



MAYOR & COUNCIL
SPECIAL CONFERENCE CALL MEETING MINUTES
May 20, 2020

***Meeting minutes are transcribed in a summarized format.
Tape recording of actual discussion is available at Town Office***

Mayor Jacobs called the meeting to order at 12:00 p.m. In attendance were Vice Mayor Andrews, Councilmember Jones, Councilmember Collyer, Town Manager Resele and Acting Police Chief Dempsey. Councilmember Edwards was absent from the conference call meeting.

Agenda –

Councilmember Collyer made a motion to approve the agenda as amended. Councilmember Jones seconded the motion. All that were present at the last meeting in favor. Motion carried.

Minutes –

Councilmember Jones approved of the last Conference Call Minutes of May 15, 2020. Vice Mayor Andrews seconded the motion. All that were present at the last meeting in favor. Motion carried.

COVID-19 Update –

Mayor Jacobs stated that as of today Kent County has 145 positive tests. The 21661-zip code is showing 9 positive cases which is an accumulative number since the beginning of the epidemic. None were reported until the count went over 7

positive cases. It has not moved in the last 3 days which is important to know. Yesterday at the State level, it appeared to be a spike of over 1700 new cases. The spike was reflecting a back log from hospital networks as their labs released results which resulted in the high numbers. So, it is not necessarily all new cases in that 1-day period. Today there were 777 new cases showing on the State's Website. Also, the hospitalization numbers are trending down. Autumn Lake changed ownership and is now Peak Care Systems and their numbers are at 60 residents testing positive, 13 staff testing positive and 17 deaths to date. What those numbers do not tell you is how many have recovered. At The Resorts Nursing Home, they had 22 residents testing positive, 9 staff testing positive and 8 deaths. The Nursing Homes only report their numbers once a week while the State numbers are daily.

This morning Mayor Jacobs had a conversation with Jim Rich, and he said that last night the Pirates & Wenches Committee met and decided to cancel Pirates & Wenches weekend for this year which is probably the right move but unfortunate.

The Fireworks are still undecided. Mayor Jacobs reached out to RJ at the Fire House to let him know about the Pirates & Wenches decision. Further away but significant, was that Baltimore has decided to cancel their fireworks and the Queen Anne's County has cancelled their County Fair. The big topic yesterday and today is outdoor Restaurant service in Rock Hall. Could we do it in some fashion was the question. There is enormous pressure on the Governor to make a decision to change the restriction and allow it. Mayor Jacobs said that Delegate Jay Jacobs has written a letter to the Governor and that she was on a conference call on Friday and sent an email to the Governor's Chief of Staff in support of outdoor dining. MML is having a conference call at 1:00 and this will be a significant topic on their agenda. This weekend only, curbside and pick-up will continue to be allowed and the restaurant owners are responsible for managing that.

Chief Dempsey stated that the Police Department will monitor all restaurant establishments as part of their regular patrol.

Mayor Jacobs commented that as soon as she hears of any changes, she will get in touch with all the restaurants and share any information. She will also touch base with Bill Webb Director, Kent County Health Department on the issue of outdoor dining.

Mayor Jacobs stated that the other news this morning was that the Governor put out a change order with respect to testing to the public. Testing can now be done

at pharmacies starting tomorrow throughout the State. You will not need a doctors order. Locations are being worked on.

Mayor Jacobs passed on information that Joann Rich shared this morning that the Hotel Association collected from a survey of 1955 travelers. Some of the questions asked were related to our situation.

1. Assuming all stay at home orders are lifted by June 15th and people are free to travel again how soon would you take a vacation to a location within driving distance? 54% would take a vacation. 11% said they would take it by July 15th.
2. How soon would you go to a large conference or festival? 41.6% said they would wait for a vaccine. 15% would go after August 15th.

Acting Chief Dempsey wants the general public and the Councilmembers to know that COVID-19 is a real danger and is in Rock Hall as he dealt with it personally yesterday. He asked people to please take heed to what warnings are out there.

Mayor Jacobs stated that our go forward protection is whatever we choose to do for ourselves. Pay attention to yourself, protect yourself and do what is important for you to keep yourself safe. Nobody knows how long this is going to go on and when restrictions are lifted, the ability to enforce what is left will become more and more difficult.

Councilmember Collyer said it is also important for the businesses and business managers to make sure their employees are adhering to the laws in regard to wearing mask.

Old Business – Decision on opening the Beach.

Town Manager Resele stated that the beach has been cleaned and ready for opening. 6 new posts have been added for signage. The trash cans are available, As of now the only hold up would be the hand sanitizer devices as they are on backorder. The water quality test was taken but the results are not back.

A small discussion followed about what the signage should say.

Mayor Jacobs would advocate that the beach be opened. In the community there is a lot of pressure to open the beach. There are also a lot of concerns about the circumstances of the situation we are in and that the risk is elevated by folks that are coming here for the weekend. Right now, it may be time to deal with the beach and let it open but if it is too much to manage safely, the Town will just shut it back down again. Mayor Jacobs also wants the people to know this requires a Council vote and could not be dealt with until there was a public meeting to open the beach.

Acting Chief Dempsey said the Police Department is prepared to move forward this weekend and is planning on supplementing the patrols this holiday weekend.

Vice Mayor Andrews made a motion to open the beach at the time that the signs are available and posted. The Council reserves the right to close the beach if the regulations are not adhered too. Councilmember Collyer seconded the motion. All present in favor. Motion carried.

Councilmember Jones wants the people to understand and follow the rules when at the beach. She also wants people to know the beach is still closed until the signs are put up.

A small discussion followed about rules the signs will have on them.

Councilmember Collyer made a motion to have the beach sign read as follows:

To reduce the spread of COVID-19 the following applies

- No Chairs
- No Blankets
- No Picnicking
- Social Distancing of 6 Feet

- Outdoor Exercise Permitted
- Walking, Jogging and Running
- Swimming

- Use of the Beach is at your own risk
- No Dogs Permitted on the Beach

Violators will be subject to fines and/or arrest.

Vice Mayor Andrews seconded the motion. All present in favor. Motion carried.

Next Meetings –

This will be the last telephone conference meeting. All future meeting will be held at the Town Hall and Livestreamed. Council was in favor.

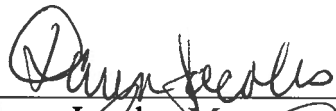
Special Budget Workshop Meeting – Tuesday, May 27th, Wednesday, May 28th and Thursday, May 29th. The objective is to have the Council satisfied with the budget by May 29, 2020 so it can be presented to the public on Monday, June 1, 2020

A motion to adjourn the Special Conference Call Meeting was made by Councilmember Jones. Vice Mayor Andrews seconded the motion. All present in favor. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned 12:51 p.m.

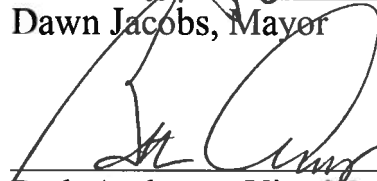
Respectfully Submitted:

Cheryl M. Butler

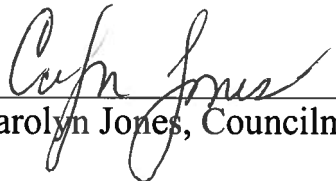
Approved by:



Dawn Jacobs, Mayor



Beth Andrews, Vice Mayor



Carolyn Jones, Councilmember



Timmy Edwards, Councilmember



Eleanor Collyer, Councilmember