03/16/2020 SB Minutes

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

March 16, 2020
Present: Chairman Boisseau, Selectman Moore, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Moritz, Selectman Caplain.
Chairman Boisseau opened the meeting at 3:30. He said this meeting is to plan and wanted all department heads here to work on a plan. He said we need to work quickly because things are evolving quickly. He also said we shouldn’t be meeting in one room with more than 10 people. Chairman Boisseau said if a family member is sick the whole family needs to self-quarantine and said there is a 20% higher mortality rate than swine flu. He explained it is a work session on how to operate as a town as virus evolves. He said they can’t make anyone leave but requested that anyone that isn’t a dept. head to leave for the safety of others. The Board discussed how they (Government) are making exceptions to 91 A due to this and giving Boards more flexibility with meeting.
Chief Anderson said he participated in a conference call with the health consortium but didn’t feel that was helpful.

Chief Anderson said he needs to get his employees educated on what they should/shouldn’t be doing on accident scenes, quarantine areas etc. He explained dispatchers are screening calls to determine risk. He also said the hospital is setting up protocols and the ambulance may be decontaminated at the hospital.

The Board discussed needing to identify essentials and what the critical issues are that need to be discussed.

Police Chief, DeMoranville said the police can be pretty mobile so they can go to people instead of people coming into the building.

Rec Director, Tim Fleury said he will work remotely because there is no program right now. Selectman Moritz said they will need information on the employees that are not working so they can be paid. Mr. Fleury asked about closing public recreation areas and was told no at this time. Selectman Moore said they can be reimbursed 75% for emergency expenses for purchasing equipment etc.

Selectman Caplain asked Chief DeMoranville if anyone did need to come into the police dept for anything and the Chief said just if they arrest someone.

Chief Anderson said there should be plans if people are quarantined for two weeks and possibly up to 4 and pointed out there will be people that don’t follow it.

The Chief also said people will need help with getting groceries and medications. He said volunteers will be needed and a protocol.

There was discussion about setting up a phone number for people to call if they need food, medication, etc.

Selectman Jensen asked if criminal background check will be done on volunteers. Chief DeMoranville said it will not be quick. Chief Anderson said his staff can be utilized and said people should sign up for code red through Grafton County sheriff’ dept. Chief Anderson said he can send out messages to everyone that signs up.

Dave Wiley said he can be at arm’s length if he is needed and said he is trying to keep the Board informed.

Mary Jackson said several towns have closed the tax/town clerk’s office. She said some have stayed open, but DMV may require everyone to shut down.

There was discussion about what services can be done online – New registrations, dog licenses and vital records. It was stated there are fees to do it online when paying with a credit card but we don’t charge that fee so we can’t waive it. It was also stated that the town charges $1.50 for an ACH payment.

The Board discussed and decided to put signs on the doors to limit people coming into the town building.

Brett Jackson said there are 7 of them (employees) in the highway department and asked what if they restrict groups to less than that and asked if he can reduce staff.

Chairman Boisseau said this is evolving so quickly. There was discussion about how it would be handled if the ambulance crew transported someone with the virus and Chief Anderson said 911 will screen so they know when responding. He also said some towns have 2 ambulance. He also said they have kits with eye protection, masks and gowns etc.

The Board discussed helping people through the food panty who need food and may need it delivered. They decided to have people call April’s cell if they need food. April will then contact a volunteer to do what is needed.

They discussed how to get timesheets to the office to make sure payroll could get done. They will be sent electronically or dropped off to the police department to get to the office.

Dave Wiley asked the Board to appoint Chief Anderson as deputy Health Officer. They will check on the process for that but agreed that made sense.

The Board discussed and decided the planning office would only be by appointments.

Chairman Boisseau said the focus needs to be on slowing the spread and understanding, empathy and flexibility is what is needed now. Chief Anderson said they can adjust as things occur.

At 4:55 Chairman Boisseau moved to go into non-public session per RSA 91A II for matters of personnel. Selectman Moore seconded. Chairman Boisseau did roll call with all members agreeing to go into non-public session.

The Board discussed personnel. Will check on 75% reimbursement for payroll.

At 5:25 Selectman Moore moved to adjourn. Selectman Moritz seconded. Carried 5-0.
Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant