on 3/4/20. Chairman Spellios suggested the priority rating list that has been formulated for the purpose of capital planning be shared with the board at a future meeting.

Due to a favorable bond rate, some capital projects were accelerated up to be addressed sooner, such as the Middle School fire alarm project. There are not many projects in the capital plan that are “shovel-ready” and Chairman Spellios emphasized that there needs to be advancements to project management to ensure more projects are ready to go, in part to be able to respond to opportunities like this one.

Rich Raymond, Chair of the Capital Improvement Committee spoke briefly and explained that the scoring sheet created by the Collins Center is something that will go into effect for next year’s planning.

## **DISCUSSION OF COMMITTEE AND BOARD VIRTUAL MEETING PROTOCOLS**

Chairman Spellios presented suggested protocols for virtual board meetings. Since the COVID-19 emergency, most public meetings have been postponed. Due to the fact that the meetings are virtual, there is concern that meetings regarding regulatory matters will not be adequately available to abutters. Non-regulatory matters can still be discussed in a public meeting

During the Stay-at-Home Order, all meetings will take place on Zoom. All meetings must be recorded, though not all will need to be televised. The Town Administrator must approve any meetings before they are scheduled. All public meetings still require at least 48 hours notice, but longer notice is preferred. All meeting minutes from a virtual meeting must be voted on and approved at the next meeting and promptly filed with the Town Clerk.

## **PRESENTATION RE: MUNICIPAL VULNERABILITY PROGRAM**

Community and Economic Development Director introduced the Municipal Vulnerability Program. Nassar Brahim, Senior Climate Change Planner from Kleinfelder was present to discuss the process and show concept designs. In a FY15 Climate Change Study, The Phillips Beach and Cassidy Beach were targeted as flood areas, and the Kleinfelder study explore potential improvements to the entrances. This is an incremental step that uses nature-based approaches to mimic the natural process that deals with flooding.

Chairman Spellios asked if a bathhouse for Phillips Beach could be included in permitting and concept design. Brahim stated that the primary challenge of having the structure is potential flooding, which would require the facility to be elevated and have a substantial ramp for access. There was additional discussion about the feasibility and importance of this project.

Additional stakeholder meetings will take place and the plan will revisit the Select Board at the end of May or early June.

## **TOWN ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE**

Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald walked through his TA Update.

- Lynn Water and Sewer Update: Fitzgerald has engaged in meetings to discuss strategies for preparing for negotiations, and have created a Task Force to review the scope of work for a consultant to assess cost assumptions for several options for the Town.
- Harbor and Waterfront Plan: Currently undergoing additional edits and will be presented at a future meeting.
- Town Meeting Warrant Draft: Will be ready for the Board's next meeting.
- Staffing update on new hires within Accounting, Building, Assessing, Police, and Fire Department.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

On Select Board **MOTION** (Dreeben) and **SECONDED** (Spathanas), it was **VOTED** by roll call to approve the consent agenda. Roll Call: Spathanas (yes), Titcomb (yes), Hause (yes), Spellios (yes), Dreeben (yes).

## **SELECT BOARD TIME**

Laura Spathanas requested that some documents be printed and provided to Select Board for the virtual meeting.

Ms. Spathanas asked for clarification on the process for the construction Work Safety Plan. These are public documents that are not being posted,

Next meeting will take place on Wednesday, April 22 at 6:00 PM.

On Select Board **MOTION** (Spathanas) and **SECONDED** (Hause), it was **VOTED** by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Spathanas (yes) Titcomb (yes) Spellios (yes) Hause (yes) Dreeben (yes).

Meeting adjourned at 9:04pm.

True Attest,



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Allie Fiske, Assistant to the Town Administrator