

Town of New Scotland
Special Town Board Meeting
05/08/2020

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. Supervisor LaGrange called the special meeting to order at 1:00 PM. We are meeting pursuant to Governor Cuomo's Executive Order 202.1 which includes not having any in-person public meetings.

COVID-19 Update

This is our weekly update. As of this morning e-mail from the Sheriff's department we have one person in quarantine in New Scotland according to the list. We had three drop off today and two dropped off yesterday. In addition to that, we have two tested and listed positives in the Town of New Scotland. One was from a test a couple of days ago that just showed up yesterday on our report. The other one is still the person that's been hospitalized for quite a time now. I think it's been a good three to four weeks if not longer.

Grievance Day

Supervisor LaGrange wanted to let the Board know that he was speaking to Michael McGuire, our assessor, who was in today. He would like, as long as the Board doesn't have any issue with it, to continue plans for Grievance Day on June 2nd between 4 PM-8 PM. It would be confined to the meeting room and we could even rope off an area so people don't wander down the hall. He would do it by appointment. He would social distance the Board and the people coming in individually. They would wear masks and he would have people wait in their car. They would be called in as they alternate people. He talked to his Board. I wanted to confirm that. He talked to the Board of Assessment Review today and everybody was fine with that procedure. He just wanted to run it by us to see if that was something we were okay with.

Councilperson Leinung asked if there was going to be an option for people to do it electronically. He could see individual people not wanting to come in, not being comfortable physically to come in. Supervisor LaGrange replied that he hasn't said that but he could certainly ask him and see. Right now he's only had a couple of phone calls since the letters went out. It's also hard to gauge how many he will have. He does readily admit usually as the day comes closer he gets more inquires and more people decide to come in. Councilperson Greenberg added that he's not comfortable with it at least until he has more information. He thought we weren't supposed to have meetings. If we are going to extend this two weeks, we're basically to June 2nd. He doesn't know enough about the process whether or not it can be moved back two or three weeks. Supervisor LaGrange said, "I believe it can." Councilperson Greenberg said if it can't, he would have to understand why it can't be done virtually. Supervisor LaGrange said that he asked him about postponing it and he said that that could be done. There is no timeframe that is going to hurt that. I think he was under the assumption or hoping that he was going with this date as a goal and getting things together for it. He could always postpone it if the Governor decided to keep things closed or if we decided to keep things closed further. Councilperson Greenberg said that, assuming that the Governor's opening things up, we don't even know what will be opened up at that point. There is no assumption that public meetings are going to be open even if certain stores are allowed to open. Councilperson Burke said that she thinks that virtual is working for all of the other functions. She doesn't see why they couldn't do this through Zoom. Supervisor LaGrange said that he would bring that up to him and mention that it's worked well for others so far. He doesn't know if there is any issue. He doesn't think so other than somebody could submit their argument beforehand so the Board has it ahead of time, but he'll go over those things with him. Councilperson Greenberg added that it seems like one of the easier things to do virtually to him. Attorney Naughton said that he would just say that he would strongly recommend the Zoom thing. He talked to some of his partners about that going around for approvals all over the state at this point. The planning boards are running these

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meetings and it's going great including presentations, hearings, etc. It may not be as easy for an applicant in this kind of a setting where they want to present the documents to kind of show the Board what it is that they want to talk about but it can be done. It could get kind of clunky and slow if people try to present documents in that fashion. Another approach may be to put up on the website that anyone who intends to submit any documentation for a challenge could do so in advance and then we could arrange to have it scanned or they could email it to the Assessor in advance or someone that we designate, and then they could put it up for everyone to share with the Board. He would strongly recommend that we follow the Zoom model or whatever model you want to use.

Councilperson Leinung advised that he was going to switch from his computer to his phone because his computer is lagging a little bit.

Recap

Supervisor LaGrange said that while we are waiting for Councilperson Leinung he forgot to hit the record button so he just wanted to say that we opened this meeting at 1 PM and I failed to take attendance so we will do that in a second. It's supposed to be roll call. I've discussed that we have one person quarantined and two that are still listed as positive COVID-19. We just started a discussion about grievance day. To give a brief overview the Board has voiced displeasure in a sense and we should continue to follow the State. Zoom would be preferred for this or postpone it. I should take attendance quickly. A roll call attendance was taken but we are still waiting on Councilperson Leinung to sign in.

Councilperson Hennessy said, just to recap, Albany County has a map of positive cases. I'm suspecting that your count does not include the village of Voorheesville. Supervisor LaGrange said that it does. The list I get does include it. The list is all of Albany County and it's cumbersome. I go through and actually go by addresses and try to check each and every one.

Councilperson Leinung returned.

Supervisor LaGrange said that his numbers could differ from that website. Councilperson Hennessy said it's good for people to know that the data on that Albany County website might not be up to date. Supervisor LaGrange said I can imagine it's quite a struggle to keep it constant. Councilperson Hennessy said it goes by zip code so obviously the boundaries are not the same but it sounds like they might not be up to date with the data you get on your list. Supervisor LaGrange said that could very well be.

Supervisor LaGrange noted that Mr. Leinung is back on. We did a quick roll call and a quick overview because he neglected to push the record button.

Grievance Day

Supervisor LaGrange said that he would convey those thoughts to Mr. McGuire and have him adjust accordingly. Councilperson Greenberg said that he doesn't know what the legalities are exactly but if we have to give people an extension on their grievance claims, I don't know if that's something we need to vote on but we should do that. Supervisor LaGrange said he would find out if we have to and we can address that Wednesday. Good point. Attorney Naughton said that he thinks Mike should understand that it's not just the comfort and convenience of the public that's willing to attend and the Board, there are also issues about having people come into Town Hall with the aerosols, etc., and who knows how long it ends up in the building and people like you that have to go in there don't need to have that kind of exposure. Supervisor LaGrange agreed. He then asked if Councilperson Greenberg had something further.

COVID-19

Councilperson Greenberg said he had a question on the COVID-19 while you were talking about it. Have you heard anything? The Governor wants to lift some restrictions by region. Have you been updated by the County what that means for our region or where we are in terms of meeting the thresholds we need to meet to start the lift some? Supervisor LaGrange said we had a Supervisor/Mayor conference call with the County Executive the other day and some of his staff. I think you've probably gleaned this from the news reports, too. It's apparent that Albany County is somewhat lumped in with downstate because of the higher rates of infection that we've had here. I can't remember for sure. I should have written it down, but I think we've met four of the seven criteria that the Governor has set but

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the best anybody has done so far in any of the regions has met is five of those. I can't list those. It's something you could probably find out easily because the Governor announced that. The County Executive mentioned that particular figure when he was talking the other day. I would anticipate as well as any of us can that we will be a little behind the curve compared to some of the further upstate and western parts of the state as far as opening things up quickly. Councilperson Greenberg said that makes it sound even more like June 2nd is an unrealistic date. Supervisor LaGrange said that's a very good point.

Attorney Naughton said that he was looking into that criteria and how that all works for opening up in connection with another matter out in western New York. They emphasized so far in the actual guidance by region. You look at the CDC thing first as to whether there is 14 days of declining hospitalizations, etc. We are really kind of behind right now to be able to meet those criteria from the CDC. Anyway, that's all I can add. Supervisor LaGrange said that that's true and there was some discussion with a couple of the mayors and those that had swimming pools and parks that they were anxious to get open but it seems like we're still a good couple weeks or more away from any of that stuff. Councilperson Leinung said that he thought there was a chart somewhere. The capital region met like three of the five qualifications. He thinks part of it was getting more contact tracing so when there is a case having X amount of people available to determine the contacts for that person. I think another one or two is our rate. We're still having too many new infections at this stage but we are in better shape than some other regions. We're in better shape than downstate but we'll see. The latest quarter ends May 15th I believe so we'll see what happens on that date. Supervisor LaGrange said to Dan that he mentioned three out of five. I've been hearing seven criteria. Councilperson Leinung said maybe that's it. It might have been five out of seven or something. Councilperson Hennessy asked Supervisor LaGrange if he had those criteria. Supervisor LaGrange replied that he didn't have them in front of him. As Michael said, it's kind of loose. To some extent they are generalized. As Dan mentioned, there were some specifics as far as infection rate and things like that. Councilperson Leinung added that there was ICU bed availability and things like that. There is a chart somewhere. He can find it and send it around. Councilperson Greenberg added that if you Google it, it comes right up on the state criteria. Supervisor LaGrange said that he just didn't have it in front of me.

In anticipation of someday not renewing our resolution and getting things opened up, Diane and I were talking about looking into some sort of plexiglass barriers like you see in stores that people are putting up. We're researching that. I did speak to our supplier for cleaning material. We had a nice long talk yesterday. There are a few things. There is a webinar right now as we speak that I'm going to join after we shut off here. It's on just that, these plexiglass units. He saw one at the allergy clinic yesterday. It's fairly simple and easy to set up. It's something that we're going to have to look into a little, especially as we open up to the public. The other thing is that he was able to get three boxes, two in a box of 1500 count, Lysol-type wipes. I don't have the dispensers yet. They should be in in a couple of days or next week. I wanted to get those while they had them so that when we do open up offices, especially like Diane's or the Building Department, we can wipe things down between customers. We are also looking at, from the same place we order from, some of those hand sanitizer units that you mount on the wall in the hallway which would be basically just for the public. It wouldn't be for us to use. We have our little spray units, the bathroom, and soap and water. It's just something else to be conveniently placed for people when they come in or leave. They also have a one of these whole room treatments that you do at the end of the day. They have both a backpack unit and a handheld unit. Obviously, the handheld unit would be what we are looking at with a certain solution that you just spray down the whole room. I'm sure Bill knows a little more about it than I do, but's it's something she's going to send me the information on. I'll see what it looks like and see if that's an option for us to do a better job of keeping things clean and sanitized as we open back up. Councilperson Hennessy said that he thinks that would be a great idea. I'd like to reach out to Sphere. They are right down the street. I heard they were deeply involved in a lot of the decontamination nationwide and maybe there is some local assistance they can provide. Maybe they are not looking to do such a small element. If you can, Doug, you might want to reach out to them. I don't have the names and numbers of the individual there. Supervisor LaGrange said that he could give them a call. Councilperson Hennessy said that if they are not able to physically help us they might be able to help us even with further guidance on direction and suggestions for exactly what you're talking about. Supervisor LaGrange said that he's assuming, and he doesn't know that for sure, but he's assuming that they go in when someone has tested positive. They go in and do this major cleaning. I don't know how that differs or if it does differ at all from more of maintenance at the end of the day. I'll ask. Councilperson Hennessy said that he thinks they were typically a large-scale element.

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I think what I recall hearing was that they helped prepare the boat out in Los Angeles for use in this process. I don't think they did it for the ship that was in NYC. That's what they historically dealt with a lot. I think they dealt with a lot of mold issues, also. They dealt with some high-end disease issues too. It's worth reaching out. Supervisor LaGrange added that they went down to DC when the anthrax scare was on and they took care of one of the legislative buildings. I don't remember which. They also, as you mentioned Bill, were big in New Orleans when the flood was causing all of the issues with mold and everything else. Yes, I'll contact them and see. I think I still have a contact number in my file here from when I've been down there before and toured it. They were very accommodating and nice down there. Maybe being in our town, at worst, they will at least recommend something.

Councilperson Burke said that one thing she saw that might work in some spots better than the plexiglass is clear shower curtains. Like in the building department where space is kind of tight that might actually provide a barrier without inhibiting space in the future. Supervisor LaGrange said that's a thought too. Easy to hang.

COVID-19 Plan

Supervisor LaGrange said that that's all he had except for making a motion to extend resolution 2020-110 until May 28. Councilperson Burke said, before we do that, can you tell us if there is any feedback on the plan that we developed? Supervisor LaGrange said that he hasn't gotten anything from anybody. He sent it out to the department heads and hasn't heard back with any problems or issues. Councilperson Leinung said one of the things is we've had this plan now for a few weeks or maybe more than that. Do we want to pass this? I know we were considering this guidance but I would be more comfortable if we passed it like an official plan or guidance document for the Town to have. Obviously as things evolve we can make changes to it and amendments to it. This isn't the final version set in stone. I think it would be important to make it an official plan. I just wanted to raise that and see if we are able to do that. Supervisor LaGrange said that we certainly could. Michael suggested that it was not to that level necessarily. If the Board chooses to we could throw it on the agenda for next Wednesday and pass it officially. It would be better if we had it in front of us and as an agenda item. Councilperson Burke said that she thought that was a good idea. Councilperson Leinung said that it seems like we haven't gotten too much more feedback from department heads or anything either. He thinks it would be helpful to try and get it passed and make it more official. It might be helpful just to get it on the books. Councilperson Hennessy said that he asked for it before so he supports passing it today if people are comfortable with it. There haven't been any comments for over two weeks. He's fine with passing it today if the Board wants to. Attorney Naughton said for the record that you have all had this plan for a solid 10 days now he thinks. Supervisor LaGrange said he was checking to be sure. Attorney Naughton said that it's not a law so you don't have that 10-day rule, but that's a pretty good measure that you've all had a chance to look it over and comment on it. Councilperson Greenberg asked what his legal thoughts were on it? I thought you had said in the past it doesn't matter. Attorney Naughton said that he doesn't think it's necessary to do it but if people want to do it and make it official it won't hurt. Supervisor LaGrange said that the last time it was dispersed amongst us was April 24th from Dan. We certainly have had plenty of notice and time here. Either way, if everybody is comfortable and Michael doesn't have any issues with us adopting it today, that's fine. Otherwise we can do it Wednesday. Whatever the pleasure is here. Attorney Naughton said Doug could share that with Mr. Mulkerrin if he wanted a copy. Supervisor LaGrange agreed. Councilperson Leinung said that he prefers to do it today. We've been waiting. We've had it for a while. He'd prefer to do it today. Councilperson Burke said that if we do pass it today we would be passing the version that she sent around as the final version. There were a few minor changes. Supervisor LaGrange that she sent around the final and then shortly after than Dan had a couple of slight things. Councilperson Burke said she thinks she sent it out the last time last Friday. It might have been Thursday. Councilperson Greenberg said then it hasn't been 10 days and we need to wait I think. Is that right, Michael? Attorney Naughton asked if the meeting is Wednesday night. Supervisor LaGrange responded that it is Wednesday afternoon. Attorney Naughton said that he thinks it might be cleaner if we have it on the agenda and publish that we're going to approve it. Its cleaners. Supervisor LaGrange said, Bridgit, you're right. You had a couple of tweaks that you found after Dan sent it around. I apologize. I thought Dan was the last one. It came out on May 6th. The revisions that Bridgit made were minor. Councilperson Leinung said that what he has from Bridgit is May 1st. Supervisor LaGrange said we got the final from Bridgit on May 1st and 10 days would be the 13th but having said that, theoretically, we got the final version when Dan sent it and Bridgit made a few minor changes. Councilperson Burke said that she just took out a few comments. Supervisor LaGrange said that it would be cleaner to wait until Wednesday but whatever you prefer.

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weeks. Bill is in on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. He and Ryan on Wednesday and today spent quite a bit of time going over the maps. We brought the map drawers down from the Highway garage a while back. They've been kind of getting those in order and together. They are down in the basement. Bill has been acquainting himself with that and for a large part Ryan too. I know Bill has gone with Ryan on a couple of occasions in the van. Today, as I recall, they were going up into Clarksville because Bill is a little concerned with the flushing as it's always been done. Nothing serious. We always meet all the levels and stuff. He just has some thoughts and ideas that he was going over with Ryan up there. There has been constant discussion and contact. The new pick-up came in. Ken has that up at the garage. Bill has been making some calls on getting some odds and ends. I think he's been coordinating with Joe at the Highway garage. The advertisements have been placed. Councilperson Greenberg asked if we have gotten any responses? Supervisor LaGrange replied that Bill hasn't told him of any responses yet. He's the one that's the contact for when people send in resumes. I don't know that and he's left for today. If I hear I will let you know. Councilperson Hennessy said if that he missed that; is that up on the website or can you forward that to the Board? Town Clerk Deschenes said that it's on the website. Councilperson Hennessy said last time he looked it wasn't. Town Clerk Deschenes said it's under Job Opportunities. Supervisor LaGrange said it was basically the same as when we hired Ryan. There were some tweaks made and some updates on the salary because that was 2-½ years ago. We had Bill look it over to see if he had anything to add. It ended up on my desk from Bill with a note, "Doug, okay, looks good." That's where we stand on that.

Census

Councilperson Greenberg said to follow up something Dan's brought up a couple of times and has done a great job at pushing is maybe we should get some more on the website to remind people of the census and to fill that out. It seems like New Scotland is not up to snuff on following through on this in terms of the percentage of people who have filled out the census. Councilperson Leinung said that he knows that Diane posted a few things on the website but we can always put more out there. Councilperson Greenberg felt that the more we can push this issue the better. It obviously benefits all of New Scotland in the long run. Supervisor LaGrange added that there is still the door-to-door effort too. Councilperson Leinung said maybe. That might be modified too depending on when everything happens. That's why it's so important that everyone fill it out online or by mail. We don't know what that's going to look like, how big the door-to-door operation is going to be. Supervisor LaGrange asked what the end date is for the census to be done by. Councilperson Leinung said that he's not sure but he thinks you can keep responding for a while. They were supposed to start going door to door in the summer but that might have gotten pushed back a little bit. Councilperson Burke said whether or not there is door to door, is that going to be a federal decision? Councilperson Leinung said that it's probably on the federal level. There is probably still going to be door to door; it just might get pushed back a long time and it might be a very compressed time period. There are deadlines that they have to hit. It might not be as extensive as in the past where they would try four or five times at every door, they might only try once or twice. That's why it's so important to get everyone to fill it out now so we don't have any many people that they have to physically contact. Councilperson Greenberg said a quick Google search says that they send the census door-to-door people out for six weeks normally and that it would be July about the end date. Supervisor LaGrange said that we'll keep doing what we can here. There is no question. Councilperson Greenberg said that he thinks we should push it as much as we can. Supervisor LaGrange said not to say we shouldn't keep going, don't get me wrong, we're going to reach the people we usually reach. If there was some other way to get it out there. Everybody was sent the stuff from the Governor and we posted it on our Facebook page and the Town website. It gets to a point where how do we reach those people that are still out there with that extra step and then what is the extra step? He just doesn't know. Councilperson Leinung said that the County was being pretty aggressive early on. He hasn't heard anything on the County level about their outreach efforts. Supervisor LaGrange said that he hasn't heard that either but he will ask that question. Councilperson Leinung said that it would be good to see what they're doing. They might be focusing more on the city of Albany. There are definitely parts of the County that need more outreach. It would be good to see what they're doing. Supervisor LaGrange said he would check on that. He will e-mail them and see what they say.

Supervisor LaGrange asked if there was anything else. If not, he appreciates your time and trusts that everyone is staying well. We will do this again on Wednesday at 1 PM for our regular meeting. It's 12:45 PM for the hearing.

Councilperson Greenberg said that Michael had written up how the public hearing would work and you

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were going to list that on the website. I had a little trouble finding that yesterday. Is that up? Town Clerk Deschenes said it should be under public notices. Councilperson Greenberg said he didn't see it but he will check again. Town Clerk Deschenes said to call her if he can't find it.

2. Adjourn

Supervisor LaGrange made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilperson Burke. The meeting adjourned at 1:43 PM.

Diane R. Deschenes, Town Clerk