

**Minutes  
Bristol Select Board  
March 19, 2020**

**Present:** Select Board members: Outgoing Chair Les Dion; Vice Chair Don Milbrand; Anita Avery; JP Morrison; Incoming Chair Wayne Anderson; and Nik Coates, Town Administrator

**Absent:**

**Public Session:** Chair Dion opened the public meeting at 5:00 PM with Mr. Morrison leading the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Others Present:** Christina Goodwin, Land Use Manager/Health Officer; Raymah Simpson, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Police Chief James McIntire, and Fire Chief Ben LaRoche.

**Consent Agenda:** Mr. Milbrand made a motion to approve the consent agenda dated March 19, 2020; to include the items named therein, seconded by Mr. Anderson. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve the consent agenda.

Mr. Anderson welcomed new Select Board member, Anita Avery.

**Election of Chair and Vice Chair:** Mr. Morrison started off by saying that at one time the outgoing Select Board member of that year was automatically nominated to be the Chair. He then nominated this year's outgoing Select Board member, Wayne Anderson. Mr. Milbrand seconded. Mr. Anderson accepted the nomination, saying he would be honored to serve. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve Wayne Anderson as the Select Board Chair for 2020.

After some discussion, Ms. Avery nominated current Vice Chair, Don Milbrand. Seconded by Mr. Morrison. Mr. Milbrand accepted the nomination. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve Don Milbrand as the Select Board Vice Chair for 2020.

**Committee Appointments:** The Select Board appointed Select Board representatives and alternatives to the following committees:

Budget Committee: Ms. Dion, Primary and Mr. Morrison, Alternate

Planning Board: Mr. Milbrand, Primary and Mr. Anderson, Alternate

Historic District Commission: Ms. Avery, Primary and Mr. Anderson, Alternate

Economic Development Committee: Mr. Anderson, Primary and Ms. Avery, Alternate

**Cardiac Monitor Purchase Request:** Fire Chief LaRoche followed up on a request to purchase cardiac monitors. Different vendors were looked at and Zoll was chosen to be the most cost effective. There is a 60-90 day lead time and the existing monitors will be traded in. Chief LaRoche requested \$15,000 for the first year's payment with the balance of \$58,898 being paid over the next four years at \$14,724.50 per year. Mr. Milbrand asked if a Purchase Order had been created, Chief LaRoche responded that it had been. Mr. Milbrand made a motion for the approval of the purchase of Zoll cardiac monitors and the authorization for the Town Administrator to sign for the purchase. Seconded by Ms. Dion. Mr. Morrison asked if anything had changed on this purchase than initially agreed upon and when would the new monitors be put into service. Chief LaRoche replied that nothing had changed in this purchase request and that the monitors would arrive within 60 to 90 days of the first payment. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of the motion to approve the purchase of the Zoll cardiac monitors. Mr. Coates signed Purchase Order 004744 for this request.

**COVID-19 Response:** Mr. Coates started by saying he has been forwarding the Select Board information on the COVID-19 pandemic and then proceeded to go over the Town's response plan. Chief LaRoche followed up by saying the Fire Department/Emergency Management has been posting information on the Town webpage and the Fire Department Facebook page. The Fire Department has made changes in operations such as setting up online payments for usual walk in services. He then spoke on the emergency management aspect of the response. The state has put protocols in place related to this which Mr. LaRoche feels are appropriate.

Ms. Goodwin went over her role as the Health Officer which includes the authority to close public events but not private events or buildings. She has been working in coordination with Fire Chief LaRoche on response related tasks such as inspecting and contacting day care centers, campgrounds and taking part on conference calls for guidance and information from the state and federal government. Ms. Goodwin went over the latest NH social isolation rules upon virus exposure, emergency orders and the extra disinfection measures being taken at the Town Office while it is still open to the public. Another precaution being taken is the ordering of an electrostatic disinfecting sprayer which will arrive within six to eight weeks.

Mr. Coates reported on the Governor's COVID-19 executive orders which can be found on the state website. The relative orders are as follows:

- Gatherings of over fifty people is prohibited.
- Restaurants and bars can only offer takeout and delivery service.
- Protections have been put in place for utility consumers and renters.
- Unemployment benefits have been increased.
- HIPPA rules have been relaxed.

Mr. Coates then went over the Town's goals of keeping its employees safe, maintaining continuity of operations, maintaining stability and safety within the community, and maintaining the financial health of the Town. He has been meeting on an ongoing basis with the Department Heads in order to place measures to limit or eliminate contact with the public and other employees. The work sectors have been broken up as follows:

- Town Clerk/Tax Collector Services
- Health, Permitting and Land Use
- Human Resources and Finance
- Technology and Cybersecurity
- Supplies
- Sanitation Service
- Communications
- Local Business Support
- Parks and Recreation

Police Chief McIntire spoke on coverage, workers compensation, and the use of accrued time aspects of managing the Police Department during this time. He also advocated for not deducting sick time to encourage employees who are sick to stay home if necessary.

Mr. Coates asked for input from the three department heads present on the Temporary Policy on Leave Due to COVID-19 and the Temporary Telecommuting Policy. They went over the various impacts and implementation of the policies. Mr. Coates went over the press release of the closing and the actions being taken to serve the public needs remotely as much as possible. These actions will be evaluated every two weeks until it is safe to reopen. He went over actions being undertaken to communicate to the public, technology for employees to work at home, and other aspects of working safely during the pandemic.

Mr. Coates conveyed to the Board that the Police Department and a group of volunteers have been helping people with food shopping and are working with Community Services to help people get through this difficult economic time. A business support group has been formed which is working with small businesses and the Small Business Administration (SBA) to help business as well.

Police Chief McIntire went over what the Police Department is dealing with in the Town and how they are handling things differently due to COVID-19. The lobby is still open to the public and surfaces are wiped down after a resident exits. He spoke on the grocery assistance program the department is doing and how they are working with Hannaford's on this. Ms. Dion suggested that a video be made on frequently asked questions.

Mr. Coates concluded by going over actions the Town Office has put into place to restrict the spread of the virus such as cleaning and disinfecting protocols. He recommended that the Town Office be closed to the public and employees work at home starting Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> and reevaluated every two weeks. Laptops and cellphones will be implemented to make this possible. Ms. Simpson voiced her concern on working with the public at this time and supports closing to the public. Discussion occurred on how services would be still provided to the public, i.e. online payments, appointments. Logistics of how a skeleton crew would work from the building were also reviewed. Ms. Dion feels closing to the public is a good move and there is a need to figure how things will work for staff that still need to come into the Town buildings to do their work.

Ms. Goodwin went over the challenges of public meetings and legal requirements of such. Mr. Coates said that Governor Sununu has come out with guidance on relaxing meeting requirements and that meetings can be done remotely with public access via live streaming. It was decided that the next Select Board meeting be done remotely and members will determine if they should gather or meet separately depending on how things are in two weeks.

Mr. Coates went over how the "Virtual Town Office" will operate, public communication, the protocol planned for those working in the office, and how public exchanges will take place such as no handling of cash, etc. How-to links will be set up on the Town website to make it easier for the public to conduct business.

Ms. Goodwin spoke on the Assessing/Land Use Department challenges and how they are dealing with them. The assessing company is currently doing exterior evaluations only. Ms. Simpson voiced her Tax Collector issues as well. Further discussion followed with the Department Heads and the Select Board.

Mr. Coates presented the temporary Telecommuting Policy which is valid for 90 days. The Town is asking employees to do their work at home and uphold their job responsibilities. Dedicated laptops and cell phones have been ordered. The policy lays out other aspects of telecommuting such as what happens in the event of a home injury while working.

Ms. Dion thanked Mr. Coates, all of the Town employees, and the school district for their quick response to this crisis. Mr. Coates added that he has been working with the school district and an internet provider on getting internet access to students who currently do not have it.

Mr. Coates went over the Temporary Policy on Leave Due to COVID-19 which follows directives from the federal government. Basically it says that if an employee or a member of their family who needs to be taken care of by the employee is diagnosed with the virus then the time needed to be taken off will not be deducted from their sick time. Chair Anderson asked if Mr. Coates and Finance Director Mr. Blanchette got input from Department Heads on the policy. Mr. Coates confirmed that they did and asked the three Department Heads present for their opinions. Chief McIntire brought up that when employees are exposed to the virus, how any precautionary time off would be handled. Mr. Milbrand

went over logistics such as how many employees should be allowed in the Town buildings at a time. Ms. Goodwin asked if the policy covers part time employees and was told that it does.

Mr. Coates discussed the press release announcing the Town Office closure to the public and directions on how to continue doing Town business. The closure will be effective on Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup> until further notice and will be reevaluated every two weeks.

**Fireworks:** Ms. Goodwin who is also the Chair of the Fireworks Committee went over dates for the 2020 Fourth of July Celebration. Currently the secured primary date for the fireworks is July 2<sup>nd</sup> but no rain date was secured with the firework vendor. July 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> are not available for the vendor. July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> are available for rain dates but they would have to charge the Town an extra \$800 for this as they would have to take down and reset the barge etcetera. Therefore a new date would need to be chosen if back to back dates were desired or the Town can stay with July 2<sup>nd</sup> but pay extra for a rain date. Discussion ensued in which Saturday, July 25<sup>th</sup> was chosen as the rain date. Ms. Dion made motion to authorize Mr. Coates to sign the firework contract with July 2<sup>nd</sup> as the primary date and July 25<sup>th</sup> as the rain date. Mr. Milbrand seconded. The Board voted 5-0-0 in favor of the motion.

**Select Board Items:** Mr. Morrison asked about the status of Hemlock Brook Road. Mr. Coates replied that there are no updates at the moment.

Mr. Milbrand spoke on the possibility of having an event to support NANA this summer.

Chair Anderson thanked all those who attended the Town Meeting and Moderator Ned Gordon. He thanked the Select Board for their confidence in voting him in as Select Board Chair.

**Public Comments:** None

**Adjourn:** There being no further business, Mr. Milbrand made a motion to adjourn at 7:03 PM, seconded by Mr. Morrison. The Select Board voted 5-0-0, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy Smith