

**TOWN OF RYE – BOARD OF SELECTMEN**  
**Thursday, June 11, 2020**  
**3:00 p.m. – via Zoom**

***Present: Chair Phil Winslow, Vice-Chair Keriann Roman and Selectman Bill Epperson***

***Others Present: Town Administrator Becky Bergeron, Town Clerk Donna DeCotis***

**I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

Statement by Phil Winslow:

As chair of the Rye Board of Selectmen, I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order. However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that we are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access possibilities by video and other electronic means. We are utilizing Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the board have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone number: 646-558-8656 and Password: 022591 or by clicking on the following website address: [www.zoom.com](https://www.zoom.com) ID #833-4443-3137.

Public notice has been provided to the public for the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using Zoom telephonically. Instructions have also been provided on the website of the board at: [town.rye.nh.us](http://town.rye.nh.us) go to the Board of Selectmen page and click on the agenda for this meeting.

If anyone has a problem accessing the meeting please email the Town Administrator at: [BBergeron@town.rye.nh.us](mailto:BBergeron@town.rye.nh.us)

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled. Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Roll call attendance of Select Board:

- Phil Winslow
- Keriann Roman
- Bill Epperson

**II. DISCUSSION**

- a. Work Flow at Town Hall**

## DRAFT MINUTES of the BOS Meeting 6/11/2020

Vice-Chair Roman spoke to the Board about wanting a statement issued on what is being done to re-open Town Hall slowly. The statement should also include an explanation of the decisions that were made during the pandemic including furloughs, revenue concerns and getting back to a normal work schedule. She's asking for continued patience as we re-open Town Hall. She stated that she knows there are frustrations and concerns and that if you'd like to voice them, please voice them to the Board of Selectmen by way of the Executive Assistant at [kdrago@town.rye.nh.us](mailto:kdrago@town.rye.nh.us).

Chair Winslow feels that it's important to communicate the next steps in re-opening, when citizens are going to have access to come into Town Hall and the process involved in that. Chair Winslow and Vice-Chair Roman would like an addition to the public statement advising citizens that a finalized plan for re-opening Town Hall will be decided on at the next Board meeting on Monday, June 22.

Selectmen Epperson agreed that patience is running thin and that we need to layout a schedule for re-opening at the next meeting.

Vice-Chair Roman wants to be sure that the re-opening plan is a coordinated effort with the Town Clerk's Office. She would like the Town Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk to provide the Board with their thoughts or strategies prior to the next Board meeting so that those may be included in the finalized plan. She would also like to address the concerns of the Clerks' Office for their workload and to help with the backlog of work.

Town Clerk Donna DeCotis said that the Clerk's Office will be able to provide guidance to the Board for how they will be handling the re-opening of Town Hall for the next meeting. Town Clerk DeCotis said that there is a large backlog of work to be done but that her office is catching up due to the new hours that were put into effect this week. The Clerks' Office has been closing at 2:00 p.m. and working until 4:30 p.m. to process transactions. They had closed on Wednesday just to process transactions and were able to get a lot done.

Vice-Chair Roman would like to address concerns on a list provided by Town Clerk DeCotis. The first item was *Communication with residents and proposing a Facebook page about procedures and suggestions*. Her feelings are that a Facebook page could be more work on the Clerks' Office and that for now, they should utilize the Town's Facebook page as it's established and can reach out to the follower base that the Town has. She thinks a Clerk Facebook is a great idea, just not at this time.

Town Clerk DeCotis said she was fine with that suggestion. She also pointed out that she has received help from the Finance Administrator and the Executive Assistant in filling out Beach Stickers and that's been helpful.

Selectmen Epperson agrees with Vice-Chair Roman's thoughts on the Facebook page. He asked Town Clerk DeCotis if there was any backlash on the office when she decided to close on Wednesday.

Town Clerk DeCotis said she'd have to talk with the Amy and Toni in the Clerks' Office and see what their thoughts were on how it went.

Chair Winslow asked how often the Clerks' Office would like to provide updates on the Facebook page. He stated that once the information is put out to the citizens, it's important that we stick to the information provided and that it's not changed frequently, without notice.

Town Clerk DeCotis said what's really helpful would be to provide updates now as things are frequently changing. Also, during elections with absentee ballot information; during tax season to let property owners know that tax bills have been sent out. It would be informational only. Town Clerk DeCotis stated the office was only closed on Wednesday to try and catch up with the backlog of

transactions from when only one person was allowed in the office at a time. Once they're able to catch up and get back to normal, she'd like to return to normal hours.

Vice-Chair Roman stated it's important that if the Clerks' Office needs to share information, Donna and Amy work together to get that information to the Executive Assistant to have it posted on the Town Facebook page. Vice-Chair Roman took the next item off of the Town Clerk's list which is *Plan regarding office hours and how the Board is going to work with her office regarding scheduling*. She stated that going forward the Board is going to work with the Town Clerk to devise one opening plan for the Town Hall as a whole.

Selectmen Epperson asked if the Clerks' Office was seeing a reduction in beach sticker requests at this point.

Town Clerk DeCotis is agreeable to following what the Board devises for plan for Town Hall collectively. In regards to Selectmen Epperson's question, the Clerks' Office has been hit hard by the request for beach stickers ever since Governor Sununu decided to open the beaches. She's also noticed that with the parking on Rte 1A being banned, the individuals that are getting beach stickers, are getting them for every car in their household instead of just a couple.

Chair Winslow stated that there was a meeting with the state in the morning and at least for the near future, the parking on Route 1A is going to continue to be banned.

Vice-Chair Roman brought up the third item on the Town Clerk's list which is *Communication and working together on decisions*. Vice-Chair Roman stated this with everything that has been discussed up to this point, she feels that that topic has been covered. She said that if there are any drastic changes with re-opening the state, the Board will work with the Town Clerks' Office regarding what the means for opening Town Hall. The fourth item on the list was *New work hours*. She stated that as long as it's working, it makes good sense to her. New vehicles seem to be causing a lot of work for the Clerks' Office. Another item on the list was *Monthly meetings between the Clerks' Office and Administration*.

Town Administrator Bergeron looked for clarity on whether "administration" referred to the Town Administrator only or was inclusive of the Board of Selectmen.

Chair Winslow stated that if there were issues, he felt it made more sense to handle those as they happened.

Deputy Town Clerk Thibodeau said she thinks that the Town Clerk was referring to the fact that the previous Town Administrator had monthly department head meetings to fill everyone in on the happenings at Town Hall. Deputy Clerk Thibodeau said she thinks that Town Administrator Bergeron provides that information, just in a different format.

Town Clerk DeCotis does not see a need to have a selectmen present for those meetings.

Chair Winslow and Deputy Town Clerk Thibodeau discussed the process of how one would register a new vehicle with the town. They also discussed the process to obtaining a beach sticker as well as how to register to vote or change a party affiliation. Chair Winslow asked what seems to cause the most frustrations for the individuals visiting the Town Clerks' Office (saved for the non-public session).

Town Clerk DeCotis wanted to reiterate to the residents that this happened extremely fast and her office is doing the best that they can to provide them with service and to process all of their transactions in a timely manner.

Vice-Chair Roman wanted a sentence or two added to the public statement advising that the reasons for the Selectmen having to cut staff were to keep employees safe and to stagger the number of employees in Town Hall and also that there was a concern for the revenue that the town would take in due to the pandemic.

**III. Other Business**

*None*

**IV. Non-Public Session (1) per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel**

**At 3:46 p.m., Keriann Roman made a motion to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel. Seconded by Phil Winslow. Roll Call: Winslow – Yes, Roman – Yes, Epperson – Yes.**

**At 4:33 p.m., Keriann Roman made a motion to come out of Non-Public Session. Seconded by Bill Epperson. Roll Call: Winslow – Yes, Roman – Yes, Epperson – Yes.**

**At 4:33 p.m., Keriann Roman made a motion to go into Non-Public Session per RSA 91-A:3, II (e) Litigation. Seconded by Bill Epperson. Roll Call: Winslow – Yes, Roman – Yes, Epperson – Yes.**

**At 4:47 p.m., Keriann Roman made a motion to come out of Non-Public Session. Seconded by Phil Winslow. Roll Call: Winslow – Yes, Roman – Yes, Epperson – Yes.**

**ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion by Bill Epperson to Adjourn at 4:54 p.m. Seconded by Keriann Roman.**

**Roll Call Vote:**

**Phil Winslow – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Keriann Roman – Aye**

**Motion passed**

Respectfully Submitted,  
Katelyn Drago