

Approved

Town of Grantham

Board of Selectmen Emergency Meeting Minutes

March 17, 2020

The emergency meeting of the Board of Selectmen, to discuss the closure of Grantham Town Hall for public business, was called to order at 2:28 pm on Tuesday, March 17, 2020, by Chairman Garland. The meeting was held in the Grantham Town Building, Jerry Whitney Memorial Conference Room at 300 Route 10 South, Grantham, NH.

Present: Chairman Peter Garland; Selectman Constance Jones; Selectman Warren Kimball; Town Administrator Melissa White; Administrative Assistant Ann Jasper; Town Clerk/Tax Collector Ken Story; and Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Penny Palmer

CLOSURE OF GRANTHAM TOWN HALL FOR PUBLIC BUSINESS

Town Administrator White stated that, due to concerns regarding the spread of COVID-19, she thought it would be in the best interest of the town employees and residents not to have face to face contact. White said many communities are taking this step, with staff is still present to take phone calls and answer emails, and to process as much online that can be. The Selectmen agreed. Selectman Garland asked if a notice and instructions for residents will be posted on the Town's website. White said yes, she will post a notice stating the town offices will be closed to the public until further notice. Language for the notice was discussed.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Ken Story informed that their software vendor, Eb2gov, has suspended the usual \$1.85 electronic processing fee for online transactions until further notice, however, he clarified and emphasized that they are NOT able to suspend the 2.79% convenience fee for credit/debit card transactions. Story added that the Director of the DMV has extended the use of temporary plates issued after March 1, 2020 until April 30, 2020.

White recommended that they cancel the March 25, 2020 regular Selectmen's meeting and the board and committee meetings that have been scheduled in the Jerry Whitney Room and Town Hall over the next two weeks. She said she will connect with Planning Board Chair Carl Hanson about the Planning Board meeting and Emily Owens about her board and committee meetings.

There was discussion about RSA 91-A (New Hampshire's Right to Know Law in light of COVID-19 concerns and issuance of Executive Order 2020-04 from the Office of the Governor) and holding meetings electronically. White reported that the school used ZOOM for their meeting last weekend and she will check with them about it. Selectman Garland added that the school he is involved with uses Google Meetings. White said that she will do some research and ask the school why they use ZOOM over Google.

Administrative Assistant Ann Jasper asked if access to the Selectmen's office and Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office can be restricted to employees who work there, including the Selectmen and not allow people who do not have a reason to be there. Selectman Kimball said that sounds fine and what they could do is set up any sort of meeting in the Jerry Whitney Room and only enter the office if they need to get supplies so, in theory, nothing should be brought into the office. White said that will require an interoffice memo and asked Jasper to clarify what she means by

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employees who work there. Jasper said she means only the employees who work in both offices. White asked her how department heads are going to get their mail and code invoices. Chairman Garland suggested leaving documents in the lobby on the counter outside of the office. The public doesn't have access to the lobby and they could get their mail and sit out there and code invoices without coming into the office. Selectman Kimball agreed and added that we should do whatever we need to do to close it off. Town Clerk/Tax Collector Ken Story said that is what they are going to be telling people where an exchange of documents is required, if it's something that they can't do online or by mail. They will come up with a new procedure.

Selectman Garland asked who does burial permits. Selectman Kimball said permits are not required, that you just have to contact the Sexton.

Selectman Jones confirmed that the door to the lobby is going to be locked and then asked about Police Department walk-ins. White stated that the non-emergency number will be posted on the door and people can call to make an appointment just as people must do who have business with the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office. Selectman Kimball commented that is good and the less people allowed in the building, the more it protects both employees and residents

White recommended postponing the meeting that was supposed to happen on March 18th and said she will reach out to David Beckley, Emergency Management Director, and ask him to give them updates if the Board agrees. There was some discussion about the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP). White said she will reschedule that meeting to a time when everyone involved is available.

Story asked when the town building closure will be effective. White said it will be effective at 5:00 PM so there will be no evening hours tonight for his office.

White stated that she is going to look into putting glass up at the three reception windows as a barrier which would have a slot through which to pass documents. The Board agreed and they will discuss the details at a future meeting.

A motion to close Town Hall to the public as discussed effective March 17, 2020 at 5:00 PM was made by Chairman Garland; seconded by Selectman Jones. **Unanimously approved.**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, Selectman Jones moved to adjourn, seconded by Selectman Kimball; by unanimous vote, the Board adjourned at 3:09 PM.

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is to be determined pending evolving circumstances.

Respectfully submitted,



Ann Jasper
Administrative Assistant