

FINAL



**Town of Henniker
Board of Selectmen Meeting
Tuesday, June 2, 2020
Virtually via the platform Zoom**

Members Present: Chairman, Kris Blomback; Vice Chair Tia Hooper; Selectman Peter Flynn; Selectman Scott Osgood; Selectman Leon Parker

Town Administrator: Joe R. Devine Jr.

Recording Secretary: Kelly McCutcheon

Virtual Zoom Guests: Ruth Zak, Dr. Wayne Lesperance, Jarrod Brooks, Joan O'Connor, Michele Perkins, Heidi Aucoin, Stef, Steve Cunliffe, Samuel Wagner, Lynn Piotrowicz, Cordell Johnston, Michael Pon, Kim Tucker, Joyce Bosse, Caleb Dobbins, Russ Roy, Milli Knudsen, Jack Krantz, Chris Woodbury, Jacqueline Coe, Mike French, Kimberly Johnson, wcolby, Dan Teaze, Patti Osgood, Stephanie Teaze, Jean Eaton, Bill Marko, Taylor Carrol, Karddermon, Paul Knudsen, Alison Mrohrs, Ray Grande, Thomas Inzinga, Thomas French, Kirk Spofford, Mark Mitch, Chief Jim Morse, 603.748.3351

ANNOUNCEMENTS

"COVID-19 - Public Meeting Procedures Notice Due to the COVID 19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, Henniker Board of Selectmen is authorized to meet electronically. The Town of Henniker will be utilizing the Zoom platform for this electronic meeting. Please note that there is no physical location to observe and listen contemporaneously to the meeting, which was authorized pursuant to Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04. All members of the Board of Selectmen have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through the Zoom platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting by following the link below, or dialing the number below and entering the ID number at the prompt. For those who want to provide public testimony in the Public Hearing portion of the meeting, and you are connected to the Zoom website, you may click on the Raise Hand icon in the Attendees Section of Zoom to make the request. When the time is appropriate, you will be recognized so you can provide your testimony. For those calling in who want to provide public testimony, dial *9 to alert the host that you wish to speak. The host will unmute you at the appropriate time/during the public hearing portion of the meeting. All participants please keep your phones and computers on mute unless speaking. Website Address: <https://zoom.us/j/98272257537> Telephone

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Dial: +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 982 7225 7537 Members of the public can also email questions or other public testimony to townadministrator@henniker.org. Staff will read the testimony or questions into the record during the meeting. Any member of the public can also call the Town of Henniker at 603-998-1492 or email townadministrator@henniker.org if they are unable to access the meeting.”

Item 1: Letter from David A. Croft

PUBLIC COMMENT #1 – (For any comment by any Henniker resident on a topic. Request time limit, up to 3 minutes).

Caleb Dobbins asked questions on how Town Meeting would be conducted and how ballots would work. He stated it would be better to have a ballot vote on all articles and leave the polls open for 24 hours and allow people to vote online.

Town Administrator Joe Devine stated there will be 9 people per room and all rooms will be connected electronically via a chat feature and that is how ballot votes will be handled.

Town Moderator Cordell Johnston stated only 5 residents are required to request a ballot vote.

Heidi Aucoin asked where Town Meeting was published. She stated she has seen it on social media; however, there is a significant portion of all age demographics who do not use social media. She was surprised there is no signage at Town Hall, Post Office, or town triangle. She stated people are so used to having Town Meeting at a certain time of year and she is not sure if the public is informed. She understands many rely on social media to communicate, but again stated across age demographics there is a significant portion that do not use social media.

CONSENT AGENDA

Item 2: Intent to Cut Map/Lot 1-92/92-X

Item 3: Intent to Cut Map/Lot 1-54-B

Item 4: Intent to Excavate Map/Lot 1-522

Item 5: Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions Map/Lot 2-154-F

Item 6: Permanent Application for Property Tax Credits/Exemptions Map/Lot 2-246

Item 7: Petition and Pole License PSNH # 12-0813

Item 8: Petition and Pole License PSNH # 12-0822

Item 9: Warrant for the Collection of Excavation Taxes Map/Lot 1-603

Vice Chair Hooper moved to accept the consent agenda. Selectman Parker seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Selectman Flynn asked about one of the items that had been signed regarding a utility pole essentially in front of his house. Joe Devine stated he reached out to the Highway Superintendent and that frequently the utility companies do not register the permits until after the pole has been installed to ensure proper location recording. He also stated that no new poles are going up in front of Selectman Flynn’s home.

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NEW BUSINESS

Item 10: Update from New England College

President of New England College (NEC) Michele Perkins stated that the college was very sensitive when the virus was first reported in the state and once the first case in town was confirmed they asked the students to return home, but a small portion were allowed to stay in the residence halls.

With 80% of colleges in the US planning to open this fall, NEC is also planning to open in one way or another. NEC is following the guidelines of the CDC and State, and recently made the decision to open this fall and are in the process of finalizing those plans. Typically, there are about 1000 students on campus in Henniker and NEC is planning for a 20% drop of their on-campus population due to current circumstances; that means more space to social distance the students and set up quarantine dorms if needed.

NEC will take all appropriate measures to ensure students are not congregating in large groups, there will be no large group meetings of any sort, if there is an athletic season fans will not be allowed. NEC will also be doing real time temperature checks with smart thermometers.

Dr. Wayne Lesperance stated last week he shared the draft plans with Joe Devine and Police Chief French to bring them into the loop and answer questions they had. Regarding the press release, he greatly apologized to the Board they were not informed and moving forward they will be receiving all communications.

Dr. Lesperance stated no visitors will be allowed to campus. Students will be required to wear face masks in all public spaces. The term will start in August and end before Thanksgiving with fall break canceled. This will mitigate COVID coming to campus. Working with Chief French they have identified spaces on campus to quarantine students if needed. Students who live within 3 hours will be sent home; students who live further will be quarantined on campus.

Dr. Lesperance stated he values the relationship NEC has with the town including first responders and law enforcement and wants to make sure NEC is upfront with their neighbors and let everyone know NEC takes this very seriously. He stated their faculty is older and in the at-risk group, but he asked them to come back and teach. Once the plans are finalized, he will share them with everyone and looks forward to answering questions and hearing people's thoughts.

Board statements and questions take place. It was stressed by Dr. Lesperance that students not adhering to the updated student conduct will be removed from NEC completely. He stated students were invited back by invitation and adhering to the guidelines, and that invitation can and will be revoked for violators. Students made to leave are not entitled to refunds.

Public comment opens. Steve Cunliffe expresses his great disappointment in NEC for not caring about the residents in town or communicating with the town.

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Joan O'Connor, 1971 alumna, stated she would like to see a monthly panel with the town, held on town property and live streamed on town media, and NEC so that there is an open line of communication for residents to speak with NEC.

Jack Krantz stated his concerns regarding parking for the new building NEC built, as students park in the middle of 114.

Milli stated her concern that things are going on and people do not know unless they are in the know. She is also disappointed in the disrespectful comments on social media.

Chair Blomback thanked Dr. Lesperance and Dr. Perkins for attending and thanked them for their time and encouraged the audience to view the NEC website (nec.edu) for more information or to contact them directly with questions.

Item 11: Update from Athletic Committee

a. Signage in Parks

Jarrold Brooks of the Athletic Committee spoke regarding the signs placed on the soccer field for safety.

He stated the signs were added for safety. The leash law is a town ordinance for town parks and town employees have been chased by dogs trying to mow the fields; golfers have not been picking up their balls and are making divots, and given how far a golf ball can travel with no safety net there is a chance of someone getting injured. Since the field is shared with the Army Corps of Engineers, he has reached out to them before placing the signs and they had no issue.

Selectman Osgood stated the Athletic Committee should proceed to do as they see right. Selectman Flynn fully supports the Athletic Committee.

Chris Woodbury stated safety is one of the main things the Athletic Committee is charged with and that this is a prime example of a personal attack on a volunteer committee. There was a conversation regarding the comments posted on a social media site.

Selectman Parker stated if people are not being respectful using the fields then something needs to be done about it.

Caleb Dobbins stated people can hit a golf ball 200' which would shut down both fields just for driving golf balls.

Heidi Aucoin asked if golfing has been a problem in the past or if it is just because of COVID. Jarrod stated in the past he addressed the issue in person and explained the safety concerns and people apologized because they didn't consider the safety.

Selectman Flynn moved to authorize the Athletic Committee to put signs on the federally owned and town owned soccer field joining each other, as they see fit for the health and safety of the towns benefit. Chair Blomback seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Hooper).

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b. Renaming Athletic Field

Superintendent Jaqueline Coe has spoken with the Athletic Committee regarding renaming an Athletic Field after a retiring employee, who was an active member of the athletic community. Jarrod Brooks stated the field is located behind the Henniker Community School, which was the first soft ball field put in for town use and the candidate has a direct tie to soft ball. The Athletic Committee passed this decision.

Chair Blomback moved to proceed with the Athletic Committee recommendation to rename the field as outlined in their minutes. Selectman Parker seconded. Motion carried 4-0-1 (Hooper)

Item 12: Update from Town Clerk

Town Clerk Kimberly Johnson discussed deeding and liens. She informed the board that tax bills would be sent out next week.

Item 13: Town Meeting Warrant

The Board reviewed the warrant articles for Saturday's Town Meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

Item 14: Discussion: Azalea Park Grant Update

Selectman Osgood had no update.

Item 15: Concert Committee Update

Selectman Parker stated the plan seems too complex and suggested canceling until next year. Chair Blomback stated the plan is very comprehensive and if they can proceed in a safe manner they should do so. Chair of the Concert Committee Ruth Zak stated that until the executive order is lifted limiting gatherings to 10 people, they cannot proceed, and the committee is adhering to all executive orders and CDC guidelines.

Chair Blomback moved to allow the Concert Committee to proceed based on CDC guidelines and Governor's orders. Selectman Osgood seconded. Motion carried 3-2 (Hooper & Parker).

OTHER BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE

Item 16: Acceptance of Board of Selectmen Public Hearing Minutes of May 19, 2020

Tabled

Item 17: Acceptance of Board of Selectmen Non-Public Meeting Minutes of May 19, 2020

Tabled

Item 18: Town Administrator Report

John Stark High School graduation is June 13th and there will be a parade through town. A time has not been set yet.

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GOFERR Grant was submitted and the first reimbursement is approximately \$26,000.

Downtown brick work: The Henniker Chamber of Commerce is looking to redo the brick sidewalk and the cost will be paid for by the businesses. It is supported by highway and town and subject to MOU for work specifications because the project will need to be accepted as a gift per RSA.

Chair Blomback moved to allow MOU to serve as vehicle to get brick redone. Selectman Parker seconded. Motion carried 5-0.

Sidewalk dining: The current set up of Abby's Café would not work. DOT is amendable to adding barriers and removing the parking spaces out front. Joe Devine is waiting to hear from Abby.

Item 19: Selectmen Reports

No members of the Board had reports.

PUBLIC COMMENT #2

Mike French asked about swearing in volunteers at Town Meeting. Cordell Johnston stated he can swear in moderators. Joan O'Connor offered to volunteer if needed.

Caleb Dobbins asked if there will be separate rooms for people who choose to wear a mask and have a temperature check and those who do not. Cordell Johnston stated they will not be doing temperature checks and that people who choose not to wear masks will not be in rooms with people who choose to wear masks.

NON-PUBLIC: None

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Hooper moved to adjourn. Chair Blomback seconded. Motion carried 5-0. Adjourn at 9:30pm.

UPCOMING DATES:

June 6, 2020 – Town Meeting

June 16, 2021 – Select Board Meeting