



TOWN OF SHREWSBURY

Board of Selectmen Meeting
Remotely Conducted Meeting
Shrewsbury, Massachusetts 01545-5398

Tuesday, April 7, 2020 - 7:00 PM

MINUTES

Important Notice: Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitations on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the **Shrewsbury Board of Selectmen** will be conducted via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. All meetings and hearings listed in the agenda will also be done so through remote participation. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at www.shrewsburyma.gov/coronavirus. For this meeting, members of the public who wish to listen or watch the meeting may do so by visiting <https://www.shrewsburymediaconnection.org/>. No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the town's website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting. To participate in the public comment portion of this meeting, dial [1-260-786-0556] and enter the following pin: [946-308-261]. Please mute your device until the Chair of the Board of Selectmen addresses your agenda item or opens the meeting to public comment.

Present: Mr. Maurice DePalo, Chairman, Ms. Beth Casavant, Vice Chairman, Mr. John Lebeaux, Clerk, Mr. James Kane, Selectman, Mr. John Samia, Selectman

Also Present: Mr. Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, Mr. Christopher Mehne, Town Moderator

Mr. DePalo called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Preliminaries:

1. **Announcements/Reports**

Mr. Lebeaux reminded all that Census 2020 is up and active and it is in resident's best interest to respond to the census. Mr. DePalo thanked all essential workers for continuing to provide essential services.

2. **Town Manager's Report**

Mr. Mizikar stated that at the current time there are 59 Positive Cases of COVID-19 in the Town of Shrewsbury, averaging at about 5.5 cases per day. Mr. Mizikar asked the public to be diligent as there is a peak expected in the region within the next 3-5 days. The downward curve will be much more gradual taking a much longer time; perhaps 2 or 3 times the rise. Town buildings remain closed to the public and remote operations have been enabled including the Emergency Operations Center. Non-emergency utilities have been eliminated reducing the need to enter resident's homes. Considering the intensive response that the town was required to do and continues to do, the Town has been tracking and managing costs to ensure it is in the best position to be eligible for Federal and State reimbursements. The Town is awaiting State guidance and working on a financial impact analysis as best as it can and it will be shared with the Board of Selectmen and Finance committee as soon as it is ready. Mr. Mizikar commended all staff on their unbelievable dedication to their jobs and the Town of Shrewsbury with special thanks to those on the front lines in the

medical community, our EMS partners, DPW, SELCO, Police and Fire. The Police Station and Municipal Campus Project is on-going currently undergoing wetland flagging and program development and space needs to determine the rough footprint for the Police Department and other Town operations at Town Hall and the Senior Center.

Meetings/Hearings:

3. Joint meeting with Christopher Mehne, Town Moderator, to review and act to postpone the Annual Town Meeting to a date to be determined

Mr. Mehne joined the Board to add support to the Board and Town Manager to postpone the Annual Town Meeting given the recent legislation, Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020. Mr. DePalo added that the meeting can be delayed until June 30th and further the moderator can postpone the Annual Town Meeting in 30 day increments thereafter if necessary. Ms. Casavant asked how the Town would proceed with funding if the Annual Town Meeting was delayed. Mr. Mizikar responded that the Town has been afforded the ability to continue into the net fiscal year by providing a written budget plan for one month at a time that has to be approved by the Board of Selectmen and Commissioner of Revenue, known as a continuing resolution where a certain amount is forwarded. It would be around 1/12th but depends on the time of year and what expenses may be due at that time frame. Mr. Mizikar added that delaying the Annual Town Meeting would put us in the best position and encourages the Board to postpone but delay in setting a certain date until the Town can best understand the circumstances and impacts.

On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote, Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted pursuant to the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 39, Section 9, as amended by Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, to postpone the Annual Town Meeting originally scheduled for May 18, 2020, to a date to be determined; and further requested that the Town Clerk in concert with the Town Manager provide sufficient notice to Town Meeting Members of this action no later than April 21, 2020.

New Business:

4. Review and act to postpone the annual Town Election to a date to be determined

Mr. DePalo stated that the date can be changed up until June 30th, however the Board can take action at another time to determine the date. The Board discussed their preferences on postponing the election and did not want to put residents in a position of risking their health in order to vote.

On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote, Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted to declare its intention to postpone the Town Election to a date to be determined.

Mr. Kane suggested that the election be pushed to the same date in November as the presidential election for budget and safety reasons. The consensus of the Board was not to vote this evening. Mr. Lebeaux stated that he does not feel comfortable with elected officials to serve 6 months past their term at this time.

Mr. Mizikar stated that the Town would first need to have a Town Meeting with a home rule petition, and the only option right now is to schedule the election before June 30th.

5. Review and act to change the 4th quarter tax bill due date from May 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020

Mr. Mizikar stated that bills were already sent out with a due date of May 1st but should the Board vote to extend the due date then notice will be provided. On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote,

Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted pursuant to Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, to extend the due date of the Fiscal Year 2020 fourth quarter property tax bills from May 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020; and further requested that the Town Treasurer/Collector in concert with the Town Manager provide notice of this extension to taxpayers by posting in a prominent location on the Town's website, by posting on official Town social media accounts, and by any other means the Town Manager deems appropriate.

6. Review and act to waive interest and penalties for certain bills if paid in full by June 30, 2020

Mr. Mizikar stated that this act will waive all interest and penalties incurred through a late payment should certain bills be paid in full by June 30th and this is broader than just property tax bills. This proposal will also have the Board consider waiving all fees and interest under late payment including vehicle excise, water, sewer, and stormwater on bills due March 10th through June 30th. Interest will start accruing from June 1st forward on property tax. For the other types bills that are up for consideration penalties and interest will accrue from the original due date. This does not include electric and cable bills. Mr. Kane asked if this involved tax foreclosure properties. Mr. Mizikar responded that anything that has been accruing historically in any other quarter, for property tax bills, will continue to accrue at its normal interest rate and any other penalties therewith.

On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote, Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, to waive interest and penalties for any late payment of any excise tax, betterment assessment or apportionment thereof, water rate, sewer rate or stormwater rate or any other charge added to a tax for any payments with a due date on or after March 10, 2020, where payment is made after its respective due date but before June 30, 2020.

7. Review and act to extend the deadline for property tax exemptions from April 1, 2020 to June 1, 2020

Mr. DePalo clarified that the action should read "Review and act to extend the deadline for property tax exemptions from April 1, 2020 to May 1, 2020". Mr. Mizikar stated that this provides a period of time that a resident may be able to claim an exemption from their property tax bill and extends it to an equal amount of time as the other actions that the Board has voted on this evening. On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote, Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted pursuant to the provisions of Chapter 53 of the Acts of 2020, to extend the due date under MGL Chapter 59, Section 59 for application for exemptions from April 1, 2020 to May 1, 2020; and further requested that the Principal Assessor in concert with the Town Manager provide notice of this extension by posting in a prominent location on the Town's website, by posting on official Town social media accounts, and by any other means the Town Manager deems appropriate.

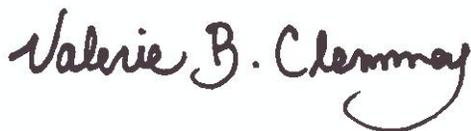
Correspondence:

8. Email, dated March 19, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Update on Local Election Legislation- so noted
9. Letter, dated March 19, 2020, from Karen Moriarty, Keegan Werlin LLP, 99 High Street, Boston, re: NSTAR Gas Company dba Eversource Energy D.P.U. 19-20- so noted
10. Email, dated March 20, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Baker-Polito Administration Announces New Health Care Resources, Small Business Relief, Other Efforts To Support COVID-19 Response- so noted
11. Email, dated March 21, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Child Care Emergency Providers - 2 in Shrewsbury- so noted
12. Email, dated March 22, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Updated info in State House News on the election legislation moving tomorrow- so noted

13. Email, dated March 23, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Governor Charlie Baker Orders All Non-Essential Businesses To Cease In Person Operation, Directs the Department of Public Health to Issue Stay at Home Advisory For Two Weeks- so noted
14. Email, dated March 23, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Municipal Elections and Municipal Governance Legislation- so noted
15. Email, dated March 24, 2020, from Sandra Wright, Town Clerk, re: Municipal Election Relief Legislation- so noted
16. Email, dated March 25, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Federal Partners Continue Providing Resources for COVID-19 Response Efforts- so noted
17. Email, dated March 24, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: Baker-Polito Administration Files Legislation to Address Challenges Faced by Municipalities, School Districts During COVID-19 Outbreak- so noted
18. Email, dated March 29, 2020, from Amy Wilmot, 209 Pleasant Street, Paxton, re: Excise Bill Abatement- so noted
19. Email, dated March 30, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: The COVID-19 Pandemic: Where are we; where are we headed?- so noted
20. Email, dated March 30, 2020, from Sandra Wright, Town Clerk, re: Frequently Asked Questions regarding Municipal Elections- so noted
21. Email, dated March 31, 2020, from Keven Krasnecky. CMRPC, 1 Mercantile Street, Suite 520, Worcester, re: Public Meeting Notice- so noted
22. Email, dated March 31, 2020, from James Vuona, Fire Chief, re: New Engine 1 Progress- so noted
23. Email, dated March 31, 2020, from Bernie Cahill, Town Planner, re: Planning Board Agenda April 2, 2020- so noted
24. Email, dated April 2, 2020, from State Representative Hannah Kane, re: HB4598 on Municipal Governance Passes House and Senate Today- so noted
25. Letter, dated April 3, 2020, from Nick Repekta, Highway Division Manager, to Kevin Mizikar, Town Manager, re: Street Sweeping Report- so noted
26. Email, dated April 3, 2020, from David Snowdon, DPW Business Manager, re: Solid Waste & Recycling Update- so noted
27. Letter, dated April 3, 2020, from Keith Elmes, Animal Control Officer, re: Quarterly Return Warrant- so noted

On a motion by Ms. Casavant, seconded by Mr. Lebeaux, on a roll call vote, Ms. Casavant- yes, Mr. Lebeaux- yes, Mr. Kane- yes, Mr. Samia- yes, Mr. DePalo- yes, the Board unanimously voted to adjourn at 7:50 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



Valerie B. Clemmey
Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen