03/23/2020 SB Minutes

Bethlehem Board of Selectmen

Meeting Minutes

March 23, 2020
Zoom conference call meeting participants: Chairman Boisseau, Selectman Moore, Selectman Jensen, Selectman Moritz, Selectman Caplain.
Chairman Boisseau opened the meeting at 6:00 pm. He explained there are new rules about meetings due to Covid-19 and no one has to be at the town building for public participation anymore. He explained the public can participate by Zoom.

Selectman Moritz said this will be the last meeting someone will be at the town building for the public to be there. The Board all agreed.
Public Input

Chris McGrath asked the Board about offering a recreation program for kids but limit it to under 10 kids and make available to employee’s kids. He also said if the Select Board isn’t comfortable meeting at the town building, they should close down so employees don’t have to be there. Dann said he would not be okay with it being open to town employees’ children.

Dann also said taxation is a crime because there is a victim and there are 5 facts that prove that. Selectman Moritz told him he is being repetitive and political. Chairman Boisseau said he has been on the record before about that and he is being repetitive. Dann said people may not have heard it before. Selectman Caplain said it is not the right timing.
Selectman Jensen talked about the town joining the Northeast Resource Recovery Association. He explained that Carberry will take Bethlehem’s waste as of April 2021 and Northeast provides recycling for Carberry. Selectman Jensen said the cost to join is $175.00 and it can be taken from the capital reserve fund for the transfer station. He said they should sign up this month or next month. Selectman Jensen moved to join Northeast Resource Recovery Association at 7 cents per resident ($175.00) and pay it from the capital reserve fund. Selectman Moore seconded. Carried 5-0.
Selectman Moore went over some Conservation Commission appointments. Selectman Moore moved to appoint Lindsay Webb and Margaret Gale for 3-year terms. Selectman Jensen seconded. Carried 5-0.

Selectman Moore moved to appoint Jeanne Robillard as an alternate for a 3-year term. Selectman Jensen seconded. Carried 5-0.
Covid 19

Selectman Moritz said she spoke with Tim Fleury and he talked with his recreation employees about finding things to do or being laid off and they chose to be laid off except his assistant and they will work on planning the summer program. Chairman Boisseau asked the Board their thoughts on utilizing the recreation program now as Mr. McGrath suggested. Selectmen Moritz and Moore said they do not think that is a good idea. Selectman Caplain said the idea is to be socially distancing so he also does not agree. Selectman Jensen agrees with the rest of the selectmen.

Selectman Moritz asked what they should do with the town building and said she thinks it should be closed. Chief Anderson said he agrees that it should be closed to the public but thinks someone should be there to answer calls.

Selectman Caplain asked if we could do call forwarding and was told our phones can’t do that but we can call remotely to get messages from our phones.

Selectman Moritz asked if Mary Jackson would be closing the Town Clerk/Tax Collectors office.

Chief Anderson said he has closed off the police and fire offices and feels he should be there.

Dann said tens of thousands of people are killed on the highway each year and employees drive to work. He said there are risks every day.

Chairman Boisseau said the idea is to minimize risk where they can and listening to the CDC they are trying to limit peoples exposure. He said he would be okay with employees working in the building but having the doors locked. Selectmen Moritz and Jensen agreed. Selectman Moritz said April posted their hours and will work from home. She said she is not okay with building being open to the public. She also said things are changing so rapidly that it is hard to lock in specific hours. Chairman Boisseau said he is fine with April working remotely and said they need to have flexibility with employees. Selectman Jensen said he is good with that and they can revisit if need be.

Chief Anderson said there is a lot of misinformation and incorrect information that a dedicated phone number for people to call and talk to someone and ask questions to would be good. Selectman Moore said she is okay with giving a specific number but doesn’t want employees to talk about medial stuff with people. Selectman Moritz agreed.

Chairman Boisseau said the building will be closed to everyone except town employees but they prefer employees work from home if they can.

Selectman Moore spoke with Robert Blechl about checking in with people due to being isolated and how they are doing including mental health.

The Board discussed how often they would meet and decided at least weekly but could meet in between if they need to. The Board all agreed to this.

Selectman Moritz said the 24-hour posting of the meeting is not required and no one needs to be at the town building.

Selectman Caplain said they would have a conference call tomorrow with Linda, Jack and April at 2:00 pm to discuss volunteers and food delivery.

Selectman Jensen said 91 A is allowing for public access to be via phone and/or electronic access with public notice.

Chairman Boisseau said they will try to do 24-hour notice but may not always be able to. Selectman Jensen said it will be put on Facebook, website and the newsletter.

Selectman Moore said she would talk with Mary Jackson in the morning about closing her office.
The Board discussed the minutes from 03/09/20. Chairman Boisseau moved to approve the minutes. Selectman Moore seconded. Carried 5-0.
At 6:51 Chairman Boisseau moved to adjourn. Selectman Caplan seconded. Carried 5-0.

Respectfully submitted,

April Hibberd

Administrative Assistant