

SUBJECT TO APPROVAL

MEETING DATE: SUNDAY, MARCH 15, 2020
1:00 P.M.

MEETING PLACE: TOWN CAMPUS ROOM A

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING EMERGENCY MINUTES

1:00 p.m. Emergency Session

First Selectwoman Lyons called the Emergency Meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 1:02 p.m.

1. Discuss and Take Action to Postpone until further notice the following Public Hearings and Special Town Meetings:
 - a. March 23, 2020 Public Hearing to discuss the 2018 Small Cities Community Development Block Grant and a Special Appropriation request in the amount of \$102,080 to fund health and transportation services for Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory Academy.
 - b. March 23, 2020 Special Town Meeting to Approve a Special Appropriation request in the amount of \$65,000 from the Board of Education to fund the Public Schools / External Placements for Special Education Reserve Fund; and a Special Appropriation request in the amount of \$81,000 to fund transportation services for Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory Academy.
 - c. March 30, 2020 Public Hearing on a Lease Modification Agreement between the Town of Madison and Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory Academy.
 - d. April 2, 2020 Special Town Meeting to Approve a Resolution on a Lease Modification Agreement between the Town of Madison and Our Lady of Mercy Preparatory Academy.

DISCUSSION: First Selectwoman Lyons gave an overview of the meetings in question. Selectman Wilson stated that it was important that residents understand that we are not trying to take away anyone's voice, but being conservative to pause actions until the Town knows the best way to proceed. He supports the motion, but wanted the public to understand what was happening at the town level. First Selectwoman Lyons agreed and stated that the Town did not feel comfortable calling the public to attend these meetings within the next two weeks with everything going on. Selectwoman Duques echoed these thoughts and stated that many towns in Connecticut are wrestling with the same issues.

CCM is working with the Governor's office to try to address the issues with these types of meetings as well as budget processes.

Moved by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectman Goldberg to approve postponing until further notice the above Public Hearings and Special Town Meetings.

VOTE: motion was approved unanimously.

2. Discuss and Take Action to Declare Local Civil Preparedness Emergency

DISCUSSION: Selectman Murphy read aloud the Resolution as follows:

**DECLARATION OF LOCAL CIVIL PREPAREDNESS
EMERGENCY**

WHEREAS, the Board of Selectmen do find:

1. That the recent pandemic of COVID 19 disease associated with a new form of coronavirus has led to a growing number of infections in Connecticut and in neighboring states, shortages of supplies needed to address and prevent the disease, and public health officials' recommendations to limit meeting in large groups and practice social distancing; and
2. That Governor Lamont on March 10, 2020 made a declaration of a statewide public health emergency and civil preparedness emergency; and
3. That President Trump on March 13, 2020 made a declaration of a national emergency; and
4. That due to the above, the Town of Madison needs to be prepared to take emergency measures in order to preserve and protect the public health, public safety, general welfare, peace, and security of the Town of Madison, its residents and property; and
5. That due to such conditions and risks it is necessary to declare a local civil preparedness emergency;

NOW, THEREFORE, under the authority of Chapter 28 of the Connecticut General Statutes and Sections 10.1.3 and 4.1.4 of the Madison Town Charter, it is hereby declared that a local civil preparedness emergency now exists throughout the Town of Madison; and

IT IS FURTHER DECLARED AND ORDERED that during the existence of said emergency, the First Selectwoman shall exercise those powers, functions and duties prescribed by state law, the Town Charter, and all applicable ordinances, resolutions, special acts, and the town Emergency Operations Plan in order to minimize the effects of said emergency; effective immediately upon enactment and automatically repealed 21 days following the effective date thereof in accordance with Town Charter Section 10.1.3

First Selectwoman Lyons stated that the Town was moving forward a process that is in the Charter. The federal and state governments have declared these emergencies and other towns do not need to make a separate declaration.

Selectman Goldberg stated that this isn't the first time that the Board has enacted a state of emergency; this has been done for weather-related events as well. Selectman Murphy echoed these statements.

Selectwoman Duques stated that it would be helpful for the public to have a clear understanding of what authority is given to the First Selectwoman under this declaration. Attorney Floyd Dugas stated that the statute and Charter are vague; there are specific scripted authorities and powers of the First Selectman. This resolution gives broad and sweeping authority specifically related to emergency matters and oversight as it pertains to the emergency itself. This authority would not supersede the authority of the Health Director as this is a public health emergency.

Sam DeBurra, Emergency Management Director, clarified that the resolution allows the First Selectwoman to take action, under the guidance of the Health Director and Emergency Management Director, without having to convene the entire Board. Police Chief, Jack Drumm, echoed the comments of Sam DeBurra and stated that this is not unusual in this situation.

Moved by Selectman Murphy and seconded by Selectman Wilson to approve a Resolution declaring a Local Civil Preparedness Emergency.

VOTE: motion was approved unanimously.

3. Discuss business continuity planning

DISCUSSION: First Selectwoman Lyons stated that other towns have moved to close the doors to the public. This is a situation that is evolving rapidly. The town has already closed the Library, Senior Center, Town Gym and cancelled non-essential events and activities. The Board of Education has also closed schools indefinitely. The Town is trying to get ahead of the curve and be proactive.

One plan is to close Town Campus for access and allow services on an appointment only basis.

Trent Joseph, Health Director, stated that given conversations with other Towns, many have closed facilities and have restricted access to emergency services in non-emergency situations as well. Towns have also limited the number of staff to report in. He strongly advised no public access to the building and also reducing hours of operation.

First Selectwoman Lyons stated that much business can be done online but for the work that cannot be done online, residents could make appointments to come in to conduct their work.

Deb Milardo stated that she has been a proponent from the beginning to balance providing service but also practice social distancing for staff. She stated that this has been a goal from the beginning. There will be employees in the building, and residents can contact employees via phone and email.

First Selectwoman Lyons stated that this would be an operational decision and final information would be forthcoming after the meeting. Mr. Joseph stated that these actions are being taken under an abundance of caution, to protect residents and staff.

Selectwoman Duques questioned if departments had created lists of what are essential in-person services. First Selectwoman Lyons stated that staff has worked to put together lists such as this. Senior Staff will be gathered tomorrow or spoken to tomorrow to clarify what work can be done remotely.

Ms. Milardo stated that she contacted via email all department heads to provide lists of services that can be done online or via mail and there is a good road map to start with. There will be clarification to services that can be accessed online.

First Selectwoman Lyons stated that there were many considerations to business continuity and that the town may need to consider waiving fees associated with this change in in-person services.

Mr. Joseph stated that the Town should consider a timeline for this directive and suggested the plan be in place for two weeks. This gives the public time to plan.

Selectman Murphy questioned if there is a sense of where we compare to other shoreline towns and communities relative to restricting access to the public. Is there a possibility we are pushing the envelope too far. First Selectwoman Lyons gave a brief overview of other towns and what restrictions they are putting place. She stated that this advance communication is important for the public and staff alike.

Selectman Goldberg stated that residents will still be able to do their business with town government, via online services, via the mail, and in some cases, via an in-person appointment. This is a balance between closing the town hall altogether and keeping it 100% open to the public.

Chief Drumm stated that no matter what, there can be complaints from the public, but the Town was doing what was best for public safety by mitigating risks now.

Mr. DeBurra stated that there are field services offered and those need to be considered as well.

Selectman Wilson asked for the expectation for services at Town Hall tomorrow and First Selectwoman Lyons stated that details would be sent out later this afternoon. It appears that the plan is to allow appointment only in-person services between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. for the next two weeks. Other services can be found online and via phone, email and mail. The key message is that residents will have access to government but we are

working on ways to provide services most efficiently. The message to department heads is to minimize in-person interactions as much as possible.

Selectman Goldberg stated that this is a frightening moment which probably unsettling to most of us. We have a responsibility to mitigate fear and maintain a sense of community that cares for one another. We should stay informed and stay calm. Echoing this comment, Selectman Murphy cautioned that we don't judge others based on their response to these uncertain times.

Selectwoman Duques and Selectwoman Lyons thanked the staff that had been working hard to address this matter over the weekend, including the Cable Access TV channel who was live streaming the meeting.

Ms. Milardo stated that since we were streaming live and employees were watching this video, so confirmed that all employees were to report to work tomorrow, Monday, March 16th.

4. Adjournment.

There being no objections, First Selectwoman Lyons adjourned the meeting at 1:48 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lauren Rhines
Town Services Coordinator / Risk Manager