

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD
TOWN OF PETERBOROUGH
Thursday, March 19, 2020 – 5:00 PM
1 Grove Street, Peterborough, New Hampshire

Present: Tyler Ward, Karen Hatcher (remotely), Bill Taylor

Also Present: Rodney Bartlett, Nicole MacStay (remotely), Chief Ed Walker, Alison Kreutz

Chair Ward opened the meeting at 5:00 PM.

Chief Ed Walker – COVID-19 Update

Chief Walker acknowledged that the situation is changing very rapidly. There are 44 confirmed cases in New Hampshire at this time.

Town Services

- The Town is continuing to provide all essential services to our residents. The town house, fire department, and police department are asking people to conduct business via telephone or email if at all possible. If business must be conducted in person, please make an appointment.
- The Library is closed, but is still offering curbside pick-up, and wi-fi is available from the Library parking lot and also the Recreation Office parking lot.
- Recreation has canceled inside programming and Adams Playground is now closed.
- Regarding Recycling Center changes, 1&2 plastics, mixed paper, and cardboard can be disposed of in residential solid waste compactor; no need to bag. Please continue to use PAYT for household waste and delay bringing larger items (furniture, appliances, etc.) for disposal. Glass, household batteries, electronics, and light bulbs should continue to be recycled as they typically are at the facility.

Healthcare

- We have been in contact with Monadnock Community Hospital and are currently working closely with them on any community related issues or concerns.
- MCH is making some changes within their practices to allow for the consolidation of providers to meet any current and future needs around this pandemic.
- Any individual who suspects they have COVID-19 and is experiencing mild symptoms should call their primary care physician. If do not have a primary care doctor, MCH practices are still accepting patients. Call 911 for life-threatening emergencies.

School District

- ConVal District has started delivery of food to students eligible for the free and reduced lunch program, as well as the End 68 Hours of Hunger participants. The School Board voted to extend breakfast and lunch program to all students in the district

Retirement Communities

- Retirement communities are doing well, considering. There is a lot of good collaboration happening, and another group call is scheduled for next week.

Community Service Organizations

- Community Service Organizations. Food Pantry will be offering “drive-by” service for currently qualified customers of the Food Pantry, available Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM at the Community Center on Elm Street.

Businesses

- Governor Sununu has ordered restaurants and bars closed (expect for delivery and take out).

- The Town has established a portal for businesses to share information, and 25 area businesses have taken advantage (as of this afternoon). Peterborough Chamber of Commerce will be sharing it with all Chamber members as well.
- Vital links on the website

Ms. Hatcher asked what the Food Pantry's plan is for new customers. Chief Walker said the plan is to expand within the next couple of weeks if an increased need is apparent.

Ms. Hatcher mentioned that Monadnock at Home is looking for volunteers to make calls and grocery deliveries; check the Monadnock at Home website for details. Chief Walker said Monadnock at Home is now accepting new memberships free of charge.

Ms. Hatcher encouraged people to join the Peterborough Area Cares During COVID-19 Facebook page.

Chair Ward asked how families of ConVal system are being notified. Chief Walker said ConVal is notifying households via their own "robust" notification system.

Chair Ward asked about roadside clean up: Would it be possible for the blue bags that are distributed around Earth Day to be available sooner? Mr. Bartlett said he will check with Concord to see when those bags will be available.

Ms. Hatcher said MCH is accepting donations of vital items from the community.

Restricted Access to Public Buildings

Mr. Bartlett explained that starting Monday, March 23rd, access to public buildings will be restricted to staff in an effort to protect both staff and the public. The public is encouraged to use online and phone resources to conduct town business when possible and, if necessary, appointments can be made for face-to-face interaction when necessary. He stressed that, though the buildings may be closed to public access, town employees are still hard at work to provide all vital services to residents.

Emergency Personnel Policy

Ms. MacStay went over the proposed Emergency Addendum to the Employee Manual:

- No employee with a fever over 99.5 degrees may report to work. Employees must stay home and contact their supervisor immediately. Any supervisor who learns that an employee has a fever over 99.5 degrees must inform the Town Administrator and Deputy Town Administrator immediately. The employee must stay home until they are free of fever, signs of fever and any other symptoms for at least 24 hours, without the use of fever-reducing or other symptom-altering medicines (e.g. cough suppressants). The employee shall call their supervisor for clearance before returning to work.
- Employees whose household includes a person who is sick with COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms must stay home and contact their supervisor immediately.
- Employees are required to practice social distancing as much as possible. This includes avoiding riding in the same vehicle, sitting together during meal breaks and working in close proximity to each other.
- As much as possible, employees should encourage the public to conduct their business with the Town online, by email or phone. The public will be directed to call ahead and make an appointment before attempting to conduct any business in person.
- The Town of Peterborough will provide all full-time employees with an additional 40 hours of Emergency Leave. Part-time employees shall receive prorated leave. This Emergency Leave must be requested through your supervisor in the same way sick leave is typically requested and approved. Please see Chapter Seven – Leave of the Employee Manual for more information. The additional time is intended to support such needs as:
 - Securing longer-term childcare in response to school and daycare closures
 - Securing elder care support

Ms. MacStay added that she understands there is a bill on its way through the legislature that will require that all employees grant 80 hours of leave to full-time employees, and grant pro-rated leave to part-employees. If that passes, it would supersede anything the Town has in place, but the addendum would serve as the guidelines for town employees in the meantime.

Motion: Ms. Hatcher made a motion to accept proposed Emergency Addendum to the Employee Manual.

Vote: Mr. Taylor seconded. All in favor. Motion passed.

Chair Ward thanked Ms. MacStay for putting the addendum together.

Guidance for Boards & Committees

Chair Ward recognized the great importance of the Town's many boards and committees. Boards and Committee appointed by the Select Board shall not meet unless statutorily required to do so until such time as the State of Emergency is listed. Elected boards are urged to do the same.

Ms. MacStay explained that state law requires land use actions go forward in a timely manner – at the current moment, there haven't been any adjustments made. If there is a requirement to hold Planning, ZBA, or Con Com meetings, they still have to go forward, even if it's in a virtual format. The public should be able to provide input in a timely, if not concurrent, manner, though technological issues can make that challenging.

Ms. Hatcher asked if the NH Municipal Association has been in touch with the Governor about an executive order to adjust the process, considering the current circumstances. Ms. MacStay confirmed, and said they were working on easing the restrictions around land use, and are also working on finding some flexibility with the Right To Know Law, so that as long as publicly accessible, it can take place virtually. "It's incredibly challenging," as not every community in New Hampshire has broadband coverage. NHMA and New Hampshire's Department of Homeland Security and others had a meeting earlier today on that subject.

Chair Ward thanked Town Department Heads for all their hard work while dealing with the rapid changes.

Via Facebook, Robert Sullivan asked about plans to expand broadband coverage. Mr. Taylor said the Board is "very actively" working on forming partnerships several different companies to expand coverage.

Via Facebook, Raymond Cote asked what the plan was for Town Meeting. Ms. MacStay said the town moderator has the power to postpone Town Meeting, but the decision cannot officially be made until within 48 hours of the meeting, so the official postponement would have to wait until April 5th. Chair Ward said Mr. Runyon could rule on that when the time comes.

Ms. Hatcher asked Ms. MacStay to confirm that the Facebook page was being regularly monitored. Ms. MacStay confirmed, and said residents were also welcome to email the Select Board with any questions: selectboard@peterboroughnh.gov.

Motion: Mr. Taylor made a motion to

Vote: Chair Ward seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Mr. Taylor made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 5:32 PM. Chair Ward seconded. All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,
Alison Kreutz, Department Assistant

PETERBOROUGH
SELECT BOARD:

DocuSigned by:

Peter W. Adams

DocuSigned by:

Karen Hatcher

DocuSigned by:

Bill Taylor

ACTION ITEM PENDING LIST

- 1.