



Fairhaven Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

April 9, 2020

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FAIRHAVEN,
MASS.

Present: Town Administrator, Mark Rees and Cable Access Director Derek Frates

Present via Zoom: Chairman Charles Murphy, Vice- Chairman Robert Espindola, Public Works Superintendent Vinnie Furtado, Finance Director Wendy Graves, Administrative Assistant Vicki Oliveira, and Cable Access Production Coordinator Erick Sa.

Absent: Selectman Daniel Freitas

The meeting was videotaped on Cable Access and Zoom meeting application.

Chairman Murphy opened the meeting at 4:03 pm and read the following statement:

"This Open Meeting of the Fairhaven Board of Selectmen is being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the "COVID-19 Virus."

In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

The Order, which you can find posted with agenda materials for this meeting allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. This meeting will allow public comment related to the posted agenda items only.

For this meeting, Fairhaven Board of Selectmen is convening by telephone conference/video conference via Zoom App as posted on the Town's Website identifying how the public may join."

Roll Call was taken for all participants

EXTENSION OF WATER AND SEWER BILLS

Mr. Rees told the Board the water and sewer department is asking for an extension on the current water and sewer bills from 30 days to 60 days and to waive any late fees or interest to allow flexibility to the tax payers because of COVID-19 restrictions. This is before the Board at this special meeting because a deadline needs to be met in order to provide more time for the printer to print and mail the bills.

Mr. Murphy and Mr. Espindola spoke with Mr. Furtado and are in favor of this.

Mr. Furtado said he would like to thank the Board of Selectmen for meeting on this. The Board of Public Works and the Town's financial team are in favor of this to help our residents have more time to pay their bills.

Mr. Espindola made a motion to extend the bills from 30 days to 60 days and to waive any late fees an interest during that time period. Mr. Murphy second. Vote was unanimous. (2-0)

Roll Call vote: Mr. Murphy in favor, Mr. Espindola in favor.

CHANGES TO EMPLOYEE HEALTH INSURANCE- COVID 19

Mr. Rees announced that because Mr. Freitas is absent and Mr. Murphy receives the town health insurance under the rule of necessity Mr. Murphy will need to vote on this issue.

Mr. Rees told the board this issue is on the agenda tonight because it is time sensitive. Blue Cross /Blue Shield is waiving any co-pays and deductibles for appointments related to COVID- 19 and the Board will need to vote in order to opt in to this program.

Mr. Espindola made a motion to move to opt in to the Blue Cross/Blue Shield program that waives the deductible and co-pays during the COVID-19 time period. Mr. Murphy seconded. Vote was unanimous. (2-0)

Roll Call vote: Mr. Murphy in favor, Mr. Espindola in favor

NOTES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Espindola reminded residents that the town is participating in the energy aggregation. He encouraged residents to read the information posted on the town webpage and if they have any questions to please call him.

Selectmen thanked Health Agent Mary Kellogg for all her hard work and efforts with the COVID -19 situation. Selectmen also thanked town staff, first responders, grocery store workers and essential workers for coming to the front lines in this crisis.

The Board wished everyone a Happy Passover and a Happy Easter and remember to wash your hands frequently.

Mr. Espindola made a motion to adjourn at 4:22 pm. Mr. Murphy seconded. Vote was unanimous. (2-0)

Roll Call vote: Mr. Murphy in favor, Mr. Espindola in favor

Respectfully submitted,



Vicki L. Oliveira
(Approved 4/28/2020)