



**TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
NORTH HAMPTON SELECT BOARD  
EMERGENCY MEETING**

**MARCH 16, 2020 6:30 PM**

**NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

***DRAFT MINUTES***

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jim Maggiore, Vice-Chairman Larry Miller, Selectman James Sununu

ALSO PRESENT: Interim Town Administrator/Director of Emergency Operations/Fire Chief Michael Tully, Police Chief Kathryn Mone, Deputy Fire Chief Jason Lajoie, Town Clerk Susan Buchanan, Director of Public Works John Hubbard, Cable Director John Savastano

**AGENDA**

Chairman Jim Maggiore welcomed everyone to the March 16, 2020 North Hampton Emergency Select Board Meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:35 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He said New Hampshire Governor Sununu has declared a State of Emergency, and this meeting is being held to inform the public what to expect from Town services and from the Town of North Hampton.

**First Public Comment Session**

*At this time Public Meetings will continue as scheduled, however we encourage the Public to take advantage of the ability to watch meetings live on:*

- *Local Channel 22*
- *Town Hall Streams*

**NEW BUSINESS**

**3.1 Discussion of COVID-19 Preparedness**

***Disclaimer –These minutes are prepared by the Recording Secretary within five (5) business days as required by NH RSA 91-A:2, II. They will not be finalized until approved by majority vote of the Select Board.***

***A recording of the meeting can be found at: [http://www.townhallstreams.com/towns/north\\_hampton\\_nh](http://www.townhallstreams.com/towns/north_hampton_nh), and a DVD recording is available at the North Hampton Town Administrative Offices, 233 Atlantic Avenue, North Hampton, New Hampshire 03862.***

Select Board Emergency Meeting  
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Interim Town Administrator Tully said currently all Town staff are using an abundance of caution dealing with COVID-19; the Town is working with other town, regional, and State officials to protect the community and following all CDC and State guidelines.

Town offices and the Town Clerk's office are open for now, Fire and Police will continue to operate, Schools are closed for 3 weeks to start, Library is closed to public, all recreation events are cancelled, Town Meeting spaces are closed to outside groups. Certain tasks are being completed out-of-office, Joe Manzi is working with Homeland Security on a phone system for wellness checks, and a contact position for Community Wellness has been created to work with Fire and Police.

Interim Town Administrator Tully said they are currently working on installing Plexiglas separations in the Fire Department, Police Department, Town offices and Town Clerk's office as a protective measure. Public visits to any office are closed, Fire Department closed except for Dispatch, Police Department and Town offices closed off for employees with buildings closed to general public except waiting areas. He said he would need votes by the Select Board: (1) to move forward on safety measures already enacted on an emergency level, (2) whether to close Town offices and Town Clerk, (3) whether to authorize Interim Town Administrator to curtail non-emergent spending; (4) whether to advise Town boards and committees that unless required by law or in an emergent situation chairs should postpone meetings until further notice.

Interim Town Administrator Tully said Select Board Meetings would continue, Planning Board required by law to meet at least once a month, some meetings in Mary Herbert room being pushed out in case needed by EOC, and suggested it would be prudent for the Board to cancel all other meetings if there is nothing emergent or required by law. Chairman Maggiore said all steps seem prudent and there was no need to completely close offices with separation spaces in place. Interim Town Administrator Tully said he saw further closings happening in steps and was looking into attaching drop boxes outside of Town buildings. He said meetings are not to exceed groups of 10; the public will be advised to watch meetings on Channel 22 and practice social distancing; as of midnight tonight all bars and restaurants are closed.

**Motion:** To continue to move forward on safety measures already enacted on an emergency level.

**Motioned:** Selectman Sununu

**Seconded:** Selectman Miller

**Vote:** Motion approved by a vote of 3-0

Selectman Sununu recommended they "prepare" for drop boxes and have a process and procedure in place before implementing. Interim Town Administrator Tully said people can phone in requests to offices to reduce possible exposure, and said Deputy Fire Chief Lajoie, Police Chief Mone, and Cable Director John Savastano are working to get information out to the public on Channel 22. He said Police and Fire now have Plexiglas separators in place and they are working on Town offices and Town Clerk's office. Binders on COVID-19 Protocol consisting of a general plan with appendices for each department were handed out to Board members.

Interim Town Administrator Tully asked the Board if they wished to authorize the Town Administrator to curb non-emergent spending until further notice. He said they are in the middle of a Budget, had never faced anything like this before, and may run into problems with individual Budgets, especially with OT for Fire and Police and funds to continue essential tasks in those departments. He said Primex was contacted about Workman's Comp, Fire and Police are in talks with other departments to provide more regional aid to protect the public, and they should secure their Town Budget from March to July 1<sup>st</sup> due to possible

significant overruns in Fire and Police. Selectman Sununu said he was sure there were discretionary things in the Budget and it makes sense to be more cautious right now.

**Motion:** To authorize Interim Town Administrator Tully to curtail non-emergent spending working with Finance Director Cornwell.

**Motioned:** Selectman Miller

**Seconded:** Selectman Sununu

**Vote:** Motion approved by a vote of 3-0

Interim Town Administrator Tully next asked the Board if they wished to tell Town boards and committees that unless required by law, or have an emergent situation, to postpone meetings until further notice. Selectman Sununu said to clarify, it would just be a request as boards technically meet at the discretion of the chair. Interim Town Administrator Tully said it would just be a strong recommendation.

**Motion:** To strongly recommend that all Town boards and committees, unless required by law or have an emergent situation, to postpone meetings until further notice.

**Motioned:** Selectman Miller

**Seconded:** Selectman Sununu

**Vote:** Motion approved by a vote of 3-0

Chairman Maggiore said the Governor made it clear that Select Boards should use the power they have under 91-A to declare an emergency and be able to meet, but no waiver is available to bar the public. Interim Town Administrator Tully said he could ask John Savastano that many programs be live so people can stay at home. Chairman Maggiore said under 91-A that they are allowed to declare an emergency meeting and there is a provision members can phone in electronically and have a quorum, but said he needed more clarification. Selectman Sununu said to participate electronically you need a physical quorum present and this is now saying you can produce a quorum by people participating electronically. Chairman Maggiore said he wanted clarity to make sure proper information is given to the public.

Interim Town Administrator Tully said the Town is moving with this situation as fast as it is changing day-to-day, Fire and Police are ready to respond, and services may change with Town Clerk, Town offices, and different departments going forward.

#### **Police Department**

Police Chief Kathryn Mone encouraged people to call with questions and to not hesitate to call the Police Department. She said the expiration dates on licenses have been extended 90 days. She said if people come to the Police Station and no one is at the front desk to push a button and someone will come out, and said there is also a phone line which will connect with Dispatch. Interim Town Administrator Tully said there is also a new line out for 2-1-1 for any questions with COVID-19, and Police and Fire are looking to increase Wellness checks moving forward.

#### **Fire Department**

Deputy Fire Chief Jason Lajoie echoed Chief Tully and Chief Mone, and said Plexiglas barriers were installed to cordon off employees from public contact. Selectman Miller asked if mutual aid between surrounding communities would continue, and Chief Tully said it would continue and they were looking into Seacoast Chiefs putting together a service to aid communities who can no longer provide a service. Selectman Miller asked about Portsmouth Hospital and Deputy Chief Lajoie said patients no longer go into the ER, only

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EMTs, and there is a different holding area. Ambulances are staying outside and that bay is basically secluded for any potential overflow of COVID-19 patients.

**Town Clerk/Tax Collector**

Town Clerk Sue Buchanan said Beach Stickers and Dump Stickers are not available until April 1, 2020 and can be done online once available. Things that cannot be done online are new registrations and transfers. She said she believes the State is also looking at extending expirations. She said a drop box will be a great idea and questions can be called in at 964-6029.

**Department of Public Works (DPW)**

Public Works Director John Hubbard said it was not really affecting them as people are not allowed to come into the DPW. He said they are meeting tomorrow on the Recycling Center, and felt the risk was more to employees than the public. He said they have curbside recycling, the Brush facility will be opening the first week of April, and they are already working on cleaning roadside debris. He said they will meet and have Channel 22 get out if the Recycling Center were closing.

**Channel 22**

Cable Director John Savastano said Podcasts were started last year as Radio North Hampton and are a quick way to get information out. He said they have a website: [northhamptoncommunitymedia.com](http://northhamptoncommunitymedia.com), and everything you need to see or hear is there. He said he can post things on their site with a link to Jan, and they could also read copy for a daily briefing and email the recording to Jan to put on the website. He said most meetings by the end of the week have happened and are recorded, Wednesday night they put everything together and redo the schedule to send to Jan for Friday Folders.

**Any Other Item that may Legally come before the Board**

Interim Town Administrator Tully said right now funding is coming into the State and all departments are keeping track of time and money spent on COVID-19 going forward to be positioned to receive that money back later from State or Federal Government. He said no COVID-19 testing is available right now for asymptomatic people, and to call your healthcare provider with any symptoms to determine if testing should be done. He said the Fire Department has personal protective equipment and they are changing operating guidelines to protect employees and manage exposure. Selectman Miller said he did not understand why a tool for Emergency Management was not already in their hands, and Chief Tully said the State does not have the immediate test kits available.

**Second Public Comment Session**

**Adjournment**

Chairman Maggiore thanked all Department Heads for coming in and asked the public to go to the Town Website for updates. The meeting was adjourned at 7:34 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary