

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
October 26, 2020**



**MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
IN PERSON MEETING AND VIA ZOOM FOR BUSINESS
MEETING ID #841 6122 6099
PASSWORD # 934901
PUBLIC COMMENT 608-9508**

ATTENDANCE

Chairman Adam Munguia; Selectman Bob Jordan, Cody Belanger, Mike Yergeau and Joe Trombley; Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge; Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard.

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Munguia called the public meeting to order at 7:00 PM at the Epping Town Hall. This meeting was also available through Zoom for Business.

MINUTES

Minutes from the October 19, 2020 Selectmen's meeting were submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve the minutes from October 19, 2020 Selectmen's meeting. Seconded by Selectman Belanger. Motion carried 4-0-1. Selectman Trombley abstained.

FIRE CHIEF LOMBARDO REPORT

Fire Chief Lombardo explained the state announced they have 400,000 15 minute rapid COVID tests to provide the first responders throughout the state. There will be additional guidance regarding how often these voluntary tests should be given. The goal is every week 25% of the first responders will be tested.

EOC Director Don DeAngelis is working with the Town Administrator and the Seacoast Public Network creating a list of essential personnel. Vaccinations for the essential personnel should be available January or February.

The state has a supply of electrostatic sprayers for ambulances. The Fire Complex was a distribution point for Rockingham County on Friday. Epping was a recipient of one of the sprayers.

Fire Chief Joe Lombardo updated the COVID numbers in the state; currently there is 10,390 cases, recovered is 8,920, deaths are at 475, current cases are 1002, hospitalized is 768 with 25 still in the hospital. Cases being monitored is 4,450. There have been 46 cases in Epping.

As of today there have been 1,048 calls of service which is lower than last year's 1,054.

POLICE CHIEF MICHAEL WALLACE

Police Chief Wallace reported there were not any incidences at the Halloween Howler this past weekend. The event ran smoothly and the mask mandate went well.

Trick or Treat is on October 31st, 5 PM – 7 PM. Please check the guidelines on the town web site. Police Chief Wallace assured the Board of Selectmen there will be extra officers on duty checking out the neighborhoods.

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge asked what the police involvement will be at the block party. Chief Wallace will provide police officers for security at the entrance and exits on Main Street and Bunker Avenue along with the crosswalks. Fire Chief Joe Lombardo has reviewed the plans to monitor the block party with Pam Tibbetts. The Fire Department will block Main Street with a Fire Engine, provide lights and will monitor for face masks. Tables will be set up 6 feet apart.

BUSINESS

FIRE – DEPUTY FOREST FIRE WARDENS

Deputy Forest Fire Warden Appointment forms for William Naugle, Danielle Zukas, Brenda Silva, Mark Proulx, Adinara Challinor and Joe Lombardo were submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Belanger to approve Chairman Munguia and Vice Chairman Jordan to sign the Deputy Forest Fire Warden Appointment forms. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve the appointments of William Naugle, Danielle Zukas, Brenda Silva, Mark Proulx, Adinara Challinor and Joe Lombardo to be Deputy Forest Fire Wardens. Seconded by Selectman Yergeau. Motion carried 5-0.

BUDGETS

Library Budget

Chairman of the Library Trustees John Clark thanked the Town Administrator, Joe Trombley, Charlie Goodspeed, the Community Church and the library staff for everything they've done while the addition of the library was under way and completed.

Mr. Clark further explained the 1% increase is caused by the Comcast bill. Discussion regarding the allocation breakdown and the budget heating amount continued.

Water and Sewer Budget

Water and Sewer Commissioners Tom Gauthier and Tom Dwyer with Chief Operator Jim Pouilot reviewed the budgets for Water Administration, Water Operations, Water Non-Operating, Sewer Administration, Sewer Operations and Sewer Non-Operating.

LIBRARY

Road Supervisor David Reinhold discussed options on how best to fix the library ramp. Keep the old ramp, jack hammer the first 3 inches, repour the cement and fix the handrails was agreed upon. How best to fund this project will be discussed with the Town Administrator.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve David Reinhold going forward with repairing the ramp and making it ADA compliant. Seconded by Selectman Belanger. Motion carried 5-0.

PLANNING

Contract for Circuit Rider Services to assist with planning issues during the hiring process of a new Planner for the Town of Epping was submitted for approval. Town Administrator Gregory Dodge explained this is needed as our Planner Brittany Howard has taken a new position. The remaining salary line will be used to fund the contract.

Interviews will be scheduled soon for a Full Time Planner as the closing date for the position was this past Friday.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve the contract for Circuit Rider Services to assist with planning issues during the hiring process of a new Planner having Chairman Munguia sign on behalf of the board. Seconded by Selectman Belanger. Motion carried 4-0. Selectman Yergeau had left the meeting

Road acceptance for Sydney Lane as a town road was submitted for approval. The Planning Board voted and approved that Sydney Lane was built according to town specifications on August 13, 2020.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to approve the acceptance of Sydney Lane as a town road. Seconded by Selectman Belanger. Motion carried 5-0.

INTENT TO CUT

Intent to Cut for Phyllis Harvey at 40 Nottingham Square Road, map and lot 015-005 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Belanger to approve the Intent to Cut for Phyllis Harvey at 40 Nottingham Square Road, map and lot 015-005. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

RAFFLE PERMIT

Raffle Permit for Seacoast United Foundation, 88 Shirking Road to sell raffle calendars for financial aid to benefit community sports programs was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Belanger to approve the Raffle Permit for Seacoast United Foundation, 88 Shirking Road to sell raffle calendars for financial aid to benefit community sports programs. Seconded by Selectman Trombley. Motion carried 5-0.

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge asked Finance Director Lisa Fogg to explain the new tax rate of \$23.64 for 2020. Mrs. Fogg said due to the town revaluation the assessments increased so the tax rate is lower. Discussion regarding the Fund Balance continued.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to accept the tax rate from the NH Department of Revenue Administration of \$23.64 for 2020. Seconded by Selectman Belanger. Motion carried 5-0.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge noticed the COLA increases were in the Water and Sewer Budgets. He wanted to make sure the board was aware that the COLA increases have not been included in all the other budgets that have been reviewed. Cost of Living and Merit Pool increases will be further discussed next week.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge said the November 9th meeting is the last Board of Selectman meeting to finalize the budget before the budget is sent to the Budget Committee for review.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge announced the Elections are one week away on Nov 3rd. Masks will be required at the polls. If you refuse to wear a mask you may still vote but it does take longer. Absentee ballots can be returned by hand up to 5 PM at the Clerk's office on Monday the November 2nd. There will be a drop box outside the polling place at the Middle School. The Epping postmaster will hand carry any ballots that are mailed in up to 5 PM.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge reminded those at home it is this Saturday that the clocks fall back one hour.

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge stated the library has new hours and they are posted on the website. There is curb side pickup by appointment.

Administrator Gregory C. Dodge asked for clarification regarding continuing the ZOOM meetings along with live meetings. The feeling of the board was to cancel the ZOOM meetings unless needed.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

Selectman Cody Belanger

No Report

Selectman Mike Yergeau

No Report

Selectman Joe Trombley

Selectman Trombley is glad the library ramp will be done soon.

Selectman Trombley clarified it is up to each board whether they use ZOOM or not.

Selectman Bob Jordan

Selectman Bob Jordan wished everyone a Happy Halloween, be careful and safe, follow guidelines and have a good time at the block party.

Selectman Adam Munguia

Chairman Munguia asked the public to wear a mask at all social events to keep yourself and others safe.

Chairman Munguia hopes everyone votes next week, Tuesday, November 3rd. Please wear a mask. Although you can vote without a mask, voting will take you longer. We will have a safe and secure voting area.

Chairman Munguia, Selectman Trombley and Yergeau will be present all day at the polls. Selectman Belanger will be available to open the polls and Selectman Jordan will try to be there.

ADJOURN

Motion by Selectman Belanger to adjourn. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:10 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Joyce Blanchard
Executive Secretary**

Adam Munguia, Chairman

Bob Jordan, Selectman

Mike Yergeau, Selectman

Cody Belanger, Selectman

Joe Trombley, Selectman

Dated: November 2, 2020