

Wendy M. Mead, Chair person
Jesse Limanek, Vice Chair
Jonathan Anderson, Clerk
David Hall
Jeffrey Bannon



Sutton Town Hall
4 Uxbridge Road
Sutton, MA 01590
Telephone (508)865-8727
Fax :(508)865-8721

James A. Smith, Town Manager

Town of Sutton
Select Board

Meeting Minutes

Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk on 09-08-2020 by a vote of 4-0

(Vice Chair Limanek absent from 9/8/20 meeting)

5:00 p.m. – August 18, 2020

REMOTE DIAL IN MEETING

Members in Attendance by video chat:

Chairperson Wendy M. Mead, Vice Chair Jesse Limanek, Clerk Jonathan Anderson & Select Board David Hall & Jeffrey Bannon
Town Manager James Smith & Deb Jacques, secretary
Town Finance Director Timothy Harrison

Chairperson Mead calls meeting to order, begins meeting with verbiage relating to Gov. Baker and meetings being conducted remotely consistent with his Executive Order of March 12, 2020, due to the current State of Emergency in the Commonwealth due to the outbreak of the “COVID-19 Virus.”

In order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, we have been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor’s Order suspends the requirement of the Open Meeting Law to have all meetings in a publicly accessible physical location. Further, all members of public bodies are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

The Order, which you can find posted with agenda materials for this meeting allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting.

Public participation has been offered for this meeting.

Public Forum: N/A

Select person Anderson motions to approve as presented minutes from 8/04/20 meeting, Select person Hall seconds passes 5-0

Recognitions: Eagle Scouts John Warren & Hayden Page received acknowledgment of recent Eagle Scout achievement as read by Vice Chair Limanek who attended the ceremony. The Select Board all offer congratulations to John & Hayden.

****Public Hearing**** Transfer of Liquor License for Sutton Center Country store. On the zoom call is new owner/manager Pinkish Patel and his Attorney Matthew Porter as well as store employee Mary Krumscik. The public hearing is opened and Select person Anderson reads the notice as advertised in the 8/3/20 Telegram. Town Manager Smith states this is a transfer of the Beer & Malt package store license from Ganesh Bohra to Pinkish Patel. Jim goes on to say Pinkish Patel has run Crossroads Variety for many years. Select person Hall says Mr. Patel has experience working in the Town of Sutton and asks if the employees are being kept. Mr. Patel answers yes. Vice Chair Limanek asks if the operations of the store will remain and if all the workers are TIP certified. Mary Krumscik replies all employees that work the register are TIP certified. Jesse asks if there was any concern by Chief Towle, Town Manager Smith replies no, the Police Chief signed off on. Select person Anderson welcomes Mr. Patel and wishes his business well. Select person Bannon asks if his business in Worc. Has had any recent violations, Mr. Patel replies no, Jeff asks about violations at center store- Mary replies about 6 years ago. Chair person Mead says you are getting a fantastic crew; Mary runs a tight ship. Hearing no further questions, the board takes a roll call vote to close the public hearing. Vice Chair Limanek motions to approve contingent on all required Board of Health permits and licenses the Transfer of a \$15 Wine & Malt Package Store Liquor License, Pledge of Inventory and Pledge of License # 00022-PK-1254 from Ganesh Bohra dba Sutton Center Country Store to Pinkesh Patel dba Sutton Center Country Store, Manager of record Pinkesh Patel located at 3 Singletary Ave. Sutton MA and a new Common Victualler license for Sutton Center Country Store under new owner Pinkesh Patel: Manager of record Pinkesh Patel with an expiration date of December 31, 2020, Select Person Bannon seconds passes 5-0

School Superintendent Friend is present as well as School Committee Chair Paul Brennan. Ted reviews the reopening plan and the process getting to where we are today which is two weeks of hybrid then remote for grades 2-12. Preschool through 1st grade will be more in school learning. Ted has been in constant meetings with school administration, unions, the public school nurse and school nurse, there are no great solutions to this. Ted says all school districts are struggling but we have to keep the students, the teachers and administration as well as the parents safe. He plans on reassessing the situation weekly. Select person Hall says he has talked to many folks and you cannot make everyone happy- there are 2 polls of opinions. Dave uses Ted's term of the current situation as a dystopian environment. Dave asks if all students have the technology to connect for the Zoom classes. Ted replies there is a fund set up to help residents get the access but as of right now no one is in need. There will be chromebooks for every child (paid with grants) but some are on a delayed shipment due to the high demand. School Chair Paul Brennan thanks the Select Board for this discussion, it is important to get the word out there. The common goal is to get the children back into the school. Vice Chair Limanek mentioned the school committee meetings last week, the first meeting approved hybrid and then the second went to all remote. This is putting heavy burden on families where one parent is forced to now be home for the student as well as be the teacher. Jesse goes on to say if a child spends hours in front of a computer they will tune out of what is being taught. What the state handed down were guidelines, we do not have to meet every guideline. This has been going on since March- over the past few weeks we seem to be scrambling to come up with a plan. There are three rules: wear masks, wash hands and socially distance. Jesse admits he knows this was a hard decision for Ted but kids belong in the classroom. Select person Anderson thanks Ted for his leadership- the culture is spooked by the virus and the guidelines handed down by DESE are full of distractions. Jonathan has an issue with long term use of masks and individual immune systems. We need to do what's right for Sutton and come up with our own guidelines. We need the teaching to build out more equitable robust model of teaching so that our children get a good education. Jonathan goes on to say we need safety in the schools and not be locked down like a prison. Jonathan asks about the massive change in teaching remotely- is there any way to identify when a teacher is struggling. Ted replies the principals will be watching the teachers and if they see anyone in need they will get the support needed. Jonathan also asks if there are enough Chromebooks to start the school year- Ted replies we will get the students that need the chromebooks what they need. Select person Bannon says he thinks Ted's decision was the right way to go and it showed in the spirited School committee discussion and 3-2 vote and hopes going forward the school committee will have a 5-0 vote putting all the efforts into what needs to be done. This is a chaotic situation and we need to do what's right for the kids going forward. Hybrid vs remote sounds good on paper but we should not be cavalier about the virus- this is a real thing causing real health issues. The safety 1st approach was the right way to go. Going forward Jeff would like to see the opportunity to increase what is being offered to students. Chair person Mead feels empathy for parents in town, this is a huge burden and many are experiencing economic hard ship but safety first is the priority for all students. Wendy feels Ted made the right decision for our community/ healthy is the only answer.

Approval of September Election Warrant- Hearing no issues Select person Anderson motions to approve the September 1, 2020 State Primary Election Warrant Select person Bannon seconds passes 5-0

Rent Forbearance for Puckihuddle- Town Manager Smith states due to the current virus Puckihuddle is closed until January- town Counsel drafted a forbearance plan for Puckihuddle to not pay rent from Sept-Dec and add those payments to the back end of the lease. A discussion takes place asking if this is a balloon pmnt at the end or will it extend the lease- whichever way this is- the board all agree this is a good use of town owned property and a good neighbor to Manchaug. In reading further this is a balloon payment at the end. Select person Bannon motions to authorize Town Manager Jim Smith to sign "Assignment No. 1 to Lease Agreement" between the Town of Sutton (Lessor) and Puckihuddle Preschool (Lessee) Vice Chair Limanek seconds passes 5-0

Town Managers Update:

- APR- Glenn King & Sharon Kent have submitted applications for an APR on King farm. They are looking to protect 204 acres from development this is the first step in the process.
- CARES Act funding- \$842,000. Received from Fed. Govt, anything not computer related requires we apply thru FEMA to get 75% reimbursement and then CARES Act for remaining 25%. \$105,000 for 100 Chromebooks, laptops for school and town dept heads as well as \$25,000. For BVT student's laptops.
- State Aid- the state has agreed to level fund state aid for FY21. Ch 70 plus \$334,000. Onetime funding for reopening schools. Looking towards FY22 to see if we will be affected at all.
- Fall town Meeting- at the July 28th Goals meeting it was stated Fall Town Meeting nothing controversial as this would increase attendance. The Board felt health and safety is priority. The only items on the warrant will be financial in nature. We will be asking to raise and appropriate for the additional new growth. The Select Board all agree to keep this as discussed at the Goals Meeting.
- State Grant for Municipal Small Bridges- the town received \$100,000. Grant for small bridge on Manchaug Road. Thankyou to Matt Stencil for applying for this grant.
- Early Voting- Sat. Aug. 22 & Sun. Aug 23 10am to 2pm for the Sept. Primary. There will be early voting from Aug. 24th – the 28th Mon-Thur 8am to 4pm and Fri 9-12
- Waters farm Days has been canceled for this year- they are looking forward to Oct 2021
- Solar for carport- working on an RFP for solar at the Police Station carport- bids due 9/10/2020

- Marions camp gate will close for the season Sunday August 30th (currently gate opened 6am-8pm) The Select Board are all ok with this but with situation of kids not going back to school if there is a heat wave could we open. Town Manager Smith says it could be considered.

Select Board roundtable

- Vice Chair Limanek updates on Food Pantry- they are in need of cleaning supplies. Jesse also takes this time to wish Lt. Dave Perry well on his retirement from the Sutton Police dept. thank you to him for his many years of service.
- Select person Anderson thanks Lt. Perry for his service to the town- he is an important figure in town.
- Chair person Mead wishes Lt. Perry a happy retirement.

Select person Hall motions to adjourn- Vice Chair Limanek seconds passes 5-0
Meeting adjourned 7:18 pm