

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES – April 27, 2020**

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7:00 p.m. - Chairman's Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chairman Perreault stated that this Open Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's 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.

Chairman Perreault added that in order to mitigate the transmission of the COVID-19 Virus, the Town has been advised and directed by the Commonwealth to suspend public gatherings, and as such, the Governor's Order suspended 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.

Chairman Perreault noted that the Order 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. Members of the public who wish to view this meeting may do so by tuning into CATV Government Channels: Verizon Channel 30 or Charter Channel 192, or by live stream at stream at <http://bit.ly/2vAySI9> or by visiting the Town's Website and going to the Department of Cable Access Television and click "what's playing live". He added that ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law.

Chairman Perreault confirmed that the following members and persons anticipated on the agenda were remotely present and could be heard.

Jason Perreault, Chairman  
Dawn Rand, Vice Chairman  
Timothy Kaelin, Clerk  
Leslie Rutan  
Julianne Hirsh

John Coderre, Town Administrator  
David Parenti, Fire Chief  
William Lyver, Police Chief  
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director  
Casey Mellin, Health Agent  
Liz Tretiak, Senior Center Director  
June David-Fors, Family & Youth Services Director  
Karen Chapman, President of Corridor 495 Chamber of Commerce  
Kathy Dalgliesh, Cable Access Director

Meeting Business Ground Rules

Chairman Perreault covered the ground rules for effective and clear conduct of the business. Each speaker on the agenda will be invited by name to provide comments, questions or motions. He asked that participants hold until their name is called.

Chairman Perreault asked members of the Board to mute their phone or computer when not speaking and to speak clearly and in a way that helps generate accurate meeting minutes. Those responding were asked to wait until the floor was yielded to them. Members were asked if they wish to respond to the comments of others, to do so through the Chair, taking care to identify themselves.

Chairman Perreault noted that the Public Comments portion of the agenda has been suspended for this meeting, adding that the Board will consider scheduling a public information and input session relating to Covid-19.

Any votes taken this evening will be done by roll call to ensure that the records of the vote are clear and accurate to the members attending the meeting remotely.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – APRIL 13, 2020 REGULAR MEETING**

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the minutes of the April 13, 2020 meeting; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Rand	“aye”
Rutan	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Kaelin	“aye”		

**UPDATE REGARDING COVID-19 RESPONSE**Karen Chapman, President of Corridor 495 Chamber of Commerce

President of Corridor 495 Chamber of Commerce Karen Chapman was remotely present to provide information on funding resources for small businesses during the pandemic. She spoke about the finance relief programs for small businesses, including the Paycheck Protection Program, the Economic Injury Disaster Loan Program and Pandemic Unemployment Assistance. She added that the Chamber is offering free webinars to members on these programs and more. The webinars are free to existing members and are offered at a discounted price of \$20 to non-members.

Ms. Chapman thanked the Town Administrator and Selectman Rutan for their quick response to the Chamber’s requests for information, including letters of support and campaign to Congress seeking continued funding for small businesses.

Ms. Chapman spoke about the Chamber’s continuous informational posts that are offering support to Northborough small businesses. In addition, the chamber is conducting weekly virtual networking events.

Mr. Coderre added that the Town maintains a close relationship with the Corridor 495 Chamber of Commerce and encouraged local businesses to join. He reported that although the Town is limited in what it can do to help local businesses, links have been added to the

Karen Chapman, President of Corridor 495 Chamber of Commerce Cont. . .

Town website with updated information provided by the Chamber. He also announced the Town's initiative to support Northborough businesses. Information has been provided on the Town Website about those businesses that are able to be open on-line or in-person during the pandemic. Northborough businesses who wish to be added to the list can do so by email at [shoplocal.town.northborough.ma.us](mailto:shoplocal.town.northborough.ma.us). Mr. Coderre indicated that although the Town extends its support to the Northborough business community, the information provided on the website is not an endorsement or promotion of any of the businesses listed.

Members of the Board thank Ms. Chapman and the 495 Corridor Chamber of Commerce for all they do for the Town. At the request of Selectman Rutan, Ms. Chapman shared how to join the 495 Corridor Chamber of Commerce and reviewed all of the services that it offers.

Updates from June David-Fors, FYS Director and Liz Tretiak, Senior Center Director

Family & Youth Services Director June David-Fors and Senior Center Director Liz Tretiak were remotely present to provide updates regarding ongoing community outreach and response efforts relating to COVID-19.

Family and Youth Services (FYS) Director June David-Fors spoke about the importance of maintaining communication with those residents in need, especially during this difficult time. She indicated that the FYS Department continues to assist and support those in need by email and telephone. The FYS Department has access to an extensive network of social service agencies and resources. A list of essential services is located on the Town website.

Ms. David-Fors highlighted the community organizations that are available to residents, including Helping Hands, Northborough Food Pantry, Youth & Family Network and the Northborough Interfaith Clergy Group to name a few. Sir Loin Catering, a local business, is generously serving free meals to Northborough residents in need. Lastly, she noted that the Northborough Special Benevolent Fund, Northborough Helping Hands and the Northborough Food Pantry are all in need and are accepting charitable donations.

Senior Center Director Liz Tretiak spoke about the resources and programs that are available to Northborough residents, adding that this information is continually updated on the Town website. The Senior Center has reached out personally to many Northborough seniors, as well as at-risk residents. She was pleased to announce that everyone that they have spoken with are doing relatively well. The Senior Center continues to actively collaborate with those same community groups as the FYS Department. Several programs and support groups are continuing to be offered remotely. She encouraged Northborough residents who need assistance, are looking for information or who just need emotional support, to contact the Senior Center through the Town website, email or by telephone.

Mr. Coderre urged anyone in need of assistance to reach out through the many venues that distribute communication, including the FYS Department and the Senior Center. He added that residents can contact the FYS Department and the Senior Center directly for information about how to help or donate to the Northborough Special Benevolent Fund, Northborough Helping Hands, Northborough Food Pantry or Sir Loin Catering.

Updates from June David-Fors, FYS Director and Liz Tretiak, Senior Center Director Cont.  
In response to a question from Selectman Rutan about future plans for providing lunches to those students in need once the school year ends, Mr. Coderre indicated that the Town staff will continue to meet to discuss programs and services beyond the end of the school year. He reported that our vulnerable residents seem to be doing okay and are using the many available resources and are getting the help they need, whether from the Town website, family members, friends, neighbors or through the continued outreach efforts of the FYS Department, the Senior Center and the School Department. We seem to be doing well as a community in meeting the needs of the vulnerable population.

Board members welcomed Senior Center Director Liz Tretiak to Northborough and thanked her and Ms. David-Fors for their efforts.

Mr. Coderre stressed the importance of getting information directly from Town departments or through the Town website, which is updated on a regular basis, to avoid being misinformed. The Department of Family & Youth Services, the Senior Center, Food Pantry and other civic organizations are constantly in communication ensuring that the needs of the community are being met. Again, he urged anyone in need of assistance to reach out through the many venues that distribute communication.

#### **MEETING SCHEDULE FOR MAY & JUNE**

Chairman Perreault stated that given the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, he discussed with Mr. Coderre scheduling a special community outreach and input meeting. Mr. Coderre indicated that a public information and input session dedicated to the COVID-19 pandemic will be held on Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. A panel of Town staff, along with the School Superintendent, will provide updates regarding the pandemic and its impact on Town services and programs. Questions from the public regarding the COVID-19 pandemic should be submitted in advance of the meeting via email to [covid@town.northborough.ma.us](mailto:covid@town.northborough.ma.us).

Mr. Coderre recommended that the Board schedule a regular meeting on May 18, 2020. He added that although the Board typically moves to a reduced meeting schedule in July and August, he recommended that the Board hold off on setting those dates until there is a better sense of when Town Meeting might take place. If we are able to move forward with Town Meeting before the end of the fiscal year, one potential date would be June 22, 2020, but that is dependent on several factors still to be determined.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to set the meeting schedule as follows:

May 7	COVID-19 Community Outreach and Input
May 18	Regular Meeting
June 8	Regular Meeting

Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Rand	“aye”
Rutan	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Kaelin	“aye”		

## **REPORTS**

### **Julianne Hirsh**

- Thanked first responders, essential workers and health care providers for their sacrifices during the pandemic.
- Thanked the community for listening to the Governor's guidelines with social distancing, etc.
- Noted that the Historical Society is collecting personal reflections and daily experiences from the community during this pandemic. Anyone interested in participating in this project can do so by visiting the Historical Society's website.
- Questioned the status of future meetings of the various Boards and Committees? Mr. Coderre responded that Town staff is looking into how best to move forward with Board and Committee meetings, focusing on creating protocols that will ensure that the meetings are conducted correctly and that security is maintained. He added that one challenge is the fact that a number of Boards and Committees do not have staff liaisons and in these cases, it will be the Chair who will have to host the meeting.

### **Leslie Rutan**

- Thanked everyone in the community who is doing their part during this pandemic.
- Questioned if the Board of Selectmen or the Board of Health can require that employees and customers of those businesses that are open wear masks?
- Encouraged residents to subscribe to Town News and CodeRed via the Town website and to text covidma to 888777 to receive important updates.

### **Tim Kaelin, Clerk**

- Thanked everyone in the community who are doing their part during this pandemic.
- Asked those that live in Northborough, and who are able, to support local businesses.
- Encouraged anyone who is in need or knows of someone in need to contact the Town directly.

### **Dawn Rand, Vice Chair**

- Thanked everyone in the community who is doing their part during this pandemic.

### **Jason Perreault, Chair**

- Asked those that are able to support local businesses to any extent that they are able.
- Asked those that are able to donate to any one of the many community groups that provide services to those in need.
- Based on the recommendation of Veterans Agent Justin Sousa, along with the MA Secretary of Veteran Services, traditional Memorial Day ceremonies will not be held this year. Mr. Sousa is going to create a prerecorded Memorial Day Observation that will be broadcast on Memorial Day for viewing through Cable Access Channels and Social Media. He added that Flags will still be placed upon graves by people wearing PPE and observing Social Distancing protocols.

John Coderre

- In an effort to avoid public speculation and to assure the community that the Town is fully aware of the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic will have on the FY2021 Budget, he provided a brief update, indicating that until the State receives clarity from the Federal Government, it is difficult to move forward with a proposed budget for FY2021. In the meantime, Town staff is working on various scenarios depending on the level of State Aid received. He will continue to provide updates at future meetings. Because this situation is so fluid, he indicated that many communities, including Northborough, may have to hold Special Town Meetings in the Fall to adjust the FY2021 Budget as information becomes available.
- Acknowledged the experienced Staff, as well as Board and Committee members who successfully navigated the last recession and put into place the policies and practices that have strengthened the Town's financial condition.
- At his request, Chief Parenti ran a video entitled "Northborough is Here For You" that Cable Access Director Kathy Dalglish created with the Town's outreach efforts in mind. The message of the video is that Northborough has dedicated staff who cares about this community and here to help residents get whatever assistance they need. The video will be available through the Local Access Channels and on the Town website.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Chief Parenti and Chief Lyver expressed their concerns that residents are hesitant to call on their departments in the case of a medical or domestic emergency. Residents are reminded that that both departments are open for emergencies 24/7.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Hirsh	"aye"	Rand	"aye"
Rutan	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"
Kaelin	"aye"		

Meeting adjourned at 8:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. April 27, 2020 Meeting Agenda
2. April 13, 2020 Meeting Minutes
3. Meeting Schedule Memorandum