



Town Of Webster
Massachusetts Est. 1832

Office of the Board of Selectmen
Webster Town Hall
350 Main Street
Webster, MA 01570

Phone: (508) 949-3800 x 1005
Fax: (508) 949-3888
selectmen@webster-ma.gov

Randall V. Becker Chairman
Donald D. Bourque, Vice-Chairman
Andrew Jolda, Secretary
Lisa Kontoes
Earl Gabor

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR SESSION MEETING MINUTES
Monday, March 23, 2020 6:00 P.M.**

Selectmen's Meeting Room
Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA
via conference call in accordance with Governor Baker's
emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the
Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §20"

MEETING OPENING: At 6:01 p.m., Chairman Becker called the meeting to order in the Selectmen's Meeting Room, Webster Town Hall, 350 Main Street, Webster, MA. The following individuals were present: Chairman Becker, Selectman Don Bourque (via conference call), Selectman Andrew Jolda, Selectman Lisa Kontoes (via conference call), Selectman Earl Gabor (via conference call), Board of Health Agent Jennifer Sullivan (via conference call), Harrington Hospital CEO Ed Moore (via conference call), Representative Joseph McKenna (via conference call), Town Administrator Doug Willardson, Attorney Jim McLaughlin (via conference call), Attorney William Mackinnon (via conference call), Attorney Andrew Weiner (via conference call), Attorney Brian Maser (via conference call), and Executive Assistant Courtney Friedland, (via conference call). The Board stood and took the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Becker stated on March 12, 2020, Governor Baker issued an Executive Order modifying certain requirements of the Open Meeting Law, to enable public bodies to carry out their responsibilities while adhering to public health recommendations regarding social distancing. The Executive Order relieves public bodies from the requirement in the Open Meeting Law that meetings be conducted in a public place that is open and physically accessible to the public, provided that the public body makes provision to ensure public access to the deliberations of the public body through adequate, alternative means.

COVID-19 UPDATE: Chairman Becker stated the Board of Selectmen's Meeting will not have any public comment. He stated the meeting is being recorded and will be put on YouTube within the next couple of days. He stated Representative Joe McKenna and Harrington Hospital CEO Ed Moore were connected remotely. He thanked Mr. Moore and Representative McKenna for joining the meeting. Mr. Moore thanked the Board of Selectmen for inviting him. He stated Harrington Hospital has ramped up its efforts within the last three to four weeks to combat the COVID-19 virus. He stated they have put many things in place for the safety of their staff and the public. He stated he feels as though they are currently in a good spot. He stated within the next couple of weeks patients entering the healthcare system will increase. He stated they are putting out daily communication will all of their staff and have implemented a command center. He stated they are keeping an eye on protective equipment for staff and spreading the word to stay home and flatten the curve. He stated

they have put two screening tents into place in Southbridge and Webster. These tents are located in their parking lots. He stated staff is prepared to protect themselves. He stated the only entrance currently open at Harrington Hospital is their Emergency Room entrance. He stated they have reduced visitors, canceled elective surgeries and reduced essential surgeries to one or two a day. He stated they established a hotline that is open from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. for anyone that has questions and is experiencing symptoms (508-765-8191). He stated they received many PPE (personal protection equipment) donations, but could still use more. He stated a local bank donated \$50,000 towards the fight against the virus. He stated they have also reduced the volume of staff in the doctor's offices to protect staff. He stated Harrington Hospital testing 56 people, 2 were confirmed positive and are currently in ICU; 33 came back negative and 21 are pending results. He stated they will be receiving several small machines that will be arriving in one week. These machines will provide testing for the virus with a turnaround of 45 minutes for results. He stated this will be used to test symptomatic people and hospital personnel. He stated they have been working closely with Congressman Neil. Mr. Moore stated the main "DO" was to stay at home. If you have symptoms, you should stay at home and contact your primary care physician (PCP). He stated symptoms often resemble the flu. COVID-19 symptoms are temperature over 100.4, cough, and shortness of breath. He advised people seeking the emergency room after speaking to their PCP to call ahead before heading to the hospital. He stated they are making every effort to save the PPE for patients who are critically ill and can't self-quarantine at home. He stated he appreciates all of the support they have received from the public. He stated they are looking at their workforce and managing the exposure level of their employees. He thanked the State for making daycare available to workers. Selectman Gabor asked the bed capacity they currently have. Mr. Moore stated they currently have two floors, with 25 beds available for COVID-19 patients. He said they also have 6 additional beds in IUC, 10 beds in the former pediatrics area, and 11 beds in the former OB area that can also be used. He stated UMass has a bunker they are putting together and Harrington Hospital will work closely with them. He said they are increasing respirators in anticipation of an influx. Mrs. Sullivan stated Mr. Moore and their Infectious Diseases Control Department have been excellent. She said they have been keeping her up to date. Selectman Kontoes asked Mr. Moore if he could explain to the public what "stay at home" means. Mr. Moore stated it means "don't leave your house". If you need to leave your house stay six feet away from another person. Social distance yourself. These are important things to do in the next two to three weeks. He said the virus is everywhere. The key is to do everything possible to stay at home. He asked everyone to take it seriously. He said this will stop the spread and will have a long-term affect on fighting this virus. He said there will be casualties in the healthcare system. He said there will be challenges meeting payroll. He said they are dedicated to serving the community. He said we need to flatten the curve. Chairman Becker also reminded everyone to have good hygiene. He said individuals may be infected but show no symptoms. These people could spread it to others that are compromised. He thanked Mr. Moore for all of this important information.

Representative McKenna thanked the Board for inviting him. He said the situation is changing rapidly. He stated the State did not mandate the shelter in place but did advise everyone to stay at home. He advised everyone to stay at home. He said essential businesses will remain open. Grocery stores, pharmacies, businesses to keep the houses running and vehicles running, supply chains and restaurants for takeout will remain open. He stated the State has waived the one week waiting requirement to file unemployment. He said residents can file immediately. He stated they have a very high volume of claims and to be patient in filing. He said they received more claims in the past week than January and February combined. He said thousands of claims are being processed. He said they approved a low interest emergency loan program for small businesses and non-profits. This is emergency funding that provides low-interest loans to small businesses. He said the self-employed are not eligible for unemployment. He said the Legislature currently has 20 bills filed within the last week. He said they will release \$8,500.00 in emergency funding for the Board of Health to use during this time. Chairman Becker stated the town will put links to the website where small businesses can get information on the low-interest loans. Selectman Kontoes asked if the State will make the shelter in place mandatory. Representative McKenna stated he believes this is as far as the Governor is going to go. He said this could change but from the conversations he has been in with the Governor he is not looking to make it mandatory. Selectman Jolda asked if

the Department of Education has issued any information regarding the remainder of the school year. Representative McKenna stated he received an email before the meeting but did not have time to read it. He said he will forward that email to the Board. He said he was aware that the school year will not continue beyond June. Chairman Becker stated the information provided should be taken seriously. He said the Board will continue to meet via conference call. He advised residents not to leave their homes and to continue social distancing. He advised that residents stay away from elderly relatives to keep them safe. Mr. Willardson stated there are currently four confirmed cases of the COVID-19 virus in Webster. He stated they are all in one family and are currently being quarantined. He stated Town Hall offices are closed and employees are working remotely from home.

Ed Moore, Representative McKenna, and Jennifer Sullivan left the meeting.

REVIEW AND APPROVE BOND RESULTS: Mr. Willardson stated the town refinanced the bonds for the Town Hall heating system, Highway Department vehicles, Fire Department equipment, and permanent borrowing for the water filtration plant.

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Bourque, Voted: That in order to reduce interest costs, the Treasurer is authorized to issue refunding bonds, at one time or from time to time, pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 21A of the General Laws, or pursuant to any other enabling authority, to refund all or a portion of the Town’s \$10,576,000 General Obligation Bonds dated March 1, 2007, maturing on and after March 1, 2021, (collectively, the “Refunded Bonds”) and that the proceeds of any refunding bonds issued pursuant to this vote shall be used to pay the principal, redemption premium and interest on the Refunded Bonds and costs of issuance of the refunding bonds.

Further Voted: that the sale of the \$4,305,000 General Obligation State Qualified Municipal Purpose Loan of 2020 Bonds of the Town dated April 3, 2020 (the “Bonds”), to Piper Sandler & Co. at the price of \$4,531,460.90 and accrued interest, if any, is hereby approved and confirmed. The Bonds shall be payable on March 1 of the years and in the principal amounts and bear interest at the respective rates, as follows:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Amount</u>	<u>Interest Rate</u>
2021	\$715,000	5.00%	2025	\$585,000	4.00%
2022	625,000	5.00	2026	580,000	3.00
2023	640,000	5.00	2027	565,000	3.00
2024	595,000	4.00			

Further Voted: that in connection with the marketing and sale of the Bonds, the preparation and distribution of a Notice of Sale and Preliminary Official Statement dated March 10, 2020, and a final Official Statement dated March 19, 2020, each in such form as may be approved by the Town Treasurer, be and hereby are ratified, confirmed, approved and adopted.

Further Voted: to authorize the execution and delivery of a Refunding Escrow Agreement to be dated April 3, 2020, between the Town and U.S. Bank National Association, as Refunding Escrow Agent.

Further Voted: that the Town Treasurer and the Board of Selectmen be, and hereby are, authorized to execute and deliver a continuing disclosure undertaking in compliance with SEC Rule 15c2-12 in such form as may be approved by bond counsel to the Town, which undertaking shall be incorporated by reference in the Bonds for the benefit of the holders of the Bonds from time to time.

Further Voted: that we authorize and direct the Town Treasurer to establish post issuance federal tax compliance procedures and continuing disclosure procedures in such forms as the Town Treasurer and bond counsel deem sufficient, or if such procedures are currently in place, to review and update said procedures, in order to monitor and maintain the tax-exempt status of the Bonds and to comply with relevant securities laws.

Call Vote for all of the above noted votes: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

SEASONAL LIQUOR LICENSE RENEWAL – WATERFRONT MARY’S: Mr. Willardson stated Waterfront Mary’s is currently in the process of applying for a year-round license, but in the meantime would like to renew the seasonal license so they would be able to open when the State lifts the prohibition of pouring alcohol in establishments that are licensed.

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Kontoes, to approve the 2020 seasonal liquor license renewal for Waterfront Mary’s, 103 Birch Island Road, Webster with the provisions to comply with the State restrictions on serving alcohol.

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

ACCEPT TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS – ROSE ROOM: Mr. Willardson stated the Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure has some technical changes for the proposed liquor license at the Rose Room, 4 East Main Street, Webster.

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Bourque, to approve the technical corrections submitted by the Joint Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure regarding the Rose Room, 4 East Main Street, Webster, liquor license.

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: At 6:57 p.m.,

Motion by Selectman Becker, seconded by Selectman Jolda, to discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares.

- o Ralph v. Town of Webster, et al

Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

The Board of Selectmen returned to regular session at 7:53 p.m.

Motion by Selectman Jolda, seconded by Selectman Bourque, to adjourn. Call Vote: Selectman Gabor – yes, Selectman Kontoes – yes, Selectman Jolda – yes, Selectman Bourque – yes and Chairman Becker – yes.

Respectfully Submitted,

Courtney M. Friedland, Executive Secretary to the Board of Selectmen