



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MINUTES
REMOTE MEETING**

MONDAY NOVEMBER 16, 2020

Members Present: Richard W. Brewer, Chair
Shana M. Shufelt, Vice Chair
Ann E. Boxler, Clerk
Steven J. Ouellette
Brian T. Valcourt

Also Present: Timothy King, Town Administrator

Select Board Chair, Mr. Brewer, called the remote meeting to order at 6:01 pm

Pledge of Allegiance: The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chair's Announcement – Under MGL Chapter 30A, section 20(f) – Meeting being recorded.

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Westport Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings as provided for in the Order. The public was invited to join the meeting through the links provided at the time of posting.

1. Acknowledgments & Recognitions

Mr. Brewer acknowledged the election process work by the Clerk's office for executing the national elections. He also recognized the staff, volunteers and Our Lady of Grace Church for use of the hall. Mr. Brewer thanked the voters for supporting the roof replacement ballot question. That work should be completed by 2022.

Senator Mike Rodriques was congratulated for his reelection as was Representative Paul Schmid.

Mr. Brewer noted the Veteran's Day ceremony and rolling parade for which a recording can be found on the Town Veterans webpage.

Mr. Brewer noted the earthquake this past Saturday and expressed concern over any residents that may have suffered structural damage, although there have not been any reports.

He reminded listeners that the next Selectman's meeting is not until December 7, 2020, due to the Thanksgiving holiday.

He stated the Board wishes all a safe Thanksgiving Holiday.

2. Updates

a. COVID-19

Westport has now been in the "red" or higher risk category for four consecutive weeks. The community had to revert back to Step 1 of Phase 3 as of Monday, November 9th, and will remain there until we are no longer considered a high-risk community. Indoor performance venues are now closed, outdoor gatherings in public are limited to 50 (vs. 100), and capacity at various facilities is reduced to 40%. Please see the attached chart for a full summary of changes due to the rollback.

Household transmission seems to be the main source of positive cases in town. If someone in your household is positive for COVID-19 please follow the appropriate isolation and quarantine protocols. Following the correct protocols is critical in stopping the spread.

We have had to turn all contract tracing over to the state Community Tracing Collaborative (CTC) team because the numbers overwhelmed our ability to keep up. The CTC is also having challenges due to the high volume of cases statewide. However, we have worked out a protocol so that when the CTC is unable to reach a person (case or contact), the Board of Health will be notified to make one last attempt to reach them. If we are unsuccessful in reaching that person (case or contact), a wellness check will be conducted. Contact tracing is a key element to breaking chains of transmission, so I urge Westport residents to cooperate with the CTC or Linda Pierce, our town nurse, if you should get a call – it will help the entire community.

I hate to be the Grinch, but we have to step up the vigilance to start bringing the levels of positive cases back down. As we go into the holiday season, I would encourage folks to keep family gatherings limited and wear masks whenever you are with people outside your immediate household, even indoors.

Reminders:

Town Hall and Annex – Open to the public BY APPOINTMENT ONLY as of today. Service by phone, mail, outdoor drop box, or online is highly recommended. Face masks are required for in-person appointments. All outdoor town facilities, such as playgrounds, tennis courts, and the transfer station remain open. Recreation activities that can occur outdoors are also encouraged.

BUSINESS EARLY CLOSING: Governor's COVID-19 Order #53 (effective November 6). Requires the early closure of certain businesses and activities each night at 9:30 PM. The 9:30 PM closure requirement is aligned with the Stay At Home Advisory and together the two new initiatives are designed to further limit activities that could lead to COVID-19 transmission.

STAY AT HOME ADVISORY (<https://www.mass.gov/news/stay-at-home-advisory>)

In order to comply with this advisory, **between the hours of 10 pm and 5 am, you must:**

- ☐ **Only leave home to go to work or school, or for essential needs** such as seeking emergency medical care, going to the grocery store or pharmacy, picking up take-out food, or receiving deliveries. If you do leave home, practice social distancing by staying 6 feet away from others and wearing a face covering.
- ☐ Do Not have gatherings in your home with anybody outside of your household.
- ☐ Comply with all Governor's Orders, including orders requiring face coverings, limiting gatherings, and mandating early closure of businesses.
- ☐ Practice social distancing and avoid touching surfaces frequently touched by others if you go outside to get fresh air.
- ☐ Use remote modes of communication like phone or video chat instead of visiting friends or family.

Travel Order: As of 11/14 only **HI, VT, NH and ME** are low risk states. Detailed travel order instructions and the travel risk map can be found [here](#). In summary, all visitors entering Massachusetts, including returning residents, must:

1. Complete the online Massachusetts Travel Form prior to arrival, unless they are visiting from a lower-risk state.
2. Quarantine for 14 days or produce a negative COVID-19 test result that has been administered up to 72-hours prior to arrival in Massachusetts.

Thanksgiving: As Westport residents plan for the Thanksgiving holiday, we offer the following considerations to help keep our friends, families, and communities safe during COVID-19:

- ☐ Wear a mask when not eating or drinking
- ☐ Wash your hands often with soap and water
- ☐ Stay at least six feet apart from others
- ☐ Consider if those around you may be at higher risk of severe illness from COVID- 19, such as older adults or those with certain medical conditions, and take extra precautions
- ☐ If gathering indoors, improve ventilation by opening windows and doors

To view the full Thanksgiving guidance, please visit the Board of Health website.

Flu vaccine: Flu vaccines are available from the Town Nurse by appointment only. We no longer have any high dose (for over 65) vaccine in our supply. Please call 508-636- 1030 if you would like to make an appointment.

Thursday 10am will begin the COVID internal committee

Ms. Shufelt stated that she believes the Board of Appeals is meeting in person and that there should not be so many people in that room. She stated she does not know whether the BOS has the authority to stop them or what the implications of that are. She stated that the Library Trustees have been meeting in person and did not think that should continue either. It is dangerous for groups to be in close proximity to each other and is concerned. She thought to ask the ZBA and Library Trustees to consider this. Ms. Shufelt asked what the capacity was for the meeting room and if there was enough space to maintain everyone at 6 feet apart. Mr. Armendo stated there can be 8 people per 1,000 square feet and estimated no more than 20 could fit in that room. Ms. Shufelt asked to reach out to those boards and encourage them to meet remotely again. She opined that the ZBA did not appear to like meeting remotely but they are an appointed board of the Selectmen. Susan Branco, Library Director stated that the Trustees will be meeting remotely in December.

Mr. Brewer asked about the State guidance for Thanksgiving limiting household members. He asked the specific guidance from Mr. Armendo. He stated the gathering size is limited to 10 people and out of state visitors would need to follow quarantine protocols.

Mr. Brewer asked how long this is expected to continue. Mr. Armendo stated some of this will be discussed at a meeting next week. Mr. Armendo stated that Chief Legendre has reinstituted the situation meetings for members of town government.

b. COVID-19 Fatigue

Pandemic fatigue is real and some authorities feel people have a physical exhaustion from navigating uncertainty and struggle with limits and restrictions. These things cause fatigue. She stated that some believe that the uptick is because of pandemic fatigue. Pandemic Fatigue is described as physical and mental exhaustion caused by a hyper awareness or hyper vigilance. She discussed coping tactics and taking a pause from hyper vigilance. The public is welcomed to reach out to the Board of Health for more information.

6:05 pm

3. Licenses/Permits.

- a. **Public Hearing.** Request approval on an application by NCES, Inc. for a transfer of a Section 12, on-premises Seasonal Wine and Malt Alcohol License DBA Village Pizza, located at 760 Main Road, Westport, MA, Neil T. Cesario, Manager. **Motion** by Mr. Valcourt to approve. Seconded

by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

- b. Request approval for a Common Victualler's License for new manager of Village Pizza, Neil Cesario, located at 760 Main Road. **Motion** by Mr. Valcourt to approve. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.
- c. Pole Hearing: Request approval of a petition to locate one (1) 35' SO Pole #32-1, to service 258 Brayton Point Road at a point approximately 35' north of existing Pole #32. **Petitioner:** Massachusetts Electric Company/National Grid. **Motion** by Mr. Valcourt to approve. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.
- d. Pole Hearing: Request approval of a petition to locate one (1) 35' JO Pole #30/37½, on the northerly side of Charlotte White Road at a point approximately 48' westerly of existing Pole #30/38 and approximately 125' easterly from existing Pole # 30/37 on the northerly side of Charlotte White Road. **Petitioner:** Verizon New England and NSTAR Electric D/B/A Eversource Energy. **Motion** by Mr. Valcourt to approve. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

4. **Discussion**

Status of hybrid meeting capabilities in the Town Hall and Annex meeting rooms.

Keith Novo explained that Westport has been one of the first towns to go remote. As the technology progressed, the vendor has provided other options. There is new hardware that allows for meeting in the meeting room and allowing the camera to project to remote audiences and projecting on the white board. The calendaring program allows scheduling the room through the calendar on google. The box in the meeting room will allow a google meet room or resource. The licensing through Google was recently upgraded for the Town.

5. **Action Items**

- a. Request permission by Boy Scout Troop 3 to decorate the front of Town Hall for the holidays tentatively on December 5, 2020. Mr. Ouellette stated that this has been done in the past. Ms. Amaral asked for the Annex to be decorated as well. Ms. Shufelt asked if the Highway Department needs to assist. Mr. Ouellette noted that in the past ornaments would be blown away so it may not be possible. **Motion** by Mr. Ouellette to approve. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.
- b. Accept donations to the Council on Aging for a total of \$5,170.00 from the following: Bill Gifford, \$20; Barbara Bettencourt, \$20; Ralph Urban, \$25; Neil Van Sloun, \$5,000; Delores Fell, \$100; Anonymous, \$5.
Motion by Ms. Boxler to accept the donations. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.
- c. Accept donations for the food pantry through the Recreation Department in the amount of \$870.00 from the following: John P. King & Mary E. Pelletier - \$50; Anne M. Fonseca & David Moreira

- \$100; Evelyn L. Wilber - \$100; Lawrence & Susan Rollins - \$25; Michael A. Woodhouse - \$250; Laura A. Medeiros - \$50; Eugenia P. Cummings - \$100; Anonymous Donors cash totals - \$195. **Motion** by Ms. Boxler to accept the donations. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye. Ms. Stewart noted that next Monday November 23, 2020 the food bank will be offering free turkeys to people in need.

- d. Accept donation from the Westport Fire Fighters Union into the Veteran's Food Pantry account in the amount of \$250.00.

Motion by Ms. Shufelt to approve. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

- e. Authorize Veteran's Memorial Fund to purchase a brick paver for the Vietnam Wall in Fall River to honor all Westport Veterans for \$250.00. **Motion** by Mr. Ouellette to approve. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

The Board thanked Ms. Freitas for the Veterans Day rolling parade.

- f. Authorize the Town Administrator to notify East Beach trailer permit holders of the year-end removal of property. Mr. King stated that the belongings on East Beach need to be removed. Motion by Mr. Valcourt to authorize Mr. King to inform the lot owners to remove all unpermitted items. Mr. Valcourt did notice several dozen staircase still left behind. Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

6. Appointments and Resignations

Accept resignation from John Miller member of the Cable Advisory Committee. Members were thankful in the various ways they worked with Mr. Miller and expressed sentiments that he would be missed.

Motion by Mr. Ouellette to accept with a letter of regret. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

7. Town Administrator Report

Mr. King attached the unofficial results for the elections. Charter will be implementing the rate increase. The Town Buildings led light installation has been completed. The COA furnace will be next and paid through the Green Communities grant. Budgets are almost all submitted and will be provided to the Board.

8. Approve Minutes

November 2, 2020. **Motion** by Ms. Boxler to approve. Seconded by Ms. Shufelt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

9. Report on Bill Warrant

Mr. Brewer stated, upon his review, all was in order.

10. Selectmen Liaison Committee Reports & Suggestions for Future Agenda Discussion / Action

Ms. Boxler had nothing to report.

Mr. Ouellette noted the same concerns for Route 6. He thanked the people who helped with the rolling parade for Veteran's Day. He mentioned that no-parking signs are still posted at the Horseneck Point landing and should be removed as it is after the season.

Ms. Shufelt stated the next Parking Permit Task Force meeting is Nov 30. Wednesday 11-18-20 is the next School building committee meeting.

Mr. Valcourt said the East Beach Vulnerability Corridor meeting; he attended the SRTA Board meeting and the Agricultural Open Space Preservation Trust Committee meeting reviewing 12 Chapter-61 requests.

Mr. Brewer discussed the Bristol County Commissioners meeting will be looking at next year budget and will have more information about future assessments.

11. Boards/Committees/Commissions Vacancy List

Ms. Boxler summarized committee vacancies.

12. Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting.

None.

13. Comments and Statements.

None.

14. Executive Session – On a **Motion by Mr. Valcourt and Seconded by Ms. Shufelt, members entered into Executive Session at 7:34 pm. and adjourned the regular session at its conclusion.**

Pursuant to the provisions of MGL c 30A section 21(a), Chair declares an open meeting will have a detrimental effect to:

- a. discuss strategy with respect to litigation concerning the Greenwood suit (3).
- b. approve Executive Session Minutes.

The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

Adjournment:

Motion by Mr. Valcourt to adjourn at 7:54 pm. Seconded by Ms. Boxler. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call. **Roll Call Vote:** Boxler, Aye. Ouellette, Aye. Shufelt, Aye. Valcourt, Aye. Brewer, Aye.

Respectfully submitted,



Lucy Tabit Administrative Assistant/
Confidential Clerk

APPROVED:



Ann E. Boxler, Clerk, Select Board Member

Attachments to Agenda of 11/16/20:

3a village Pizza Liq lic - owner trf app; 3b Village Pizza CV for Neil Cesario; 3c 258 Brayton Point Rd pole petition packet; 3d 91 Charlotte White Rd pole petition packet; 4 Google Meets; 5b COA Oct donations; 5c Rec Dept. Food Pantry donations 11-9-20; 6 John Miller resignation; 7 TA Report 111620; 8 BOS minutes 110220; 9 Bill warrant 11-16-20.