

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN/SEWER COMMISSION

Wednesday April 3, 2020 – 6:00 PM – Virtual Meeting

**PRESENT;** Roger Manzolini, Chair; Neal Pilson, Selectman; Alan Hanson, Selectman; Danielle Fillio, Town Administrator

**ABSENT:**

**Update and Status of Town functions.** Danielle let the Board know that everything was working well with the Town staff mostly working remotely. Claudia will be dropping down to 2 days a week in order to limit the number of people in town hall at one time. Danielle was finally able to work out a system to get Phyllis the recordings in order to resume typing minutes. The highway crew was back to full staff doing road work.

**State of Emergency Declaration.** Danielle had emailed and brought up on the screen for the Board to review the state of Emergency Declaration. It was noted that this should not cause alarm for residents and that the reason for doing so was for the Town to get the available funding from the state and federal governments if needed to help cover unanticipated costs due to the COVID-19 Pandemic. Roger gave a brief overview of the Emergency order which is incorporated here in the minutes.

Roger made a motion that the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Richmond, Massachusetts, hereby declare that as of March 15, 2020, a state of emergency exists in the Town of Richmond. This declaration of emergency shall remain in effect until further notice is given, pursuant to our judgment that the conditions leading to this declaration no longer exist. Neal Seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**WHEREAS,** the 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a highly contagious and potentially fatal respiratory disease, the prevalence of which is increasing rapidly throughout the world, inclusive of the United States and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; and

**WHEREAS,** on March 10, 2020, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts issued a Declaration of a State of Emergency to Respond to COVID-19; and

**WHEREAS,** on March 11, 2020 the World Health Organization designated the COVID-19 outbreak a Pandemic Health Emergency; and

**WHEREAS,** on March 13, 2020, the President of the United States announced a national declaration of emergency; and

**WHEREAS,** on March 23, 2020, Governor Baker announced and updated the March 15, 2020 emergency actions to respond to the evolving COVID-19 public health emergency impacting the Commonwealth, including prohibitions on public gatherings of ten or more people, continuing to prohibit on-premises consumption of food or drink at bars and restaurants from March 17, 2020 until April 6, 2020, as well as suspension of elementary and secondary school educational operations from March 17, 2020 until April 6, 2020; and

**WHEREAS,** on Governor Baker announced additional public gathering limitations, travel advisories and suspension of elementary and secondary school educational operations until May 4, 2020; and

**WHEREAS,** the Town of Richmond Board of Selectmen in consultation with its Health Department and the State Department of Public Health, has determined that COVID-19 presents a major disaster which poses an immediate threat to public health, safety, and general welfare of people residing both within and outside of Richmond; and

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Richmond Board of Selectmen along with its Emergency Management Director have determined that immediate public action is needed in order to prevent or minimize the spread of COVID-19 by and among the people of Richmond; and

**WHEREAS**, it is critical to take additional steps to prepare for, respond to, and mitigate the spread of COVID-19 to protect the health and welfare of the people of Richmond; and

**WHEREAS**, declaring a state of emergency will facilitate and expedite the use of resources to protect persons from the impacts of COVID-19, including but not limited to emergency expenditures pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 31 and limitations on operating hours and access to public buildings; and

**WHEREAS**, the Richmond Board of Selectmen recommends that a state of emergency be declared in the Town of Richmond.

**NOW THEREFORE**, we, the Board of Selectmen of the Town of Richmond, Massachusetts, hereby declare that as of March 15, 2020, a state of emergency exists in the Town of Richmond. This declaration of emergency shall remain in effect until further notice is given, pursuant to our judgment that the conditions leading to this declaration no longer exist.

**Appointment of Assistant Treasurer Collector** Danielle explained that Paul Lisi is the only name on numerous town bank accounts and we are having trouble accessing information. The only way to get her name on the accounts and to be able to move forward with documents that need to be signed is by appoint her as Assistant Treasurer Collector. Roger said he felt that there should always be two names on the bank accounts and wanted to make sure that two names continued to be on the accounts whenever the current Treasurer Collector comes back. Roger made a motion to appoint Danielle as Assistant Treasurer Collector. All seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**Discussion of Town Meeting and Elections** Danielle let the Board know that the state had recently passed legislation allowing Boards to postpone their Town Meeting and Elections. Danielle noted that the town needed to get approval by a court order to postpone the Caucus at the end of March because it is considered a primary election and the legislation had not passed yet. The Board voted to postpone the Town Meeting originally scheduled for May 20<sup>th</sup> to June 17<sup>th</sup> and the annual elections from May 23<sup>rd</sup> to June 20<sup>th</sup>. Danielle noted that she was still looking into the logistics of the Town Caucus dates. The Board also discussed the fact that the Baby Town Meeting or the Civic Association Annual Meeting that was originally scheduled for May 2<sup>nd</sup> was cancelled. The Board decided it will hold its own Baby Town meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

**Discussion of Real Estate and Tax Payments** Danielle informed the Board that the state approved legislation to allow Towns to postpone the due date of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter real estate taxes from May 1<sup>st</sup> to June 1<sup>st</sup> and the option to waive all penalties and interest on bills paid late due to financial issues directly related to COVID-19. After much discussion, the Board decided that if they postpone the deadline it would potentially cause more confusion with the way the bills are currently done. The Board did agree to waive interest and penalties for those impacted financially and urged residents to reach out for help with payment plans if needed.

**Warrants** It was decided that because the warrants could not be signed by the Board that they would be signed by Danielle and Verbally approved by the Board at their meetings. Danielle would scan in the warrant cover sheets for their approval.

There were no sewer matters for this meeting.

There being no further business before the Board, there was a motion to adjourn. The motion was seconded and adopted by unanimous vote.

Signed:

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Roger Manzolini, Chair