

**Selectmen Meeting  
Minutes  
March 26, 2020**

Chairman Connolly, Selectman Boisoneau, Selectman Devault and Selectman Dziokonski were present. Via Zoom Selectmen Kerrigan. Town Administrator Ward and Solicitor Gibbons were attendees. Chairman Connolly opened the meeting at 7:00PM.

Chairman Connolly opened the meeting reading a prepared statement acknowledging the hard work of all town employees, all the departments have come together to keep the town services in operation. He acknowledged the members of the Board of Health have been diligently tracking the updates surrounding the pandemic. He thanked them for the open line of communication and collaboration in working together to keep the community safe. He speaks with the Chairman of the Board of Health daily. He thanked his fellow board members for their support and availability to meet, including Selectman Kerrigan for all of his work regarding the communications work. He explained this is an off schedule meeting to be updated on the COVID-19 pandemic, the board will meeting again at its regular scheduled meeting next Wednesday, April 1 to continue work on the upcoming town budget establishing a priority list and other business, including an update on the virus emergency.

**Public Comment**

Chairman Connolly explained the meeting is open to the public via Zoom or Facebook Live, Public Comment was being accepted via e-mail until 6PM today and is still currently open via office telephone. There was none.

**Phil Duffy, Director of Community & Economic Development**

*COVID- 19 Emergency Response: WHEAT Community Connections MoA*

Mr. Duffy reviewed he has been in contacted by the WHEAT office regarding the daily food service being offered. They are seen four times the amount of participation in the program. The Director has asked for the town to initiate the Social Service Act that had been passed in 2015 & 2016 to assists with this food program expense, offsetting their costs by supplementing \$150.00 a day until June 30<sup>th</sup> to allow the service to continue. He presented a draft Memorandum of Agreement to the board which outlines the coverage to the program until the State of Emergency ends or June 30<sup>th</sup>, which ever comes first. Selectman Devault made a motion to approve the MoA as presented, supporting WHEAT food service program with \$150.00 per day. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

*COVID-19 Emergency Response: Small Business Micro Loan Program*

Mr. Duffy explained he would like to utilize the Community Development Fund, by offering a Small Business Loan Program. He explained a similar program has been

utilized by small business in the past for the creation of jobs, miscellaneous income and other business needs. His recommendation is to use \$150,000 in funding to establish a Resiliency Loan Program. The guidelines will include loans up to \$5000.00 per business, to offset the loss of business from March 10<sup>th</sup> through April 30<sup>th</sup>. There will also be assistance offered through Federal Government Programs after April 30<sup>th</sup>. He is hoping this will address the needs of small business and assist them. Selectmen Dziokonski asked what the criteria will be for the loan program. Mr. Duffy reviewed eligibility will include businesses located in Clinton, have one employee other than the owner and any type of business is eligible to participate. There are a set of draft guidelines in the boards packet. The business will have to document monthly and payroll expenses to include the self-certified loss of 50% gross sales. At this time, he has contacted a local banker and a local attorney for professional assistance to evaluate and review applications. Chairman Connolly stated it sounds similar to loan programs run in the past. Mr. Duffy agreed yes, it is similar. Selectman Dziokonski stated the expenses are associated from the emergency. Mr. Duffy agreed. Selectman Dziokonski made a motion to approve the creation of a Small Business Loan Program to be conducted by the Community & Economic Development office under the direction of Mr. Duffy to be funded with \$150,000.00. Selectman Kerrigan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous. Mr. Duffy thanked the board and explained he will get informational material out tomorrow to the small businesses.

#### *COVID-19 Emergency Response: CDBG Grant Amendment*

Mr. Duffy reviewed he would like to offer an informational assistance program through funding from the FY17 CDBG. His recommendation is to amend the grant to allow \$75,000 in funding be used in a Small Business Assistance Program. He explained the loans would be up to \$15,000 per qualified business, the balance in the grant fund is \$150,000, in Commercial Improvements Program. This is an informational for the board he will host a Public Hearing next week and then come to regular meeting for approval.

#### **COVID-19 Coronavirus Emergency Response Update**

##### *State of Emergency Declaration*

Chairman Connolly reviewed in response to the virus emergency the board should make a declaration of a state of emergency for the town. Selectman Devault made a motion to declare a State of Emergency for the town in response to COVID -19. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. Under Discussion: Administrator Ward explained the declaration should go back to the date the Governor declared it for the state. Selectman Devault amended the motion to reflect the state of Emergency declaration begin on the same date as the Governor declared for the state. Selectman Dziokonski seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### *Operations Briefing*

Administrator Ward explained he appreciates the boards support, he has daily contact with the Chairman in collaboration with the Board of Health Chairman there has been a lot of work done in response to the virus emergency. At this time, there has been no disruption to services provided by the town. All departments are in operations, all town offices remain in operation even though the building is closed to public access departments can be reached via e-mail or telephone. A drop box is available in the front of the building where all correspondence for the building can be dropped off. In order to keep social distance offices are sharing coverage. The public safety departments are in continuous operations, there have been no limitations set to the level of service. There have been some first responders in quarantine due to third party exposure. No town employees have tested positive to the virus. Fire Chief Lutes has expressed concern over protective gear supplies, he indicated the state has sent some as of yesterday. The biggest needs are for protective gloves, gowns and masks. As of this afternoon he was notified by the Board of Health to four positive cases in Clinton. The first case was reported last Friday at that time an all call went out to town residents. The Parks & Recreation office, Library and Senior Center are closed to public access. They can be reached via e-mail or by telephone. The library continues to have staff reporting and are working on professional development. They are working on offering more programs through online services, the wi fi is available and assistance is available via e-mail or telephone. The Senior Center continues to offer services through van service and meals on wheels along with outreach to residents. Selectman Dziokonski asked about the number of the reported cases in town, last week there were 2. Administrator Ward explained yes, one case is still under quarantine and the other has recovered. The total number of cases will be shared on the town website, separating those in quarantine and those recovered, the Board of Health updates this daily. The anticipation is the cases will increase. There is one public health nurse so the Chairman has enlisted assistance from the School Department Nurses. They are being trained to assist in monitoring the cases daily. Selectman Devault asked if a citizen thinks they may have the virus, do they contact the Public Health Nurse. Administrator Ward stated no, the nurse is contacted with only the positive cases, any questions or concerns can be addressed by calling the nurse. Selectman Devault asked if a town employee has the virus do they contact the nurse. Town Administrator Ward explained it is helpful to know, the employee should report to Department Head and are advised to the protocol pending the exposure. There have been some cases where family members have had exposure. Selectman Devault asked if all the departments are engaged in work, he is aware some departments have reduced the workforce to keep possible transmission of the virus down. Administrator Ward explained all the administrative office remained staffed, the Police, Fire and Dispatch are regular staff, the DPW is using some distancing measures and staffing alternate days. They are working with reduced staff and rotating staff while working on projects. Selectmen Kerrigan explained he has heard from Deputy Chief Sivert regarding the concerns of the department on the need for a washer and dryer to clean cloths worn on shift prior to

returning to their homes and families. Administrator Ward explained he is aware of the concerns and the Facility Director is working on purchasing the machines and having installed as soon as possible. The department had received a Federal Grant to purchase a commercial washer and dryer to be used to clean gear. The Facilities Director was working on having these installed, there is some work required, the cost is about \$15,000 for the plumbing and electrical needed to complete. He is working on the getting a washer/dryer set now for the department to allow cloths to be washed before they leave work. Selectman Devault made a motion to approve Town Administrator Ward work together with the Facility Director to ensure the purchase and installation of the washer/dryer for the Fire Department be completed. Selectman Boissoneau seconded the motion. Under Discussion: Selectman Devault stated this should not wait until grant funding is available. Chairman Connolly stated this should be made a high priority. Selectman Devault agreed this is the number 1 priority. Chairman Connolly explained the funding is somewhere to support this expense, it can be spent, and the account balanced at the end of the year. Selectman Kerrigan explained he spoke with Facility Director this morning he has washer and dryer. Chairman Connolly explained we need to get it done; it should happen immediately. Selectman Devault stated the board should follow up on this at next weeks meeting. The vote unanimous.

### **Old & New Business**

#### *COVID-19 Information on Website*

Selectman Devault explained he is aware Selectman Kerrigan and Town Administrator have been working on communications and information on the website, he has some suggestions. He recommended adding important links on the site, and having content be the home page. He can speak to both the Administrator and Selectman Kerrigan more offline with more recommendations. Chairman Connolly explained please work with Selectman Kerrigan, please get him all of your suggestions, this is an ongoing event and he is doing great work on keeping residents informed and up to date.

#### *Acknowledgement of Service Workers in Community*

Selectman Dziokonski expressed thanks to all the steadfast grocery store clerks, he is impressed by the continuation of hard work. These people engage and touch every household in the town. All retail establishments should be saluted for all their dedication and hard work at this time.

#### *Communications Update*

Selectman Kerrigan explained he wanted to relay to people the live stream is a work in progress, at this time the meeting participation was available through Zoom and Facebook Live, there are some challenges to overcome. He will keep the webpage updated and has created a new Town of Clinton Facebook page to be used as an informational tool.

*Operations Response COVID-19 Continued*

Selectman Devault asked if the Board of Health has monitored the grocery stores to ensure they are disinfecting and practicing social distancing in the stores. Administrator Ward reviewed the Health Agents have been working with all retail establishments over the last two weeks, they distributed literature on best practices. The department continues to educate, monitor and assist all of the retailers as needed. The Board of Health is made up of part time staff, two health agents, public health nurse and administrative assistant. All of the members are collaboratively working together in servicing the needs of the community in response to COVID-19, all working more than the normal part time hours. The Chairman of the Board of Health is a volunteer who is working daily on monitoring the events related to the virus, I speak with him every day. A daily update is provided to the webpage regarding the number of cases in the community. This is the department's response which continues as the event evolves. Selectman Devault asked if additional resources are needed for the department, he is supportive of accommodating what is needed. Administrator Ward explained they did a lot of preparing, it is a waiting game monitoring how many cases present in the community, at this time it is manageable. He explained he will notify the department to keep the board aware if additional resources are needed.

Chairman Connolly reviewed the board will meet next on Wednesday, April 1, 2020 for regular business.

Selectman Dziokonski made a motion to adjourn at 7:50PM. Selectman Boisoneau seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Chairman Connolly asked for community feedback regarding the use of alternate meeting participation portals.

Meeting Adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce Corbosiero  
Executive Assistant Board of Selectmen/Town Administrator