

**Select Board Meeting Minutes**  
**March 18, 2020**

**Present:** Mr. Kevin Dumas, Town Manager and Mr. Barry LaCasse, Assistant Town Manager/Finance Director were present. The members of the Select Board all participated remotely: Mr. Jess Aptowitz, Chairman; Mr. Michael Trowbridge, Vice-Chair; Mr. Neil Rhein, Clerk; Mr. Frank DelVecchio and Mr. Steve Schoonveld.

**1. Call To Order Select Board Meeting - Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Aptowitz called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. He then asked those present to stand and for Mr. Dumas to lead the pledge. He reminded everyone that the meeting was being broadcast live and taped for future broadcast on Mansfield Cable.

**2. Resident Questions and Comments**

The public was not allowed to be present in Town Hall. Chairman Aptowitz read a statement and provided an email address and phone number to those watching and a message appeared on the screen throughout the meeting directing residents to send their questions in, and they would receive a response within twenty four hours.

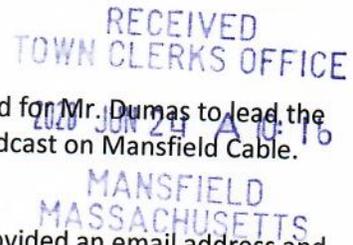
**3. COVID 19 Update from Mansfield Health Agent**

Ms. Amy Donovan-Palmer, Health Agent and Chief Justin Desrosiers were present for this agenda item. Ms. Palmer began by giving an overview of the coordinated response on this rapidly changing virus. She explained who was part of the COVID19 Task Force was and what decisions have been made. She provided guidelines for everyone and explained that people need to keep six foot distances. Chief Desrosiers provided information on those infected in Mansfield and those who were tested and explained that it is everywhere in the community. Ms. Palmer explained that the Town has been planning for pandemic emergencies for over ten years and that the constant communication has been essential and providing a proactive response. Ms. Palmer explained that the decision to close the school was made because kids have milder symptoms and can be carriers of the virus unknowingly, and urged parents to keep the kids away from other kids and not go to the playground or have playdates. The kids can easily spread the virus to older vulnerable populations that may have complications. Mr. Dumas stated that all fifty states have at least one reported case if not hundreds and that it is assumed that the virus is everywhere and there is no safe haven. Ms. Palmer emphasized good hygiene and the importance of washing hands often and not touching your face. The virus is spread by respiratory droplets and the virus can live on different surfaces for different lengths of time, and further research is being done to determine that information. Chief Desrosiers explained that the importance of following these guidelines is to flatten the curve so that the health care system can keep up and it maintains a manageable pace and the systems will not become overwhelmed if there is a steep rise in the cases. The Select Board then asked a few questions.

Mr. Schoonveld asked if delivery of food is in jeopardy. Ms. Palmer answered that just keep a six foot social distance and be sure that credit card equipment is cleaned and wiped down. Keep six feet when your waiting in line, when you leave a store sanitize and as soon as your home to wash your hands. Mr. Schoonveld then asked if the soccer fields and tennis courts could be opened for use. Ms. Palmer stated this is a hard decision and it was noted on Monday that kids had to be told to leave the fields at the schools and then they went over to Memorial Field and we need to model the behavior and can't come in large groups to hang out. Mr. Rhein asked if conservation areas are closed and Ms. Palmer stated that the conservation land is open but urged people not to walk close to a friend and keep your distance. Mr. DelVecchio stated that he appreciated the updates that have been provided on a daily basis and to speak with a unified voice and try not to confuse the matter by putting out one's own opinions. Mr. Trowbridge stated that there were a lot of uncertainties on a global level and this situation is unprecedented and may seem drastic but there is a need to keep the community safe. He commented that the information has been forthcoming and feels it has been a good process so far. Chairman Aptowitz noted at Monday's meeting it was discussed that individuals are hoarding supplies and the markets do not have a protocol to handle that and asked if there was something the local Board could do to minimize that situation. Mr. Schoonveld did not think the Town had any authority over food stores like they do over alcohol licensing. Chief Desrosiers said it would be like a request from the Town rather than a legal order and Mr. Dumas stated they are going to work with the local grocers to be sure that there are plans in place should there be additional restrictions.

Lastly, Chief Desrosiers noted a Disaster and Distress Helpline and anyone can call for help and someone to talk to and speak with a counselor the phone number is 1-800-985-5990.

**4. Declaration of Emergency**



Mr. Dumas asked the Board to declare an emergency in the Town of Mansfield and be able to operate under emergency procedures and gain access to things that are needed and in a quicker manner under state law. Mr. Dumas read the Declaration of Emergency.

**Motion:** To approve the declaration of emergency as presented. (Rhein/Schoonveld) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz - Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. Schoonveld - Yes	

*Ms. Palmer and Chief Desrosiers left the meeting at 7:12PM.*

**5. Consideration of Revised OPEB Policy**

Mr. Dumas explained this policy was discussed at the last meeting and a few additional changes were recommended. Mr. Schoonveld reviewed the changes made that provided better clarity. Mr. DelVecchio noted one change in paragraph two in the last sentence; he stated that it should read “majority votes of the Select Board and School Committee.” Mr. Schoonveld noted this would also apply to the end of the funding policy that was written above.

**Motion:** To approve the Town’s official OPEB Policy with the friendly amendments just described. (Schoonveld/Rhein) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Schoonveld – Yes	Mr. Rhein – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz - Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio - Yes	

**6. Consideration and Vote to Approve 2020 Town Meeting Warrant**

Mr. Dumas asked Mr. Matthew Violette, Town Accountant to come forward for the agenda item. Mr. Dumas stated that everyone has been working to get this document ready for tonight. He stated he was going to be asking the Board to open the warrant and add article twenty two which is avigation easements for the Mansfield Airport and the deletion of article twenty three which is the zoning bylaw for sign ordnances. The Chairman asked if any Board members had any questions. Mr. Schoonveld asked why article twenty three was being removed. Mr. LaCasse stated that this article was added as the request of Mr. Rhein about temporary signs on public property and through conversation and looking at the Town’s bylaw to enforce anyone putting a temporary sign on public property but there is room for improvement. He noted that they agreed to wait for Fall Town Meeting and work on revising the entire bylaw, using other towns as examples and getting input from other Town Departments and Committees. Mr. Schoonveld asked if it was believed that a May 5, 2020 Town Meeting would actually happen. Mr. LaCasse said the Town is moving forward, but it depends on further orders from the State, but it is the goal to meet that date.

**Motion:** To open the 2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz - Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. Schoonveld - Yes	

**Motion:** To add Article #22 to the 2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz - Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. Schoonveld - Yes	

**Motion:** To delete former Article #23 from the 2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz - Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. Schoonveld - Yes	

**Motion:** To close the 2020 Annual Town Meeting Warrant. (Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes	Mr. DelVecchio – Yes	Chairman Aptowitz – Yes
Mr. Trowbridge – Yes	Mr. Schoonveld - Yes	



**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes

Mr. DeVecchio – Yes

Chairman Aptowitz - Yes

Mr. Trowbridge – Yes

Mr. Schoonveld - Yes

- **School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 20038PS in the amount of \$1,690,541.30**

**Motion:** To approve School Payroll/School Medicaid Payroll 20038PS in the amount of \$1,690,541.30. (Rhein/Trowbridge)  
**Passes 3:0:2**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes

Mr. DeVecchio – Abstain

Chairman Aptowitz - Yes

Mr. Trowbridge – Abstain

Mr. Schoonveld - Yes

- **School Deductions Vendor Payroll 20038SV in the amount of \$542,423.32**

**Motion:** To approve School Deductions Vendor Payroll 20038SV in the amount of \$542,423.32.  
(Rhein/Trowbridge) **Passes 5:0**

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes

Mr. DeVecchio – Yes

Chairman Aptowitz - Yes

Mr. Trowbridge – Yes

Mr. Schoonveld - Yes

**9. Town Manager’s Report**

Mr. Dumas stated that after discussion with Town Counsel and the task force no one is to come into Town Hall that is not an employee and that is why the Select Board is meeting remotely. He stated the Town may have to go to working remotely with no Town Hall staff present depending on how things go. He thanked the staff for their work during this time and noted that there has been lots of communication with the surrounding communities in working through the COVID-19 pandemic. Mr. Dumas stated that there is a backup system in place should the staff at SEMRECC become unable to take 9-1-1 calls. There is an emergency operation center set up at 500 East Street that will accept the calls, the system is portable and has been tested. Mr. Dumas stated the Police and Fire will have longer shifts and Town Hall hours will be Monday to Thursday 8am to 4pm and Friday 8am to Noon. He stated that he will be reducing the number of staff in the Town Hall by fifty percent and employees will be able to do work remotely and alternate the days they come into Town Hall to work. He also stated there is extra cleaning happening.

**10. Select Board Member’s Questions and Comments**

Chairman Aptowitz thanked everyone for their hard work.

**11. Any items not anticipated by the Chair 48 hours prior to this meeting**

There were no items.

**12. Adjourn**

**Motion:** To adjourn the Select Board Meeting of March 18, 2020 at 7:54PM. (Rhein/Trowbridge)

**Roll Call Vote:**

Mr. Rhein – Yes

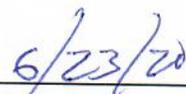
Mr. DeVecchio – Yes

Chairman Aptowitz - Yes

Mr. Trowbridge – Yes

Mr. Schoonveld - Yes

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

*Minutes prepared by Carrie Champagne*