



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman's Meeting  
June 1, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

**Board of Selectmen in Attendance:** Chairman, Erin Hutchings, Andrew Rawson, Matt Morrill

**Other Attendees:** Town Administrator, Ernest Cartier Creveling,

**Remote Attendees:** Lawrence Brown, Humphrey Williams, Thomas McDougall, Lynette McDougall, Ashley Emmons, and 603.652.4129 (conference call line)

**Meeting Called to Order :** Selectmen Hutchings welcomed all who joined the remote selectman's meeting, under emergency order #12, & Executive 2020-04 giving the board permission to meet electronically, as long as they are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, conference call, or other means of access. Selectman Hutchings read off all the ways in which to access the meeting.

**Live Streaming Issues:** Selectman Hutchings announced that the you-tube live streams appear to be off-line, so she reiterated that the way that residents could still access the meeting if they wanted to was to call 844-855-4444 and entering the pin number once prompted to key in the following code:145672#

**Pledge of Allegiance:** 5:12, Selectman Hutchings opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance and a roll call of the select board. Rawson (present), Morrill (present) Hutchings (present).

**Public Comment: (Remotely)**

**Larry Brown:** Larry wanted to thank the Board of Selectmen for his appointment to the Local Government Task Force. He also questioned what the committees charge would be, more immediate explicit changes or future changes.

**Humphrey Williams:** Humphrey shared his concerns on the appointment process for the Efficiency Task Force . He questioned why only 6 candidates were selected, when there was supposed to be 8 appointments to the committee. He shared that he did not understand why he had not been selected as he felt he was one of the most qualified candidates. He discussed his experience on the numerous boards that he has served on and his previous job experience, which he felt would be beneficial to this committee. He expressed his dis-satisfaction with the process that the board had used to select candidates, and was upset that he had not been given a reason as to why he was not selected to serve on this committee. He requested that the board rethink their process and revisit the selection of this committee.

E. Hutchings thanked both Larry and Humphrey for taking the time to participate in the Public Comment portion of the meeting.

**New Business**

**1.) Update Regarding Covid-19 (Novel Coronavirus) Operational Activities/Plans**

E. Creveling shared that he has been working on putting protocols in place for the anticipated opening of the Milton Town Hall. He asked the board for their input on how they would like to start re-opening the public buildings. E. Creveling shared that there were several criteria that should be looked at such as the age of the employees and the risk factors surrounding that. He stated that he had employees that have expressed a lot of concern of potentially being exposed to the virus, or bringing the virus back to their family members. Also discussed was the need for stepped up cleaning, and public education on what is expected of them when they enter the building for an appointment.

The public will need to wear masks while at town hall, use hand sanitizer and bringing their own pens so there is no little to no exchange of materials between staff and the public. There was discussion on only opening the building to the public on Fridays by appointment, and continuing the on-line services for the time being. This would give the Select Board the ability to take things slowly and revisit protocols every couple of weeks. As the Governor's Orders change, the board could make changes as well. M. Morrill requested that the employees be polled on how many days a week (1 or 2) they would feel comfortable being opened. The board agreed to move forward with opening the building on Fridays by appointment only.



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman's Meeting  
June 1, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

- M. Morrill motioned to re-open the Milton Town Hall on Friday, June 12th, by appointment only, seconded by A. Rawson. Motion passed.
- E. Hutchings stated that the board will be meeting on Monday, June 15th, and this can be revisited at that time and that will allow them to see how the re-opening went and if the public followed the guidelines on following the protocol about

**2.) Wastewater Treatment Facility Updates - Dale Sprague**

D. Sprague has been meeting with E. Creveling on all the issues that have been coming up regarding wastewater treatment in New Hampshire. D. Sprague shared that he met with DES regarding the increased concerns of elevated Nitrates and Chloride levels showing up in the ground water sampling from the monitoring wells. It is DES's opinion that the groundwater is having an impact on the elevated readings coming from the wells.

D. Sprague shared a brief history on the Lagoons. The consensus is that the liner in the largest lagoon, is beginning to breakdown and the integrity of the liner is in question. D. Sprague stated that they have been sampling these lagoons for the past 10-15 years and have had relatively low levels of these contaminants. However, now DES is requesting that action be taken. In 2015 the wastewater was lowered in the larger lagoon, and it was discovered that there had been some deterioration in the liner, and there were defects found. The defects were fixed and some spots were patched.

To address the DES concerns, in April of 2020, D. Sprague had a professional engineering company come in and take a look at the lagoons, and it is their opinion, as well as D. Sprague's, that the liner in the larger lagoon needs to be replaced. They both feel that the higher contaminant levels are directly linked to the deterioration of the lagoon liner. D. Sprague requested an estimate from this company on what the cost would be to replace the liner.

D. Sprague shared that there are a couple of ways to repair/replace this liner. One way is to cut the top of the liner off and replace it. D. Sprague explained that the top of the liner has way more exposure to the elements, and UV rays than the bottom does, which are the major reasons why a liner deteriorates. The company he spoke to has done this procedure before in other towns, and have been happy with the process, and the outcome. They offer a 30 year warranty on the portion of the liner that they replace and on the repair itself. However, there is no way to know what the bottom part of the liner looks like or what kind of shape that portion is in.

D. Sprague stated that partially replacing the liner would run somewhere between sixty-nine thousand (\$69,000) and seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) with the town having to do some of the work to defray the costs. If the town was to move forward and decide on a total replacement of the liner, which would include removing the sludge before the liner could be replaced, the price would be somewhere around five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) maybe more. The town currently has five hundred, fifty thousand (\$500,050) in their reserves, which D. Sprague felt might not be enough money. He shared that if the town were to go with the partial repair, it would buy some time until the town decided what they eventually want to do with their Wastewater Treatment Plant.

D. Sprague pointed out that the NH State Shed sits above and behind the lagoons, and wasn't sure if that might be one of the factors in why they are seeing higher Chloride levels in their testing. He has raised his concerns to the state, but has received no response from them. He feels that the liner and the run-off coming into the lagoons are all contributing factors to this issue. He stated that just the removal of the sludge could cost upwards of two-hundred and fifty thousand dollars (\$250,000). D. Sprague shared that at some point, the town is going to have to look at raising their rates to keep up with the increasing costs. He stated that currently the town offers very low rates to the residents in comparison to neighboring towns.



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman Workshop  
June 1, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

**2.) Wastewater Treatment Facility Updates - Dale Sprague**

**Total Nitrogen Permit:** D. Sprague gave an overview of new regulations coming from the state in regards to the draft Total Nitrogen Permit they are currently working on. He feels this is going to be bad and it is going to have a huge impact on the towns involved. Currently there have been 12 towns mentioned in this permitting process, Milton being one of them.

D. Sprague shared that the guidelines require, that a town must maintain their current Nitrogen Levels. He stated that one of his biggest concerns is that the state never came to Milton to test for these levels, but simply estimated what they thought our levels were. D. Sprague questioned, that if the numbers are not correct in the first place, then how can the plant remain at that level? He feels that even if the levels are correct, that would prohibit the town from adding any additional stain on the system. He cautioned that if the town would to have any sort of growth spurt, it would impact these levels, and that would put the town in violation of the guidelines. He shared that although some towns have the ability to treat their nitrogen levels, the Town of Milton does not, and neither do several of the other towns involved in this permitting process. Several of the other towns are spending huge amounts of money trying to keep their nitrogen levels at their current rates.

D. Sprague shared that there is active litigation against DES in regards to the implementation of this permit, because many of the towns do not have the ability to meet the guidelines. He has been asked to join in the litigation, and wanted to inform the board about the action that other towns have decided to take. He warns that there are so many new mandates and regulations coming from the state in regards to treatment plants, that he doesn't know how long having a treatment plant will be a good option for the town. He shared that out of 52 towns, only 12 towns have been mentioned as having to attain this permit. The 12 communities all have run-off going into the Salmon Falls River, which in turn flows into the Great Bay. Other towns also have run-off, but may have different outlets in which the run off goes into. The majority of towns involved feel that other towns have been overlooked, even though they may also contribute to the run-off into Great Bay.

D. Sprague shared that the reason for the creation of this permit would be to cover the cost of continually monitoring the Great Bay which has a price tag of over 1 million dollars. The town would have to add this expense to their annual budget to cover the cost of the permit.

D. Sprague asked if he could have board approval to move forward with working with the engineering firm that he had visited the plant in April. He must respond to DES with an action plan. He requested that he be allowed to move forward with a feasibility study on wastewater, ground water, the lagoons, and the equipment. It might be an option to get out of the river all together, which is what Farmington has done. If this does not eliminate Farmington from the permit process, then it would not help Milton either. D. Sprague shared that he has confidence in this engineering firm based on their qualifications and the work he is aware that they have done.

D. Sprague feels that other things need to be looked at such as the cost of service rate structure. The town is currently raising approximately ninety thousand dollars (\$90,000) a year in revenue and expending about eighty-five thousand dollars (\$85,000) annually in operations costs. He is concerned that there currently isn't any money being set aside for capital projects or maintenance of these capital items. D. Sprague shared that they could borrow the money from the state for the study, or self-fund as much they can. He did not think that the town would qualify for any grant monies based on the low rates the town is currently charging. He shared that the current annual rate a resident would pay would be around \$231.00 per year for waste water, which in comparison to other towns in the state is extremely low.



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman's Meeting  
May 20, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

**2.) Wastewater Treatment Facility Updates - Dale Sprague**

**Total Nitrogen Permit - continued:** D. Sprague stated that the feasibility study would really help. He suggested that they could increase the annual rate by 5% and start putting money away for these upcoming issues. A. Rawson asked how many people are currently using the system. D. Sprague replied that there are currently approximately 800 people using 300 services.

E. Hutchings shared that she would like to see multiple estimates from different engineering firms. She asked D. Sprague what the estimated cost for the study would be. He shared that he estimated that the cost would be between twenty-five thousand (\$25,000) - thirty thousand (\$30,000) dollars. He stated that he would prefer to work with the company that he is already working with. D. Sprague shared that the way they look for engineering companies is not by price, but by qualifications, and it would be necessary for the board to interview all the firms by that criteria. D. Sprague stated that because of qualifications that this firm would be the best firm to do the feasibility study, especially compared to the cost of the Nitrogen Permit. A. Rawson asked if this would be a total study? He asked if they would be looking at everything before the town spends any money. D. Sprague stated that this study should be done as soon as possible. A. Rawson stated that he did not want to add more to D. Sprague's work load, but he also felt that they should look at more companies, before just hiring this company to do the study. D. Sprague informed the board that they would have to set up interviews with interested engineering companies, and look at their qualifications, he again emphasized that the cost doesn't necessarily equate with qualifications, or the ability to do the work that needs to be done. He also stated that prices would not be discussed in the interviews. He shared that most of these companies are equitable in price, and competitive with each other. He shared that they all are aware of what other companies are charging for rates, and thought that they would use comparable price sheets, and price wise they would be similar.

E. Creveling shared that he does feel that it would be necessary to do a cost comparison. He suggested that D. Sprague and himself could meet with interested companies at the Wastewater Treatment Plant and give them all a general overview of what the town is looking for. Once that has happened and everyone is aware of what the needs are, they could then meet with each company individually and see what each of them has to offer.

D. Sprague stated that he had notified DES that the Town of Milton was making some changes, and that he would be in touch with them. He has not heard back from them as of yet. E. Hutchings asked if they could put a packet together and send it to a few companies to see what response they would be. D. Sprague stated that he would want to meet with the companies representatives face-to-face, and do a walk through of the treatment plant. This would allow for him to give them a synopsis about what has been going on, and an in person look at the plant itself. E. Hutchings asked how quickly would D. Sprague be able to move forward with contacting these companies? D. Sprague replied that he would try and get something set up for the week of June 22. He added that the firms would need to schedule their representatives, which would give them a couple of weeks to do so.

**3.) RSA 79-E Discussion - Ira Miller's General Store**

E. Creveling informed the board that this would need to be postponed until a later date as it was currently in process with legal, and the assessing contractor.

**Old Business**

**1.) Local Government Efficiency Task Force**

E. Creveling explained that one of the letters of Interest that was sent into the town was inadvertently misplaced in a computer file and was overlooked when the board initially reviewed the letters of interest. A. Rawson stated that the letter was from David Benedict, someone he knows personally, and feels that would be an asset to the task force.



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman Workshop  
June 1, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

**Old Business**

**1.) Local Government Efficiency Task Force - continued**

A. Rawson motioned to have David Benedict added to the task force.

E. Creveling shared that all the at-large spots on the task force were already filled, and that there was a variety of task force members with a varying assortment of backgrounds and efficiencies.

A. Rawson again motioned to add David Benedict to the Local Government Efficiency Task Force, seconded by M. Morrill.

E. Hutchings called for a roll-call vote: Rawson (YES) Morrill (YES) Hutching (YES), motion passed.

**Approval of Minutes**

June 18, 2020 (Public) & (Non-Public) Board of Selectmen's Minutes - E. Hutchings asked to postpone the approval of these minutes until the next board meeting. The other members were in agreement.

**Expenditure Report**

E. Creveling explained the pre-paid postal line in the report, and stated that the credit was applied to an expense line instead of correct line. He shared that most of the lines that were in question have been resolved with the bookkeeper. He thought that there might still be an issue with the public works lines, but was not sure.

**Administrator Comments**

**Head Start Correspondence**

E. Creveling stated that there was information in the boards packets in regards to the Head Start Building in the industrial park. He has been in touch with Betsy Parker Andrews, and she would like to meet to discuss possible future building use. The Head Start Program was moved to another town, as their enrollment numbers were down and it was more feasible to combine the program with another town.

**NH DOT Weather Stations**

E. Creveling gave an update to the information in the boards packets in regards to the request for NH DOT Weather Stations. He stated that the towers are approximately 30 ft tall, and are pretty inconspicuous. He stated that the towers are important to the DOT as they allow them to get up-to-date weather information which is especially important during the winter months. A. Rawson shared that the towers are a good tool in any weather event, and would be a good asset.

**GOFERR Grant Reimbursement Submission for March 1 - April 30, 2020 (\$19,145)**

E. Creveling shared that he had turned in his grant application for reimbursement of COVID-19 Funds. He also shared that the state has made it possible for towns to claim past expenses that may have been overlooked by the towns by the deadline date.

**Article 20 - Lease Agreement**

E. Creveling shared that the town had just received a check in the amount of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) as approved by the passing of Warrant Article 20 - Land or Roof Solar Lease Agreement Amendment Ratification at the 2020 Annual Town Meeting.

**Selectman's Comments**

A. Rawson - No further comments

M. Morrill - No further comments

E. Hutchings - No further comments.

**Other Business - None**



Town Of Milton  
Remote Board of Selectman's Meeting  
June 1, 2020  
Milton Town Hall

**Adjournment**

E. Hutchings made the motion to adjourn the public part of the meeting at 6:31 pm and under RSA , she motioned to go into a non-public meeting. She called for a roll-call vote: Morrill (YES), Rawson (YES) Hutchings (YES).

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Karen J Brown  
Recording Secretary**

---

**Chairman, Erin Hutchings**

---

**Vice Chair, Andrew Rawson**

---

**Selectman, Matt Morrill**

**Date Signed:** \_\_\_\_\_