

TOWN OF GOSHEN  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

**EMERGENCY MEETING**

Sunday, March 22, 2020

2:00 p.m.

Present: Robert P. Valentine, Dexter S. Kinsella, Mark S. Harris

1 Call to order: 2:06 p.m.

2. Bob Valentine opened the meeting with reference to Governor Ned Lamont's Executive Order 7-I Item 13, March 21, 2020. Governor Lamont addressed Connecticut municipalities with reference to *municipal budget processes* as it pertains to the COVID-19 pandemic. The normal budget process will be changed in which the Board of Selectmen will authorize the Board of Finance to conduct an online/ phone budget hearing where town's people can be heard and make suggestions after which the Board of Finance will adopt the budget and set a mill rate for fiscal year 2020/2021. The Legal Posting of the *Public Hearing* in the local newspaper will be temporarily suspended. For the foreseeable future, the *Public Hearing* announcement will be on the Town of Goshen website only.

The Region 6 budget meeting will be conducted in the same manner as the Board of Finance with the Board of Education adopting its budget. Bob Valentine had a conversation with Superintendent Chris Leone wherein he requested the school budget be "flat" and not increase over current expenditures.

Bob stated he felt that under these current emergency circumstances, the emphasis on the Town budget should be on *essential* services and obligations. Region 6 has had some push-back with regards to districts who send students to Wamogo for the Vo-Ag program, in particular paying tuition when school is not in session. Irrespective of whether school is in session Region 6 will still need to pay Vo-Ag teachers.

Bob further stated that for the town of Goshen, a spending freeze should be put in place, suspending non-essential spending, including but not limited to, Tamarack Lane reconstruction, Chip Seal, crack seal, as well as capital expenditures even though the funds have been appropriated.

Selectman Kinsella agreed that it would be prudent to suspend non-essential spending for the time being. Selectman Harris asked about the current budget process and suggested that budgets approved be subject to a "line item veto" until such time as the revenue to those expenditures is received.

Bob Valentine explained the process for the Board of Selectmen to manage the budget, Connecticut General Statutes 7-14 and the Board authority to superintend the concerns of the town", and the Board's ability to not spend monies already appropriated. Bob also suggested that the budget currently being crafted be only for those items necessary to continuation of town operations. At a later date, when more is known concerning future revenue additional appropriations can be made, possibly with more town's people participation.

Discussed was the process for suspending non-essential spending and keeping board members informed.

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In a **motion** made by Mark S. Harris, seconded by, Dexter S. Kinsella, it was **voted** to allow the First Selectman latitude, in consultation with the Board of Selectmen, to suspend non-essential spending from now forward, until rescinded by the Board of Selectmen. Voted unanimous.

Also discussed with Superintendent Leone earlier, was the district suspending spending in the same manner as the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Education will be meeting soon to take action. Fortunately Region 6 has put monies aside for capital project which could be redirected if necessary.

Friday there was a conference call with chief elected officials and the Governor at which Bob Valentine asked the Governor for some guidance on allowing events at the Goshen Fairgrounds. The Governor responded that he would be cautious about approving events moving forward and into the summer. Bob asked the Board members to consider tabling any Special Events applications until the Governor's executive order on assemblies expires on April 30, 2020 or is extended.

A brief discussion took place on the library closing and there being two (2) employees in the library, to assist residents who may need help downloading books or with questions. It was agreed that starting this week library employees would be asked to stay home and they would continue to receive their normal compensation. In addition, the library phone would be forwarded to Lynn Steinmayer's personal phone so she could answer questions town's people may have.

Currently redundancies are being created to have online meetings and meeting by phone so our normal operations can continue.

Dexter wanted the town's people to know that we are all in this situation together and people are not alone. Bob reported that the town of Windsor has set up a process when bells would be rung at a specific time to keep residents connected. Recently, the town of Kent has done the same. This could be something we could do as well.

Bob also discussed ways to keep Goshen businesses going during this extremely difficult time. There is a need to reach out to Goshen businesses to garner their needs and what people can do to help.

In a **motion** made by Dexter S. Kinsella, seconded by Mark S. Harris, it was **voted** to adjourn the meeting at 2:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Lucille A. Paige V.P.*

Lucille A. Paige, First Selectman's Aide

Received March 24, 2020 @ 3:55 P.M.

Attest Barbara Z. Bueh

Goshen Town Clerk