

TOWN OF RYE –SELECT BOARD

Monday, March 15, 2021

3:00 p.m. – Via Zoom

Present: Chair Phil Winslow, Selectman Bill Epperson and Selectwoman Mae Bradshaw

Others Present: Town Administrator Becky Bergeron

I. CALL TO ORDER AND PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Chair Winslow called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Reading of Attestation

Statement by Phil Winslow:

As Chair of the Select Board for the Town of Rye, 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:754658 or by clicking on the following website address: www.zoom.com ID #831 2445 6139.

- a) 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 Town of Rye website town.rye.nh.us
- a) Providing a mechanism for the public to alert the public body during the meeting if there are problems with access.
- b) Adjourning the meeting if the public is unable to access the meeting.
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.

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

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Roll call attendance of Select Board:

- Bill Epperson
- Mae Bradshaw
- Phil Winslow

Note: The members of the Board all stated that their spouse was in the house.

II. July 4th Holiday Discussion

Chair Winslow recommended that they focus the discussion on four issues:

1. The health and wellbeing of the attendees
2. Crowd control
3. Costs and whether the Town has the funds from a cashflow standpoint to pay for fireworks
4. The Governor's future ruling on social distancing

Recreation Director Lee Arthur noted that she has done a survey of the surrounding communities. Hampton and Portsmouth are considering having an event, but have not made a final decision yet. Portsmouth will be making their decision by May 1st. If they do move forward, they will be hosting them on the 3rd.

Hampton feels that there is an 85% likelihood that they will move forward with their plans. If they do have them, they will be hosting them on the 4th.

The Town of Greenland, North Hampton and Stratham do not have fireworks on the 4th of July.

The City of Dover will be having their event, but it has been moved from downtown to Garrison Hill, in order to provide a larger area for the gathering.

The Town of Durham will not be doing their event. Their event was done by the Rotary in the past as a fund raiser. They found that it was not that fruitful, so they have discontinued it.

Ms. Arthur also talked to the managers of the Beach Club and the Surf Club. The Beach Club has not decided yet. They usually do them on the 3rd. They are thinking of maybe pushing them back towards the end of the summer. The Surf Club has not decided yet. Their fireworks would be on July 5th.

Chair Winslow stated that one of the concerns is that if other communities that normally have fireworks decided to cancel, it would push people to Rye, making the crowd control more difficult.

Chief Walsh talked about the influx out-of-town visitors and the need to have an operation plan. He feels that weather depending, they would have to close Washington Road down to just pedestrian traffic and push the parking out further. If Portsmouth and Hampton do not have theirs, he has a concern regarding the potential increase in the crowds. He also stated that the health officials would have to say that the Town could have a large gathering of over 100 people before they could host the event.

Selectman Epperson pointed out that it is simply going to be a logistic issue, between space, staffing and expense. He acquiesces to Chief Walsh and Director Arthur recommendations.

Selectwoman Bradshaw stated that she is still concerned about the health issue. She pointed out that only 12% of the people in New Hampshire have received the vaccine.

Chief Cotreau talked about the vaccine forecast. It is believed that it will be ramped up in the near future. He pointed out that with this issue it really is a matter of the planning time required, the logistics and guidance at the time of the event. He feels they should be in good shape, but it is still up in the air.

Administrator Bergeron expressed concerns regarding contracting with the vendor and the costs.

Director Arthur responded that the Town would need to put the RFP out now and be ready to commit with a deposit.

After discussion, it was agreed that this was not the year to hold a July 4th Celebration.

Motion by Phil Winslow to cancel the July 4, 2021 celebration event and to send out an RFP for the fireworks display for 2022 this summer (2021) to start the planning for a robust July 4th Celebration for 2022. Seconded by Mae Bradshaw.

Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye.

Motion passed

Ms. Arthur and Ms. Bergeron will get the word out to the residents. Ms. Arthur reported that the Recreation Department will still be having the photo contest this year, “The Patriotic Faces of Rye”. There will be a short YouTube video of the contest.

III. OTHER BUSINESS - None

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Bill Epperson to Adjourn at 3:35 p.m. Seconded by Mae Bradshaw.

Roll Call Vote: Phil Winslow – Aye; Bill Epperson – Aye; Mae Bradshaw – Aye.

Motion passed

Respectfully Submitted, Dyana F. Ledger