

Town of Swanzey, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Meeting – June 16, 2020
Town Hall, 620 Old Homestead Highway and remotely using Zoom.
Swanzey, NH

Note: Draft Minutes are subject to review, correction and approval by the Board. Review and approval of Minutes generally takes place at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board.

ZOOM MEETING during Health Emergency

Town Administrator Michael Branley hosted a ZOOM online conference call at 2:00 pm at Town Hall due to the public health emergency. Emergency Meeting pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, Section 8 and Emergency Order #12, Section 3.

Present were Selectmen W. William Hutwelker, Sylvester Karasinski and Kenneth P. Colby, Jr. Also present was Town Administrator Michael Branley and Recording Secretary Beverly Bernard.

PUBLIC ACCESS

Notice was given to the public to participate remotely over Zoom by going to www.zoom.us or using the Zoom App on a cell phone, or a landline calling 1 929 205 6099 and entering Meeting ID 235 370 4380 #. The notice also provides a phone number: 352-7411 ext. 107 to call should a member of the public be unable to access the meeting.

OTHERS PRESENT

State Representative Jennie Gomarlo, Caddy Gregory, State Representative Barry Faulkner, Recreation Director Aaron Cherry, Human Services and Resources Coordinator Edna Coates and Assessor Dave Marazoff

COVID-19 UPDATE

Branley provided updated numbers: Current NH cases are 5345, recovered are 4041, deaths are at 320. He said there are 984 active cases, which is a downward trend. Cheshire has 8 current cases. He said the Governor stated the Stay-at-Home order has ended and now there is a Stay-at-Home advisory. Folks over 65 are encouraged to remain home. He spoke about funding for rental assistance and asked Coates to provide information.

Coates said the July 1 hold on evictions will be lifted but there is \$35,000,000 between agencies in the state offering assistance. \$15,000,000 will be set aside of housing and stabilization program. She noted a \$2,500 grant will be available for rental assistance. Families must be able to maintain payments going forward. For families who cannot maintain housing payments, there will be ongoing rental assistance until such time as the families are more stable. There is a program to assist the homeless to get housing. She said three clients came into Town Hall recently and they owed over \$5,000 in utilities and back rent together. She said a letter will be going out to needy folks as to the resources they need.

Faulkner asked if expenses are related to those only incurred during COVID-19. Coates said the expenses covered are those from April 1 and going forward through July 1. Those receiving funds have to show that their expenses are Covid-19 related such as loss of a job. Branley thanked Coates for her work. Karasinski also expressed thanks.

Branley spoke about liquor stores reopening. He said there is no current date for the Swanzey store.

Cherry said he has been working with staff and Fire Department and summer camp will have PPE training for camp staff. Camp will follow the guidelines set out. Branley said camp starts the June 29th. Colby asked about restaurants opening. Do they need to be at 50% capacity? Branley said some counties are at that limit, but Cheshire can open at full capacity but have to have adequate spacing between tables.

Gomarlo spoke about legislative activity. They will be meeting again in a few weeks.

Dave Marazoff said his staff will be going out with appointments in regard to abatement requests. 11-12 abatements need to be wrapped up and they will make the July 1st deadline to provide recommendations to the Board of Selectmen. He spoke about residential homes in business district. Marazoff said there is an RSA for tax payers within a business district; they can request the Town assess their property as a residence without the commercial influence. He noted two have requested such. Land base rate does show a difference between commercial property and primary residence. He said the properties are assessed a bit higher for homes used solely as a residence in a business district. He said the Board will see those abatement applications in the future.

Bernard noted the Chesterfield Inn is now open both for outside and inside dining.

Colby thanked all for attending the meeting and Branley closed the meeting.

Meeting over at 2:19 pm

Respectfully Submitted,



Beverly Bernard, Recording Secretary

Approved on June 17, 2020