



**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MINUTES  
REMOTE MEETING  
Monday March 30, 2020**

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

Also Present: Timothy King, Town Administrator

Select Board Chair, Ms. Shufelt called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm in the Westport Town Hall, 2nd floor meeting room, 816 Main Road, Westport, MA.

**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.

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

**6:05 p.m.**

**1. Licenses**

- a. **Public Hearing.** Request by Fernando Perreira d/b/a Ferns Auto Repair for approval of a Motor Vehicle Repair License located at 276-280 State Road. Mr. Perreira introduced himself and spoke a little about his repair shop. He said that the plan was approved for 36 cars but he is only seeking 8-9 spaces for his repair business. Ms. Paquette, land owner, stated he only needs 8-9 spaces. **MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to approve a new Repair License for Fernando Perreira dba Ferns Auto Repair for 9 vehicles. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Ouellette, Aye; Valcourt, Aye; Shufelt, Aye.

**2. Action Items**

- a. Release of Lien Book 6198, Page 285. The release is called for after a loan, issued by the Town, is paid off in full for a clear title. **MOTION** by Mr. Valcourt release. Seconded by Mr. Ouellette. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Ouellette, Aye; Valcourt, Aye; Shufelt, Aye.

**3. Discussion items**

- a. COVID-19 updates and discussion. Town Nurse, Linda Pierce briefed the Board. There are 797 new cases in the state, 59 deaths and 5 cases in Westport. She noted there are cases that are quarantined. Mr. King recognized the staff at the Health Department and in particular Mr. Armendo and Ms. Pierce. Ms. Shufelt also mirrored that sentiment. Mr. Armendo noted that the

stay at home has been extended by the President. Mr. King asked him to explain to the Board, how the Board of Health is handling the out-of-town visitors. Mr. Armendo said they posted a public health advisory for anyone coming in from out of state self-quarantine, on line and at local stores.

Betty Slade asked if this can be enforced. Mr. Armendo stated it is an advisory at this time.

Ms. Shufelt noted the Council on Aging is providing Senior Services. The Town webpage is carrying much information and one can e-subscribe.

Ms. Shufelt met with Mr. Ouellette and the Emergency Management Group. Mr. Armendo and the Board of Health are at the forefront. She noted that the website is being constructed to manage and accommodate the information as it is becomes available. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Shufelt asked the Board, from a communication point of view, if the Town should report the number of cases and how often. The State does not recommend it. Mr. Valcourt felt that it should be reported to demonstrate to people that there are cases present as a reminder to stay at home. Mr. Brewer and Mr. Ouellette agreed to this as numbers are increasing. Ms. Boxler also agreed to this. Ms. Shufelt stated that this Board prefers daily reporting of cases. Under no circumstances will any information on the individual cases be permitted to be shared publically, it is confidential, unless the Nurse decides there is a reason to notify other persons. Ms. Shufelt was complimentary to Ms. Tabit for the work on the website.

Ms. Shufelt noted that Senator Rodrigues and State Representative Paul Schmid have reached out offering assistance.

Ms. Shufelt stated that there is possible legislation about due dates but encouraged taxes be paid on time.

Because Ms. Shufelt will be acting on behalf of the Board, she asked for members to volunteer for specific things to lighten her load as she is still working from home. All members offered to take anything she would like to delegate. This is all new for the Emergency Management Team having only had experience with weather events and storms in the past.

Ms. Shufelt asked for public comment and hearing none, continued the meeting.

Constance Gee asked if anyone is asking the Governor to mandate a 14-day quarantine. Ms. Shufelt is not aware if anyone is specifically asking. Carol Freitas asked if the closing of Town Buildings will be extended. Ms. Shufelt will wait for guidance from the Governor.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette that in accordance with the Town Emergency Management Plan, the Board of Selectmen authorize the Chair to act on behalf of the Board regarding decisions for the COVID-19 outbreak. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Ouellette, Aye; Valcourt, Aye; Shufelt, Aye.

b. Town Elections discussion.

Mr. Ouellette will not participate or vote in the discussion as he is on the ballot for re-election. Mr. Valcourt will abstain from voting with the Board as he is also on the ballot for re-election.

Legislation has allowed communities to postpone elections and to ask for recommendations from the Town Clerk. Marlene Samson recommended the Board vote to postpone the election because



of the circumstances and the danger to the public and the poll workers who are seniors. Ms. Samson stated the Board can vote to postpone and not yet set a date however, she warned that 20 day lead time is necessary for posting the ballot and within 10 days prior to the election, voter registration is required to be open.

Mr. Armendo stated that, Board of Health guidance and recommendations for social distancing and managing crowds, and due to for the lack of supplies, means postponement is a good idea.

Ms. Shufelt called on Ms. Boxler and Mr. Brewer for any questions. Mr. Brewer asked if the incumbents will continue until then. It was confirmed that they would. Ms. Boxler stated that that it would be good to have an idea what date the Board would want to postpone the elections to. Mr. Brewer asked about the elected Town Treasurer and if his term would continue as well. Elected officials terms would continue unless they resigned.

Mr. Ouellette is happy to keep serving. Mr. Valcourt agrees with the Town Clerk and Mr. Armendo concerning this unprecedented public health issue. He feels a vote should be postponed for public safety. He is also happy to serve again. He asked how people can register to vote. Ms. Sampson stated that there is information on the website.

Ms. Shufelt called on the new candidates who were on the line remotely. Those present commented:

Sherrie Mahoney for Selectmen asked if June 30<sup>th</sup> is a set date or if it could change. Ms. Samson stated the legislation has set that as the last day to hold elections but the legislature could change it again.

Bernadette Oliver, candidate for Town Clerk who is expected to serve as the interim Town Clerk when Ms. Samson retires until the election also agreed that postponing was a good idea. Bill Harkins for Board of Health had no questions at this time. Manny Soares candidate for Planning Board asked if people could vote by mail through early voting. The Clerk confirmed that is possible and set up on the website. Ms. Shufelt encouraged everyone to vote. John Bullard candidate for the Planning Board asked the BOH advise if the virus may be worse. He encouraged everyone to vote by mail. Ms. Shufelt stated that an exception was made this year to allow early voting. Mark Schmid, candidate for Planning Board asked if the voting was able to be spread over a few days. Discussion ensued.

Ms. Oliver gave her thoughts in support of Ms. Samson's recommendations. Ms. Samson said if voting is postponed, that would give the office more time to process votes by mail reducing the number of people who will eventually go out and vote later on.

Manny Soares also agreed to this.

Betty Slade asked if anyone can request a ballot. Ms. Shufelt noted that, yes.

Ms. Shufelt also stated that Town Meeting will be discussed on April 13, 2020 agenda with the Town Moderator in attendance. Guidance from the state allows for Town meeting to occur after June 30.

Jeff Wagner asked how voting for the elections will be conducted – the Town Clerk is encouraging voting by mail. He also asked the best way to get COVID-19 information. Ms. Shufelt referred to the Town website.

**MOTION** by Ms. Boxler to postpone the April 14 election to a date no later than June 30. Seconded by Mr. Brewer. The members voted 3-2-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Shufelt, Aye. Ouellette and Valcourt abstained.

c. **Treasurer Appointment discussion**

Mr. King stated the candidate chosen decided to remain at his current position. Mr. King and the Evaluation Committee recommended that position be reposted.

**MOTION** by Mr. Ouellette to repost the Treasurer position. Seconded by Ms. Boxler. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Ouellette, Aye; Valcourt, Aye; Shufelt, Aye.

Mr. Brewer was confident in the Evaluation Committee and suggested there should be up to 4 candidates next time. Ms. Boxler also felt that the Committee could provide a better report. Mr. King will ask the committee to report.

Mr. King recognized the town employees in their dedication and hard work performing their duties as professionals in this unprecedented time.

Mr. Armendo stated that he is pleased at the cooperation the BOH is receiving from all departments and local business; they are all doing a great job and he can't be happier to work with them.

4. **Minutes**

None available.

5. **Bill Warrant**

Noted.

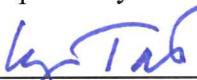
6. **Topics not reasonably anticipated forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting**

None.

**Adjournment**

**Motion** by Mr. Ouellette to adjourn at 7:20 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Valcourt. The Board voted 5-0 in favor by roll call: Boxler, Aye; Brewer, Aye; Ouellette, Aye; Valcourt, Aye; Shufelt, Aye.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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Lucy Tabit Administrative Assistant/  
Confidential Clerk

**APPROVED:**   
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Ann E. Boxler, Clerk, Select Board Member

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**Attachments to Agenda of 3/30/20:**

1a Ferns Repair 276 State application package  
2a Release of Lien  
5 Bill Warrant 040720