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Hanson Board of Selectmen
Tuesday, May 26, 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.

II PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENTS & UPCOMING MEETINGS

Mr. Blauss read the public announcements and upcoming meeting dates. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett commended Veterans Agent Tim White for the brief memorial service that was held yesterday at Town Hall, noting COVID-19 challenges in doing so.

III NEW BUSINESS

Elder Affairs Mary Collins & Library Director Karen Stolfer re: COVID-19 Updates

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett introduced **Elder Affairs Director, Mary Collins**. Ms. Collins stated that the senior center is closed but services are being provided. She explained that Meals on Wheels deliveries continue on the Monday-Friday schedule noting that their office has seen an increase in those requesting meals since the onset of the pandemic. Ms. Collins said she continues to process referrals for field assistance and provide SHINE counseling services. She explained that she is studying the criteria for re-opening as to accommodate those with educational/social programming needs as well as for day programs. Ms. Collins said she is exploring alternative programming opportunities, via applications such as *ZOOM*, as a way to ease social isolation at this time.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett asked how the Town can be of help to her. Ms. Collins stated that the community has been very helpful already. In particular, she mentioned that the fire and police departments reached out to her early on to proactively offer assistance and continue to provide resources within the community where needs were identified.

All Board members thanked Ms. Collins for her service and offered their assistance.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett introduced **Library Director, Karen Stolfer**. Ms. Stolfer began by saying that the library has developed a re-opening plan and that the trustees will be meeting virtually tomorrow to vote on its adoption. She said that the plan will be placed online for the public to view.

Ms. Stolfer stated that the library re-opening plan will entail four phases, as follows:

Phase I - Staff will work in the building on a limited capacity. Ms. Stolfer said that during this phase, the book drop will re-open, noting that due dates for items currently checked out have been extended to July 9 and late fees have been waived until further notice. She explained that books returned will be quarantined for 72 hours before they will be put back into circulation and that contact-free curbside pickup will begin next week. She lastly stated that initially, only the materials in this library will be available as the state-wide delivery service is not up and running yet.

Phase II - The public will be allowed in the building in limited numbers. Ms. Stolfer said that plastic shields will be in place at the service desk for protection.

Phase III – The library will be a bit more opened up than Phase II, with an expansion of services.

Phase IV – The new normal.

Ms. Stolfer said that the timing of the later phases will depend upon the governor's timeline. She said that in the meantime, they will be continuing their virtual programming, i.e., weekly book chats for adults and children. And Ms. Stolfer said that they are currently planning an adaptive summer reading program, details of which will be posted soon.

Ms. Stolfer said that staff members will be wearing protective gear, cleaning surfaces, and the library will have shorter hours initially. She reminded also that staff are available by phone and email for questions and posts its calendar of events to social media sites. In response to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett, Ms. Stolfer reviewed the various materials that are available at the library.

Ms. Stolfer stated to Mr. Blauss that due to reduced staff and hours initially, the library will have a limit on the number of materials that can be checked out.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett expressed appreciation to both Ms. Collins and Ms. Stolfer and asked them to be in touch regarding anything they might need.

Diane Cohen re: Revisiting reopening of Camp Kiwanee/Cranberry Cove

Ms. Cohen expressed that Camp Kiwanee caretakers are working one at a time as per social distancing guidance from the Recreation Director. As Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett and Town Administrator John Stanbrook questioned the need to do so given the ability to social distance at the camp, Mr. Stanbrook said he will reach out to the Recreation Director to clarify.

Ms. Cohen explained that she is being asked if the cove can open early, which is typically after the end of a normal school year, and asked the Board for their opinion. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett stated that logistical, safety and financial aspects would have to be considered.

Health Department Chairman, Arlene Dias, stated that she is unaware of clear guidance that has come down as yet from the state level. She noted that she wants to be prepared in event of planned openings and stated that the Health Department needs to work with Recreation to devise a strategy for a safe opening.

Finance Committee Chairman, Kevin Sullivan, recommended keeping the cove closed as long as possible due to budgetary concerns. He stated that as the cove is normally budgeted to open about June 15, anything earlier will result in a shortfall. He also explained that the cove opening would necessitate a larger supplement from the Town going forward as current revenues are down and expenditures have increased.

Mr. Dyer noted that the May 18 guidelines from the governor did encompass beaches, which he said cited, in part, a 12-ft social distancing.

After comments from other Board members and additional discussion, Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett summarized that the Board's view would be against an immediate re-opening of the cove particularly because there is not a re-opening plan in place. She added that the Recreation Commission and Board of Health should begin talks on the development of a re-opening plan. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett stated that she will tentatively add Ms. Cohen to the June 9 meeting agenda for an anticipated update on this matter.

Mr. Dyer commented that as an opening plan for a likely reduced-volume and shortened-hours cove evolves, the boards should be cognizant of the importance of cooling centers. He explained that it would be wise on the part of both Recreation and the Board of Health to educate the public on alternate cooling locations on the South Shore as the cove will likely be unable to accommodate its usual volume.

Juvy Hartweg, Hanson Rotary Club: Food pantry fundraiser/"Story Walk" at Camp Kiwanee

- Ms. Hartweg explained that the Hanson Rotary Club would like to conduct a **Food Pantry Fundraiser** on the Town Green to sell lawn signs which say, "I Support My Food Pantry." She said that the club wants to hold the fundraiser over a day or two, beginning on May 30.

MOTION by Mr. Blauss, seconded by Mr. Hickey to allow the Hanson Rotary Club to hold a Food Pantry fundraiser on May 30/31 to sell lawn signs on the Town Green. ***Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, and Blauss aye. FitzGerald-Kemmett abstained. Voted 4 - 0 - 1***

- Ms. Hartweg described that in support of the South Shore Children's Museum, the Hanson Rotary Club would like to host a **"Story Walk" event at Camp Kiwanee**. She stated that the event would entail a circular walk, about a mile, on the campgrounds for groups of up to ten families during which the book, "Birds Eye View" would be read in segments throughout the walk. She said that it is not expected that groups of this size, in the open outdoor setting, would be considered a crowd in terms of social distancing. Ms. Hartweg also said that the intent is for there to be multiple hour-long story events through the

weekend and that there would be no contact between the volunteers and the families. Ms. Harteg is suggesting that the event be held during the weekend of June 14/15.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmert commented that her understanding is that the Board has not voted yet to approve the opening of Camp Kiwanee, saying that the Recreation Commission would have to recommend doing so to the Board of Selectmen and present a plan.

While in support of an event of this nature, Selectmen expressed concern that it is too soon to coordinate an event of this size, with Mr. Dyer pointing out that ten families of four would be 40 individuals on the same path at the same time. He added that if an event of this kind does occur at some point, they need to ensure that they have provided poison ivy and tick awareness material.

Mr. Mitchell stated that the Recreation Commission/Board of Health would need a social distancing plan in place prior to this, plus affirmed that the Recreation Commission would need to approve the event, after which being subject to approval by the Board of Selectmen.

Ms. Hartweg said that she will reach out to the Recreation Commission for guidance on their parameters. She said perhaps she will try for a date later on in the summer depending on how the phased openings are proceeding by then and will be in touch.

Request for 7/31/20 WHRSD graduation ceremony

Town Administrator John Stanbrook explained that he and the Town Administrator of Whitman, Mr. Lynam, received emails asking for permission to hold a WHRSD graduation ceremony on July 31, 2020. Mr. Stanbrook said that he reached out to the Fire Chief, Police Chief and Health Agent, who all stated that they didn't have a problem with the concept of what was being proposed provided that there would be a meeting a few weeks prior in order to work out logistics. Mr. Stanbrook continued that the proposed ceremony would be held outside on the turf field, friends and family present if allowed by that time, and students practicing social distance. He said the event would be live streamed.

Health Agent Dias stated that the email was forwarded to her and other health board members just after their last meeting, and she has seen general support of the ceremony the way it was presented. She said that they will be meeting on June 2 during which they intend to discuss it and take a formal vote.

Mr. Dyer stated that he would prefer to defer to what the governor's guidelines might be on graduations, expressing hesitance to allow 400 students to assemble on the field together. Mr. Mitchell was supportive provided that student seats were 6-10 ft. apart. Mr. Hickey said that he would postpone an opinion until after the Board of Health has officially weighed in. Mr. Blauss said he would be in favor if it were possible given the other factors.

MOTION by Mr. Dyer, seconded by Mr. Hickey, to defer a decision to hold a WHRSD high school graduation ceremony for further guidance from the Governor's office and the Hanson Board of Health. **Roll call vote Dyer aye, Mitchell aye, Hickey aye, Blauss aye and FitzGerald-Kemmett aye. Voted 5 - 0**

Arlene Dias re: Board of Health update

Ms. Dias stated that Phase I has gone smoothly and she continues to keep current with frequent guidance updates so that they will be ready to put them into action as soon as possible. She said that restaurant guidance is still curb side pick-up only. In response to Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett, Ms. Dias said that her understanding at this point is that restaurants without pre-existing outdoor seating accommodations will not be allowed to serve in said manner in Phase II.

Ms. Dias stated that the pop-up COVID-19 testing at Maquan School last Friday, May 29, went well and that those who signed up were tested quickly in an organized manner. She said that 22 individuals were tested and that there may have been more with better notice of the testing. Ms. Dias noted that if another testing date is planned, it should be announced at least one week prior.

Mr. Dyer asked that Ms. Dias reach out to the American Legion on re-opening steps.

Proposition 2 ½ Override on Town Election ballot

Mr. Stanbrook explained that per vote of the Board of Selectmen last Friday, a question will appear on the June 27 ballot for a Proposition 2 ½ override to assess an additional \$800,000 on real estate and personal property taxes.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett reviewed that last August the Town learned that the per pupil method of computing Hanson's share of its regional school district costs was moved to the Statutory Method, and noted that it will result in a significant increase for a small town with a small commercial base and low growth.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett said that the Town's financial team—Finance Committee Chairman, Kevin Sullivan, Town Accountant, Todd Hassett and Mr. Stanbrook—presented the recommended \$800,000 figure to the Board of Selectman. She clarified that the Board voted affirmatively of that figure in response to their responsibility to balance the many needs of the Town with available monies. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett stated that to move forward without it, there would be insufficient funds to support Town operations and services.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett suggested that there be additional work by the Board and the school committee to study additional ways that the \$800,000 can be reduced and that this be analyzed prior to the Town meeting and election.

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett stressed the importance of educating the public with facts prior to a potential override vote. She voiced support of coordinating a panel discussion via video conference during which Mr. Sullivan, Mr. Hassett and Mr. Stanbrook explain everything about an override in order to arm the community with all the facts they need to make an informed

decision. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett said she would suggest that it then be posted to the cable channel, website and social media.

Execute June 27, 2020 Town Election Warrant

Mr. Stanbrook stated that the Town Clerk has prepared the warrant for Town Meeting and that in order for it to be executed, it needs to be signed in person by a majority of Board members. To accommodate safe social distancing to do so, it was agreed that the warrant will be placed in the Selectmen's Meeting Room and Board members will come in individually tomorrow and sign the warrant.

Review new timeline for Town Meeting & revised Selectmen's calendar

Mr. Stanbrook said that he has re-worked the 2021 Selectmen's calendar for the rescheduled Town Meeting on July 20. He noted that the upcoming Selectmen meetings will be June 9, June 23 and June 30 and thereafter. He continued that deadlines relating to the July 20 Town Meeting are as follows:

June 30 (8PM)	Annual Town Meeting voter registration deadline
July 6	Deadline to post the Special Town Meeting warrant
July 10 (8 PM)	Special Town Meeting voter registration deadline
July 13	Last day to post the Annual Town Meeting warrant

Discuss proposed amendment to WHRSD regional agreement

Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett stated that the proposed amendment to the 1991 regional agreement with the Whitman Hanson Regional School District has been placed on the Town Meeting warrant and was distributed to Board members for review.

Mr. Stanbrook drew attention to Page 7, Item E, in which the current method of calculation is described as the Alternative Method. He continued by reviewing that the proposed language contained thereafter outlines that a 50% total assessment under the Statutory Method will be used for fiscal year 2021, and for 2022 and beyond, the full Statutory Method will be in place.

Finance Committee Chairman, Kevin Sullivan, said that while the proposed amendment does not reflect a best case scenario for the Town, he said the resulting alternative could be much worse given the shortened negotiation window that they were afforded given COVID-19 delays. He stated that he would be in favor of the override in terms of the well-being of the Town.

Mr. Dyer expressed that he is satisfied with a 2021 fiscal year 50-50 split, but said that he wants the conversation to continue regarding 2022 and beyond, a time which he says they should be able to have a more normal conversation. Mr. Stanbrook agreed with Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett that the amendment language precludes additional conversation after this year.

In response to Mr. Hickey, Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett explained that this amendment addresses only the method by which the towns will financially contribute, and not, for example, the Town's representation on the school committee.

Mr. Stanbrook affirmed in response to comment by Mr Blauss that this is a discussion of the amendment this evening, requiring no vote of the Board. Chairman FitzGerald-Kemmett added that the Board will have to vote at some point on recommendation of the article; however, it is within their right to take a neutral stance, present the facts and defer decision to that of Town Meeting and the voters. Mr. Stanbrook clarified that the Board is required to sign-off on all articles that will appear on the Town Meeting warrant.

IV OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business discussed.

V TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

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

- Mr. Stanbrook explained that he has been updating the Board as to the warrants that he has signed given his authority to do so until June 30. He noted those warrants signed on 5/21/2020, as follows:

Warrant 47	\$308,631.71	Vendor Warrant, consisting largely of an assessment for South Shore Voc-Tech School (\$251,240.25)
Warrant 47-PR	\$137,241.22	Payroll Warrant
Warrant 47-WH	\$25,613.57	Payroll Withholding Warrant

- New Business:
 1. Mr. Stanbrook stated that today was the first day that more staff has returned to the Town Hall. He said that it went smoothly, with observations noted of other changes that will be needed in terms of social distancing.
 2. Mr. Stanbrook said that he has complied with the Hanson Town Administrators Special Act and prepared the monthly update regarding outstanding legal matters. He stated that it will be emailed to Board members as it is not a public document.
 3. Mr. Stanbrook said that as the Town Meeting has been postponed to July 20, he is required to prepare a monthly budget for submission to the Director of Accounts for approval prior to June 30. He said that a monthly budget has to be prepared for every month that there is not a Town Meeting effective budget.
 4. Mr. Stanbrook explained that there has been recent guidance from Plymouth County regarding CARES ACT monies for which the Town may be entitled as the result of COVID-19-related expenses. He continued that a web portal, Plymouth County Cares (www.plymouthcountycares.com) was created for the purpose of managing the distribution of the money allocated to Plymouth County. Mr. Stanbrook said that the most

recent communication has been on how to submit reimbursement claims, which are for those expenses incurred between 3/1/2020 and 12/31/2020. He clarified that these funds are for expenses only and not revenue replacement.

VI ADJOURNMENT

MOTION at 8:04 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