

Town of New Scotland
Special Board Meeting
04/03/2020

The following Town Officials were in attendance:

Supervisor:	Douglas LaGrange
Councilperson:	Adam Greenberg
	Bridgit Burke
	William Hennessy
	Daniel Leinung
Highway Superintendent:	Kenneth Guyer
Town Clerk:	Diane Deschenes
Town Attorney:	Michael Naughton

1. Call to Order

Supervisor LaGrange called the conference call meeting to order at 1:00 PM. A roll call of those in attendance was taken. Crystal Peck, the Planning and Zoning Board Attorney, was in attendance along with two guests, John Remmers and Barbara Lewis.

Barbara Lewis advised that she got an invitation to the meeting. The only reason she could think of was because she has a permit outstanding that's coming before the next Board meeting. Town Clerk Deschenes said that Mrs. Lewis is probably signed up to get notices from the website.

Supervisor LaGrange advised that the purpose of the meeting is to see how Zoom works. Mrs. Peck is on the Planning and Zoning Board so we can experiment and see how this works today so that we're prepared for our Town Board meeting on the 14th. We are hoping to get a Planning Board and Zoning Board meeting toward the end of the month.

Mrs. Lewis said she would log out then. She asked if anything pending will come up before the Board at that Zoom meeting? Supervisor LaGrange said that that's what they're hoping for but that she would get all the notifications that she normally would. Mrs. Lewis said okay and signed out.

Email from Sheriff

Supervisor LaGrange said that he did receive an email yesterday from the Sheriff's office. We do have a confirmed positive for COVID-19 in New Salem. That person along with four family members is quarantined until April 14th. We also had two folks on Font Grove Road quarantined because of possible contact. That's the newest that he has for the Town of New Scotland. There was a rumor going around that there was a death from COVID-19 in the town but we haven't confirmed that. He thinks it's just a rumor. He's been sending updates. He sent one just a little while ago from the County Executive from their daily email. That's about all he has as far as updates.

Supervisor LaGrange asked if there were any questions or comments. Councilperson Hennessy said that he sent an email earlier this week. He heard that Colonie was pretty much shut down entirely including the Building Department and DPW except for emergency services. That's a heads up as to what might be for New Scotland depending on where things go. Councilperson Burke asked if Councilperson Hennessy knew why they took that action. Councilperson Hennessy replied that he didn't. He saw someone he knew in the Building Department several days ago. His understanding is that it was just a general precautionary element. He has been told that the Capital District Regional Planning Commission actually keeps track of what towns have accessibility and have different levels of closure. He did not know that, but another engineer told him that last night. There may be information on that website as to how other towns are working.

Supervisor LaGrange said that he talked to Supervisor VanLuven and Supervisor Barber yesterday. After Councilperson Hennessy's email he wanted to see if they were maintaining or changing their protocol. They are both basically hanging where they were. Bethlehem is a little more stringent, kind of like Colonie. Supervisor Barber said that Guilderland is pretty much going as they were. Both have cut staff. The big difference is the highway. The foremen in Bethlehem are pretty much in charge of being out there. Guilderland highway is still staffed 1/3, 1/3, and 1/3. Supervisor VanLuven did call Colonie to see if they were changing anything. He did say they are going to resume a limited yard waste collection next week in Colonie. Everyone is doing various amounts of protocols depending on the need and their

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particular situations. Obviously we are a little more rural than the others. Colonie is probably as dense as anybody.

Highway Superintendent Guyer said that he spoke with the Town of Bethlehem Highway yesterday. Starting Monday it sounds like they are going to be bringing in a quarter of the crew. They are going to do the same thing as we and Guilderland are doing, but they're going to do it in quarters. It sounds like for highway personnel 25% of their crew will come in Monday to resume work in some fashion. Supervisor LaGrange asked if the last couple of weeks have just been foremen? Highway Superintendent Guyer agreed, adding that the last couple of weeks it's been the foremen that have been there, a few mechanics, and some office staff. The crew was on call for an emergency. It sounds like Monday they about a quarter of the crew will be coming in. Supervisor LaGrange said that he didn't know to what extent Colonie is bringing in for the pickup but that seems to be the case for them too.

Councilperson Burke asked if Supervisor LaGrange wanted to send around a draft of that plan that we put together. Supervisor LaGrange replied that he would. He saw it late yesterday and he wanted to briefly go through it to make sure we didn't have anything out of sorts. Yes, we will send that out to the Board to get your thoughts through email if you have any additions before we actually introduce it. Thank you for your help on that too.

Councilperson Leinung asked Highway Superintendent Guyer how the current process is working. We're 50-50 right now with the crew. Highway Superintendent Guyer agreed. They are doing a week on and a week off. It's going well. They are able to attend to certain jobs. They're out there and getting certain things done. They started sweeping roads a little bit early; he's hoping that we don't get caught with having dirty roads again. They're sweeping roads and picking up some brush. With people being home, they are doing more yard work. They are here and are getting stuff done. It's working very well so far. Councilperson Leinung replied, "That's great." He just wanted to check in on that.

Councilperson Greenberg asked if the public knows the Transfer Station will be open this Saturday so they can go out there? Highway Superintendent Guyer said that we will be open this Saturday from 9 AM-4 PM. We just ask the public that they practice social distancing. When they get there they should remain in their vehicles and let the attendant look at what they have so they can keep their distance from each other. Councilperson Greenberg said that he didn't know if that was up on the Town website yet; if not, we should get that up there. Town Clerk Deschenes said that she would do that.

Supervisor LaGrange asked if Attorney Naughton had anything. Attorney Naughton said that he didn't. He sent around some emails today about next steps. We've got some SEQR to do on the grant for that Hilton Park matter. We can do that on the 14th. He drafted a proposed resolution and circulated that. We also have on the website now the codification of the zoning law which is Local Law A of 2020. That's all queued up and ready to go. That will be referred to the Planning Board at the County by Monday afternoon so it will be on their agenda for April 16th. Their March meeting was cancelled so they're having a meeting on April 16th. Attorney Naughton said that that's all he had.

Supervisor LaGrange said that he thinks we have a couple of bugs to work out here. We need to know how to record on Zoom. Do we want to set up another meeting next Friday again so we can give it another trial and also as a check in? Councilperson Greenberg responded, "Yes." Supervisor LaGrange added that he thought it would be a good idea.

Resolution 2020-117

Councilperson Greenberg offered the following and moved its adoption:

Resolved that the Town Board of the Town of New Scotland does hereby set a special Town Board meeting for April 10, 2020, at 1 PM.

Supervisor LaGrange seconded the motion. All present and voting, the motion carried (5 Ayes).

Supervisor LaGrange asked Councilperson Hennessy if he was okay for 1 PM on April 14th? Councilperson Hennessy agreed. Supervisor LaGrange said that once he gets the Zoom call in for information for April 14th he will get that to everyone too. He will send out an invitation probably for that on Monday now that we've got a feel for things a little bit here. In the interim, he will also send out

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one for 1 PM for next Friday. We can get the rest of the bugs out and be a little more prepared. We won't have a public hearing on April 14th. We postponed that. The way things have gone together with the codification do you think we should be scheduling on April 14th the Public Hearing on May 13th? Attorney Naughton agreed adding that by then we should know how to do that. Supervisor LaGrange agreed. We had some visitors today and they were able to chime in as needed.

Does anyone have anything else? Councilperson Burke asked if Town Clerk Deschenes had a copy of the low-hanging fruit document that she could stop and take a look at. Town Clerk Deschenes replied that she did not. Supervisor LaGrange said that he thought Building Inspector Cramer said something about that. Councilperson Greenberg and Councilperson Hennessy had some suggestions for Mrs. Stolzenburg that they could fill Supervisor LaGrange in on offline regarding what type of things they were looking for that she might start to work on after this initial codification. Councilperson Greenberg replied that they could send along kind of a working document where people have pointed out what they think the low-hanging fruit is. Nothing has been finalized or decided. It's just in the process of being compiled. Councilperson Burke said great, and she'd like to be in on that.

Supervisor LaGrange asked if there is anything else before we adjourn. Attorney Peck asked Supervisor LaGrange to call her when they were done, and she would show him how to record on his iPad.

Attorney Naughton said that at the next meeting he would suggest we have a quick resolution letting the public know that, although we have a policy of allowing the public to comment as items come up, we suspended that practice and policy while the COVID rules are enforced. We will then take comments from the public at the end of the meeting. That's been suggested in some of the notices that went out to towns. Supervisor LaGrange said that that was part of Executive Order 202 he thinks. Attorney Naughton agreed. Supervisor LaGrange added that he and Town Clerk Deschenes sat in on the webinar and there was a lot of good information. We will do that. He will have a list of things to say. They also ask for a roll call vote of who's attending like we did at the beginning of this meeting. When we get into the 14th and we're actually voting on things like SEQRA and things like that it's also a roll call vote. If he stumbles on that, remind him.

Councilperson Greenberg asked if Supervisor LaGrange could give us a quick update on any issues that we're seeing at the town level, seniors for instance. What are the reports back on getting them to their hospital appointments and things like that? Do we need volunteers? Anything like that you could tell us about what's going on. Supervisor LaGrange said that Mrs. Engel, our Senior Outreach person, is checking in daily or every other day. She told him that she's been in contact with the seniors who have needs that are out there. A lot of people are pretty scared. That's the general tenor of all of them. She's been taking time to reassure them. We still have quite a few of the Hannaford packs that we had during the holidays. She asked Supervisor LaGrange if he might be able to drive her around with some on the bus to people that are in need of those next week. He thinks the STAR program is done now that March 1st has gone by. The Town Clerk could tell you better than he can. She and Deputy Clerk Barber have been alternating and bringing in mail and stuff, opening it, checking for checks, and taking payments. We got a tremendous amount of tax payments in the last two days. The usual stuff is going pretty smoothly especially being cut back. Again the public understands and appreciates that we're running with a limited amount of people. He thinks it's going pretty well. Councilperson Greenberg said that he just wanted to make sure that we are doing all we can for our at-risk groups in town with the seniors being the main one. Do we have a system where we're finding out people who need groceries delivered and things like that or would prefer that? Supervisor LaGrange said that grocery delivery is part of what Mrs. Engel has been working on. There are some people who have volunteered for that. Councilperson Greenberg said that maybe we should get stuff on the website for numbers for people to call if they're not familiar with that. The other thing he wanted to mention was that he saw a notification going around the other day on a Historical Association meeting at the Community Center. He didn't know if other people got that. It could just be that it was set up to go out. Town Clerk Deschenes said that it was set up to go out and she's gone through and taken everything off the Community Center Calendar so those notices shouldn't happen. Councilperson Greenberg said that we have to make sure we're not notifying meetings that are not happening. Councilperson Leinung offered to reach out to Mr. Kowlowitz to make sure he's aware of the current meeting policy. Town Clerk Deschenes said that they are planning to meet via Zoom. Councilperson Leinung said that he would check in with him.

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Councilperson Burke said that we did have on that plan that one of the things we should be doing is assessing not just the services the town is providing for our at-risk community but see what's in the County in general and posting that information on the website and also identify where there are gaps in services not being provided and trying to figure out how we ourselves or with other communities fill those gaps. Supervisor LaGrange thanked Councilperson Burke adding that these are good points. Supervisor LaGrange added that he and the Town Clerk and I will have to coordinate a little bit better with Mrs. Engle on that if she has some thoughts and ideas. She may have somethings to add especially during this time that would catch people's eye on the website as far as county services and things like that. We'll have to fine tune that a little. I know there are some of those things there but maybe they should be on the COVID page. Councilperson Burke agreed.

John Remmers thanked the town for the invite. It was a learning experience.

Supervisor LaGrange said that it was good that we had a couple of people join us. Now we have a better feel for how this is going to work on the 14th. Town Clerk Deschenes said that the other thing we were going to look into is how we could go into an Executive Session if we needed to. Supervisor LaGrange said that the problem here is that we don't have cameras on our monitors. That's why he used his iPad. Apparently he has some limited access here, but maybe Attorney Peck will be able to help out on that. We will check on both recording and going into a side room. He's also heard there is a lot of hacking going on. We will see what happens. He's impressed that we got this far.

2. Adjournment

Councilperson Hennessy made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilperson Greenberg. The meeting adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Diane R. Deschenes, Town Clerk