

MINUTES
SELECT BOARD MEETING
TOWN OF COVENTRY
MONDAY MAY 18th, 2020 AT 4:30 P.M.

Board Members Present:

Scott Briere/ Chair; David Gallup; Phil Marquette

Town Officials Present:

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator

Josh Griffes / Planning Commission Chair

David Barlow / Treasurer

Kate Fletcher / Assessing Clerk

Guests:

Martha Sylvester; Sue Harkey; Don Whipple; John Miller; George Linton; Mary Ellen Linton; Kate Linton; Jeffrey Kemp; Jessica Punt; Len Griffes

Press:

Megan Wayland / Barton Chronicle

This meeting was held remotely by 'Zoom' video and telephone conference.

All participants identified themselves at the start of the meeting.

The meeting was audio and video recorded for official record purposes.

1. **Chair Scott Briere called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.**

2. **Allow for public comment**
 - Resident Jessica Punt stated her disapproval of ATV's being allowed to use Town roads and the damage it has caused to her Class 4 road, Cooke Road, costing them money personally to maintain.
 - Resident Don Whipple stated that ATV travel over the weekend was very loud and asked the Board to reconsider the speed limit in the recently approved ordinance and determine a rate of speed in relation to the noise level produced.

- Resident John Miller commented that he had missed the ATV Ordinance discussion in previous Select Board meetings and would like the Board to consider a public town wide discussion.
- Kate Fletcher stated she felt very strongly about the ATV travel on Heermanville Road where she resides. She expressed her concerns over the safety and was not happy about the 6am to 10pm time stated in the ordinance, stating that it was too early and too late in the day for the disturbance to be allowed.
- Residents Sue Harkey and Jeffrey Kemp stated similar concerns with the ATV ordinance as their neighbors.
- Town Administrator Amanda Carlson reminded the attendees of the meeting that the public comment section of the meeting does not allow for action taken by the Board and any requests for action would need to be addressed under 'other business'.
- Coventry Town Foundation Board member Don Whipple stated that the foundation had been supporting residents affected by COVID providing gift cards for groceries and other necessities. Don reported that to date the Town Foundation has issued more than \$12,000 in resident assistance and that it was wonderful to be able to assist the community during this time.

3. Community Center and Town Offices Public Health and Safety Precautions Update

- Emergency Management Director Phil Marquette stated that although certain restrictions have been lifted in regards to public places during the pandemic; that he still recommends proceeding in the same manor until further updates are received.
- The Board unanimously agreed that the Town Offices will remain closed to the public unless by appointment; the offices will be closed for public meetings and the Community Center closed for all events.
- Phil stated he would continue to follow the Governors guidance and recommendations and update the Board as necessary.

4. Planning Commission Project Update

- Planning Commission Chair Josh Griffes stated that the Planning Commission has agreed that they would like to participate in enacting the Economic Development Plan by pursuing the Village Improvement Plan included in the recommendations.
- Josh stated that the hope was to develop a plan for assistance to Village improvements with the goal to eventually implement town wide.
- Josh stated that this project will take some time to ensure details and legalities are researched and that the Board will be updated along the way.

5. Treasurers Report of Financials for Preceding Month

- Treasurer David Barlow reviewed the financials for April 2020.
- The Board reviewed the statement provided. No action taken.

6. Other Business

- Susan Harkey stated that the recent ATV Ordinance has been contentious with residents and requested that the Board delay its enactment until a community discussion can be held. An ordinance can be challenged by the voters by petition; however the current pandemic made the petition difficult and asked the Board to exercise their authority to waive the petition and call for a special vote on the matter. Sue expressed that she really felt this needed to be reviewed and approved by all voters.
- Jeffrey Kemp; Kate Fletcher; John Miller; and Don Whipple all stated their support for Susan Harkey's statement and request to the Board.
- Chair Scott Briere stated that the past weekend was opening weekend for ATV's and was busier than anticipated. He felt that the ordinance should stand for the season in order to give it a chance and understand the benefits and pitfalls.
- Scott Briere stated he was not in favor of making a motion to waive the petition requirement.
- David Gallup and Phil Marquette agreed they were not in favor of making such a motion and the Board unanimously agreed that residents should pursue a petition if they would like to challenge the ordinance.
- Martha Sylvester stated her disappointment in the Select Board for not waiving the petition during a pandemic and for not calling a special meeting on request of the residents in order to allow all voters their say.
- Kate Fletcher questioned that if the Ordinance had been in review by the Select Board since January then why was it not brought to the voters at Town Meeting.
- Residents urged the Board to review the ordinance and consider amending in regards to speed limit; noise disturbances; and the 6am to 10pm time frame.

7. Discussion with Town Attorney Regarding Utility Appraisal Appeals

Anticipated executive session in accordance with 1 V.S.A § 313 (1) (f)

- No current updates from the Town Attorney to report. Item tabled.

8. Sign Orders

- Item tabled due to electronic format of meeting.

9. Meeting adjourned at 5:50 p.m.

The next Select Board meeting will be held on Monday June 1, 2020 at 4:30 p.m.

Scott Briere / Chairman

David Gallup

Phil Marquette

Amanda Carlson / Town Administrator