

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
April 8, 2020
Zoom Meeting**

1. ROLL CALL: A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was conducted Wednesday, April 8, 2020 virtually without a physical location in compliance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Orders #12, 16, & 17. Participating were Dave Gilbert (Chair), Denise Ricciardi (Vice Chair) and Councilors, Phil Greazzo, Bill Duschatko, Melissa Stevens, Bill Carter and Lori Radke. Also participating virtually was Town Manager Rick Sawyer, Planning Director Becky Hebert, and Public Works Director Jeff Foote.

Chairman Gilbert opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

Chairman Gilbert said I'd like to call the April 8, 2020 meeting of Bedford Town Council to order and as Chairman of the Council I find that due to the State of Emergency declared by the Governor as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and in accordance with the Governor's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this public body is authorized to meet electronically.

Please note that there is no physical location to observe this meeting, which was authorized pursuant to the Governor's Emergency Order.

However, in accordance with the Emergency Order, I am confirming that:

- a) We are providing public access to the meeting by telephone, with additional access live on BCTV Comcast Channel 22 or streaming online by going to the Town website and choosing BCTV under "departments" and clicking on Channel 22.

We are utilizing an online platform called Zoom for this electronic meeting. All members of the Council have the ability to communicate contemporaneously during this meeting through this platform, and the public has access to contemporaneously listen and, if necessary, participate in this meeting through dialing the following phone number (646)-558-8656 and entering the meeting ID, 229 339 014#, password 766455.

- b) We previously gave notice to the public of the necessary information for accessing the meeting, including how to access the meeting using the telephone which are listed at the top of the agenda on the Town website.
- c) If anybody has a problem accessing the meeting via the phone please email us at: councilors2@bedfordnh.org

In the event the public is unable to access the meeting, the meeting will be adjourned and rescheduled.

Please note that all votes that are taken during this meeting shall be done by roll call vote.

Chairman Gilbert took a roll call attendance and called on the Councilors and they responded: Bill Carter-here, Bill Duschatko-here, Phil Greazzo-here, Lori Radke-here, Denise Ricciardi-here, Melissa Stevens-here.

Chairman Gilbert stated that Town Manager Rick Sawyer, Police Chief John Bryfonski, Fire Chief Scott Hunter, Planning Director Becky Hebert, and DPW Director Jeff Foote were also joining the meeting.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – N/A

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Gilbert stated that public comments can be made now if you are on the phone by dialing *9 and then wait until we call on you. We will also read any comments that have been sent to councilors2@bedfordnh.org

Chairman Gilbert stated that the Town Council welcomes citizen comments before the start of the agenda for up to 5 minutes per person. When appropriate, the Chair may allow for reasonable input from the public during discussion of agenda items. Individuals desiring items on the Council agenda must contact the Town Manager's Office at 472-5242 by 4:30 PM on the Thursday prior to the meeting.

Chairman Gilbert asked Mr. Sawyer if any comments had been received through our email address or if there was anyone on the phone who have dialed *9. Mr. Sawyer responded that no one was on the phone and no one had emailed any comments.

4. PUBLIC HEARING

a. Consideration of Ordinance 2020-01 amending Chapter 239, Streets and Sidewalks, to add Article VI, Utilities, Poles, Wires and Equipment within Public Right-of-Ways

Chairman Gilbert stated that If anyone would like to provide comment and are on the phone please dial *9 and they will call on you. They will also read any comments that have been sent to councilors2@bedfordnh.org

Chairman Gilbert stated that they will first have an introduction to the Ordinance by Planning Director Becky Hebert, then he will invite Councilors Duschatko and Ricciardi to add anything they would like as members of the Council's Telecommunications Committee that requested the Ordinance before he opens the Public Hearing.

Ms. Hebert stated that the Planning Department had been working with the Bedford Telecommunications Committee in discussing and reviewing a process and a procedure at which the Town could regulate personal wireless telecommunication facilities; so cell

tower equipment that may be installed within the public right-of-way. This has been done in anticipation of the deployment of cell phone networks for 5G wireless. This is typically referred to as next generation of cellular technology. Although they haven't seen it widespread in NH yet, everything they read is that it is coming and it is the up and coming technology for wireless telecommunication. Small cell deployments are similar to traditional cell towers in that they are very strictly regulated by the Federal government as well as State law. Local governments cannot prohibit or have the effect of prohibiting any provisions for personal wireless services. NH State law also has additional regulations that streamline the permitting process for new wireless installations including the small cell installations for a 5G network.

Ms. Hebert stated that after reviewing and discussing this, the Telecommunications Committee determined that the best procedure for NH communities and the recommended procedure for communities to establish a permitting process for this type of equipment and the same use in our right-of-way, was to adopt a comprehensive right-of-way ordinance that would regulate all utilities in the public right-of-way. They can't discriminate one utility from another, so they are looking at a right-of-way ordinance that enhances how the Town regulates all utilities, poles, and wires and like equipment in the public right-of-way and creating a new procedure for placement of this infrastructure by including the personal wireless telecommunications facilities.

Ms. Herbert stated that the ordinance establishes a new committee called the "Utilities, Poles and Wires" Committee, which would be a committee of members appointed by the Town Council. The primary role of this committee would be to review and issue permits. The committee would have the ability to adopt their own rules and procedures, their meeting schedule, their fee schedule, and they would also adopt preferred designs for installation of equipment. There would be very clear diagrams that would dictate what Bedford's preferred installations would look like in the right-of-way for all utilities and primarily for the small cell networks.

Ms. Hebert stated that the ordinance provides a comprehensive list of fabrication content that would be required. It includes specific standards for the design and placement of personal wireless telecommunications equipment. It also includes a requirement for continual testing and verification that any cellular equipment meet the Federal standards for radio frequency emissions and that they continue to meet that standard over time as an annual testing requirement. Prior to reviewing an application, there is a notification to landowners within 200 feet of any new above ground installation. The ordinance includes a requirement for financial guarantees so that equipment may be removed by the Town if they were to become obsolete or no longer in use. The ordinance also provides standards for utility pole height; the maximum height is recommended at 45 feet and for utility pole spacing at 150 feet as the minimum spacing between utility poles along the same side of the roadway. The ordinance also addresses underground utilities and how utilities could be installed in areas where the Planning Board had required the placement of utilities underground or where Bedford may be anticipating taking above ground utilities and moving them underground. There is an exemption for antennas. It doesn't imply that you could install an antenna on a utility pole. The 'Utilities, Poles, and Wires' Committee

would be developing a preferred standard for the undergrounding of equipment and for placement of utilities set in underground areas. They are not allowed to require antennas to be placed completely underground, because the FCC has determined that that would be an affective prohibition of service, so they do have to require the antennas to be placed above ground in these areas. The ordinance also exempts all existing permitted utilities in Town, so you won't see any filing of after the fact permits for any existing infrastructure. It also exempts any Town-owned utilities or infrastructure from the permitting process.

Ms. Hebert stated that the ordinance does nothing to change how traditional cell towers are permitted in Bedford, so if a cell tower is proposed on Town-owned land or private property, it would still need to meet all of the Zoning requirements including the special exception permitting process and all of our Land Development Control Regulations. You are not looking at any changes to how traditional cell towers and cellular equipment are installed on private property. They are strictly talking about how these small cell installations would be installed within the Town's public right-of-way.

Ms. Hebert stated that right now they have no pending requests. There is no permit that is driving this ordinance. The Telecommunications Committee wanted Bedford to be better prepared for applicants should they be coming in the future. The Committee had folks who were close to a new infrastructure being placed in the right-of-way and they had members who work regularly with telecommunications providers, so they had a balanced approach. They worked very hard to develop standards that they felt were fair and reasonable for all utilities and for the telecommunications utilities.

Ms. Hebert stated that there was no additional cost to the Town in adopting the ordinance other than the codification of the ordinance, but this permitting procedure would require additional time and staff resources from the Public Works Department and the Planning Department.

Councilor Duschatko thanked Ms. Hebert for a great deal of time that was put in by the Planning Department, but in particular herself working with Councilor Ricciardi. He thought they had a very good product. The other members of the Committee were very involved.

Councilor Ricciardi emphasized that this was a very important ordinance and it was months and months and very well thought out and it can only benefit our Town and improve how things are run in the public right-of-way.

Chairman Gilbert asked if there were any other Councilors that would like to provide comment prior to opening the hearing. Seeing none, Chairman Gilbert opened the public hearing. He asked Mr. Sawyer if any comments had been received through our email address or if there was anyone on the phone who have dialed *9. Mr. Sawyer responded that no one was on the phone and no one had emailed any comments.

Councilor Stevens wanted to know if other communities had passed any similar ordinances. She thought it was somewhat presumptuous and are they putting the cart

before the horse. Ms. Hebert stated that Dover and Keene were in the process of adopting an ordinance. The NH Municipal Association had put out several memos advising communities to begin the process and be proactive. She thought they were following the general recommendations that they are hearing from their professional associations and from the State of NH to be prepared for these types of installations. Communities that are more urbanized, communities in Massachusetts, rural Connecticut, and Southern New England have a process in place for these types of installations.

Chairman Gilbert closed the public hearing. He stated that the recommendation from staff was to continue this public hearing until their May 13, 2020 meeting.

MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council continue the public hearing on Ordinance 2020-01 until Wednesday, May 13, 2020 at 7:00 PM so that more participants can engage in this very interesting and exciting ordinance. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.

Roll Call Vote: Bill Carter-aye, Bill Duschatko-aye, Phil Greazzo-aye, Lori Radke-aye, Denise Ricciardi-aye, Melissa Stevens-aye, Dave Gilbert-aye. Motion Passes.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. COVID-19 Update

Chairman Gilbert stated that they would now take New Business starting with an update on our response to the COVID-19 pandemic from the Town Manager, and our Co-Emergency Management Directors, Chief Bryfonski and Chief Hunter. Please save your questions until after their report.

Mr. Sawyer stated what a difference four weeks makes. Four weeks ago they were at Town Meeting and had just completed their elections the day before. Thankfully, they were able to complete those events unlike many other communities who had their meetings scheduled for the weekend or later that have yet to happen. He stated that tonight was just to give a general update on the Town response to the pandemic before he turns it over to the Co-Emergency Management Directors who will share how they have responded and their thoughts and recommendations.

Mr. Sawyer stated that he truly couldn't be more impressed by the way our employees have stepped up and in some cases changed everything about how they perform their duties overnight. Their sense of responsibility to the public and to get the job done while at the same time being reassuring to others that we will get through this is beyond impressive. He was also very happy with the support and understanding that our community has shown to our employees and our community's efforts to slow the spread and flatten the curve by social distancing and now staying home. Please keep up the good work.

He thought it was critical to understand that our employees represent a microcosm of society. We have employees of all ages, some with underlying health issues, some with school age children, some whose kids were away at college when this broke out, some with parents who need support or live in assisted living situations. We have many families with significant others who work in the medical profession who worry about bringing illness home to their families. We have had employees who have had to be quarantined due to potential and confirmed exposures, and others who have had to be isolated due to family exposures. Luckily, we have not had any employee test positive. Mr. Sawyer stated that they clearly have lots of essential employees working the obvious front lines when responding to emergency calls, but we also have the less obvious essential workers that are interacting more than the rest of us by working at the Transfer Station.

Mr. Sawyer stated that their initial action was first taken six weeks ago at our February 26th staff meeting where he asked the department heads to start looking at their departments for how they might work differently with less staff if people were out sick, or even how they might operate with just one person. Two weeks later, on March 11th, the day of Town Meeting, they had a much more in depth conversation about the need to be ready to continue operations in what could become a situation of having very limited staff. Really after the 11th is when everything started to significantly ramp up. This was also the day that the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 outbreak to be a pandemic. By noontime on Friday the 13th, just 36 hours later, he issued a lengthy memo restricting business travel out of state and steps employees would have to take if they were traveling personally or family had traveled not allowing them to return to work and also staying home if they were sick. It all seems so simple and elementary now, but at the time it was very upsetting to some employees knowing how these types of restrictions would impact their lives. At the time, NH had six known cases. Later that Friday evening, the Governor issued the Emergency Order that has been added to 27 times since. In some cases, it was members of our team that asked for the order or worked very hard on the language in the order, or to get them issued. Our team has adapted to these orders without hesitation.

Mr. Sawyer stated that he spent that first weekend creating our first comprehensive statement on the impact to Town services and our webpage where all information could be found. Our team has spent countless hours reviewing and adapting to the federal acts that have been issued like the Families First Act, the CARES Act, the Emergency Paid Sick Leave Act, and the Emergency Family Medical Leave Expansion Act, and understanding how Workers Comp was going to be covered. We have issued new policy statements covering these issues for all employees.

As you would expect, our Police and Fire Departments have issued many changes in their procedures that the Chiefs will speak about where they feel appropriate and have worked tirelessly to make sure their employees are as protected and as prepared as possible.

Mr. Sawyer stated that it was not an easy decision to close a town office building, a library, or a playground to the public as everything in every employee's gut tells us to be there for the public and to get the job done.

Mr. Sawyer stated that he couldn't be more proud of how our employees have continued to serve the public by first continuing to come to work, by turning their dining room tables into work stations, by continuing to make inspections, increasing cleaning operations, by holding Zoom pre-construction meetings, by splitting shifts so to maintain physical separation, ramping up our web presence, by conducting Facebook posts and videos, by finding childcare when schools were no longer in session, by learning and training citizen volunteers how to conduct virtual meetings. He really didn't want to call out anyone individually for fear of leaving someone out but when there is only one person in the department it is hard not to, but a lot of thanks goes out to our IT Director Nate Gagne for his efforts getting everyone up and running remotely so quickly. Truly every conversation I have with an employee includes the question, is there anything I can do to help? Or please let me know if there is anything anyone needs.

Mr. Sawyer stated that very early on, we issued new pay codes and financial documentation procedures to be sure we are tracking all of the various new COVID leave and reimbursement scenarios, which we continue to modify as new programs are added and new explanations are provided. To date, our purchasing costs have not been overly significant. Our personnel related costs have so far remained low and are mostly focused around first responder overtime, which we expect will be covered 75% by FEMA and possibly 25% by the State. We do expect these costs to grow in the coming weeks. Also, early on we took steps to understand the impacts we would have if childcare centers were to close or if our members of the National Guard would be deployed. We continue to monitor and work with employees on those two fronts.

Mr. Sawyer stated that we are reviewing cash flow projections for the year, identifying potential losses of revenue, and addressing spending and hiring restrictions where appropriate. We are most concerned with the loss of State revenues such as our share of the Meals and Rooms tax and the Highway Block Grant along with some other funds which total a little less than \$2M. He is hopeful and working to ensure that the State will find a way to keep municipalities whole through the use of the over \$1.4 billion dollars they have received in federal support. The Finance Director and I am confident that we can manage our cash flow for the year with the existing accounts and not need to issue any kind of tax anticipation note. We have suspended the hiring of non-essential employees, but I'd still love to fill dispatcher positions if we are able to find the right people.

Mr. Sawyer stated that he couldn't thank our Department Head team enough for their countless hours of work and dedication to getting the job done for our community and for the support they have shown their employees and each other. As I think you know, many of them have been working 7 days a week and/or very long days to ensure we continue to provide acceptable levels of service to the community and that we are ready for what may come down the road. They are a very impressive ground of individuals.

Mr. Sawyer wanted to leave everyone with two great things that have happened in our community. First is a program that I have coined “Beautify Bedford”. This is a grassroots effort lead by former Councilor Rombeau, the Energy Commission, and our Department of Public Works. Together they have been responsible for cleaning up or inspiring others to clean up many roads in Town as mostly identified on this map. Public Works took the initiative following Town Meeting where a resident brought this subject up, to supply trash bags, reflective vest, grabbers, and warning signs available at the Transfer Station for residents to use in their cleanup programs that have been inspired on social media by former Councilor Rombeau and others including the Energy Commission who developed the map. Public Works has also completed many cleanups themselves over the last several weeks. He encouraged everyone to continue to give back to the community in this way in the weeks and months to come. He thanked everyone for their efforts in keeping Bedford beautiful.

Lastly, he couldn't say enough about the efforts of Councilor Ricciardi and her vision to create Bedford Cares as a way to support those in most need in our community. Her singular efforts have inspired approximately 100 citizens to sign up to help in this effort and has already helped dozens and dozens of Bedford residents in need. Councilor Ricciardi herself has worked beyond sun up to sun down every day since announcing Bedford Cares by answering hundreds of phone calls and emails, shopping and delivering food, getting prescriptions filled, securing sanitizer and cleaning supplies for our first responders, and supporting the Bedford Food Pantry with over 800 pounds of food, while continuing her Councilor and family responsibilities. I and the entire Town of Bedford owe her a tremendous amount of gratitude that cannot be understated. If you are finding yourself in need of help shopping, or are short on cleaning supplies, or are needing support in some atypical way, or are able to lend a hand or a donation, I'd encourage you to reach out to Bedford Cares at 792-1319 or on Facebook by finding BedfordNHCares.

Chief Bryfonski thought it was important to talk about the coordination as well as the steps that had been taken to coordinate and ensure that the public safety response in Bedford is responsive to the community and that they maintain the same level of quality from public service. It began more than three weeks ago with meetings he's had with members of the executive board of the NH Chiefs of Police Association, meeting with the commissioner of public safety, the deputy commissioners of public safety as well as the governor himself and his staff to talk about the impact this pandemic is expected to have and has already had and what is likely to have upon all the first responder agencies and to put together some additional plans and strategies to bring us to the point where they would be ready to respond adequately to the needs of the public and they've done that. The State has done a marvelous job at the State level and they are ranked amongst the top 10 states in the country in response to the pandemic. In addition, he thought bringing it down to the local level of support and talk about the management and coordination between the public safety entities, the Emergency Management Directors, Fire Chief and his staff, himself and his staff, working seamlessly together in a partnership as they always do and have done in years past and continue to do, to rely on each other with the various levels of expertise and insight working together to husband all of the supplies in terms of personal protective equipment to make sure that every first responder is

adequately equipped and ready to respond to the crisis each and every day and each and every shift and they've done that.

Chief Bryfonski thanked Chief Hunter and Deputy Chief Folsom from the Fire Department for their work and working with the Police Department as they ramped up and began to put into place a myriad series of policies and procedures to protect the first responders, their families and loved ones as well as the public.

Chief Bryfonski stated that on the Police side, they began to take substantial steps more than three weeks ago in beginning to alter their posture in terms of response to certain calls to ensure that they are limiting the exposure of the police officers only to those calls that are necessary. They conducted an analysis of their caller reasons and determined which priority calls were subject to telephonic as opposed to in-person response to calls. As a result, they identified Priority 2 and Priority 3 calls, but not all. Most of the Priority 2 and Priority 3 calls were identified in which an officer could adequately handle a particular call and request from the public by telephone. That's not to say that a complainant or individual that wanted to see a police officer, they can still request to see a police officer and a police officer will respond. They want to make sure that the public understands that despite the changes in procedures that they've put in place early on, that if they need a police officer, a police officer will always respond. They may be asked a series of questions by the communications center staff, particularly with respect to whether or not the caller may be symptomatic or have symptoms similar to this virus and to determine whether or not there are sick people at the location. That allows the first responder, the police officer, to be able to prepare him or herself ahead of time before they get to the call wearing the proper protective equipment to ensure everyone's safety. That police officer who may respond to that call is going to respond to other shifts and have contact with his or her colleagues throughout the remainder of their shift. These are smart ways that they began to address the pandemic early on.

Chief Bryfonski stated that they instituted a number of procedures that were put in place at the Safety Complex. First, closing the Safety Complex to visitors. They want to make sure everyone knows the outer lobby at the Safety Complex remains open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In that outer lobby there is a telephone where you can contact the communications center staff and a police officer or a firefighter or emergency medical personnel will respond to the outer lobby immediately. If anyone is feeling unsafe or insecure for any reason and they need to contact the Police Department, the lobby is open, so feel free to come and use the outer lobby. A police officer will meet you in the outer lobby or if the weather and time of day is conducive, the officer may ask to chat outside, as the officer may do if they respond to a particular location for an in-person response. They may ask questions to determine whether or not they may be able to meet the officer outside. If not, the officer will go inside and meet with you and handle any requests you have. They instituted a number of disinfecting and sanitizing procedures. They have a formal screening station that requires all of their personnel to conduct formal screening to determine if their temperature is within the normal range, answer a series of questions and if they determine that through self-assessment they are symptomatic, they will contact a supervisor and arrangements will be made so their slot would be filled that

day by another officer. These are all preventive measures to ensure that all first responders remain well. Their 2nd special order went into effect after the first series of the governor's emergency orders. That special order provided their police officers with the methodology and instruction and guidance on how to enforce, if necessary, any emergency order. The guidance that was issued and still remains in effect at the Police Department is the three E's: Engage, Educate, Encourage. They have yet to enforce any of the governor's emergency orders with any violations or any of the service orders. The goal is to never have to use enforceable tools such as a summons or violation. The officers are prepared to engage folks if they see someone(s) that may be violating emergency orders, particularly the order that prohibits the gathering of 10 or more people. They have and will continue to talk to folks and provide them with copies of those orders and educate them as to why it's so critically important to follow all of these emergency orders. There is some distinction between orders and guidance. The social distancing and guidance is guidance; it's not an emergency order. They still encourage people and educate people as to why it's so vitally important to maintain that social distancing that we are all unfortunately accustomed to and will continue to do that. They received some complaints and information about youth and folks gathering on some of the private as well as some of the public sports fields. Certainly Timbertown and parks that the Town owns such as Timbertown and the skate park are closed, because the Town can't adequately clean those particular places during a pandemic. There were some initial reports of youths playing basketball on some of the school courts. The School District has taken steps to placard and to close those particular courts. However, the Town parks, the recreation remains open. The Town tracks remain open. They encourage folks to maintain social distancing and follow the governor's emergency order that restricts any gathering to less than 10 people. It's important to recognize that you can run on a track at McKelvie, but maintain that social distance. It may be safer to run on the track than it is to run on some of the streets in Town. Exercise proper social distancing and common sense and you will still be able to protect you and others from the pandemic. Those are the emergency orders. There are various other policies and procedures that they've put in place to ensure the protection of the public and those typically relate to disinfecting procedures.

Chief Bryfonski stated that the Bedford Police Department and Fire Department are still on the job 24/7/365. They are still doing their jobs, nothing has changed. There has been some minor deviation in terms of police response as he indicated with respect to telephonic calls as opposed to in-person calls, but if folks want to see a police officer, they will get a police officer and police officer will arrive. They've seen a reduction in crime. Notable exceptions are shoplifting. They continue to see shoplifting occur at a stable rate at the retail stores in Bedford, particularly Target and Lowes that remain open. They are paying more attention. They have additional directed patrols to businesses, particularly the grocery stores, pharmacies and the retail stores that remain open to make sure folks feel confident. They've instructed their officers to conduct additional directed patrols in the neighborhoods, in and around recreation facilities including private recreation facilities where they've seen groups gather to use some of the private fields. They've talked to the owners of those private fields and those have been placard and closed as well to prevent folks from violating the governor's emergency order. Crime is typically down in Bedford and across the nation. Traffic is also down and you will see predictably reduced traffic in

Bedford. Hopefully that will help the construction company speed through the final phase of the Route 101 traffic because of the reduced volume. They've heard a lot of words of encouragement. The Town Manager talked about Bedford Cares. He can't speak enough to what Councilor Ricciardi has done and her army of volunteers that are out there. The folks that have brought supplies to the Police Department are beyond heartwarming. They've had many different families bring everything from masks to gallons of hand sanitizer, cases of Handi wipes, and things of that nature that they are burning through constantly as they disinfect cruiser cockpits, shared communications equipment, and shared furniture.

Chief Bryfonski stated that they are looking toward to the end of this. It will end; they will reach the finality. America has always improvised, adapted and overcome the challenges that they've always faced in our history. Bedford is a resilient, adaptable community. The community spirit here has been nothing short of extraordinary and he knows that all of those things combined with their dedicated employees will see this thing through.

Chief Hunter stated that it has been a great partnership with not only the Police Department, but with everyone in Town. This particular emergency has been a little bit different than things they have planned and practiced for in the past. Some of the things that make it different being a pandemic is the length of the emergency. Often times they are prepared for flooding or an ice storm or things of that nature and this has a different effect on all of us in just the length of time that it takes. They are in it for the long haul and really talking to not only the responders but the public about how to cope with that and how to get through the marathon, because it's not a sprint. Another thing he thinks that makes this particularly different is that it's very information heavy. They are managing a lot of information every day that is coming from Federal, State, and Local resources. They are trying to get that to their providers and trying to make decisions based on that that changes almost daily. Like the Police Department, they have a policy that is adaptable and flexible and changes every day. With that comes training their staff on a routine basis to those changes. The procedures that have been changed over the course of time are how they respond and their disinfecting and decontamination procedures are lengthy and require a lot of effort. As they recently analyzed their call volume through this compared for first quarter from the time pre-COVID to the last few weeks, they are finding that they have a small drop in their call volume. It's not overwhelming. What surprised them a little bit was that the drop was in EMS calls, but they have an increase in Fire calls. They asked themselves why and they believe it's because people are at home. They are doing things that sometimes require a response, so that's why they are having that increase in Fire calls. The EMS calls they are responding to, they have responded to COVID type emergencies. They have had four of their responders in quarantine over the course of this; two of them are currently. Those are for unprotected exposures and they are using the guidance given to them by the State to make decisions based on what is an unprotected exposure and how to respond to that to keep not only their responders safe, but the rest of the workforce safe and the public safe. That's why they follow through with those protocols and policies. Since the beginning of this he's been particular concerned at the local level, because of the amount of long-term care beds in nursing homes and assisted living they have in Bedford. They responded to that very early on and partnered

with those businesses. They were extremely responsive and cooperative and put safeguards in place immediately and they are going back now five or six weeks and they think that those types of recommendations that were followed are paying off. If you follow the governor's press release today, it was about long-term facilities across the State and how it's affecting those in Manchester, Nashua, and some other places across the State. As far as they know, and they checked in with all of their nursing homes and assisted living facilities yesterday, they have had no positive cases within those facilities as of yesterday as reported to them by each of those seven facilities. They definitely changed their business practices in terms of using technology like this (ZOOM). Two weeks ago he wouldn't have felt half as comfortable meeting with them on ZOOM, but certainly feeling much more comfortable. They have their daily meeting on ZOOM at the Fire Department, but they are also conducting trainings through ZOOM, their regular EMS trainings. They also have folks working from home and utilizing technology for that. He also talked about social media and some Bedford sites you will find things like the firefighter challenge. On a weekly basis, the firefighters are producing something fun, challenging for families to participate in and help cope as staying at home for long periods of time does have an effect on people. They want to make sure people are getting through that as healthy as possible. Also, the building and health division responded early on. When they closed the building, there were lots of changes that were put in place by their building and health division to be able to continue their services. They continue to offer a full breadth of services albeit they've changed the way they operate in some big ways, however, they have not impacted the building that's going on in Town. Whether they are talking about a small residential single family project or a large residential project, which is 107 South River Road, which is a large project they are inspecting on a weekly basis. The building and fire inspectors are entering that structure after 2:30 in the afternoon when all of their subcontractors have gone home, limiting the exposure. That's an example of alternative operations from the building and health division.

Chief Hunter stated that they don't know exactly what a surge looks like in our community, but for the Councilors and the public, they are responding to this within our community. They are not responding to NYC's challenges, but they are looking at and making plans for what does it look like in our community. Regarding the stories about shortages in protective equipment for medical workers, he has more confidence every week that goes by in their stockpile of those types of products. Even as late today, receiving another large order of the masks that they require as medical providers to be able to respond to this appropriately to protect the providers and to protect the public. They don't know what the surge looks like or exactly when they might see a peak within our community, but they are feeling more confident every day that they are going to be prepared with plans and the equipment that they are going to need to respond to that. Their efforts have been put into those types of activities these past few weeks.

Chairman Gilbert asked each Councilor if they had any questions or wanted to make any statements

Councilor Carter extended his appreciation to the Police Chief and the Fire Chief, Rick Sawyer and BCTV. The amount of literature and social media that has been put out

concerning this has been excellent and has kept all of the residents of Bedford up to date and thanked them for their efforts.

Chairman Gilbert echoed those comments and thanked both chiefs and Rick Sawyer for a great update.

b. Award of Bid 8-2020, South River Road Corridor and Utility Improvement Project

Chairman Gilbert stated that they are moving on to Award of Bid 8-2020, South River Road Corridor and Utility Improvement Project. We will start with a report from Jeff Foote, DPW Director.

Mr. Foote, Public Works Director, stated this award was consistent with DPW's update to the Town Council on December 11, 2019 and March 4, 2020, which identified the 2020 and 2021 road construction programming. Four firms prequalified to submit bids for the project and two firms submitted bids. Busby Construction of Atkinson, NH submitted the lowest qualified bid in the amount of \$4,619,619. Their bid was approximately \$408k less than the next lowest bidder. Busby Construction has performed work as a contractor and a subcontractor for many municipalities throughout New Hampshire including Bedford and has realized excellent performance. The project includes extending municipal sewer along South River Road to a proposal hotel at 270 South River Road and then southerly to Sunset Lane where another proposed sewer connection is scheduled at the TRM Microwave that was recently approved for expansion by the Planning Board. There are some other connections that will occur on Cedarwood including a potential to the Town-owned property at the corner of Sunset. In addition to the sewer project extension, the project also includes the construction of Fosters Place, which is a new road that connects Commerce Park North with Technology Drive, so there will be access for those folks to a signalized intersection. Other work includes roadway and drainage improvements to nine streets within the corridor. No sidewalks are proposed in the contract. Some of the other streets that will be improved as a part of this are Club Acre Lane, Autumn Drive, Harvey Road, Commerce Drive, Commerce Park North, Technology, Sunset Lane, and Cedarwood. The majority of the monies here, about \$3,942,218.50, is from the first installment of the 2014 bond approved by voters. When they got the bonding for this effort back in February, they received the last of the \$10m from the three installments, so this is the last portion of that. They have the money; it's sitting in a bank, and they are ready to move this project forward using the \$3.942m. In addition, they have about \$180k in developer funds that will be utilized for the sewer extension. They are also proposing to use Sewer Enterprise Fund monies of about \$496,522.50. These are all estimates. It's likely that the monies that they are seeking for award tonight will more than cover the projects that they are intending to complete as part of this. They will be able to repurpose about \$500k-\$700k towards other projects when they are done this exercise on other roadways in Bedford.

Chairman Gilbert asked each Councilor if they had any questions or wanted to make any statements.

Councilor Radke wanted to know if Busby Construction would be doing the other road projects with the leftover monies. Mr. Foote stated that they potentially could or they could let another bid out. They could assign the work using Busby prices or let the next work out under a separate bid. Councilor Radke wanted to know if he anticipates black top prices decreasing. Mr. Foote stated that the cost of asphalt is influenced by the cost of liquid asphalt. From everything that he's seen, liquid asphalt is holding; it's not dropping as other energy sectors are.

MOTION by Councilor Duschatko that the Bedford Town Council award the South River Road Corridor and Utility Improvements project in the amount of \$4,619,619 to Busby Construction Co., Inc. and to authorize the Town Manager to execute the contract and issue change orders as necessary to complete the project. Seconded by Councilor Ricciardi.

Roll Call Vote: Melissa Stevens-aye, Phil Greazzo-aye, Lori Radke-aye, Bill Carter-aye, Bill Duschatko-aye, Denise Ricciardi-aye, Dave Gilbert-aye. Motion Passes.

Mr. Foote stated that they appreciate everyone's support whether it's the governing board or the residents of Town.

Mr. Foote mentioned the heavy volume at the Transfer Station the last few Saturdays. He wanted everyone to know that the Transfer Station will remain open during normal business hours. If you have large amounts of debris and building materials and projects that are happening now because people are home, they are asking that they come with those big loads on Wednesday, Thursday and parts of Friday. A couple of Saturdays ago they had someone show up with four different truckloads of materials to dispose of and that really influenced the wait times that other people have experienced, because they were stuck in line. If it's possible, for those big loads, to hold off on Saturday and Tuesday and go Wednesday, Thursday or Friday, they would appreciate it.

c. Other New Business – None.

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Other Old Business – None.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Budgetary Town Meeting – March 11, 2020

Chairman Gilbert asked if there were any corrections to the March 11, 2020 minutes.

MOTION by Councilor Ricciardi that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the March 11, 2020 Budgetary Town Meeting. Seconded by Councilor Stevens.

Roll Call Vote: Bill Duschatko-aye, Denise Ricciardi-aye, Lori Radke-abstained, Phil Greazzo-aye, Melissa Stevens-aye, Bill Carter-abstained, Davie Gilbert-aye. Motion Passed.

b. Organizational Meeting/Public Session – March 16, 2020

MOTION by Councilor Carter that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the March 16, 2020 Organizational Meeting/Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.

Roll Call Vote: Lori Radke-aye, Phil Greazzo-aye, Melissa Stevens-aye, Denise Ricciardi-aye, Bill Carter-aye, Bill Duschatko-aye, Dave Gilbert-aye. Motion Passed.

8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

Mr. Sawyer extended a happy Passover and happy Easter to everyone and hopes that everyone is finding ways to enjoy that family time either on social media or other ways. He knows it's a challenge this year, but next year will be great and they will all be back together.

11. COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Chairman Gilbert asked if there were any Councilor Comments or Committee reports and to please wait to be called.

Councilor Ricciardi thanked all of the employees in Town for working so hard, all of the Department Heads, first responders and everyone from the top throughout. She also thanked all of the volunteers that have been helping her to do the shopping and deliveries and all of the donations that have been left on her doorstep for the Bedford community food pantry. She hoped that everyone could just hold the faith, not to get too stressed out, because this too will pass and they will be stronger for it.

Councilor Greazzo stated that the Historic District Commission met yesterday via ZOOM and it went very well. The Water & Sewer Advisory Committee meeting was cancelled.

Councilor Radke wished everyone a happy Passover and Easter to everybody on the Board and everybody in Bedford. She gave a heartfelt thank you to Mr. Sawyer and his staff for these last four or five weeks putting together the COVID-19 emails, information on Facebook and the website has been phenomenal. She thought Councilor Ricciardi did a great job with Bedford Cares. She's seen a lot of enthusiasm in the community that they haven't seen in a long time and it makes her really proud to be a resident in Bedford. She

urged the residents to be careful of all of the scams that are out there. They just received something today from the Attorney General's office regarding stimulus payment scams and things to watch out for. If you are expecting a check from the IRS, you don't need to do anything. It just shows up. She asked that they avoid any emails they may receive and to call the IRS first before you answer any of those. There was also a scam about unemployment. Have a great week and together they will get through this.

Councilor Stevens urged people to slow down when they are driving around Town. They have a lot of people that are out walking and biking right now her family included. There have been some folks that have been concerned over people speeding down Bedford roads and asked that they do not do that ever and not now for sure. There are so many people trying to go outside. She mentioned all of the people that work for the Town who are not only working, but homeschooling. She's doing it and it's a job times 10. She mentioned the Planning Director who is trying to get her job done and also has a daughter at home. Whatever they can do to help those folks out. It's not easy for families and it's not easy for the kids. Kudos and keep on going. She mentioned Councilor Ricciardi taking the lead in an organized way to help folks get the items that they need. If you don't feel comfortable reaching out to a group, she knows just based on her friend group, your neighbors or whoever that might be, if you need something to reach out. It might be something as simple as the pasta that your daughter must eat every single day and you can't find it at the store; there are people out there who can help you out and leave something at your doorstep. They are all looking for something else to do that doesn't include Chrome Books or emptying the dishwasher. Everyone has some need right now so don't feel that you are stepping on somebody's toes, reach out and get that help.

Councilor Carter thanked Councilor Ricciardi for her work with Bedford Cares. He gets a lot of updates on that and it's a great thing for the Town of Bedford. Regarding the clean-up of the roads, he and his wife have been doing some work on New Boston Road. They came and picked up four bags in just the quarter mile up and back from his house. They've got some more work to do and get it all to the Transfer Station. He thanked Jeff Foote and DPW for continuing on with that. He stated that living on New Boston and with the Transfer Station being as busy as it is, he's seeing a lot of those loads on the back of pick-up trucks that are not covered. Being on New Boston, they've picked up a considerable amount of construction trash and insulation stuff that's fallen off those vehicles. He wanted to know if they could get some word out to make sure that these loads that are going to the Transfer Station are sufficiently covered. He doesn't live on a road that's 20 mph, so when they go flying by his house, maybe it's something they could look at and get the word out. He echoed Councilor Stevens when it comes to slowing down on the Bedford roads. He and his wife do a lot of walking. He stated that there was no Conservation Commission meeting in March and the April meeting has been cancelled. He wished all the residents in Bedford a happy Easter and happy Passover, which started at sundown tonight.

Councilor Duschatko stated that the Planning Board held its first virtual meeting on Monday night and he thought it went very successfully. It was probably the first virtual meeting that had everybody that was not associated directly with the Town and he thought

it went smoothly, except for his end where he couldn't get the audio to work. At the meeting they approved a 30k square foot expansion of one of their larger industrial clients. It's a very architecturally novel and attractive building. He thought it would be a great addition to the base. They had a proposal for a gas station approval basically behind River Road Tavern and that has been put off until their next meeting in May, so the public could have the chance of being involved in it. He voiced his great appreciation to all of the hard work that's been done by the Town employees, Department Heads and everybody else that's been involved. He spends a couple of days a week at the Transfer Station and he knows how difficult their jobs are and thought they were doing a marvelous job in a very difficult environment as is everybody. He thought Mr. Sawyer's presentation on the COVID crisis and the steps they've taken in Town was right on the mark and he congratulated him for that and all of the foresight and media steps they took back in March that many are not aware of, but it was done quietly and effectively and is paying off now and the work that both Chief Bryfonski and Chief Hunter have done is great. He gave everybody best wishes for a happy Passover and Easter.

Chairman Gilbert stated that they have tentatively scheduled their retreat for May 9th, location TBD and maybe even the retreat TBD, they don't know yet, but for right now they've scheduled it tentatively. He stated that in discussions with the Educational Farm at Joppa Hill and with Jane O'Brien with Recreation, they have gone ahead and decided to hold Old Towne Day up at Joppa Hill in September. There is a committee formed in conjunction with Jane and they will be going out getting permits, contacting Police and Fire to see what they need to do make that a Town event. They've got a committee up at the Farm that is going to work it. He thought it was a positive and hopes its fun, and hopes they can do this. On Monday at the Bedford Men's Club, they donated and are also going to help repair the dugouts and the snack shack at Riley Field. He wished everyone happy holidays and thanked all the Town employees for their support, keep going and keep asking and they will help.

12. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3 (if necessary)

13. ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Gilbert asked for a motion to adjourn.

MOTION by Councilor Carter to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Councilor Duschatko.

Roll Call Vote: Denise Ricciardi-aye, Lori Radke-aye, Phil Greazzo-aye, Melissa Stevens-aye, Bill Carter-aye, Bill Duschatko-aye, Dave Gilbert-aye.

The meeting ended at 8:18 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford