

**MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING OF THE
CORNWALL BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Tuesday, April 21, 2020

7:30 p.m. – Remotely via Zoom

PRESENT: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway; Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey; Selectman Priscilla Pavel; One Member of the Press; 5 Members of the Public

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway called the meeting to order at 7:32 PM.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway moved to add the following items to the agenda: 1) Internet Expansion & 2) Executive Session to discuss a piece of town real estate. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

COMMUNICATIONS: Selectman Priscilla Pavel applauded Cornwall Park and Recreation Director, Jen Markow, for her efforts organizing and implementing a town wide scavenger hunt. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey also communicated her appreciation for the work Jen has done.

COVID-19 CORONAVIRUS UPDATE: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway presented an update on the Town's efforts to respond to the health threat of Covid-19. The update included discussion regarding the Fire Department and EMS adjusting to the use of new Personal Protective Equipment, as well as a brief analysis of the increase in Covid19 cases across the region. Also, the Board discussed the State order requiring persons to wear masks in public when unable to maintain a distance of 6 feet from one another. First Selectman Ridgway put forth a requirement for individuals to wear a face mask while at the Transfer Station. The Board of Selectmen agreed that a face mask requirement at the Transfer Station should be town policy. Finally, First Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey thanked the Fire and EMS volunteers for their excellent work as part of the Cornwall Covid19 Work Group.

MEMORIAL DAY EVENTS: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway provided an update on the upcoming plans for Cornwall's observation of Memorial Day. He has been in touch with the V.F.W. and others. The 3 events traditionally observed: in West Cornwall Village, in Cornwall Village, and at the North Cornwall Cemetery - will be filmed; however, there will be no in-person participation by the general public. Also, there will be no parade this year due to safety concerns regarding Covid19.

TAX DEFERMENT PROGRAM: The Board of Selectmen discussed the Tax Relief options provided under Governor Lamont's Executive Order 7(S) Sec. 6. First Selectman Ridgway stated the advantages of the "Deferment Option" over the "Low Interest" option. The deferment option is easier to administer and provides 3 months deferent to those who qualify. Selectman Priscilla Pavel noted that the deferment option was good solution for people going through difficult times. First Selectman Ridgway moved to choose the Deferment Option in answer to Executive Order 7(S)(6). Priscilla Pavel seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

SUSPENSE TAX LIST: The Board of Selectmen discussed the suspense tax list, which was provided by Cornwall's Tax Collector, Jean Bouteiller. The list removes past due taxes from the active list and places them on the collections list. Selectman Priscilla Pavel moved to accept Jean Bouteiller's recommendation and designate the listed taxes for collections. Selectwoman Marina Kotchoubey seconded, and the motion unanimously passed.

BUDGET 2020 / 2021: The Board of Selectmen discussed the Executive Order which effectively banned town meetings due to Covid19. This year the Budget will be decided by the votes of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Finance. First Selectman Ridgway provided some details about the proposed budget, and noted that the local tax rate is to stay the same. The Board of Finance will meet in May to vote on the budget. The Board of Selectmen and Board of Finance are accepting public comments via email and letter. Also, First Selectman Ridgway will speak with Representative Maria Horn regarding funding for Cornwall's response to Covid19.

INTERNET EXPANSION: The Board of Selectmen discussed efforts to expand Cornwall's internet connectivity. The NHCOC has hired engineer Ben Paletsky from the Town of Morris to assist in coordinating connectivity efforts. Katherine Freygang and the Cornwall Association are also involved, and there is an EDC (Economic Development Commission) meeting scheduled for May 18th at 7:30 PM via Zoom to discuss internet expansion.

PUBLIC COMMENT: Paul Gottsegen of Cornwall thanked the Board of Selectmen for their continued efforts to guide the Town through the Covid19 Pandemic. Leila Hawken of the Lakeville Journal asked if the Tax Deferment would automatically apply to residents. First Selectman Ridgway answered that the Tax Deferment program was available by application for those residents who qualify. Next, Jane Bevans thanked the Board of Selectmen for their efforts, and First Selectmen Ridgway concluded by thanking Cornwall Fire, EMS, and Social Services Director Heather Dinneen.

The Board of Selectmen then reviewed items for Bill Payment.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: The Board of Selectmen entered an Executive Session at 8:20 PM to discuss a piece of town-owned real estate. No motion was made, and no action was taken. The Executive session ended at 8:32 PM.

The meeting adjourned at 8:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jonathan Berry
Administrative Assistant
Town of Cornwall