

**Selectboard
Emergency Meeting Minutes
March 16, 2020
Town Offices
1:30 p.m.**

The emergency session of the Selectboard of the Town of Whately was called to order on March 16, 2020 at 1:35 p.m. by the Chairperson, Joyce Palmer-Fortune. Also present were Selectboard Member Frederick Orloski, Town Administrator Brian Domina, Emergency Management Director Lynn Sibley and Administrative Assistant Amy Schrader. Selectboard Member Jonathan Edwards participated in the meeting remotely by telephone.

To discuss modifications to the operations of the Town of Whately government in response to the COVID-19 (Novel Coronavirus) pandemic

The Selectboard discussed the rapidly evolving situation with the coronavirus and discussed how best to protect Town employees, elected/appointed officials and residents while ensuring that essential operations continue. The Selectboard discussed whether it made sense to close all town buildings to the public and how this might impact currently scheduled and future public meetings. The Selectboard determined that the benefits of closing town buildings to the public exceeds the logistical difficulties that will be created by closing the buildings. Joyce made a motion that the Selectboard adopt an emergency order restricting public access to all town buildings effective today at 4:00 p.m. The transfer station is to remain open with special precautions. The emergency order does not apply to the elementary school or library which are under the control of other boards (both buildings are already closed). Fred seconded the motion. All in favor – roll call vote Joyce – yes, Fred – yes, Jonathan – yes.

The Selectboard discussed how its emergency order will affect currently scheduled and future public meetings. The Selectboard decided that all non-essential meetings and all community group meetings need to be postponed and that essential meetings may be considered on a case by case basis. The Selectboard asked Brian to put together guidance on holding public meetings in light of the building closures.

The Selectboard discussed how the current circumstances might affect the Annual Town Meeting and Annual Town Election. Brian recommended that the Selectboard take a vote to postpone the Annual Town Meeting originally scheduled for April 28, 2020 to a date uncertain. Current legislation only allows the Annual Town Meeting to be postponed until June 30, 2020. Brian informed the Board that the Annual Town Election is currently scheduled for June 9, 2020 and there is no action recommended at this time. Joyce made a motion to postpone the Annual Town Meeting originally scheduled for April 28, 2020 to a date uncertain. Fred seconded the motion. All in favor – roll call vote Joyce – yes, Fred – yes, Jonathan – yes.

The Selectboard discussed the currently scheduled Special Town Meeting on March 25, 2020. Brian informed the Board that there are two time sensitive articles on the warrant – one for the Williamsburg Road Bridge project and the other article is to make an additional payment on the CPA loan for the Town Hall. The Board decided to keep the Special Town Meeting as scheduled and to require safe social distancing measures be followed.

The meeting adjourned at 3:25

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Domina, Town Administrator

Document List on File in the Selectboard Office

None