

**HOLDEN BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
May 18, 2020**

6:30PM

Senior Center

Present: Anthony Renzoni, Tyler Gibbs, Robert Lavigne, Geri Herlihy, Chiara Barnes

Others Present: Peter Lukes, Town Manager
Stephanie King, Assistant Town Manager
Stephen Madaus, Town Counsel
Liz Fotos, Town Recorder

Chairman Renzoni called the meeting to order at 6:30PM. The Board stood to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

1. Citizens Address

Chairman Renzoni stated that the Board was live for the first time in three meetings. He stated that there were no residents present but they would hold a second Citizens Address at 7:00PM.

1. Appointments, Licenses, and Permits

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO APPROVE SILVIO ANNUNZIATA, FREDERICK LONARDO, AND BRIAN MELJAC FOR REAPPOINTMENT TO THE ZBA FOR A 3 YEAR TERM TO EXPIRE 5/31/2020.**

2. Town Manager Update

See Attached

3. Essential Business Classification Discussion

Mr. Lukes stated that the Baker conference was held today and Phase 1 begins in the Houses of Worship along with construction, shooting ranges, and more. He stated that May 25, 2020 would be the second part of phase 1 for auto dealers, drive-ins, hair salons, general offices for 25%. He stated it would also have curb side for libraries and retail stores and beaches with restrictions on parking, fishing, boating, and other outdoor things.

Mr. Lukes stated that the next phase would be a minimum of three weeks away and would open more businesses and would have fewer restrictions on those that were already opened.

Mr. Lukes stated that his office fields a lot of phone calls because there were a lot of contradictions with the Governors plan. He stated that the Town is not making the rules and there are a lot of legal reasons why some places are open and others are not. He stated that they can not answer all the questions that people have about the contradictions.

Mr. Lukes stated that they were still trying to take action for the local businesses. He stated that he reached out to local gym and fitness places that have been closed and spoke to them about holding classes outdoors. He stated that they thought that there would be some new rules for outdoor activities in the next week or so and the Town was trying to be ahead of that announcement in terms of getting them space. He stated that the businesses were thrilled with some of the ideas.

Mr. Lukes stated that restaurant opening was under Phase 2 but that there was a footnote about exploring outdoor dining. He stated once that is approved, the Town wants to be in front of it and figure out a way to extend liquor licenses and decks or spaces that will allow restaurant owners to have more outdoor space.

Mr. Lukes stated another idea they had was that there were several seniors and immuno-compromised people who felt crowded on the streets. He stated that he was working with Superintendent McCall to use the high school track as a space with special hours for these at risk people to use without fear of walking on a crowded street.

Mr. Lukes stated that the Covid efforts feel both restrictive and unenforceable. He stated that he had said that there would not be fines in the past as he feels that this work is a community effort and he thinks that it works better to appeal to people's sense of community rather than governing with a heavy hand. He stated that if you look back, the Town has had great communication getting the message from FEMA and the state to local residents. He stated that as time goes by and people get frustrated they need to appeal to peoples sense of community and to have people be kind and considerate of others.

Sel. Gibbs left the meeting at 7:06PM.

Mr. Lukes stated that the biggest protection that we have from the virus is still masks. He stated that there is still a stay at home order in effect for those over 65 and immuno-compromised. He stated that they cannot criminalize normal behavior and they have to provide some level of progress to keep people on track.

Sel. Gibbs returned to the meeting.

Chairman Renzoni stated that Mr. Lukes did a great job explaining where the Town was and that he was glad to see that Holden was working to reopen. He stated that he thinks Mr. Lukes is spot on that we are different from Boston and that they need to have local leadership in order to guide the Town through these phases. He stated that he does not think that the Town needs to comply with all parts of the reopening phase and he thinks that if the Town is able to open sooner than later then the Board and Town Manager are

the local government closest to the people. He stated he is happy that the Town was not fining people but that did not mean that we did not have the ability to fine if someone was not adhering to the proper guidelines. He suggested having the Town Manager's Office publish the plan so people could see how we were moving forward.

Sel. Lavigne thanked Mr. Lukes for his overview of the reopening of Holden and what it looked like. He asked if they had any thoughts surrounding youth sports and the pool.

Mr. Lukes replied that they were preparing the pool for full use this summer, but they have not taken the cover off yet. He stated that he would be surprised if the governor did not open pools as beaches were planning to open. He stated that he believes there will be some movement for youth sports starting in June and feels that sports such as baseball which are more distant by nature could be among the first.

Sel. Barnes stated that they need to readdress the pool situation in terms of who was being let in and how many passes should be allowed to be purchased daily.

Mr. Lukes stated that he had discussed that with the Recreation Director and that day passes would have to be figured out.

Sel. Barnes asked if the Town had the capacity to do curb side pick up for the library.

Mr. Lukes stated that they were doing it before they were closed and they were not comfortable with deliveries but that they were going to discuss it further and the library has a plan as to how to move forward. He stated that the DPW was going to have plexi glass installed so that they were ready when the time came.

Sel. Herlihy asked if they thought there would be more oversight necessary as things began to reopen.

Mr. Lukes replied that the Town has had good luck with good business owners who were always open to helping in town. He stated that if there were any issues that quickly speaking with them would probably work as the businesses in town knew that the Town wanted to be there to help. He stated that he thought that at this point they will jump through hoops, they just wanted to be able to open.

Sel. Herlihy asked if the Board of Health was the oversight.

Mr. Lukes replied that CMRPC would come out if there was an issue.

Sel. Gibbs asked what other Town Managers in the area were doing.

Mr. Lukes stated that everyone was basically held to the same things, but that they were just trying to get a jump on things for our local businesses.

Chairman Renzoni stated that he thinks we have a responsibility to business owners and residents to interpret this as widely as possible. He stated he does not know why outdoor dining has to wait and he wants to move forward as aggressively as possible to save businesses.

Sel. Lavigne asked what things needed to be put in place in order to allow things like outdoor dining and extended alcohol service. He asked what they could have in place in front of the announcement.

Chairman Renzoni stated that they have the conversation about it and then if things move fast they can always call a meeting of the Board to approve anything. He stated that the Town needs to move forward fast and safely. He stated that there was some risk but that it was an acceptable level of risk.

Sel. Gibbs stated that he agrees that people make the decision to congregate but that they need to make sure that as a town they are not rushing into anything.

Chairman Renzoni stated that as government they need to encourage safety protocols however with low cases they need help move forward as this is something that we are going to live with in the years to come.

Sel. Gibbs stated that the people that were reaching out were the ones that were interested in opening however he stated that the town needed to be mindful of other people as well.

Chairman Renzoni stated that it is scary but it is the world that we live in and we need to manage it. He stated that they can not ask local businesses to stay closed until there is a vaccine. He stated that they need to insert themselves into the process in a healthy way to help open things up. He stated that it is a tall order but they need to move forward as a community.

Sel. Barnes stated that she thinks retail needs to be included as well.

Chairman Renzoni stated that they have to recognize all the businesses locally.

Sel. Lavigne stated not just small businesses; he stated that the Holden franchises were all locally owned as well.

Mr. Lukes stated that he will prepare any vote for moving forward with expanding outdoor dining. He stated that he believes that the state will accelerate the opening process. He stated that thus far owners have been following the restrictions and that they expect good results going forward as well.

4. Selectmen Subcommittee

Sel. Lavigne stated that the EDC was working with Sel. Barnes to start to think about Halloween in Holden to make it bigger and better.

5. Selectmen Minutes

None

6. Selectmen Miscellaneous

Sel. Lavigne reminded people to be a part of the community and wear a mask.

Chairman Renzoni asked how they envisioned Town Meeting.

Mr. Lukes replied that members of the same home could sit together and a row apart from others using the balcony.

Chairman Renzoni asked if anyone had done the math as to the amount of seats they had.

Mr. Lukes replied that if there was a capacity issue they could televise the meeting into the cafeteria for overflow.

Chairman Renzoni suggested offering it as an option regardless, he asked if they thought about the gym as well.

Mr. Lukes stated that they also spoke about outside as well but that they would continue to discuss it.

Chairman Renzoni asked if there was any further correspondence with the district.

Mr. Lukes replied there was not but that he was going to meet with the Superintendent on Wednesday.

Chairman Renzoni asked if they could discuss beginning classes in the fall.

Sel. Lavigne stated that they needed better communication from the district.

Sel. Lavigne stated that Troop 180 wanted to do some community reinvestment. He stated that any small business that needed the troops help to beautify the outdoor space could reach out.

Chairman Renzoni asked what was going on with the DPW building.

Mr. Lukes stated that they were full steam ahead and anticipated bids at the end of June.

Chairman Renzoni asked if they had authority to put the breaks on the project if the bids did not come in as anticipated.

Mr. Lukes stated if bids come in over they just don't move forward.

7. Citizens Address

None

Chairman Renzoni stated that the Board would be meeting again on June 1, 2020 at the Senior Center.

Motion by Sel. Lavigne, seconded by Sel. Gibbs, it was **UNANIMOUSLY VOTED TO ADJOURN THE MAY 18, 2020 BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING AT 7:36PM.**

APPROVED: _____9/14/20_____