

**ACUSHNET BOARD OF SELECTMEN
REGULAR MEETING
TOWN HALL MEETING ROOM**

TUESDAY, MAY 5, 2020

Selectman Gaspar motioned to approve the Consent Agenda including the minutes of the Regular Session Selectmen's Meeting of October 8, 2019 as presented, Selectman Desroches seconded and all were in favor.

MEETING MAIL

None

APPOINTMENTS

None

OLD BUSINESS

COVID UPDATES

Town Administrator, Julie Hebert: gave general information regarding an update the legislation passed through the Senate and could be voted by the governor as soon as next week. This would give Town's time to move Town Meeting beyond June 30th knowing that there are things to get done by July 1st. This gives the Board time to act on lowering the quorum or have a remote Town Meeting or move the existing location. We currently have a 75-person quorum; the town could not bring the meeting to no less than 10%. The legislation also encouraged only budget items and nothing controversial.

- **Employee Vacation Roll-over**

The Board discussed all department heads currently have a 5-day roll -over of vacation time if the employee is unable to use for an unforeseen reason. Most employees have up to 3 weeks left some not so many. Selectman Gaspar said he was apt to say use it or lose it. Even though there is a pandemic, understand this is by no fault of the employee. Ms. Hebert suggested if the Board agreed to let employee's carry-over extra days, there should be a time limit as to when they should be used. The Board agreed to let Ms. Hebert write a memo and go at a case by a case basis given the circumstances (management). Selectman Desroches mentioned there are many variables to this situation. We can bring this up at the next meeting. No Votes

- **Golf Course Opening**

This is a Board of Health Issue until the Governor lifts the state of emergency. Selectman Gaspar knows the course continues to lose money and is increasingly

concerned. Selectman Desroches spoke about the safety of course management. Selectman Desroches has had meetings with course management and is not going to continue wasting his time if the final decision gets overruled. Let's leave the course closed until we get notice of the end of state of emergency.

The Board also discussed how frustrated they were that the Board of Health shut down the bulky item pick-up just 3 days before it was set to go. There was talk about the pick-up being moved to June but it could be indefinitely. Selectman Gaspar said with regard to it being a right or wrong decision, the BOS are the Town fathers and should be making the decision. The Recycling Center should also be open there could be steps taken to make sure that the DPW is safe. The Board will have to work through the Board of Health's decisions. Selectman Gaspar also wanted to publicly apologize to Ms. Kathy Silva for getting all the info and setting up the bulky item pick-up only to have it canceled.

Chairman Cabral commented that the BOH had taken actions with regard to the DPW that may have been influenced a conflict of interest and he is considering whether or not any action is necessary as a result of this.

BUDGET & TOWN MEETING ARTICLES

Chairman Cabral wanted to hold the Budget & Articles until the May 12, 2020 meeting with that being solely on the agenda. Selectman Gaspar mentioned that the Board would need to revisit the vacation carry-over, all agreed to place that on the agenda as well.

KEARSAGE SOLAR AGREEMENT APPROVAL/NET METERING POWER PURCHASE

Town Administrator, Julie Hebert spoke about the KEARSAGE Net Metering Power Purchase agreement. She mentioned that the Town should sign the PPA. Town Counsel has gone over it numerous times, made some language changes and are fine with the agreement. Selectman Desroches motioned to approve the final version with the seal of approval of Counsel, Selectman Gaspar seconded and all were in favor.

TOWN ACCOUNTANT UPDATE

Melissa Forgue has been the Interim Town Accountant for some time now and Ms. Hebert feels that she can move in to the position. Let's put together a contract for her to look over and agree upon. Selectman Gaspar motioned to offer Melissa Forgue to the Town Accountant Position, after a satisfactory contract is in place Selectman Desroches seconded and all were in favor. Selectman Gaspar did mention that there is a 6-month probation period and he would like language about retaining her certification after a certain amount of time.

NEW BUSINESS

TOWN CLERK ELECTION HOURS CHANGE

The Town Clerk told the Selectmen that she knows she will find it hard to cover the Election shifts, she has spoken to other Town Clerks and they all feel the same and as the 2020 election is uncontested a lot of people won't be out to vote. She will be pushing early voting and absentee ballots which can be located on the Town Website and can be left in the drop box at Town Hall. Chairman Cabral asked what hours she would prefer and she prefers 10 a.m.-2 p.m. on election day Saturday, June 27, 2020, Selectman Gaspar motioned to endorse the hours proposed by the Town Clerk, Selectman Desroches seconded and all were in favor.

COMCAST CONTRACT LICENSE

Ms. Hebert, Cable Committee has been working for a long time to get this contract to fruition. The school and cable committee have projects in mind once this is passed. Ms. Hebert stated that the attorney at Comcast's expense hired a stenographer, which helped. Ms. Hebert stated there was not much to negotiate it is pretty much boiler plate. **At this time Ms. Hebert asked the Board to vote to adopt the report of the Cable Advisory Committee as the Town ascertainment of the Town's cable related community needs and interests; adopt the finding in this report that Comcast has met the requirements of 47 U.S.C. § 546 ©(1)(A)-(C); and Authorize the CAC, its Chair Julie Hebert, to work with counsel to negotiate the final terms of a renewal License with Comcast. Selectman Desroches made the Motion and Selectman Gaspar seconded and all were in favor.**

Selectman Gaspar wanted to make sure the cable committee would be on hand to make approvals as well. Ms. Hebert related that any cable spending goes the Board of Selectmen.

SOIL BOARD PERMIT

The Soil Board permit still has not been signed, there are a lot of factors. We need answers that are appropriate. Selectman Gaspar wants to do right by the residents. Since receiving the DEP letter that changes things and we need a time line from DEP on the process. No votes

NON-UNION PERSONNEL AGREEMENTS

Executive Admin. Assistant, Highway/Water Superintendent, DPW Business Manager, Golf Manager, Golf Superintendent, Golf Pro, Inspector/Facilities

Manager, COA Director/Program Coordinator, Conservation Agent, Animal Control Officer

The Board at a previous meeting voted to approve the COLA for Department Heads at 2%. Ms. Hebert explained that next we need a personnel by-law which all would be covered, this by-law would also be a benefit to the tax payers. Selectman Desroches motioned to approve Personnel Agreements, Selectman Gaspar seconded and all were in favor.

RESERVE FUND TRANSFER

The Assessors sent in a transfer in the amount of \$1,000 for GIS Software Expense. Selectman Gaspar motioned to approve, Selectman Desroches seconded and all were in favor.

TOWN ADMIN REPORT

POLICE COMMENDATIONS

The Police Chief called the attention of the Board of Selectmen, to a great example of a long term investigation spearheaded by Detective Sergeant Keith Ashley & Detective Jeremy Fontes regarding the attached SouthCoast Today Article. The Chief also wanted to call attention to an outstanding example of investigative teamwork within the Acushnet Police Dept. during another investigation.

Officer Ryan Lavioe, Dispatcher Samantha Gomes, Officer Kevin Walsh, Detective Sergeant Keith Ashley & Detective Jeremy Fontes.

The continuity, resolve, and tenacity displayed in both investigations is indicative of the high quality of the police department's personnel!

We thank you for your service!!

COA FREE PRODUCE PICK-UP

On Thursday, April 30th the COA held a free produce pick-up from 8:30 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.

HAND SANITIZER DONATIONS

David Wojnar donated hand sanitizer to the FIRE/EMS, The Fire Chief would like to also thank DPW, Evan White from White's Farm (110 one gallon containers) & Brian Monte (300 8 ounce bottles with caps) The COA distributed to the seniors and the housing authority was getting 60.

Selectman Gaspar wanted to take the time to thank the officers and he really sees they are stepping up under the new Chief. Selectman Gaspar also wanted to commend the EMA they are doing great work!! Chairman Cabral also stated he wanted to commend the Chief it must have taken some effort to write those letters, it's important to

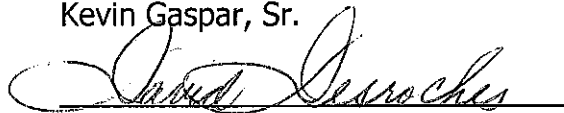
recognize the people that you lead. When you have good employees it's good to make them understand.

Ms. Hebert wanted to give the Board info on our recycling audit. The town received a bad audit and there will be changes in pricing for contamination of 1,850 per month. The DPW continuously is working to get information to our residents on what is correct to recycle and what is ok to throw away.

ADJOURNED REGULAR SESSION AT 6:48 P.M.

Roger A. Cabral, Chairman

Kevin Gaspar, Sr.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Desroches", is written over a horizontal line.

David Desroches
Board of Selectmen