

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
December 29, 2020**



Via ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Munguia called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

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

EOC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Don DeAngelis reported that there were 37 known COVID cases in Epping though he thought that number was incorrect and is probably higher. There were 859 cases statewide as of yesterday. To date there have been approximately 43,000 cases throughout the State that were reported. Recovery rate is at about 85%.

CHIEF LOMBARDO'S REPORT

Chief Lombardo believes the number of cases has been under reported than what you see from the State and viewed on WMUR. He indicated that there were 44 active cases in Epping. He said that sometimes when one family member is positive no one else bothers to get tested as they assume that they are positive so the numbers are probably much higher.

The number of calls is at 1289 for this year closing in on 1300 calls for service.

Vaccines have begun for First Responders and are being administered in Exeter.

CHIEF WALLACE'S REPORT

Chief Wallace just returned from vacation and said that everything went well in his absence and remained status quo.

He reported that there is a group circulating the area targeting vehicles that are unlocked and property being stolen. He urged everyone to keep their vehicles locked.

Chief Wallace submitted Purchase Order #302 for Motorola Solutions in the amount of \$7,557.60 for new radio desk sets (4), which includes programming. Funds to come from impact fees.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve Purchase Order #302 to Motorola Solutions in the amount of \$7,557.60 for new radio desk sets (4) to include programming. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Discussion: Selectman Trombley wanted to know if this was equipment for the cruisers. The Chief stating that impact fees were being used and it cannot be used for equipment in cruisers but rather infrastructure within the station. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Yergeau, Trombley and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Chief Wallace also presented Purchase Order #303 to 2-Way Communications in the amount of \$8,097.00 for new speakers, wiring and labor of the radio desk sets. This will be purchased with impact fees.

Motion by Bob Jordan to approve Purchase Order #303 to 2-Way Communications in the amount of \$8,097.00 for new speakers, wiring and labor of the radio desk sets. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Yergeau, Trombley and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

2020 ENCUMBRANCES

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge reviewed the list of encumbrances for 2020. Adamson Industries \$30,475.80, HH Locksmith \$3,800, Granite State Minerals \$18,700, Monarch Electric \$10,000 and AAI Tree Service \$2,300 for a total of \$65,275.80.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the list of encumbrances for Adamson Industries \$30,475.80, HH Locksmith \$3,800, Granite State Minerals \$18,700, Monarch Electric \$10,000 and AAI Tree Service \$2,300 for a total of \$65,275.80. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Yergeau, Trombley and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

TOWN WARRANT REVIEW

Chairman Adam Munguia began the review of the Town Warrant.

Operating Budget – This was all set with the Board already approving and recommending a budget of \$10,267,295.00.

Police Union Contract – Town Administrator Dodge suggested no Board action until the rest of the Board was brought up to date on its contents.

Accrued Benefits – Finance Director Lisa Fogg suggested an amount of \$30,000. Selectman Trombley thought that the Budget Committee's idea to get a sense of the number of employees retiring might be beneficial.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to fund the “Accrued Benefits Expendable Trust Fund” at an amount of \$30,000. Seconded by Selectman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Yergeau, Trombley and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Highway Equipment Fund – This was not acted on as the Board suggested that the Administrator speak with Dave Reinhold as to his needs for the next piece of equipment so that the appropriate funds can be appropriated.

Watson Academy – Administrator Dodge was asked to seek information from Nicole as to what the goal is for this fund.

Recreation Facilities – Nicole Bizzaro was to be contacted as to the goal of funding this trust fund. Selectman Mike Yergeau mentioned that some work may have to be consistent with the terms of the L-CHIP grant.

Landfill Closure – There was considerable discussion on this topic which evolved into a discussion of raising the price of the dump stickers. Selectman Trombley would like to “leverage” revenues derived from the sales of permits to go into an account for the eventual landfill closure. Lisa Fogg said that would require an annual warrant article. Selectman Mike Yergeau felt that sufficient funds needed to go into the account that makes sense as \$20,000 a year is barely making a dent in terms what it will eventually cost the Town. He suggested putting in \$200,000. Selectman Trombley agreed with Selectman Yergeau’s idea.

Government Buildings Trust Fund – There was discussion on how funds were used this year from this account. Administrator Dodge thought that the money was used for the library stairs. He would get an accounting of what funds were used for the next meeting.

EYAA – This article has been both a petitioned and a Selectmen’s article. Chairman Munguia asked that the Administrator reach out to EYAA to see if they are seeking a warrant.

Highway Garage Addition - The Board needed more information from Dave Reinhold before moving forward with this article.

Fire Museum Overhead Doors – This is a petitioned article in the amount of \$5,000. The Board only needs to decide whether or not to recommend or not recommend the article.

PURCHASE ORDER

Town Administrator Gregory C. Dodge submitted Purchase order #304 to Monarch Electric in the amount of \$10,000 for work to be done on the antique lights downtown. This was a 2019 warrant article.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve Purchase order #304 to Monarch Electric in the amount of \$10,000. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Jordan, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

The Cemetery Trustees submitted Purchase order #305 for AAI Tree Service in the amount of \$2,300 for maintenance of the Plumer Cemetery.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve Purchase order #305 for AAI Tree Service in the amount of \$2,300 for maintenance of the Plumer Cemetery. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Jordan, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

CRUISER BID AWARD

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge brought forward the results of a sealed bid for the purchase of one (1) 2013 Ford Explorer and one (1) Dodge Charger. Jeffrey Hunt submitted a bid of \$360 for the 2013 Dodge Charger, Mike Scampini submitted a bid of \$600 for the 2013 Ford Explorer and William Sangermano submitted a bid of \$700 for the Ford Explorer.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to award the 2013 Dodge Charger bid of \$360 to Jeffrey Hunt and the 2013 Ford Explorer to William Sangermano in the amount of \$700. Seconded by Selectman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

TOWN HALL ACCESS PLAN

The Board reviewed the "Town Hall Access Plan" once again which was carried over from discussions at the December 28th meeting.

Town Hall Access Plan

1. Follow model used during the initial phases of shutdown put in place last March.
2. Essential personnel are defined as those necessary to conduct town business.
3. All individuals determined as non-essential will be allowed to work from home.
4. All personnel shall be required to always wear a N-95 mask while in Town Hall. Only exception to mask wearing is during periods of eating or drinking, however social distancing of at least six feet shall be maintained in those instances. Masks shall be worn over nose and mouth. No entry into the building unless the mask is worn and screening completed.
5. All personnel shall be required to always wear a mask while riding in a vehicle with another town employee.
6. All personnel shall be screened to include temperature checks and answering existing questionnaire prior to starting their workday. Screening shall be conducted by the Epping Fire Department representative assigned to that day's detail. Personnel with a temperature of 100 degrees or higher or answering to the affirmative to any of the screening questions, shall be sent home.
7. No one can enter the building if they are experiencing any symptoms.
8. Individuals experiencing symptoms shall follow current State of NH DHHS guidelines regarding quarantine requirements. This includes a mandatory ten-day quarantine period starting at the onset of symptoms followed by remaining home for twenty-four hours after all symptoms have subsided.
9. Quarantine period of at least ten days following exposure to an infected individual. However, if symptoms arise after exposure to an infected individual occur the ten-day quarantine period begins at the onset of symptoms followed by a symptom free period of 24 hours without the use of medication.

10. Reinstigate the compensation plan where personnel are not required to use personal time during quarantine. (Current plan is a deterrent to those who should stay home but come to work with symptoms because they rely on a paycheck. The consequence of not reinstating the prior policy could be further spread of Covid-19.)

11. Any questions regarding the above policies shall be referred to Chief DeAngelis, Town of Epping Emergency Management Director.

The purpose of this review was to amend bullet point #10. Town Administrator Gregory Dodge submitted the following re-write of paragraph 10;

Full-Time and Part-Time employees who accrue "Earned/Sick Time" must use said time when they are unable to work due to illness in accordance with the Town of Epping Personnel Policy. Should that illness manifest itself into a positive test for COVID-19 and it is reasonably assured that the virus was an "at work exposure" then that employee may recover any "earned time" used. If there is undeniable evidence that an employee contracted COVID-19 as a result of their known carelessness and/or negligence, that employee will be charged "earned time". Employees who voluntarily choose to travel (not work related) outside of the New England states and must quarantine as a result of that travel then the employee will be charged "earned time" for that "quarantined time". All COVID-19 "work related" cases require all personnel to file worker's compensation claims. The Finance Director will work with employees on how compensation is to be handled for "accepted" claims.

After a lengthy discussion the Selectmen made the Administrator's version into specific paragraphs. The Board suggested the following.

Paragraph One - Full-Time and Part-Time employees who accrue "Earned/Sick Time" must use said time when they are unable to work due to illness in accordance with the Town of Epping Personnel Policy. Should that illness manifest itself into a positive test for COVID-19 and it is reasonably assured that the virus was an "at work exposure" then that employee may recover any "earned time" used.

Paragraph Two - If there is undeniable evidence that an employee contracted COVID-19 as a result of their known carelessness and/or negligence, that employee will be charged "earned time". Employees may be given time back in accordance with State of New Hampshire mandates.

Paragraph Three - Employees who voluntarily choose to travel (not work related) outside of the New England states and must quarantine as a result of that travel then the employee will be charged "earned time" for that "quarantined time".

Paragraph Four - All COVID-19 "work related" cases require all personnel to file worker's compensation claims. The Finance Director will work with employees on how compensation is to be handled for "accepted" claims.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the text as written with the specific paragraphs as written and that the language should reflect that the employees "may" recover days instead of "will" recover days and all according to State mandates. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the text separating the travel portion of the text. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to approve the text separating the worker's compensation portion of the text. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge advised the Board that a warrant article to make the Town Clerk's part-time position to a full-time position was inadvertently left off the warrant and will be added.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge

Administrator Dodge said that he has accumulated a great deal of paperwork as a result of many meetings and wanted to know how the Board would like to handle signing the paperwork. For some Selectmen they will come in to sign the paperwork and for those who cannot make it in the Town Administrator will bring the paperwork to them.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN'S REPORTS

Selectman Joe Trombley

Selectman Trombley was pleased with the work accomplished at this meeting. He also stressed that the Shirkin' Road issue cannot be ignored and needs to be followed up. There are many options to explore and he feels the Board owes it to the residents and the commercial district. He further stated that the Town of Epping actively pursued working with Fremont and they chose a different path.

Chairman Munguia commenting that he would like the Administrator to follow through with a letter to the Fremont Board and to schedule a meeting with them. This comment created more discussion. Selectman Yergeau pointed out that there were no restrictions for the residents of Fremont. Selectman Trombley asked that department heads be contacted to get their views of the Shirkin' Road matter. He also suggested that the Town Attorney be contacted as well for assistance. In the end the following motion was made.

Motion by Chairman Adam Munguia to have the Administrator draft a letter to the Fremont Board of Selectmen stating the Board's displeasure with the actions of the Fremont Board of Selectmen and to commit to a resolution of the Shirkin' Road matter. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Jordan, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Selectman Mike Yergeau

No report.

Selectman Bob Jordan

Selectman Jordan suggested a traffic survey be conducted so the Town will have evidence of increased traffic as a result of the Town of Fremont's actions. After a short discussion it was decided that a survey would not be appropriate at this time.

Selectman Adam Munguia

Chairman Munguia thanked his colleagues on the Board for their hard work including the hard work of the Fire Chiefs, Police Chief, Town Administrator Dodge and ETV.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 4-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:12 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

**Gregory C. Dodge
Town Administrator**

Adam Munguia, Chairman

Bob Jordan, Vice-Chairman

Mike Yergeau, Selectman

Joe Trombley, Selectman

Selectman Cody Belanger was not in attendance.

Dated: January 12, 2021