



Town of West Boylston
140 Worcester Street, West Boylston, Massachusetts 01583

Selectboard/Sewer Commission Meeting Minutes

Date / Time / Location of Meeting April 1, 2020; 6:00 p.m.; VIRTUAL MEETING, 140 Worcester Street
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Members Present Patrick J. Crowley, Chairman Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chair John W. Hadley, Clerk Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman

Members NOT Present

Invited Guests:

Mr. Crowley convened the meeting at 6:08 p.m. All members are present.

TOWNS RESPONSE TO COVID-19: Ms. Lucier reads a public announcement which has been placed on website and is attached.

**REVIEW AND VOTE TO APPROVE WARRANTS FOR THE PERIOD COVERING
MARCH 4, 2020 TO APRIL 1, 2020: Town Payable Warrants FY2020-39 and 40; Town
Payroll Warrant FY2020-19; Municipal Light Plant #26.**

Motion Mr. Rajeshkumar to approve, second Mr. Rucho.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Mr. Kittredge, yes

All in favor.

**6:15 P.M. Public Hearing in conformity with the General Bylaws of the town of West
Boylston, ARTICLE XXII – PUBLIC HEARING AND NOTICE to consider amending:**

Mr. Rucho read the Public Hearing Notice.

Motion Mr. Hadley to open public hearing and postpone until May 6, 2020, second Mr. Rajeshkumar.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes
Mr. Hadley, yes
Mr. Rucho, yes
Mr. Kittredge, yes
All in favor.

NEW BUSINESS

1.Consider request for transfer of Common Victuallar License issued to West Boylston House of Pizza:

Motion: Mr. Rucho moved to approve the transfer, second Mr. Hadley.

Roll Call Vote:
Mr. Crowley, yes
Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes
Mr. Hadley, yes
Mr. Rucho, yes
Mr. Kittredge, yes
All in favor.

Mr. Kittredge lost connection 6:21 p.m.

2.Town v. O'Connell (central Housing Court Docket No. 20CV00017): Discuss status and vote to take appropriate action with respect to filing a Statement of Claim at the Registry of Deeds:

Ms. Lucier stated a residence needed to be secured, the Town secured the property and this order in front of the Board allows the Town to recoup fund expended securing the building.

Motion: Mr. Hadley moved to approve the order, second Mr. Rucho.
Roll Call Vote:
Mr. Crowley, yes
Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes
Mr. Hadley, yes
Mr. Rucho, yes
All in favor.

Mr. Kittredge joined back in 6:23 p.m. Mr. Crowley updated Mr. Kittredge on the Town v. O'Connell case and vote taken.

3.Report from Marijuana Sub-Committee on Host Community Agreement Discussion with Evergreen:

Mr. Crowley stated he and Mr. Rucho met with Evergreen and recommends same host community agreement but instead of 3% of sales, \$250,000 flat amount annually for 5 years. Mr. Crowley stated he believes they also offered \$25,000 to the town. Mr. Crowley would like Town Counsel to review and then a final vote on the agreement.

Motion: Mr. Hadley moved to approve the agreement that Mr. Crowley and Mr. Rucho had worked out, second Mr. Kittredge.

Mr. Rajeshkumar stated he did not understand why the town would want to go with the flat amount and not the %. Mr. Crowley explained the sales amounts are unknown. Mr. Rajeshkumar questioned the other agreements were for the 3%, Mr. Crowley explained Evergreen was not willing to enter in an agreement for 3%. Mr. Rucho stated the \$250,000 flat payment equvalated out to \$8.3 million in sales. Mr. Rajeshkumar stated if they are willing to pay \$250,000, he believes they could pay more. Mr. Crowley stated they discussed with Evergreen the difference of wholesale and retail. Mr. Crowley stated they town would have to prove the need for the 3% for the town. Mr. Kittredge asked if this for 5 years, Mr. Crowley stated yes.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, no

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Mr. Kittredge, yes

Four yes, one no motion carries.

4.Consider signing MOU with Town of Sterling for Building Inspector coverage of vacations:

Ms. Lucier explained this is to provide coverage for vacations and other days off for the Building Inspectors in both towns. She stated she anticipates no more than 15 days a year will this be needed. Mr. George Tignor stated he has no issues with the agreement.

Motion: Mr. Hadley moved to approve the order, second Mr. Rucho.

Roll Call Vote:

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Mr. Kittredge, yes

All in favor.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS/SELECTMENS REPORTS:

-Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if the Board should take action on the Annual Town Meeting date change, Ms. Lucier stated she is watching the situation and the Board can discuss at the next meeting.

-Mr. Rajeshkumar asked if the Town is going to close the access to the Rail Trail, Ms. Lucier stated the Board of Health makes the decision on Park and Common closure. Mr. Bob Barrell responded that he hasn't had a chance to check the site but can discuss at their next meeting on April 8th at 6 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION:

Consider entering into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30a, Section 21(A), Part 2 to discuss strategy with respect to negotiations with union and non-union personnel and the Chair declares that an open meting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body.

Motion Mr. Hadley moved to enter into executive session under the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 30a, Section 21(A), Part 2 to discuss negotiations with union and non-union personnel in regards to health insurance options - Chair declares that an open meeting discussion may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining position of the public body and to exit and adjourn the meeting following Mr. Rucho, second, all in favor.

Roll Call Vote

Mr. Crowley, yes

Mr. Rajeshkumar, yes

Mr. Hadley, yes

Mr. Rucho, yes

Mr. Kittredge, abstained and exited meeting.

Motion Mr. Rucho to adjourn at 7:04 p.m. Mr. Rajeshkumar, second all in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Approved April 15, 2020:

Faye D. Zukowski, Municipal Assistant

Patrick J. Crowley, Chairman

Barur R. Rajeshkumar, Vice Chairman

John W. Hadley, Clerk

Christopher A. Rucho, Selectman

Michael J. Kittredge III, Selectman

Town's Response to COVID-19

Good evening,

On March 2nd the town received an invitation from the Worcester Division of Public Health, the lead agency of the Central Mass Regional Public Health Alliance, to attend an informational gathering meeting on Monday, March 9 at the Shrewsbury Public Library due to the ramping up of the Corona virus. I attended that meeting together with Fire Chief Tom Welsh, Board of Health Chair Bob Barrell, member Tom Dillon, and Richard Meagher, principal at the Elementary School. Our public health nurse was also in attendance. Members of the Alliance provided an overview of COVID-19, the role of the Worcester Division of Public Health in a public health emergency within the alliance, isolation/quarantine/hipaa, what communities need to prepare and respond to.

Since that time the town has participated in weekly briefings from the Governor, Department of Public Health, and MEMA. We have been provided with weekly HR updates from Mirick O'Connell and KP Law. As Town Administrator, I begin each day with a morning check in with the Chair of my Board of Health and the Fire Chief.

The town has applied for and been approved for additional funding to cover the cost of additional nursing services, including costs associated with her supplies and mileage.

On March 16th I held a meeting with the Board of Health, their department assistant, our town nurse, Senior Center Director and member of the COA, Library Director, Building Inspector, Town Clerk, Fire Chief, and the officer in charge at the police department. Prior to that I had spoken with the School Superintendent and she indicated that they have their plan in place. We decided to officially closed town buildings to the public. All doors have been posted, notice was placed on the website, and electronic sign board. In addition links for the DPH and CDC are also posted on the website. All employees at this time will be reporting to work, practice social distancing, and we have back up plans in place for dispatch and 911 calls.

On March 18th the Selectboard held an emergency meeting to consider signing a Declaration of a State of Emergency for the Town of West Boylston. The Selectboard and the Board of Health determined that immediate public action was needed in order to prevent or minimize the spread of COVID-19 by and among the people of West Boylston and that it was critical to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of the people of West Boylston. By declaring a state of emergency it will facilitate and expedite the use of resources to protect persons from the impacts of COVID-19, including but not limited to emergency expenditures pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 31 and limitations on operating hours and access to public buildings.

On March 19th we sent out a reverse 911 call to our residents letting them know that due to the COVID-19 virus and an abundance of caution, all town buildings, parks, playgrounds and fields will be closed to the public until further notice. Our DPW secured our town facilities. I also checked with DCR Director John Scannell to see what the plan was for the rail trail. He indicated that they had no plan to close the trail, however, they would remove the porta potties.

On Friday afternoon I was contacted by our nurse and told that we have 2 confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus in town. On Tuesday morning I was notified that we have 3 more cases, bringing our total to 5 and we expect those numbers to climb. Those cases will be monitored by our nurse.

For meetings that cannot be postponed, we have worked with our IT vendor and have Zoom remote software available for our municipal boards/committees/commissions to use for their meetings. Board meetings are being aired on Government Channel 194 of our local public access station.

We are now staggering hours of essential personnel at town hall and relocated staff to other work spaces within town hall.

Our DPW is now operating on a one-person per division schedule.

With regard to permits and inspectional services from the building department,

1. All building permits will be sent via e-mail, fax, or mail. We will keep the orange permit card in this office. The card will be delivered on the first required inspection.
2. Anyone needing an inspection should phone in their request and explain what inspection is needed.
3. Photos or videos will be accepted for any inspections that are not considered life or safety.
4. Once these photos/videos are reviewed, the interested party will be contacted and allowed to proceed.
5. Any inspections that are considered structural or life safety will be done on a case by case basis.

With regards to the Fire Department, the Chief reports that the Wachusett Regional Communication Center has been doing a phenomenal job being our first line of defense, screening calls with the COVID -19 questionnaire, and reporting their findings to the Police and First Responders, before we arrive on scene to take the required precautions needed.

The Fire and EMS crews have been brought up to speed on the new procedures for handling medicals, positive or negative, as well as de-coning equipment and apparatus. Starting last Thursday we are doing a pretest of the crew coming on shift which will consist of taking a temperature and answering a few questions. If they have a fever or answer yes to any of the questions they will be asked to go home and self-quarantine for the 14 days required or until they are tested.

The Ambulance is taking a little slower approach when arriving on scene, keeping a 6' distance when talking to family or patient to get the story of what is going on. We then have one masked (N95) EMT give a surgical mask to the patient or family member to place on the patient. That one EMT enters the home and evaluates the patient. The other EMT and Safety Officer (responding from home at night) stand by at the door to retrieve equipment or assist with patient care, if needed. Family is no longer allowed to ride in the ambulance, because they are not allowed to the emergency room either.

On fire calls we are taking extra precautions when entering homes and business, wearing surgical masks and asking the residents to do the same or remove themselves from the property. We are limiting the number of Firefighter entering the property, until we have a better handle on what is taking place. All inspections are suspended, unless requested by the Fire Chief. Should the call volume increase, we have a contingency plan for extra staffing.

Our Senior Center volunteers are using social distancing and taking additional precautions as they are still preparing and delivering meals through our Meals on Wheels Program. All meals are now delivered to the Center pre-packaged, which has resulted in the reduction of the number of volunteers needed to coordinate that program. The numbers of seniors signing up for Meals on Wheels has increased since the Center is now closed to the public, and the Director reports that they are handling it. The senior vans are operating on a reduced schedule and regular passengers book their appointments directly with the WRTA. Any new participants book their appointments though the Senior Center.

The Police Chief reports that everything in his department is running smoothly at this time and they are adhering to sanitation protocol.

Currently Republic is continuing to pick up our curbside trash/recycling, the Pink Bag Program has been suspended, and the Regional Recycling Center is closed until further notice.

A special thank you to the jail and Knollwood Nursing Home for providing hand sanitizer and thermometer covers to the Fire Department, and to Curtis Industries for donating two cases of rubber gloves for the Police Department.

Myself and the Select board would also like to thank the residents for their patience and cooperation during this challenging time and remind them that on the Home Page of our website we have posted contact information for all our municipal services.

Our municipal employees and town boards and committees are doing a commendable job keeping services running. I thank them for their flexibility with their work schedules.

I would like to acknowledge the diligent efforts of our police officers and the dedicated members of our Fire and EMS crews as they continue to respond to the needs of our residents and businesses. Their commitment to our community is exceptional and we are very fortunate to have these individuals working in our town.

In closing I would like to thank the Board for their support during these challenging times.

If residents have any questions, please feel free to call the office of the Town Administrator/Selectboard at 774-261-4012.