

TOWN OF CUSHING
EMERGENCY MEETING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of Meeting
March 17, 2020
Cushing Community Center

Selectmen Present: Chair Alton Grover; Selectmen Dan Staples, Craig Currie, Corey Jones, and Martha Marchut

Selectmen Absent: none

Staff Present: Town Clerk Lisa Young

Public Present: Robert Stackpole and William N. Smith

1. Call to Order: Chair Alton Grover called the meeting to order at 7:10 P.M. and a quorum was determined.

2. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

3. New Business

3a. Discuss response to the Coronavirus

ACTION: Selectman Dan Staples made a motion, seconded by Alton Grover, to close the Town Office to the public immediately. The open date will be left open-ended with a plan to review the situation at every Select Board meeting. The staff will be working their regular hours to take phone calls and emails as needed

Discussion: Dan Staples said he had spoken with the Thomaston Town office, adding that they are no where near the same size as us, but that they were going to close to dealing with the public but will keep their office open so that people can do stuff online or by phone and stuff like that. Martha said she had looked at Village Soup and added that Rockport and Camden were doing nearly the same thing. Lisa added that Waldoboro, Union, and many others are doing the same. She said other towns such as Franklin, Owls Head, many others are closed, but business can be done by phone/mail within the office. Lisa also added that BMV is now closed too which limits customers from getting new plates and things like that. Dan asked if people weren't going to be coming to the window would three people be needed in the office at the same time. Dan added it's not a lot of money for Danika, he had checked. Lisa said there are things that we can start working on and cleaning out and can play it by ear. Lisa suggested doing it for a while and seeing how it goes; adding she wasn't sure how long they were suggesting closing to the public, days or two weeks, or what. Corey suggested two weeks as that's what most places have started with. Martha agreed, and added that in case of what could be an emergency situation to the townspeople, could they make an appointment to come in rather than just closing completely. Lisa said the State did send a GA packet to Alton and that was one of the things it said, being able to make an appointment adding it can be done over the phone as well. Lisa also said she spoke with Mariann Ahold, the Health Officer, that if anyone lives alone, trying to get numbers together to check in and be available to help those residents. Dan spoke about the contract with Garnett, and in that contract being charged so much per day; he asked if the office is closed down and he doesn't have coverage here would we have to pay him that day. Dan said he is just asking as this is new to all of us. Dan asked if we weren't open and servicing the Town, we shouldn't have to pay that. Alton asked why he couldn't [work], he doesn't see very many people a day anyway, probably only one person at a time and if they have an appointment. Corey said the whole purpose of shutting down, adding he sees it at the Breakwater

building, is to keep people away. He added if you start having one here and one there, and Garnett and his workers coming from wherever they come from in Bangor or wherever, they're crossing a lot of places to get to here; he [Corey] feels the whole purpose of shutting down is to keep people safe. Alton said when they [assessor] are in there, there is always someone coming, not a lot, but one or two. Dan added there are other things they have to do, with the April 1st assessment date coming up. Corey said it's already in the budget, we'd be paying them if this wasn't happening, so he feels it is there already. Martha felt leaving it up to him rather he comes in or not might be a good idea, stating he knows what he has for work to do aside from meeting with people. Alton agreed that he knows better than us. Corey mentioned about thing about the office, suggesting maybe leaving it up to Lisa to determine, but to keep in mind that both girls working here have kids out of school and not knowing how that could affect them, and maybe be able to stagger their days. Lisa agreed, and thought if it didn't work out for them to come in, she felt it was fine as long as the Board agreed. Dan said as long as there is coverage by a couple people, those two could stagger off if needed. Lisa also added if someone gets sick, things could change too. Corey felt that everything should be done over the internet, by phone, or email; he thought GA should be the only thing that people could make an appointment to come in for. The Board debated the closure for two weeks vs an open-ended date with review per State recommendations and progression of the virus. It was decided to keep it open-ended with review at Select Board meetings. Lisa asked about the Select Board meetings, and how they would be done. Dan said many other Towns are shutting them down, he said they could be done via phone if not all Board members wanted to be there. Bob Stackpole asked how you can have a public meeting by phone, Dan said residents could participate, too. He said the only thing residents can't do is participate in the communication. Bob did not understand how Dan thought everyone could join by phone, Corey added what Dan was referring to was for Board members that can't attend only, and he needed to read up on the page more for the public information. Dan then read, "members of the public who demand to attend in person, reduce risks by spacing out seating or providing a second room or location where the meeting can be screened to those who do not have internet access from home." Bob said the whole meeting can't be done strictly by telephone, there has to be a meeting. Dan agreed but again stated this is new territory, they've never had to do this before. Martha said if seat spacing does become an issue, meetings could be moved to the gym and asked if they were deciding to continue having the Selectman meetings at this point. Alton didn't see why not. Corey felt it should continue to be a day by day thing as this progresses. The Board agreed.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

3b. Request for resident's phone numbers and e-mail addresses

ACTION: none taken

Discussion: Martha said, as it ties in with this discussion, Bill Aboud had suggested sending out a letter in tax bills to request phone numbers and emails. She added that it wouldn't be as much of a burden on the staff now to get this information in the system having three people and stated that it is for future reference. Lisa said that wouldn't be a problem. Dan asked if it was for us or for the whole town. Martha answered that the information would be for us from the whole town. Alton asked every taxpayer. Martha said yes, so there is a way to access people. Lisa added that in the new Trio Sequel, it does have a place to enter phone numbers and emails, so as we get new people in Town that come to the office we have been getting that information added in if they want to give it to us.

ACTION: Chairman Alton Grover made a motion, seconded by Dan Staples, to adjourn at 7:25 p.m.

Motion Carried 5-0-0

Respectfully submitted,

Samantha Jones
Recording Secretary