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BY LOGGING ONTO WHITMAN-HANSON CABLE ACCESS TV:
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*Hanson Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, May 19, 2020
6:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting*

I CALL TO ORDER

At 6:00 p.m., Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett called the meeting to order and led the Pledge of Allegiance. She asked for a moment of silence to honor those affected by the pandemic and on the front lines.

II PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mr. Blauss read the public announcements and upcoming meeting dates.

III NEW BUSINESS

Sean Kealy & Kate Feodoroff re: June 15, 2020 Town Meeting update or postponement

Town Administrator John Stanton reported that his recent email survey to department heads, commission heads and likely meeting presenters showed that there was a near even split (17 yes, 14 no) to the question if the June 15 Town Meeting should be held as scheduled.

Town Moderator Sean Kealy commented that to accommodate those who may be uncomfortable attending the upcoming meeting, an outdoor gathering could be considered. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett noted that Whitman is holding theirs at the high school gym, which would be more suitable for indoor social distancing. It was acknowledged that the decision of when the meeting will be held must be made tonight as to meet the deadline for notifying the Town Clerk by tomorrow.

Ms. Feodoroff spoke to the issue of whether the Town is allowed to postpone the Town Meeting. She explained that as elections are posted on the Warrant in Hanson, there has been concern that it would be a violation of the By-Law if the Town Meeting were held later. Ms. Feodoroff cited from the emergency legislation that “notwithstanding any general, special or by-law to the contrary,” the Board of Selectmen can postpone the meeting. With that said, Ms. Feodoroff explained that the Town can legally postpone the meeting.

Ms. Feodoroff confirmed comment from Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett that if Town Meeting is held after June 30, the Town will go to a 1/12 budget.

In response to Mr. Kealy’s consideration of a virtual-type Town Meeting, Ms. Feodoroff stated that remote participation is not permissible for voters, but may be allowed for presenters who

provide information. She informed the Board that there are litigation options for reducing quorum in the event of attendance restrictions.

Ms. Feodoroff responded to Mr. Hickey that if Town Meeting is postponed, the Board of Selectmen sets the 1/12 budget, which must be submitted and approved every month until the meeting takes place. She continued that the 1/12 budget includes operation and required spending only and not items such as increases to approved collective bargaining agreements or capital expenditures. Answering Mr. Blauss, Ms. Feodoroff stated that retroactive collective bargaining salary increases would be in effect after Town Meeting.

Town Clerk Beth Sloan said that she is available for any date that is agreed upon for Town Meeting, but will need to assemble individuals who can perform check-in.

Asked by Mr. Dyer to comment on a 1/12 budget, Finance Committee Chairman Kevin Sullivan expressed that his preference, from a financial aspect, is to hold Town Meeting as soon as possible as to not affect the pending first year compromise to be voted on by each town, or to risk a budget takeover by the state.

In terms of timing, Ms. Feodoroff confirmed to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemett that the towns' adoption of the budget amendment at different times would mean that it is not in effect until both towns have adopted it and that the school district would also be on a 1/12 budget. While the emergency legislation does not specify with official guidance, Ms. Feodoroff stated that it is likely that a 1/12 school budget would be calculated on the statutory method.

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to postpone the Town Meeting and Special Town Meeting until July 20. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Review & vote to place 2020 Special & Annual Town meeting articles

Mr. Stanton affirmed that a vote of the Special and Annual Town Meeting articles is not necessary at this time due to the vote to delay the meetings until July 20.

Placing Proposition 2 ½ Override on Annual Town Meeting warrant and ballot (deadline 5/23/20)

Mr. Sullivan expressed in response to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemett that without large departmental cuts, there is a 100% chance that the Town will require an override given the \$865,000 deficit it currently faces with the one-year compromise on the table. He continued that the deficit would be closer to \$1.6M if calculated full statutory immediately without the compromise. To clarify for Mr. Hickey, Mr. Sullivan said that an override of some kind, along with a few cuts, will sustain current services for the coming year. He continued that the hope is that the extra revenue generated by the override, added to next year and with new growth, the result will be a more reasonable amount for them to later work with.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett asked Mr. Sullivan for clarification of “drastic cuts” that could result if there is no override. Mr. Sullivan explained that reductions here or there could provide monies, but not near enough to generate \$865,000. He stated that the most significant amounts would have to come by reducing head counts from the larger departments, i.e., police or fire, which comprise the largest share of the budget.

Ms. Feodoroff responded to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett saying that since the Town Meeting has been postponed until after the election, the special election could be held prior to the regular election to provide a platform for better explaining the override prior to its vote. Town Clerk Beth Sloan emphasized that there would be tight scheduling in doing so given the upcoming primary and early voting. Ms. Feodoroff stated in response to Mr. Mitchell that legislation stipulates that the regular election take place by June 30. She lastly noted that the Town could go to court to request a postponement beyond the June 30 deadline, if they felt it was necessary, but was doubtful of its success.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by, Mr. Mitchell, to place the Proposition 2 ½ override question on the Annual Town Meeting warrant and ballot. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Reopening of Camp Kiwanee & wedding fees

Recreation Commission Chairman Diane Cohen explained that an individual who had scheduled a wedding and reception at the Camp Kiwanee lodge, and paid their 50% deposit, now wants to change the event to a wedding ceremony only. She said that because of the scaled down event, they are requesting that no additional fee be due. Diane stated that the client has agreed that they will go along with the guidelines that will be in place at that time.

Mr. Hickey asked Ms. Feodoroff about liability to the Town in the event that wedding attendees who didn’t adhere to the guidelines are infected with the virus. Ms. Feodoroff suggested that she work with the Recreation Director to prepare a Special Waiver & Release that cites COVID-19.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, that the fee for a wedding/reception reservation at the Camp Kiwanee lodge in August be reduced to \$1,500 due to the event change to “wedding only,” with it being contingent upon adherence to COVID-19 guidelines in place at that time and the lodge being open. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Ms. Cohen asked the Board if Camp Kiwanee can be allowed to re-open as to allow caretakers to perform pre-opening maintenance in preparation for opening.

MOTION by Mr. Hickey, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to allow Camp Kiwanee staff, under the oversight of the director, to return to the camp in order to perform maintenance and cleanup work in preparation for public admittance. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Chairman Arlene Dias re: Board of Health update

Health Agent Arlene Dias stated that recent discussion by the Health Board concerned the opening of Camp Kiwanee and the waterfront. She explained that their board is in support of openings provided that all guidelines in place at that time are adhered to. Ms. Dias said that their other point of conversation was concerning the upcoming COVID-19 testing in Hanson. (See next section.)

Discuss COVID-19 testing site in Hanson

Town Moderator Sean Kealy introduced Ann Kiessling, Director of the Bedford Research Foundation (BRF), and himself as a longstanding board member of the foundation. He explained that Ms. Kiessling has organized a voluntary COVID-19 testing site in Hanson for this Friday [May22].

Mr. Kealy stated that a 3 ½ hour event, setup in a tent outside of the Maquan school, is planned during which individuals who pre-register and pay the \$55 insurance-refundable fee online can receive a voluntary COVID-19 test. He said that upon registration, the individual is given a specific time slot during which to be tested. Mr. Kealy said that a nurse and a technician from BRF will be onsite to administer the test. He said that because of similar events that BRF has hosted, they anticipate that those being tested will be on-site no more than ten minutes.

In response to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett's concerns about privacy of information, Ms. Kiessling stated that BRF is a CLIA-licensed [Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments] lab, which incorporates HIPAA [Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act] legislation. She said that the only information that they share is to the Department of Public Health (DPH) for those who test positive, which is required of any testing site.

Ms. Dias stated that she reached out to Police Chief Miksch who didn't anticipate any traffic issues with this event. In response to Mr. Mitchell, Mr. Kealy said that he will also contact Fire Chief Thompson to keep him informed.

Ms. Kiessling explained to Mr. Mitchell that bathroom facilities will be unnecessary for the event given the pre-registration, drive-up format, no lines and swift testing.

Mr. Mitchell remarked that multiple testing sites are setup in the Hanson region and questioned the need for one in Hanson. Ms. Kiessling explained that they have found that a testing site in an individual's community raises awareness and makes them more likely to get tested.

Ms. Kiessling stated that if there is more interest than they are able to accommodate during the event, they will likely schedule another in the near future.

Ms. Kiessling responded to Mr. Hickey concerning tracking to say that BRF is required to report positive cases to DPH, who then communicates them to the local Board of Health.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to allow Bedford Research Foundation to conduct a COVID-19 voluntary testing event on May 22 on the grounds of the Maquan School. The motion is contingent upon Fire Chief Thompson's notification and approval of the event. This motion also represents an open-end approval by the BOS for BRF to conduct additional future COVID-19 testing events. **Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0**

Re-opening of Town buildings draft plan

Mr. Stanbrook detailed for the Board his draft plan for re-opening the Town buildings. He began by explaining that the library has its own draft plan, with Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett suggesting that they been invited to the next meeting to provide the Board with those details. Concerning senior centers, Mr. Stanbrook expressed that those openings will likely occur at a later phase as to best protect the elder population. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett added her understanding that those guidelines are still being formulated by the state.

Mr. Stanbrook explained that he drafted a four-phase opening plan for the Town Hall, summarized, in part, as follows:

Phase 1 - Allow only employees in the building on a staggered basis with no public interaction; social distancing and sanitation practices in place; temperature checks; plexiglass installed; remote meetings only; tentatively scheduled for next Tuesday [May 26]

Phase 2 – Phase 1 guidelines, to additionally allow limited public access to the building ONLY in cases where a task cannot be accomplished otherwise; perhaps a detail police to enforce building entrance guidelines

Phase 3 – Phase 1 and 2 guidelines with increased access to the public, i.e. public hearings subject to social distancing

Phase 4 – New normal, per guidelines at that time

The Board voiced support of the guidelines that have been outlined by Mr. Stanbrook to date.

Discuss public forums and public meetings

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett cited the challenges of the land-use boards to hold effective public hearings virtually given plans/maps that attendees need to view. She said that hybrid-type meetings are being suggested that consist of minimal board members on-site and the use of virtual technology to display visuals such as plans.

Mr. Stanbrook stated that there is a debate about whether a board/committee that normally meets with less than ten persons in attendance can hold a normal meeting. Ms. Feodoroff, citing the current guideline prohibiting gatherings larger than ten, explained that regardless, if a normal meeting was scheduled and a larger than usual group arrived to attend, it could be an Open Meeting Law violation to turn people away. She added also that it wouldn't be fair to expose Town employees to a known risk, as meeting rooms do not provide the same protections as other areas of the building.

End of FY20 transfers and possible Town Administrator authorization to approve

Mr. Stanbrook explained that Massachusetts General Law Chapter 44, Section 33B, allows transfers from appropriations in the last two months of the fiscal year, if approved by the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee. He said that in the past, the Board has voted to allow the Town Administrator to act on their behalf in approving those end-of-year transfers.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to allow the Town Administrator to approve Chapter 44, Section 33B-related transfers on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Extension or expiration of Town Administrator’s authorization to sign warrants

MOTION by Mr. Blauss, seconded by Mr. Dyer, to extend the Town Administrator’s authorization to sign warrants until June 30. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Nominate Elder Affairs Director Mary Collins to the Old Colony Elder Services Board

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to nominate Elder Affairs Director Mary Collins to the Old Colony Elder Services Board. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

IV OLD BUSINESS

Revisit Right of First Refusal on 902 Main Street, Unit 39

Mr. Stanbrook stated that a previous vote of the Board to give up the right of first refusal for 902 Main Street, Unit 39, has expired amid COVID-19-related issues.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Mitchell, to reaffirm the Town’s waive of the right of first refusal for 902 Main Street, Unit 39. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 – 0***

Whitman-Hanson Regional School District budget update

Mr. Stanbrook affirmed to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett that no vote concerning the WHRSD budget by the Board is required at this time.

V TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S REPORT

Mr. Stanbrook updated the Board on recent activities, as follows:

Mr. Stanbrook itemized warrants that he has signed on behalf of the BOS as follows:

5/7	Warrant 45	\$88,614.99	Vendor Warrant
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5/7	Warrant 47-PR	\$137,307.53	Payroll Warrant
5/7	Warrant 47-WH	\$26,105.76	Payroll Withholding Warrant
5/14	Warrant 46	\$37,329.30	Vendor Warrant
5/14	Warrant 46-PR	\$142,255.42	Payroll Warrant
5/14	Warrant 46-WH	\$27,428.05	Payroll Withholding Warrant

- New Business:

1. Mr. Stanbrook stated that he received an email in March from Ralph Greenberg of Impressed LLC asking to speak to the Board about expanding a current cannabis cultivation license at 15 Commercial Way to include manufacturing.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett asked that this be postponed due to the need for public input saying that the current virtual constraints would prevent the meaningful dialog required of this topic.

Mr. Dyer requested that Mr. Greenberg be contacted concerning his timeline as well as Ms. Feodoroff to inquire about the process to move forward.

In response to Mr. Hickey, Mr. Stanbrook suggested from early discussions that this might represent a significant income increase to the Town.

Mr. Stanbrook said he will follow-up with the aforementioned questions to Mr. Greenberg and Ms. Feodoroff.

2. Mr. Stanbrook stated that he has been forwarding the required monthly financial reports to the Board and will continue to do so. He said that he will direct the Board's questions, if any, to Town Accountant Todd Hassett.
3. Mr. Stanbrook said that he has received a Whitman-Hanson senior class parade request for May 29. He explained that the request indicates no one exiting their cars or physical interaction whatsoever. Mr. Stanbrook stated that the Board of Health and Police Chief have indicated approval of the request. Board members expressed support of the event provided social distancing adherence.
4. Mr. Stanbrook explained that there has been guidance from Plymouth County regarding CARES ACT monies for COVID-19 relief. He stated that Plymouth County received approximately \$90.9M from the federal government for COVID-19-related expenses occurring between March 1, 2020 and December 31, 2020. Mr. Stanbrook stated that Plymouth County will be using 25% of the funds for Phase 1 reimbursements, with Hanson's potential portion for this phase being \$476,598.53. He added that a web portal will be available next week to submit reimbursement claims.

5. Mr. Stanbrook said that the traditional Memorial Day parade has been canceled and a small ceremony is planned in its place. He said that the Veterans Agent will announce the details of the ceremony, which will be broadcast on cable.
6. Mr. Stanbrook said that last night the school committee approved a 2021 budget of \$55,320,238 which includes the hiring of four new teachers. He continued that Hanson's assessment for operating will be \$11,214,177. Mr. Stanbrook said the amount they had been working with, about \$11.9M, had been reduced by \$699,045 using \$350,000 of excess and deficiency funds and \$250,000 of circuit breaker funds.

Mr. Stanton further detailed that Hanson's 2021 general fund budget deficit of approximately \$1.5M, reduced by \$699,045 as previously described, brings it down to about \$865,000. He added that these figures are tied to both towns' amending the regional agreement at their Town Meetings.

VI ADJOURNMENT

MOTION at 8:35 p.m. by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Mitchell to adjourn. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 - 0***

Respectfully submitted,

Shirley Schindler
Minutes Clerk