

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



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James A. Smith, Town Manager

Town of Sutton  
Select Board

Meeting Minutes

**Minutes Accepted and filed with the Town Clerk on 9/29/2020 by a vote of 4-0-1**

(Vice Chair Limanek absent from this meeting)

5:00 p.m. – September 8, 2020

**REMOTE DIAL IN MEETING**

Members in Attendance by video chat:

Chairperson Wendy M. Mead, Clerk Jonathan Anderson & Select Board David Hall & Jeffrey Bannon

(Vice Chair Limanek absent)

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 Hall motions to approve as presented minutes from 8/18/20 meeting, Select person Bannon seconds passes 4-0

Select person Hall motions to approve as presented Executive Session minutes from 8/11/20, Select person Bannon seconds passes 4-0

Recognition: Police Officer Matthew Pepin and Sgt. Fortunato- Police Chief Dennis Towle is present on the Zoom as well as Officers Pepin and Fortunato. Chief Towle gives a brief description of the call that these officers along with Environmental officer Donald Spaulding responded to on July 22, 2020 for a male individual that was emotionally distraught. Officer Pepin found the individual on the side of the road and disarmed him of a loaded gun. The Chief states this could have gone in a different direction but it ended with the person being transported to the hospital. Select person Anderson reads the recognition at this time. The Select board all offer their individual thanks for the bravery that was shown for this situation as well as their every day job of keeping our town safe.

**\*\*Public Hearing\*\*** 61A Leland & Dodge Hill Road; Public hearing notice read into record by Select person Anderson- present on the Zoom meeting is Bill Wence- family member of the family selling the property. Town Manager Smith says the town has the first right of refusal under MGL 61A §14. This is for 25.53 acres of land. The BOS has 120 days to review, we have had this for approx. 45 days. No town dept. or committee feel the town should purchase this property. Mr. Wence states he started discussions with the Assessor's office regarding the roll back taxes approx. 4 years ago and feels it could have moved sooner. Select person Hall asks for clarification as to the layout of the property- Mr. Wence replies it is a pie shaped piece of property with the largest frontage on Dodge Hill road. The other Board members have no issues or questions. Chairperson Mead closes the public hearing- Select person Bannon motions to not exercise the town's option under MGL Chapter 61A for property located on Leland Hill & Dodge Hill Road, known as Assessors Map 19 Parcel 69 (25.53 +/- acres) Select person Anderson seconds passes 4-0

Sewer Commissioner Appointment: present on the Zoom meeting is John (Jack) Sheehan. Town Manager Smith informs the board this is to fill the seat left vacant by Larry Wiersma that chose to not be reappointed this past July. Jack Sheehan had previously sat on the Conservation Commission for 12 years. Mr. Sheehan says he is willing to do his part by volunteering for the town. The Select board all offer thanks to Larry Wiersma for his years of volunteering- and offer their thanks to Jack for volunteering again. Select person Anderson motions to appoint John Sheehan to the Sewer Commissioners with a term to expire June 30, 2023, Select person Hall seconds passes 4-0

Town Managers evaluation (attached to final minutes) Clerk of the Select Board Jonathan Anderson reads the 20 questions with the score for each question and ends with the total score of 95.2 out of 100. Also read are the individual comments. Select person Hall says 95.2 is outstanding- this is what we come to expect and is due to the tremendous work you have done. An outstanding performance. To score high marks consistently year after year- thankyou. Select person Anderson says Jim is a valuable asset to the town- Jim is a committed town manager to the town. His leadership and ability to develop relationships especially with this past year (COVID). Jonathan also says he respects how Jim will reach out to the board to get an opinion then makes his decision. Jonathan states he is grateful to serve the Town with Jim as manager. Select person Bannon says congratulations on an outstanding evaluation- it was difficult this past year split in to two parts- pre COVID and post COVID. Sound decisions were made, excellent dealing with COVID issues, he did not over react such as the Town Meeting deferring items to a future meeting where we could get more input from residents. Jim reached out to the board and got a consensus- this evaluation says it all. Chairperson Mead agrees with Dave saying the Chair person has more interaction with the Town Manager on a regular basis- Jims ability to work with Dept. Heads and committees along with all the personalities and viewpoints is outstanding. Along with the long term financial situation, bond rating and grants such as the Cares act. Jim has been a good steward he has done an outstanding job. Town Manager Jim Smith thanks the Board for the evaluation- he goes on to say he loves his job and always thinks about how he can serve the town as well as his family as Sutton is their adopted home. Jim thanks Tim Harrison as the financial director as well as all the Dept. Heads.

#### Town Managers Update:

- Fire Dept. Grant- the Fire Dept. received from the Exec. Office of Public Safety a grant in the amount of \$45,500.
- Sustainability Director Doreen DeFazio is now a consultant to the town. Doreen submitted her resignation early summer- at that time Jim discussed a consultant role with her. Doreen will continue to work for the town responsible for Green communities reporting as well as grant submission and project close outs.
- Per Diem Nurse- Cheryl Rawinski recommended Susan Rowland of Leicester as a per diem nurse. Susan previously worked for the Town of Spencer. She will assist Cheryl with COVID cases as well as Flu Clinics and be paid out of COVID money or the IMA's.
- Communications Upgrade in the Wally Johnson Meeting room- the communications Dept. is putting together a system where we will be able to broadcast and stream hybrid meetings which would include in person and zoom participants. The cost is roughly \$7500. And would be paid out of Cares Act money.
- IFB- Cupola- Bids due back Thursday- 9/10 at 11am
- IFB- Gravel Pit land- out again for bid on the 25+ acres of town owned land. There has been some interest in the Aggregate site which abuts this piece of land. The potential buyer of Aggregate property has also shown interest in the town owned property. The sale of this town owned property would require a 2/3 vote at a town meeting.
- Solar for Carport at Police Station- Currently out to bid- due in Thursday Sept. 10<sup>th</sup>
- Chain of Lights contacted Jim Smith today saying the event normally held the first Sat. in Dec. will be cancelled this year due to the Corona Virus.

#### Select Board roundtable

- Select person Hall says the Chain of Lights is another in a series of events that we normally have around town that we are not having. We are not out of the woods yet- stay vigilant and stay safe
- Select person Bannon asks people to be supportive over the next few weeks regarding the opening of school. This is uncharted territory there may be bumps, be vigilant and be patient.
- Chairperson Mead requests Michelle at the food Pantry to post on social media any needs the Food Pantry may have (Vice Chair Limanek is absent and usually reads the needed items) Wendy also adds with the opening of school, stay safe, health and be kind.

Select person Hall motions to adjourn- Select person Anderson seconds passes 4-0  
Meeting adjourned 6:25pm