A combined Virtual Meeting of the Board of Selectmen RE: COVID 19 was held on

Tuesday March 31 2020, 6pm

Present were:

Dennis Guilfoyle - Chair

Dr. Dennis J. Teehan - Vice Chair

James A. MacDonald

Sarah E. MacDonald

Dimitria Sullivan

Mr. Guilfoyle informed all that all votes will be taken via roll call.

Mr. Guilfoyle called the Meeting to order for the Board of Selectmen at 6:02pm.

Mr. MacDonald, Ms. MacDonald, Dr. Teehan, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Guilfoyle

**Board of Health**

Leanne Jasset, Kathy Reda, Mary Ellard

**Parks & Rec.**

Jonathan Briggs, Tye Donahue, Jim Maher, Lisa Moran, Chuck Dello Iocono

**School Committee**

Kevin Coughlin, Steve Bilafer, Mayanne MacDonald Briggs, Melissa Pearow, Josh Donati, Lisa Laprade and Tracey White.

**Also present and speaking**:

Leon Goodwin, Town Manager, Mike Welch, Superintendent of Dedham Schools

Bob Stanley, Director Parks and Recreation

Bridget Sweet, Interim Director, Health

Mr. Goodwin welcomed everyone to the meeting. Mr. Goodwin stated that these are unprecedented times and this event does not fit any of the traditional scenarios. Mr. Goodwin added that over the past few weeks, with the help of many talented employees, elected officials and others, we have changed the way we do business. In response to the Governor’s March 10, 2020 Declaration of Emergency the Town has taken action to protect the public’s health while continuing to provide essential services. Mr. Goodwin stated that the Select Board and the Board of Health held a joint meeting on March 16, 2020, at which a local State of Emergency was adopted. Mr. Goodwin stated that those Boards also voted to close the playgrounds at that time. The Board also voted to postpone the Town Election that is scheduled for April 11, 2020 and to file Special Legislation to that affect. Mr. Goodwin informed all that the Legislation did pass to allow municipalities to postpone Town elections. Mr. Goodwin continued, saying the Select Board will be voting to formerly ratify the postponement, to a date that is not set yet. Mr. Goodwin stated that another vote will take place to postpone the May Town Meeting.

Mr. Goodwin stated that on March 19, 2020 the Town closed Facilities, Town Hall and all other Town Facilities. Mr. Goodwin added that they migrated most staff to remote work, with only a handful of people rotating into Town Hall. Mr. Goodwin stated that Police, Fire and dispatch remain fully staffed and ready to assist in case of Emergency. To folks that are interested in seeing what services are available should go to the Town’s website for further information. Mr. Goodwin continued, saying that the Town is running a call center out of the Town Manager’s office, where five days a week we will be answering the 781-751-9100 numbers.

Mr. Goodwin stated that one of the major things they have realized while handling this situation is that we need continuous and improved communication. Mr. Goodwin informed all that they have created a COVID19 specific page and have been providing frequent updates to the website. Mr. Goodwin stated that there are signs and message Boards throughout Town and we have been doing weekly press releases in concert with the Board of Health.

Mr. Goodwin informed all that parks, fields and other recreational facilities are closed. Mr. Goodwin added that they have been doing weekly PSAs.

Mr. Goodwin stated that since this crisis began, he has heard many stories about neighbors stepping up to help neighbors. Two noticeable examples involve the Council on Aging and the Food Pantry. Mr. Goodwin added that the COA has been so helpful to a vulnerable part of our population, conducting a lot of outreach, calling folks to see what they need. Last week, working with the food pantry, we were able to deliver over 365 bags of food to 55 households throughout Dedham. Mr. Goodwin stated that this will be happening every 2 weeks. Mr. Goodwin continued, saying that MS Walker a local company that usually makes flavored alcohol, changed their operation to produce hand sanitizer and have provided over 47,000 bottles to the Town.

Mr. Goodwin thanked Dedham’s first responders and other essential employees who have been working countless hours through this crisis.

**Superintendent Welch**

Superintendent Welch thanked those who have been keeping this Town running and the Students safe. Superintendent Welch stated that the schools were closed on Friday March 13, 2020, and that closure has been extended multiple times since then under the direction of the Governor. Superintendent Welch informed all that he has been sending out a weekly email to keep up the communication with the public, teachers and students. Superintendent Welch informed all that the School’s website is being updated nightly. Superintendent Welch explained that students under the age of 18 can receive meals at the Avery School, the Riverdale School and the housing authority offices. Central admin offices are open from 8am – 1pm with a skeletal crew of 2 people 1 administrator and 1 admin asst.

Superintendent Welch added that all students in grades 6-12, have their own district issued chrome book so we are well positioned to move into an on-line platform.

**Bob Stanley,** Parks and Rec Director

**Mr. Stanley** thanked all who have worked hard during this crisis. Mr. Stanley explained the timeline for closures and cancellations. Mr. Stanley stated that the 4major things they are challenged with:

(1 (83%) Cities and organizations have kept their fields open

1. 16% closed them

(2 Trails open or closed to the public?

 92% opened, 3% closed and 5% n/a

(3 Playgrounds open or closed

 37% opened, 63% closed

(3 Dog parks opened?

 43% opened

 25% closed

Mr. Stanley went through a list of activities and classes that have been cancelled. Mr. Stanley spoke briefly about the Flag Day Parade and the possibility of still holding it. Mr. Stanley stated that they are staying in touch and informing the public as to where we stand.

**Bridget Sweet – Interim Health Director**

Ms. Sweet Thanked Mr. Goodwin, Ms. Baker and the Board of Health for all their support and guidance.

Ms. Sweet stated that on March 16, 2020 the Board of Health met with The Select Board to create an Emergency declaration and to close the playgrounds.

Ms. Sweet informed all that the Board of Health met on March 18, 2020 and decided to adopt the 10 or less gathering protocol and voted to institute a temporary closure of fitness centers, ice rinks, indoor facilities, etc. Ms. Sweet added that at that same meeting they decided to suspend non-essential personal care services (hair salons, nail salons, etc., Ms. Sweet informed all that the Board voted to support the daycare facilities that Governor Baker implemented. Ms. Sweet went on to explain what the Board of Health voted against and what they deemed essential. Ms. Sweet continued, saying that the Board of Health has worked closely with Police and Fire to give out PPE to those who need it. Ms. Sweet stated that they have received some grant funding to help support the Health Department. Ms. Sweet added that the Health Department is making sure the food establishments are compliant with social distancing protocols.

Ms. Sweet stated that they sent out posters with instructions on how to carry out the important guidelines. Ms. Sweet stressed how important it is for all Dedham Residents to wash your hands multiple times a day, to sanitize your hands social distancing rules as well as the 10 max for a gathering.

A resident asked Ms. Sweet to address the shift to not reporting Town level data and why.

Ms. Sweet informed all that this came as a strong recommendation from the State last Friday and as of now the Board has not voted to change the structure.

Kevin Coughlin, Chair of School Committee, thanked Superintendent Welch for all of his hard work from the beginning and up till now. Mr. Coughlin added that he would also like to thank the Dedham school employees. Mr. Coughlin asked if someone could get some PPE for the cafeteria workers.

Sam Rippin, Assistant Superintendent, stated that the essential cafeteria Workers are on rotating shifts. Mr. Rippin added that they are practicing social distancing and they are wearing PPE where advisable.

Superintendent Welch stated that in the event there is any opportunity for the Board of Health to access additional PPE, in particular masks, they would welcome.

Ms. Sweet informed all that the virus is not transferrable via food. Ms. Sweet added that masks are not required in food service at this time and there is no recommendation regarding the public wearing PPE. Ms. Sweet stated as of now, the PPE is designed for people who have symptoms or a person who is working with someone who is exhibiting systems.

Ms. Sweet continued, saying that she is in the process of getting more grant money, so when the Health Department orders more PPE, we can look into getting some for the Schools.

Leanne Jasset, Chair Board of Health, thanked everyone for all of their hard work and dedication during this trying time. Ms. Jasset stated that it is extremely necessary for everyone to practice social distancing, wash your hands and sanitize, as well as the other ways to keep you and your neighbor safe and healthy. Ms. Jasset informed all that the BOH will continue to have their weekly meetings, on Wednesdays.

Ms. MacDonald asked about putting together a Town wide mailing for those who do not have internet access and asked Mr. Goodwin for an update.

Mr. Goodwin informed all that the letter should be arriving to resident’s homes either today or tomorrow.

Ms. Sullivan asked about translating to other languages on our website.

Mr. Goodwin stated that they have been making an effort to make sure that information is put on our website in HTML and not PDF as format as HTML enables residents to use Google translator. Mr. Goodwin informed all that they do not, at this time have the capability to translate on the Town’s website.

Mr. Briggs thanked Bob Stanley and his staff for their proactive actions. Mr. Briggs stated that it is necessary for residents to get outside, not only for physical health but for mental health.

Ms. MacDonald brought up the fact that this pandemic is going to significantly impact economically and we as a Town need to start thinking about what mechanisms the Town has to provide either relief or support to residents who have bills piling up. Ms. MacDonald asked what we are doing proactively to support businesses either by helping access Federal and State resources or how we can help locally.

Mr. Goodwin stated that by the next Select Board meeting, he will have some definitive plans on how to move forward in this new normal.

Mr. Guifoyle asked Chairman Coughlin to adjourn the School Committee meeting.

Mr. Coughlin moved to adjourn the School Committee Meeting; seconded by Ms. Pearow.

**On the Vote**:

Tracey White – Yes

Lisa Laprade – Yes

Steve Bilafor - Yes

Mayanne MacDonald Briggs - Yes

Melissa Pearow - Yes

Josh Donati - Yes

Ms. Reda moved to close the Board of Health Meeting; Seconded by Ms. Ellard.

**On the Vote**:

Kathy Reda – Yes

Mary Ellard – Yes

Leanne Jasset – Yes

Mr. Briggs asked for a motion to close the Parks and Rec Meeting.

Chuck Dello Iacono moved to close the Parks and Rec Meeting; Seconded by Lisa Moran.

**On the Vote**:

Tye Donahue – Yes

Jim Maher – Yes

Chuck Dello Iocono – Yes

Lsa Moran – Yes

Jonathan Briggs - Yes

**Select Board Action**

**Vote to Affirm Legislation to Postpone Annual Town Election**

Mr. MacDonald Moved approval; Seconded by Ms. Sullivan.

**On the Vote**:

Sarah McDonald – Yes

Dr. Teehan - Yes

Ms. Sullivan – Yes

Jim MacDonald – Yes

Dennis Guilfoyle - Yes

**Vote to Postpone Annual Town Meeting**

Jim MacDonald moved approval; Seconded by Dr. Teehan.

**On the Vote**:

Sarah McDonald – Yes

Dr. Teehan - Yes

Ms. Sullivan – Yes

Jim MacDonald – Yes

Dennis Guilfoyle - Yes

**Old/New Business**

Ms. MacDonald informed all that this Saturday, the Master Plan Committee is still hosting their kick-off Virtual Visioning workshop starting at 10am.

DesigningDedham2030.org. or go to the Town’s Web Site.

Ms. Sullivan reminded all to keep communication flowing, especially during these trying times.

Mr. MacDonald thanked Mr. Guilfoyle for running this virtual meeting. Mr. MacDonald also thanked Ms. Baker and Mr. Goodwin, who have been at this since the start. Mr. MacDonald informed all to make sure that they are getting their information from trusted web sites and outlets.

Ms. MacDonald asked Mr. Guilfoyle if the Board’s next meeting has been scheduled.

Mr. Guilfoyle answered not yet and they will discuss that with Ms. Baker and Mr. Goodwin.

Dr. Teehan thanked all who were on this virtual meeting. He also stated that he would like to commend the vast majority of Dedham residents who are following the guidelines.

Mr. MacDonald moved to adjourn the meeting; Seconded by Ms. Sullivan.

**On the Vote**:

Ms. MacDonald - yes

Dr. Teehan - yes

Ms. Sullivan - yes

Mr. Guilfoyle, yes

Mr. MacDonald – yes

The next Meeting is scheduled for Thursday April 9, 2020. This is to certify that the above is a true and accurate record of the minutes of the Selectmen’s Meeting held on March 31, 2020 which minutes were approved on June 4, 2020.

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