

Town of Brimfield  
Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes – October 13, 2020  
21 Main Street and virtual

**Current State of Emergency:**

Pursuant to Governor Baker's March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, and the Governor's March 15, 2020 Order imposing strict limitation on the number of people that may gather in one place, this meeting of the Brimfield **[Board of Selectmen]** will be conducted in person and via remote participation to the greatest extent possible. Specific information and the general guidelines for remote participation by members of the public and/or parties with a right and/or requirement to attend this meeting can be found on the town's website, at [www.brimfieldma.org](http://www.brimfieldma.org). For this meeting, members of the public who wish to virtually attend the meeting may do so in the following manner: WEBINAR allowing computer and phone participation. ~~No in-person attendance of members of the public will be permitted~~, but every effort will be made to ensure that the public can adequately access the proceedings in real time, via technological means. In the event that we are unable to do so, despite best efforts, we will post on the Brimfield website an audio or video recording, transcript, or other comprehensive record of proceedings as soon as possible after the meeting.

**Join Microsoft Teams Meeting**

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Conference ID: 602 713 517#

Members Present: Chair; Mike Doyle, Vice Chair; Paul McCarthy, Member; Carolyn Haley, Member; Suzanne Collins (absent), Member; Ryan Olszta, Recording; Admin; Carol Camerota.

Others: Police Chief Kuss, ZBA; Harold Leaming, Town Clerk; Bob Sullivan, Building Commissioner; Bill Cantel, Mike MacFadden,

**Call to order:** by (Doyle) at 6:38 p.m.

**Payroll and Warrants:**

Signed by board

**Minutes:**

Review & approve minutes of September 28, 2020:

**Motion:** by (Haley) move to approve minutes of September 28, 2020 as written, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor. Roll call as follows: (Doyle)-Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes

**Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees:**

Building Commissioner: ADA town buildings & sign bylaws:

The board wanted to review with the Building Commissioner ADA status with town buildings. Town Maintenance will be correcting some of the issues at the town hall and Annex. Town Hall and Annex still don't meet code for access to the second floor. With deficiencies discussed access in the Town Hall should only be on a temporary basis until brought up to code.

Structural engineers will be looking at the Town Hall when considering space for a new Sr. Center. (Olszta) pointed out that an actual remedy is needed not just paint and flooring. It's been piecemealed over the years and the town needs to focus on what needs to be done.

Sign by law: This subject came up because of Cumberland Farms but effects the whole town. Temporary banners were put up but have since been removed. The Building Commissioner is the only authority to handle signs. After reading the town's bylaws he found that it is written that no one can put up a sign without a permit including real estate signs, tag sales, etc. It needs more clarification before he can enforce. He won't be requiring anyone to take signs down until it's updated. Political signs are most likely covered under Mass General Laws.

Leaming, agreed that this would be unreasonably restricting and is being worked on at the State level.

ZBA has been working on all the bylaws. They are not requiring Cumberland to take signs down and are working with them on other issues.

(Doyle) spoke with the regional manager and asked that any complaint come to the Select board Chair, Building Commissioner or Health Agent depending on the complaint.

Leaming reminded the board that ZBA is there for special permits and zoning and has no authority. He also understands the plight of the residents on the common.

MacFadden for the record went into Cumberland's but did not represent himself as an official regarding their signs. He forwarded his information onto the Building Commissioner but never heard back. Concerned about the bylaws and know multiple attempts have been made on town floor without change. In spite of the existing bylaws it seems like the wild west to not try and enforce something. Enforcement should come from the Zoning Officer not ZBA. Suggested a letter go out to business owners on Rt. 20 for compliance. The Building Commissioner replied saying it would open the town up to liability for not making everyone in town comply.

(Olszta) addressed Mr. MacFadden regarding his visit to Cumberland Farms and that he should not have represented himself as a town official.

Cantel spoke of Cumberland's occupancy permit regarding the sprinkler systems, they only use 1,000 per day which would put them over the limit. They've requested relief from the special permit and will need to go through Planning Board and ZBA. They currently have a temporary occupancy. With winter coming there is time to work this out.

Chief Kuss added his views on the sign bylaw that the town needs to maintain some enforcement. What types of businesses should be taken into consideration to begin the compliance and not ignore, gently easing into it.

Discussion of letter to businesses as targeting. (Olszta) felt temporary signs should not be included in the bylaw and should not require a permit. Enforcement is at the beginning stages and until changes are made should be at the discretion of the Building Commissioner.

**Motion:** by (Haley) to appoint Building Commissioner as the Selectmen's appointed sign enforcement agent, seconded by (Olszta), all in favor.

MacFadden felt the letter campaign would get people's attention and should be up to the Selectmen to enforce. Chief Kuss further added that the town should remember these bylaws were enacted by the people. Even though you may not agree just remember the process of the law.

#### **7:00 p.m. Public Access**

None

#### Sr. work off position for grant writing: S. Overbey for Grant writer:

Susan Overbey is a retired teacher, works for Hitchcock Academy and has written grants and enjoys writing them. She is also on the Historical Commission.

**Motion:** (Haley) move to appoint Susan Overbey as a Grant Writer in the Sr. work off program, seconded by (Olszta), all in favor.

Roll call as follows: (Doyle)-Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes

**Reports of Officers, Boards, and Standing Committees: (cont.)**

Veteran's Agent phone, purple heart signs:

(Olszta) will be meeting with Mr. Avis next week. Veteran's agent has 2 cell phones and it looks like one of the numbers is listed on other town websites. Brimfield is paying for these 2 phones. Discussion of employee cell phones pros and cons.

Residents can also call the Sr Center to reach Mr. Avis. There should not be time sensitive reasons for him to have a cell phone. (Olszta) will be asking those questions when the Outreach Coordinator and 2 Chiefs are 24/7 and don't have town cell phones.

Purple Heart signs for the town are being worked on.

**Motion:** by (Haley) to have Highway procure the Purple Heart signs for the town, seconded by Olszta), all in favor. (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes  
Pay for with the Veteran's account, Olszta will confirm.

Highway retirement: R. Gagnon:

Roger Gagnon has retired after 29 years of service to the town.

The board will issue a certificate. Discussion of what the town does for employees when they leave.

Bell ringing has been well received. Family members and friends gather outside the town hall. Doyle clarifies it is for the entire board to ring, not just him. Will ask Paul the Maintenance man to build a locked door on the first floor for the bell rope.

(Doyle) spoke with Highway Surveyor about the parking lot paving to the library

**Reports of Special Committees:**

Chair signed CDBG approval of consultant for the Sr. Center Planning Project:

CDBG will be meeting in the next 2 weeks in person. (Olszta) will attend.

Gazebo update (Administrative only, no public discussion):

(Doyle) met with ADA coordinator, Highway Surveyor and Historical members regarding location of the gazebo. Meeting next Monday to discuss what moving forward would look like. Meeting should include ADA, Planning Board, Historical and Highway.

Locations on common were viewed. Historical found an additional \$6,000 and should be able to complete the project by the end of the year.

(Haley) has been having trouble reaching anyone from Historical. No web page or minutes on the town's website.

**Special Orders:**

Trick or Treat & Halloween:

(McCarthy) Brimfield Community Partnership has requested use of the common on Halloween to set up a tent for Trick or Treaters. Board of Health is not in favor of trunk or treat due to COVID restrictions. (Olszta) agreed and with not much time left to plan social distancing or limiting people to keep with the guidelines. Trick or Treat on the common will draw a lot of people.

Would the Congregational Church also be doing something? If so, guidelines should be used.

**Motion:** by (Olszta) move to approve Trick or Treating from 4pm to 7pm following BOH COVID guidelines.

E. Pittsinger mentioned that the church did contact BOH and are doing some kind of drive through. Motion seconded, by (McCarthy), all in favor. Roll call as follows; (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-No (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes

Brimfield Community Partnership requested having a tent on the common to hand out prewrapped candy with social distancing. Board in favor but want guidelines to be followed especially with a large crowd. Haley mentioned that it will draw Sturbridge residents as always.

**Motion:** by (McCarthy) move to approve use of common for Brimfield Community Partnership setting up a tent on the common for Trick or Treating pending BOH approval and to follow COVID guidelines, seconded by (Doyle), all in favor. Roll call as follows; (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-No (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-abstain

Sign Berry Insurance: Endorsement for Public Safety:  
Additional insurance on the new Public Safety Complex

Drop box for Town Clerk:

Sullivan has been looking into getting a ballot drop off box and paying for it through a grant. However not many are available in the time frame needed. A box should be attached to a building with a light on it. He will be starting 10 days of early voting. One day is 11 hours. Over 800 early ballots will be mailed out. Opportunities for someone to be available to receive them would be limited. Mail will continue to be delivered to the Annex mail drop. He would like the board to consider discussion with the health agent about keeping side door closed. The agent has said no, even though it will be cold in November. Could maintenance build an alcove on the side door to keep the room warmer? He also had concerns about a crack in the bottom stair from that side door. Could maintenance also add a sidewalk from the stairs to the main sidewalk. Haley thanked the Mr. Sullivan for doing an awesome job. Could he photograph each place people can leave ballots and post on the website so voters would know what to look for.

**Motion:** by (Olszta) to approve plan for sidewalk addition from side door of town hall used from town hall repair, seconded by (McCarthy). Roll call as follows; (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes

Mr. Sullivan also brought up that he has not received any compensation for the many additional hours required for following State guidelines for early voting, elections, requests, and logging everything into the computer. It has become more than a full-time job. He has been doing this job for 8 ½ years and never asked for an increase. He has also procured a voting machine that saved the town money along with a grant for a second voting machine. He does not take the town insurance or benefits and retirement. An 18-hour job has turned into a 60-hour job. Please consider his rise to the occasion without compensation.

Appointment: Fire Department: Jonathan Hall until 6/30/2020:

**Motion:** by (Olszta) move to appoint Jonathan Hall as Firefighter until June 30, 2021, seconded by (McCarthy), all in favor. Roll call as follow; (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes

Common Victualler Licenses for approval:

Discussion of application being received outside the 30-day limit. Event at the Brimfield Winery still had Batch Ice Cream listed.

**Motion:** by (Olszta) to approve Common Victualler License for Batch Ice Cream, seconded by (McCarthy), (Doyle) abstain, (Haley) abstain,

**Motion tabled.**

Old vendor permits from canceled flea market:

Possible use of 2020 permits for 2021. Suggested using stickers on old permits.

**Unfinished Business and General Orders:**

Phone system update:

Lease agreement signed and waiting for Total Communications to secure a carrier.

Cable update and contract:

No update.

Parking contract for School Dept at Highway update:

Waiting for school. (Doyle) suggested continuing to pay for the gas but discontinue paying Tantasqua for IT.

Gas pump contract status:

(Olszta) then added that a retail license from Division and Standards may be needed to allow anyone else to use the pumps. And even to continue the way things have been going. At cost or not we are still charging which is considered retail. To continue the town will have to apply for the license. Hold

**New Business:**

(Doyle) a Select Board rep is needed to attend Insurance Advisory Committee. Ask (Collins) if she would be interested.

Notice read that was received from the Town of Warren Planning Board regarding Cutler Road.

**Office Matters & Mail:**

**Adjourn:**

**Motion:** by (Haley) move to adjourn at 8:45 p.m., seconded by (Olszta), all in favor. Roll call as follows. (Doyle)- Yes (Haley)-Yes (McCarthy)-Yes (Olszta)-Yes.

**Upcoming Meetings:** October 26, 2020 6:30 p.m.

(Brimfield Elementary School cafeteria due to early voting)

Respectfully Submitted:

*Carol Camerota*

Transcribed by: Carol Camerota

ACCEPTED: *MLZ* DATE: 10/27/2020

Documents Utilized for this meeting

**MATERIALS FOR BACKGROUND AND REFERENCE**

1. Meeting minutes of September 28, 2020
2. Email from Bldg Comm re: sign bylaws
3. Berry Insurance policy changes for Public Safety
4. CDBG signed Sr. Center Notice of Award
5. Brimfield Community Partnership – use of common
6. Email re: Halloween from health agent
7. Appointment request for J. Hall