

Board of Selectmen

Tuesday, March 31, 2020

**Remote Participation (Zoom)**

7:00 PM

Chairman Murby opened the meeting and stated the following: “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 Medfield Board of Selectmen is being conducted via remote participation. 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 as provided for in the Order. A reminder that persons who would like to listen to or view this meeting while in progress may do so by following the instructions on the agenda and meeting notice,” and disclosed that the meeting is being recorded and streamed on Medfield TV.

The Board took a moment of appreciation for our Troops serving around the globe in defense of our country, and noted the Covid outbreak on the air carrier Teddy Roosevelt off the coast of Guam. Chair Murby also recognized our first responders.

Chair Murby commended the maturity of the Medfield students from the recent Fox 25 story regarding the Medfield State Hospital that aired earlier in the day.

Appointments:

**Community funds available to residents including but not limited to the Medfield Foundation, Medfield Food Cupboard, Covid-19 Relief Fund, and the HOME committee.**

Evan Weisenfeld, Abby Marble, Kathy Thompson, Georgia Colivas were present to discuss community funds available to residents including but not limited to the Medfield Foundation, Medfield Food Cupboard, Covid-19 Relief Fund, and the HOME committee.

Ms. Thompson discussed the origins and purpose of the HOME Committee. There is a governing board that determines where donations are made. She further discussed the relationship between HOME Committee and Medfield Foundation and their \$10,000 donation to the Medfield Foundation to assist with Covid-19.

Mr. Weisenfeld and Ms. Marble discussed the Medfield Foundation, its relationships with Medfield Youth Outreach and the UCC Church, and how best to spend funding raised by the Foundation within the community. A special Medfield Foundation Covid-19 Relief Fund has been created and to date seven (7) requests have been made to the Fund and more are expected as

rents and mortgages come due. Additional resources are available such as fuel assistance and the food cupboard.

Chair Murby explained his intention on putting the item on the agenda as a mechanism to highlight the existing resources and wondered if consolidation was needed so people know where to go to obtain the assistance that is being offered. There is a Facebook group and Helping Hands that all maintain good relationships to make connections. The missions and operations of the Medfield Foundation, Food Cupboard, and availability of lunches at the high school during this time were discussed in depth.

### **Jay Duncan, Townwide Master Plan Committee Townwide Master Plan Update**

The TWMPD determined that it is best to pause on the process due to concerns about public participation issues due to virtual meetings, the inventory on businesses may not be relevant based on the existing situation, and importantly, is the master plan a high enough priority to move forward in light of health, wellness, and financial issues of our residents. Mr. Peterson, as a member of the TWMPD, agreed and recommended reviewing the contract for timing. Mr. Murby and Mr. Marcucci agreed with the Committee's position in light of current events. Ms. Raposa noted the documents on the Town's website that the public can review in the meantime.

### **Discussion**

#### ***Board of Selectmen to discuss small business resources and the use of the Economic Vitality Fund***

Mr. Marcucci suggested using the approximately \$9,000 from the Economic Vitality Fund to help provide a boost to local businesses through this crisis. Mr. Peterson hoped that money could be used for a sustainability consultant but it was noted that may not be within the scope of the appropriation. Discussion about the coordinator position noted that Amy Colleran is working on the grant for Green Communities (deadline extended). Mr. Marcucci suggested that underutilized employees might pursue grant opportunities to remain engaged. The Board discussed ways to use the fund most directly and efficiently. Mr. Marcucci suggested purchasing gift cards from local restaurants and donating them to individuals in need of food assistance. Attorney Cerel recommended keeping it simple by partnering with a local group so they could arrange with businesses for meals and submit a voucher to the Town for payment. Alternatively, meals could be provided to people and then individual vouchers could be submitted for payment. Question from Attendee: Can residents contribute to the Economic Vitality Fund? Flexibility is lost if money is donated to a municipality so it was suggested to purchase goods or buy gift cards to the businesses.

Chair Murby stated that there is a distinction between helping people in need get food versus providing assistance to the local businesses. Attorney Cerel stated that tax-payer funds can only be used for public purpose and residents in need meet that requirement. Mr. Marcucci noted that

some communities have community development programs designed to be able to offer grants to businesses but we may not have that ability. Ms. Raposa briefed the board on the new small business loans available (economic injury and paycheck protection program). The Economic Vitality Fund is approximately \$9,000 and may not be adequate to keep businesses afloat.

Ms. Trierweiler noted that the Warrant Committee voted to approve a \$15,000 allocation to the fund for a vote at ATM 2020 to aid in contributing to the Holiday Stroll if local businesses are financially unable to sustain their previous contributions. Jean Mineo stated that the business contribution to the stroll is approximately \$7,500 in addition to the Town's allocation of at least \$5,000 for public safety measures.

Mr. Marcucci asked Ms. Trierweiler to continue to pursue this type of program and to develop potential options for use of the funds to assist local businesses to get through the crisis.

### **Board of Selectmen to discuss Town of Medfield Bill Collection with Treasurer/Collector Georgia Colivas**

Ms. Colivas stated that the Covid-19 situation is creating a financial strain on some residents and the deadlines for payment maybe harder to meet. Online services and the drop box behind the Town Hall are available for bill-pay. Real estate taxes are due May 1<sup>st</sup>, however new legislation is pending which would extend the 4th quarter due date from 5/1 to 6/1. No BOS vote will be needed. Ms. Colivas noted that the extension may cause a cash flow problem as 62% of real estate taxes are paid by escrow and about \$12.3 million (quarterly amount) would not come in until after 6/1. To help alleviate this, she recommends that the Town move to bi-weekly vendor warrants. Motor Vehicle excise tax bills were also due 3/9. As the Tax Collector, Ms. Colivas has discretion about when to put bills 'on demand' and does not plan on doing that during this time.

Additional legislation to waive penalties and interest on real estate tax and excise tax from the date of the state of emergency, March 10 through June 30 is also pending. The BOS will need to vote to approve this as a local option once it is passed. The current outstanding amount due for excise tax is about 40% of billed amount, or \$55,000; it is usually only 10%.

Local receipts may also suffer as no demand fees or interest will be received. Medfield has maintained a 99.8% collection rate in its taxes. State will also be strapped so state aid may be delayed, and the financial team is keeping a close eye on that situation. School reimbursement may also be delayed. Ms. Colivas does not believe that Revenue Anticipation Notes will be needed but this situation may reflect poorly in bond rating as reserves are not available. Ms. Colivas also stated that she did not anticipate any cash shortage between now and June 30.

**Action Items Sarah Raposa, Town Planner requests the BOS sign the following:**

- Medfield Meadows Regulatory Agreements - Motion to approve Chair to sign the rental and ownership was made by Mr. Peterson, and seconded by Mr. Marcucci; roll call vote: MM: Yes, GM: Yes, OP: Yes (3-0)
- Housing Choice MOU for ADA planning - tabled as Town Administrator is able to sign MOU as the Town's ADA Coordinator.

**Board of Selectmen to discuss COVID-19 Operations/Actions**

- Ms. Trierweiler noted that there are upcoming pending local actions to be taken by the BOS as the legislation did not pass before the meeting.
- Chief Guerette - The Fox 25 story was a very positive piece. Medfield residents have done a good job in abiding by the Governor's orders. Long term consequences of the pandemic can cause stress and anxiety and she believes in maintaining State Hospital as an open campus is beneficial. The Trustees properties are closed which is causing an increase in use of our properties.
- Chief briefed the Board on the Department's emergency protocols.

**BOS are requested to vote to approve health insurance renewal and authorize Town Administrator Kristine Trierweiler to sign renewals**

Ms. Trierweiler noted a 3.48% increase this year in Health Insurance Premiums.

- Motion to approve and authorize the Town Administrator to sign the health insurance renewal was made by Mr. Peterson, and seconded by Mr. Marcucci; roll call vote: MM: Yes, GM: Yes, OP: Yes (3-0)

**BOS are requested to vote to approve renewal for workers compensation insurance and property/general liability insurance and authorize Town Administrator Kristine Trierweiler to sign renewals**

Ms. Trierweiler noted a 2.8% decrease this year.

- Motion to approve and authorize the Town Administrator to sign the renewals for workers compensation insurance and property/general liability insurance was made by Mr. Peterson, and seconded by Mr. Marcucci; roll call vote: MM: Yes, GM: Yes, OP: Yes (3-0)

**BOS are requested to vote to approve letter with T-Mobile regarding Mt. Nebo Water Tower lease negotiations.**

Mr. Milano briefed the Board on the negotiation amongst the three carriers.

- Motion to approve and authorize the Town Administrator to sign the letter with T-Mobile regarding Mt. Nebo Water Tower lease negotiations was made by Mr. Peterson, and seconded by Mr. Marcucci; roll call vote: MM: Yes, GM: Yes, OP: Yes (3-0)

## **FY2021 Budget Annual/Capital Budget & Annual Town Meeting Warrant Articles**

The BOS met with the Warrant Committee last night. Different capital budget scenarios will be presented next week at a Capital Budget Meeting.

### **Town Administrator Update**

- Ms. Trierweiler stressed the goal of continuity of government operations for activities such as meter readings, hydrant flushing, street sweeping, and road maintenance projects.
- Norfolk County mosquito spraying will commence in April.
- Transfer station urges people to avoid Saturdays (Please use other days) to practice good social distancing as Saturdays are still quite crowded at the Transfer Station.

### **Next Meeting Dates**

- 4/7/20 (Quad meeting: School Committee, Dale Street School Committee, Warrant Committee, and BoS regarding grade configuration on potential new elementary school)
- Annual Town Election moved to Monday, May 4, 2020
- Annual Town Meeting moved to Monday, June 15, 2020

### **Selectmen Reports**

Mr. Marcucci noted the Town residents practicing safe social distancing practices and the efforts of Town Employees to keep operations functioning. He offered thanks to the Medfield Board of Health for their great work especially having been appointed just last year.

Mr. Peterson seconded Mr. Marcucci's recognitions to the Town during unprecedented times. Mr. Peterson noted that Mike Standley passed away; he had been a very active member of the community for a very long time.

Mr. Murby went to the State Hospital and attests that people are practicing good social distancing measures. He asked about when the reorganization of the BOS should occur since the town election was postponed. Mr. Peterson suggested that reorganization not occur until the election and Mr. Marcucci agreed.

### **Adjournment**

- Motion to adjourn at approximately 9:15 pm was made by Mr. Peterson, and seconded by Mr. Marcucci; roll call vote: MM: Yes, GM: Yes, OP: Yes (3-0)