



TOWN OF VINALHAVEN BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MINUTES

Wednesday, March 25, 2020

5:30 pm

Emergency Meeting

Meeting held virtually through Facebook Live

This was a virtual meeting in which some BOS members participated remotely. The public may view the meeting by going to the Town of Vinalhaven Facebook page. This recording will also be made available and posted to the Town of Vinalhaven YouTube page.

Eric Gasperini opened the meeting with a greeting:

Thank you everyone for joining us tonight. We hope this meeting's live stream will reach you with success and be informative. The last couple weeks have presented some new challenges for us to respond to and we would like to both, provide you with information about how we have modified our services in response to Covid-19, and discuss the actions we can take as a community to support one another and minimize the opportunity for community spread. There are some ground rules tonight for this live stream meeting: All board members will acknowledge roll call and all votes will be by roll call. All in person meeting participants will introduce themselves. This will be a discussion of the Board of Selectmen and not a dialog of those viewing virtually. This meeting is being recorded and will be made available on the Town website and YouTube. Any questions asked in the text display will be answered and available as soon as possible, but not during the meeting.

1. **Roll Call** – Selectmen Eric Gasperini, Pamela C. Alley, Phillip Crossman, Donald Poole, and Jacob Thompson; Town Manager Andrew J. Dorr; PHC/EOC Members Marc Candage, Kerry McKee, Jennifer Desmond, and Gabe McPhail.
2. **Agenda** – Motion by Eric Gasperini to approve the agenda as written. Second by Phil Crossman. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carried.
3. **Covid-19 Community Update** -
 - a. EMA Ordinance and EOP – Andy shared the current Emergency Operation Plan (version from 2006) which does have a pandemic/flu section. They are working to build out a communication plan and update contact information. The EMA Ordinance dictates who is in charge, duties of the EMA Director (currently Marc Candage), following of the ICS System for continuity, and who would serve in the Emergency Operations Center. The Team has been meeting every day at 4pm and putting out a daily update to the community. The Ordinance also outlines the procedure for declaring a local state of emergency and what that provides.
 - b. EOC (Emergency Operations Center) - Serves and a physical and organizational resource hub for the Public Health Team Members. Andy outlined the rolls of each person and their duties. He also shared a chart for the Incident Command System. This outlines the logistics and delivery of services when in a response phase.
 - c. Communications Plan – Updates have been going out daily (typically between 6-7pm) via Facebook, Instagram, and the Town's website. A member of the staff in the office as well as one of the teachers has been helping to pull together community resources, and will have that resource list available on the website by Friday. Andy revisited the idea mentioned last meeting about mailing out a notice to all property holders. This comes to 1800 individual parcel holders, and the Town Office doesn't have that number of envelopes at

this time so they are re-evaluating this approach. If information is changing daily is this the appropriate method of communication. The Town has written a letter to the Governor's office regarding the decision-making process at the Ferry. It is a long process, going through many channels, before action can be taken and it was asked that that process be shortened/streamlined/simplified. Andy was able to talk to the Manager today, which was helpful. The Ferry is reviewing their services and scaling back the number of trips as of Saturday (3/28) for all islands. The notice that was asked of the ferry service to pass out in the Rockland line has not been approved by the Ferry Service (an example of the lengthy decision-making process).

Andy, Kerry, and Marc have been checking in with Town employees daily and making sure those services are running smoothly and addressing concerns.

Marc, Kerry, and Jen have been working with businesses and individuals helping them navigate the regulations coming from the Governor.

There is an online portal for tracking FEMA resources (supplies and hours) which the Town has started utilizing.

The Town has been pulling together a FAQ sheet with questions they have been receiving.

Andy will continue working with other island community leaders to draft a letter to the State asking for some similar things that have been asked before but also asking for better access to testing results.

Phil Crossman said he was flabbergasted that the request to have a notice put on vehicles in line in Rockland had to go up the chain of command before it could be implemented. Andy said they (MSFS) needed to review it and make sure it was consistent and legal before being distributed. Phil was under the impression that recommendations need to go through the chain of command if they effect services, but is surprised given the current situation that this request has not moved more quickly. Jake Thompson returned to VH today from FL and he reported that there were no notices anywhere about quarantining or isolating.

- d.** *Consideration for Local State of Emergency – There is no recommendation at this time to declare a State of Emergency. Andy put together some guidelines on why or when the Board might consider such a declaration. A State of Emergency would streamline access to additional funds or equipment that may be required, but is not necessary at this time. Marc asked what kind of time would be necessary for the Board to call a meeting. He gave the example of if the Board could not gather within three hours that he would have the ability to make decisions in an emergency. There was a consensus of the Board that they could be available and organize a meeting in a couple hours.*

There was discussion on placing restrictions on Ferry travel. The Town and BOS have received two emails with concerns. Phil didn't feel the BOS had the luxury of restricting or limiting travel, but thought if passengers had an opportunity to read the notice that the Town prepared, they would resist the temptation to come here. But as more information becomes available and if the Board does have the authority to do something more stringent he feels they should consider it. Andy has received questions about just traveling to Rockland, but is asking everyone to consider if that travel is essential.

Eric Gasperini read a statement:

I would like to thank everyone who has been helping to navigate the many changes we are witnessing. From the WIND crew that put out a digital version last week to comply with the recommendations on physical distancing, to the organizations or individuals out there that are providing food and services, and to those who are diligently self-isolating or quarantining themselves. Our appreciation of your spirited efforts is tremendous. A lot as been asked of all of us. We would also like to encourage respect and compassion for anyone during this situation. Isolating or quarantining yourself or family can be challenging. WE recognize that, so if you can continue to be calm and kind while supporting those community members who may be experiencing increased anxiety or depression, it will help our community become stronger. Please show support and gratitude for all individuals and organizations in our community who are doing their part using safe practices and going above and beyond. You may consider helping someone in need, it may be something as simple as a positive phone call, delivering food, contributing to local businesses by paying it forward, or helping organizations provide services. However, we still strongly urge those who do not have a primary residence on this island to not come at this time. With limited

resources at hand and this remote community, you are almost certainly in a safer place where you currently are. If you have questions about this or want to see any of the information we have offered, you can find them on the Town's website (townofvinalhaven.org), or view the resource page in the WIND. You can also call the Town Office to get more information about recommendations or available resources.

- 4. Adjourn** - Motion by Eric Gasperini to adjourn. Second by Phil Crossman. Vote 5-0-0. Motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elizabeth Bunker, Deputy Town Clerk