

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

Pursuant to notice duly filed with the Town Clerk, the Concord Select Board convened in a conference call on May 14, 2020.

Present were Michael Lawson, Chair; Linda Escobedo, Clerk; Terri Ackerman, Jane Hotchkiss, and Susan Bates. Also present were Stephen Crane, Town Manager; Deputy Town Manager, Kate Hodges; Carmin Reiss, Town Moderator; and Finance Director, Kerry Lafleur.

Call to Order

Select Board Chair Michael Lawson called the meeting to order at 4:00pm.

Minutes to approve: February 24, 2020; March 9, 2020; March 13, 2020; March 19, 2020; March 26, 2020; April 2, 2020; April 9, 2020

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED to approve the meeting minutes for February 24, 2020; March 9, 2020; March 13, 2020; March 19, 2020; March 26, 2020; April 2, 2020; April 9, 2020.

Town Manager Update

Town Manager Stephen Crane reported that the CARES act from the federal government provides assistance to states dealing with COVID-19 related impacts. Concord will be given funds that are proportional to population. The Town has been carefully tracking COVID-related expenses.

Mr. Crane reported the Town received an AAA bond rating.

The Town has been working on infographics related to social distancing and facial coverings that are locally relevant to pair with infographics from the state and CDC. Mr. Crane noted that a facial covering does not need to be a surgical mask, and all residents have something in their home they could use as a facial covering if they do not have a mask.

The Town is starting the recruitment and advertisement process for the role of Chief Information Officer, which is considered an essential position.

The Bruce Freeman Rail Trail Phase 2B is starting construction soon, with funding from MassDOT.

Supporting materials for agenda items are available online at www.concordma.gov/sbmtgdocs. Materials are uploaded on the Friday before a Select Board meeting.

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

The Department of Planning and Land Management is working on developing electronic permitting systems.

The Police Department have noticed an increase in vehicular speed, particularly on Route 2 in Concord. The Police are trying to focus their attention on doing radaring and patrolling in areas with lots of pedestrians and cyclists. Mr. Crane stated that if residents notice increased speeds in their neighborhood, they should reach out to the Police Department and they will add patrolling.

The Town continues to receive correspondence about the reopening of recreational areas. Mr. Crane stated that these areas will continue to remain closed due to inappropriate use and the need for continued social distancing.

Mr. Crane mentioned that Fire Chief Tom Judge has reported that EMS calls for potential non-COVID illnesses or injuries are down, likely because people may not feel safe going to the hospital and are putting it off. Mr. Crane cautioned the community that Emerson Hospital does currently have the capacity to treat patients, and also have the capacity to keep them separated from patients who may have COVID-19.

Deputy Town Manager Kate Hodges attended to provide an update on senior services in the Town. Harvey Wheeler closed on March 14. For a week after, van service continued for medical appointments only. The Director, Assistant Director, and Social Workers remained full-time working from home. Their outreach to 700+ seniors has continued. Critical staff are stationed at home currently, and are making daily calls. The social work staff meets weekly with the Police liaison. When masks became recommended and later required, residents stepped up and donated masks to the Council on Aging, which were then distributed to over 100 seniors. Exercise classes have taken place online. Ms. Hodges commended the Council on Aging for their work.

Middle School Building Committee Recommendation

Middle School Building Committee Chair Timothy Hult attended the meeting. Mr. Hult stated that the Middle School Building Committee voted to pause the work on the project due to the difficulty of doing collaborative work and working with other boards and committees due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, as well as cost-related issues and the financial uncertainty of this time period. Mr. Hult noted they will review on a month to month basis to determine when the committee may start up again.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED to suspend the work of the Middle School Building Committee upon the production of a preliminary Feasibility Report, prior to proceeding with

Supporting materials for agenda items are available online at www.concordma.gov/sbmtgdocs. Materials are uploaded on the Friday before a Select Board meeting.

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

the Schematic Design phase of the project. The work of the committee will remain suspended until reactivated by the Select Board.

Roll call vote:

Susan Bates: Aye
Linda Escobedo: Aye
Mike Lawson: Aye
Terri Ackerman: Aye
Jane Hotchkiss: Aye

Gerow Project Discussion

Deputy Town Manager Kate Hodges attended the meeting. The Gerow Recreational Park project has completed the feasibility, design, and permitting processes. Ms. Hodges noted the design is complicated because it is near the water, the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail, woodlands, and wetlands. Ms. Hodges stated that they hope to begin the process for earth work and site improvements by August 1, 2020. The hub of the park is located near the center of the property and has a complex plan with a composting restroom, benches, a bike repair station, as well as storm water management. There is a three-seasons barn in the hub, which will be available for programs and for residents to rent for family gatherings. The plan will be presented to the Natural Resources Commission on May 20. The bid package for this plan will be sent out on August 1st, and collected by September. The funds for this project have already been allocated and approved by the Town.

One-twelfth Spending Plans Update

Town Manager Stephen Crane noted that new legislation allows municipalities to run on a 1/12 budget. This means that the Town will run on the FY20 budget divided by 12 each month. A monthly budget has to be submitted and approved. Finance Director Kerry Lafluer stated that a 1/12th expenditure is approximately \$4,000,000 per month, although it varies month-to-month. Any debt service in this scenario would need to be paid upfront. Ms. Lafluer noted that the Town is in good position to submit their application for a 1/12 budget to the Department of Revenue. The budget will need to be approved by the Select Board, which will be reviewed by the Select Board at an upcoming meeting before it is submitted to the Department of Revenue.

Re-opening Town Operations

Town Manager Stephen Crane stated that the Town is actively engaged in conversations about re-opening Town operations. Mr. Crane appointed a Reopen

Supporting materials for agenda items are available online at www.concordma.gov/sbmtgdocs. Materials are uploaded on the Friday before a Select Board meeting.

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

Task Force of mid-level managers and supervisors, and the task force is currently developing an employee survey. Mr. Crane commended the fact that when essential Town operations needed to resume during this pandemic, the Town was able to make it happen despite staffing and logistical difficulties. The Town has ordered glass dividers. The Town is contemplating how often it will be necessary to be open to the public. Mr. Crane stated that the Reopen Task Force will make recommendations to the Senior Management Team about reopening certain Town services in the coming weeks.

Town Meeting Update

Town Moderator Carmin Reiss explained that Town Meeting will need to be delayed until the end of July and if possible, until September. The reasons for that are the public health risks, uncertainty about the best measures to mitigate these risks, and the uncertainty related finances that make it difficult for the Town and the schools to make appropriate recommendations to Town Meeting.

Ms. Reiss explained that the Town Meeting can only be moved 30 days at a time. The current date for Town Meeting is May 22. Some time in the following week, Ms. Reiss will issue a declaration to move the meeting to June 22nd. Town Counsel's recommendation is that we don't move the meeting again until the first of June. Then, we would move it another 30 days and put it into July. This would allow the Town to submit the 1/12th budget to the Department of Revenue. Mr. Crane commented that Town Meeting will likely not be in the format that Concordians are accustomed to given the public health measures that will need to be taken to conduct Town Meeting safely. Mr. Crane also stated that the warrant will need to be revised, given the budgetary adjustments for the next fiscal year that are now necessary.

Cancellation of Memorial Day Events at Rideout Field and Monument Square

The Public Ceremonies and Celebrations Committee requested that the Select Board take a formal vote to cancel the Memorial Day Events at Rideout Field and Monument Square.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY

VOTED to cancel the Memorial Day events at Rideout Field and Monument Square.

Roll call vote:

Susan Bates: Aye

Linda Escobedo: Aye

Mike Lawson: Aye

Terri Ackerman: Aye

Supporting materials for agenda items are available online at www.concordma.gov/sbmtgdocs. Materials are uploaded on the Friday before a Select Board meeting.

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

Jane Hotchkiss: Aye

Letter in opposition to the Hunt Plan

Mr. Lawson thanked Natural Resource Director Delia Kaye and Select Board member Jane Hotchkiss for their preparation of the letter in opposition to the recent US Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to expand hunting at the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in Concord.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **VOTED** to authorize the Chair to send a letter to the Wildlife Refuge Complex Manager at the Eastern Massachusetts Wildlife Refuge Complex in opposition to the recent US Fish and Wildlife Service proposal to expand hunting opportunities at the Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

Roll call vote:

Susan Bates: Aye
Linda Escobedo: Aye
Mike Lawson: Aye
Terri Ackerman: Aye
Jane Hotchkiss: Aye

Miscellaneous Correspondence

Mr. Lawson stated that the Board continues to receive correspondence from residents, and in particular received several emails regarding opposition to the US Fish and Wildlife Service plan to expand hunting at Great Meadows National Wildlife Refuge.

Public Comments

Karlen Reed of 83 Whits End Road asked if Independence Day celebrations have been canceled. Mr. Crane stated that he believes they have been.

Concord Public Works Week Proclamation

Mr. Lawson stated that he circulated the proclamation declaring May 17 to May 23 as Concord Public Works Week.

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY **VOTED** to adopt the Concord Public Works Week Proclamation

Supporting materials for agenda items are available online at www.concordma.gov/sbmtgdocs. Materials are uploaded on the Friday before a Select Board meeting.

**TOWN OF CONCORD
SELECT BOARD
MINUTES
May 14, 2020**

Roll call vote:

Susan Bates: Aye
Linda Escobedo: Aye
Mike Lawson: Aye
Terri Ackerman: Aye
Jane Hotchkiss: Aye

Adjourn

Upon a motion duly made and seconded, it was UNANIMOUSLY
VOTED: to adjourn

Roll call vote:

Susan Bates: Aye
Linda Escobedo: Aye
Mike Lawson: Aye
Terri Ackerman: Aye
Jane Hotchkiss: Aye

Minuteman Media Network Coverage:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=irBkcPAapII>

Meeting Documents: [May 14, 2020 Select Board Packet](#)