



Town of Swampscott
Select Board and Board of Health Joint Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, May 6, 2020 – 6:00 PM
Virtual Meeting

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT

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

BOARD OF HEALTH MEMBERS PRESENT

Marianne Hartmann, (Chair), Emily Cilley, Stephanie Goodman

MEMBERS ABSENT

None

OTHER TOWN OFFICIALS PRESENT

Sean Fitzgerald, Town Administrator; Allie Fiske, Assistant to the Town Administrator; Jeff Vaughan, Health Director; Neia Illingworth, Public Health Nurse; Marzie Galazka, Director of Community Development; Molly O'Connell, Senior Planner; Graham Archer, Fire Chief; Ron Madigan, Police Chief; Max Kasper, Building Commissioner; Susan Duplin; Town Clerk; Max Kasper, Building Commissioner; Michael McClung, Town Moderator; Kelly Stevens, Town Engineer

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm

COVID-19 UPDATE

Chair of the Board of Health spoke briefly about the important of continuing to follow the orders related to COVID-19 to ensure safety for all.

Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald provided an update on Swampscott's response to COVID-19, and provided a recap on the current Town closures and safety protocols. The State and Swampscott Declaration of Emergency, Stay-at-Home Order, and Mask Order all remain in effect.

There was a discussion regarding the Town Election and Town Meeting schedule. There is no mechanism at the moment to extend the election beyond June 30. Though it is currently scheduled for Tuesday, June 2, a further delay is likely. There will be a push to promote voting by mail, though polls will still remain open on voting day. The Town Meeting has been postponed to June 22 but will be virtual pending state legislation and some investigation into the

mediums that would make this possible. The Board agreed that they should continue to appeal to Senator Brendan Crighton to advocate for better guidance and protocols on Town Elections. Potential new dates for Town Election and Town Meeting will be discussed at the 5/13/20 Select Board / Board of Health Joint Meeting.

Public Health Director Jeff Vaughan provided a recap of Massachusetts' new face mask requirement, which requires that any person inside or outside in a public space must wear a face covering if unable to maintain a distance of at least 6 feet. Public Health Nurse Neia Illingworth provided an update on COVID-19 cases in Swampscott and Massachusetts.

CONVERSATION WITH SWAMPSCOTT BUSINESSES

The Select Board invited business-owners to participate in a listening session and share their challenges and questions related to COVID-19.

Deb Goldberg, a local realtor and member of the Swampscott Rotary Club spoke briefly about the effect that COVID-19 has had on the Realty business. She offered the support of the Rotary Club in continuing this discussion to make sure businesses can open safely.

There was a discussion about having Town-wide testing available to residents and employees of Swampscott businesses. The Board of Health is currently working with Urgent Care on the possibility of providing this service. The manager of Urgent Care spoke about current testing procedures. Urgent care has performed an estimated 1,500 COVID-19 tests. He also briefly described how Urgent Care will roll out antibody testing and in what way this could be made available to businesses, particularly insurance logistics.

A business owner and Rotary-member asked if there could be specific information offered about when the Town will re-open businesses, particularly personal-service business. The boards could not provide a specific date, but did indicate that certain personal-service businesses may reopen slower than others depending on the level of personal contact, and that more guidance needs to come from the state. Ms. Hartmann clarified that it won't necessarily be up to the Town to decide which businesses can and cannot open, but that it may be the state that implements this plan. Mr. Spellios commented that the Town is looking to partner with the business community to come up with creative solutions to social distancing requirements when businesses reopen.

Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald spoke briefly in response to a question regarding Harbor access. The Swampscott Yacht Club remains closed and the launch will not be activated at the moment. Boating is not prohibited but the launch and pier will not be available and boaters access their boats through their own means. Town Administrator Fitzgerald also spoke briefly about updates on the beaches, which remain open. He encouraged residents to use the beach for passive recreation such as social distant walking, but not for congregating or group activities.

Colin Codner, Executive Director of the Greater Lynn Chamber of Commerce spoke and expressed concern on behalf of the business community about businesses enforcing Massachusetts and town orders, including the mask and social distancing order, and how this may impact the safety of employees.

In response to some comments from the board, Director of the Office of Community & Economic Development Marzie Galazka will work with Greater Lynn Chamber of Commerce to create a forum to work with businesses to help formulate clear and effective re-opening strategies.

Laura DeToma Swanson, Executive Director of Enterprise Center at Salem State University spoke briefly about their programs and services.

There was a discussion about any allowances available to small businesses paying rent during the shut-down. Assistant Town Administrator of Finance and Administration Ron Mendes stated that the Town does not have the ability to grant exemptions to commercial properties under state law. The due date for property taxes has been extended to June 1 and there will be no penalties or interest until after June 30.

Following a discussion on individuals with disabilities waiting in line to get into certain retail stores, it was requested that Jeff Vaughan look into requiring businesses to prioritize individuals with mobility or other disabilities.

Maria Distefano the Northeast Regional Director from Massachusetts Office of Business Development spoke briefly about resources available to businesses.

There was a discussion about having businesses submit a work safety plan before reopening This could help the Board of Health determine they are ready to reopen, and also help the Town develop creative solutions to share with other businesses as well.

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

PRIVATE WAYS ACCEPTANCE

Town Engineer and Tree Warden Kelly Stevens provided a presentation on the Department of Public Work's petition to have the Select Board accept four private ways as public: Atlantic Crossing, Gracie Lane, Morton Hill Ave., and Supreme Court. Ms. Stevens explained the process which includes the residents petitioning to have the streets accepted, the Town ensuring that roadway is in good condition, and the role that the Select Board and Planning Board play in voting to approve the roadway layouts.

Ms. Stevens walked through each of the private ways and the context behind why the petitions for that street are being presented. There was some question among the board regarding the history of the streets. Molly O'Connell, Senior Planner stated that they have pulled all relevant documents and will fully verify any outstanding questions prior to final approval.

There was a discussion about the arrangement the Town has with private ways. Assistant Town Administrator Gino Cresta provided information about what services the Town is already

providing to these streets – trash, utilities, and snowplowing. Supreme Court is still paying for electricity on street lights.

On **MOTION** (Dreeben) and **SECONDED** (Hause) it was voted by roll call that the Swampscott Select Board confirm its intention to layout the following ways as public and refer the petitions and layout plans to the planning board per G.L. c.41 Section 81G and 81I: Atlantic Crossing, Gracie Lane, Morton Hill Avenue, and Supreme Court. Roll Call: Spathanas (YES) Dreeben (YES) Hause (YES) Titcomb (YES) Spellios (YES)

CONSENT AGENDA:

- Review of meeting minutes from the following meeting: April 29, 2020

On **MOTION** (Dreeben) and **SECONDED** (Hause) it was **VOTED** by roll call to approve the Consent Agenda. Dreeben (YES), Spathanas (YES), Titcomb (YES) Spellios (YES)

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR REPORT:

Town Administrator Sean Fitzgerald provided a brief update on several items:

- Finance Committee Task Force discussing questions about FY21 proposed budget and end-of-year shuffle.
- Meetings with Department Heads and Human Resource Direction to look at staffing levels and workflow and demand for Town services
- Deep cleaning of Town Hall and continued efforts to maintain safety in public buildings
- “Swampscott Has Virtual Talent Show” moved to Friday, May 15

SELECT BOARD TIME

Select Board Vice Chair provided an update on the senior outreach program and the plan to begin a survey to gather information about the community’s food needs during the summer when the school lunch program ends.

On **MOTION** (Hause) and **SECONDED** (Titcomb) it was **VOTED** by roll call to adjourn the meeting. Roll Call: Dreeben (YES) Spathanas (YES) Titcomb (YES) Dreeben (YES) Spellios (YES)

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

True Attest,



Allie Fiske, Assistant to the Town Administrator

Minutes APPROVED by vote of the Select Board 5/13/2020