



**Town of Amherst  
Town Council Meeting  
Monday, April 27, 2020  
6:30 p.m.**

**Virtual Meeting: <https://zoom.us/j/96480457532>  
Minutes**

*Complete video is available online: <https://amherstmedia.org/content/amherst-town-council>*

**1. Call to Order**

Councilors Participating Remotely: Councilors Bahl-Milne, Brewer, De Angelis, DuMont, Griesemer, Hanneke, Pam, Ross, Ryan, Schoen, Schreiber, Steinberg, and Swartz

Councilors Absent: None

Others Participating Remotely: Town Manager Paul Bockelman, Library Director Sharon Sharry, Health Director Julie Federman, Information Technology Director Sean Hannon, and Clerk of the Council Athena O’Keeffe

After confirming that all participants can hear and be heard, President Griesemer declared the presence of a quorum and called the Town Council meeting to order at 6:31 p.m.

Note: Pursuant to Governor Baker’s March 12, 2020 Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law, G.L. c. 30A, §18, this joint meeting of the Town Council and School Committee was conducted via remote participation.

**2. Announcements**

President Griesemer made the following announcements:

Upcoming Town Council Meetings:

- Friday, May 1, 2020, 10:00 am – Special Meeting, Water and Sewer Presentation
- Monday, May 4, 2020 6:30 pm – Regular Meeting
- Monday, May 11, 2020, 6:30 pm – Special Meeting, 3 Boards/Budget Coordinating Group

Upcoming Council Committee Meetings

- Community Resources Committee – Tuesday, May 4, 2:00 p.m.
- Governance, Organization, and Legislation Committee – Wednesday, May 6, 2020, 10:30 a.m.
- Finance Committee – Tuesday, May 12, 2:30 p.m.
- Outreach, Communications, and Appointments Ad Hoc Committee – Monday, May 11, 2020, 9:30 a.m.
- Town Services and Outreach Committee – Monday, May 4, 2020, 9:30 a.m.
- Joint Capital and Planning Committee – TBD

**3. Hearings - None**

#### **4. General Public Comment**

Amy Zuckerman, Amherst resident of 117 Brittany Manor Drive, spoke about concerns regarding cleaning and ventilation in common spaces in apartment complexes.

#### **5. Proclamations and Commemorations – Consent Agenda**

##### **a. Juneteenth Proclamation**

Councilor Ryan reported that the Governance, Organization, and Legislation Committee declared the proclamation clear, consistent, and actionable.

Councilor Hanneke added that she will share information about virtual celebrations of Juneteenth as she receives it.

#### **6. Presentations and Discussion**

##### **a. Town of Amherst COVID-19 Status Update**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman gave a status report and spoke about:

- Updated case numbers in the state, county and Town of Amherst
- Monitoring cases, hospitalizations, and deaths
- Town operations
- Testing for first responders
- Major challenges including finances, employee health and safety, upcoming elections, board and committee meetings
- School buildings closed for the remainder of the academic year
- Public spaces
- Food security
- Housing and rental assistance
- Shelter season ends April 30
- Senior Services
- Tuesday and Thursday open Q & A
- Virtual Cuppa Joe Friday May 8, 8:00 a.m.
- Impact on local businesses
- Farmer's Market

Health Director Julie Federman spoke about:

- Upcoming testing for all guests at Craig's Doors
- State-run isolation and recovery centers at hotels if guests test positive
- Food and transportation would be provided to guests

Councilor Pam commented that Harvard decided not to open in the fall, and suggested special senior hours at the high school track for walking.

P. Bockelman responded that Somerville has ordered that residents must wear masks outside; the Town is not taking that step at this time.

Councilor DuMont asked about steps that will be taken if a shelter guest tests positive, about shared public spaces are an issue, and about safe indoor spaces for homeless residents.

J. Federman responded that if a guest tests positive, all guests who have shared space will need to quarantine. P. Bockelman added that the tests, results, and potential quarantine is voluntary. J. Federman stated that the State is sending information regarding common areas.

Councilor Hanneke commented about areas needed for homeless residents to stay dry and maintain social distance, and asked about projects happening while buildings are closed.

P. Bockelman responded that work is being done in Town buildings while buildings are closed.

Councilor Brewer commented about indoor spaces where homeless people can be, and asked about mask orders.

J. Federman responded that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that people use homemade cloth masks in places where people cannot maintain social distancing, reviewed mask procedures, and stressed the ongoing importance of social distancing.

Councilor Pam spoke about concerns regarding wireless internet access for homeless people and suggested the Town install wireless kiosks.

P. Bockelman responded that the purpose of hotspots was for students to be able to do their homework, and the lack of access speaks to a community-wide need.

Councilor Brewer expressed concerns about people in public who are not maintaining social distancing.

J. Federman responded that social distancing is the top priority right now. Community Participation Officers are collecting materials for homemade masks.

Councilor Swartz commented about people not maintaining social distancing outdoors and at grocery stores.

J. Federman spoke about how to effectively enforce and encourage social distancing.

Councilor Bahl-Milne asked about language of “advisory” versus “order,” in terms of enforcing social distancing, and asked for clarity about how many people can gather in groups.

J. Federman responded that an advisory is strongly recommended, while an order is mandatory and must be enforceable. P. Bockelman added that the University of Massachusetts is encouraging students not to gather.

Councilor Schreiber spoke about masks and that Harvard will open but will be online.

Library Director Sharon Sharry spoke about:

- Library staff virtually serving patrons
- Library services that are available while the building is closed
- Finances
- Library building project update

Councilor Pam was disconnected at 7:50 p.m. and reconnected at 7:52 p.m.

- Items bring returned in quarantine
- Curbside pickup will begin
- Disinfection of surfaces and bathrooms
- Eventual use of computers and meeting rooms
- Unknown timeline of phased reopening
- Questionnaire for residents
- Archivists looking for photos and residents’ experiences

## 7. Action Items

### a. Consent Agenda

- (1) 5.a. Juneteenth Proclamation
- (2) Suspension of Town Council Rules of Procedure rule 8.4 for the following agenda items:
  - 7.b. Extension of Budget Deadlines
  - 7.c. Intermunicipal Agreements
  - 7.d. Selection of Auditor for Fiscal Year 2021
- (3) 7.b.(1-3) Extension of Budget Deadlines
- (4) 10.a-b. Approval of Minutes: April 13, 2020 Special Council Meeting minutes, and April 14, 2020 Special Joint Council School Committee Meeting minutes

**Consent Agenda:** The following items were selected because they were considered to be routine and it was reasonable to expect they would pass with no controversy.

To remove an item from the consent agenda for discussion later in the meeting, ask that it be removed when the President lists the consent agenda items. The request to remove an item from the consent agenda does not require a second.

**MOTION:** President Griesemer moved, second by Councilor Steinberg, to move the following items, and the printed motions thereunder and approve those items as a single unit:

- 5.a. Juneteenth Proclamation
- Suspension of Town Council Rules of Procedure rule 8.4 for the following agenda items:
  - 7.b. Extension of Budget Deadlines
  - 7.c. Intermunicipal Agreements
  - 7.d. Selection of Auditor for Fiscal Year 2021
- 7.b.(1-3) Extension of Budget Deadlines
- 10.a-b. Approval of Minutes: April 13, 2020 Special Town Council Meeting minutes, and April 14, 2020 Special Joint Town Council and School Committee Meeting minutes

**VOTED** unanimously by roll call to move the following items, and the printed motions thereunder and approve those items as a single unit:

- 5.a. Juneteenth Proclamation
- Suspension of Town Council Rules of Procedure rule 8.4 for the following agenda items:
  - 7.b. Extension of Budget Deadlines
  - 7.c. Intermunicipal Agreements
  - 7.d. Selection of Auditor for Fiscal Year 2021
- 7.b.(1-3) Extension of Budget Deadlines
- 10.a-b. Approval of Minutes: April 13, 2020 Special Town Council Meeting minutes, and April 14, 2020 Special Joint Town Council and School Committee Meeting minutes

**b. Extensions of Budget Deadlines – *Approved via consent agenda***

**c. Intermunicipal Agreements**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman outlined the intermunicipal agreements brought to the Council for authorization. Draft agreements give a sense of what they will be, but are not final.

Councilor De Angelis expressed concerns about a lack of the minimum charge in one of the draft agreements.

Councilor Schoen commented about fluoridation of Amherst water, and no fluoride in Hadley water.

President Griesemer asked that the Town Manager clarify those questions and bring answers to the next Council meeting.

**d. Selection of Auditor for Fiscal Year 2021**

Councilor Steinberg noted the Finance Committee report of April 13 in the packet, which contains the recommendation to not select a new auditor for the coming year; the bidding process is labor intensive for staff.

**MOTION:** President Griesemer moved, second by Councilor Hanneke, to not engage in an auditor selection process for Fiscal Year 2021 and to continue to use audit services provided by Melanson Heath, as recommended by the Finance Committee report of April 13, 2020.

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to not engage in an auditor selection process for Fiscal Year 2021 and to continue to use audit services provided by Melanson Heath, as recommended by the Finance Committee report of April 13, 2020.

**8. Appointments**

**a. Town Manager Appointments**

**(1) Finance Director – Charter Sec. 2.11(a)**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman spoke in praise of Sonia Aldrich’s service as Finance Director during the past three years and about the selection of Sean Mangano as Finance Director for the Town.

Councilor DuMont reported that the Town Services and Outreach committee voted unanimously in support of the appointment.

**MOTION:** President Griesemer moved, second by Councilor De Angelis to approve on the Town Manager’s appointment under Charter Section 2.11(a) of Sean Mangano as Finance Director.

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to approve on the Town Manager’s appointment under Charter Section 2.11(a) of Sean Mangano as Finance Director.

**(2) Board of License Commissioners – Charter Sec. 2.11(b)**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman spoke about the appointees.

Councilor DuMont reported that the Town Services and Outreach committee voted unanimously in support of the appointments.

**(2) Board of License Commissioners – Charter Sec. 2.11(b)**

**MOTION:** Councilor DuMont moved, second by Councilor Schoen, to approve and confirm the following Town Manager appointments under Charter Sections 2.11 (b) and 6.3 to the Charter Section 6.3 Board of License Commissioners:

- For a two year term to expire on June 30, 2022, Dillon Maxfield.
- For a three year term to expire on June 30, 2023, Hallie Hughes (reappointment).

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to approve and confirm the following Town Manager appointments under Charter Sections 2.11 (b) and 6.3 to the Charter Section 6.3 Board of License Commissioners:

- For a two year term to expire on June 30, 2022, Dillon Maxfield.
- For a three year term to expire on June 30, 2023, Hallie Hughes (reappointment).

**(3) Conservation Commission – Charter Sec. 2.11(b)**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman spoke about the appointee. Councilor DuMont reported that the Town Services and Outreach Committee voted unanimously in support of the appointment.

**MOTION:** Councilor DuMont moved, second by Councilor De Angelis, to approve the following Town Manager appointment under Charter Section 2.11(b) to the Conservation Commission:

- For a two year term to expire on June 30, 2022, LeRoy Gaynor.

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to approve the following Town Manager appointment under Charter Section 2.11(b) to the Conservation Commission:

- For a two year term to expire on June 30, 2022, LeRoy Gaynor.

**b. Town Council Appointments**

**(1) Zoning Board of Appeals – Charter Sec. 2.9(c)**

Councilor Ross spoke about the process used by the Outreach, Communications, and Appointments Committee (OCA) to make the appointment recommendations to the Council; the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) lost four members in 7 months, which put the board in a precarious position. There is typically difficulty in finding residents willing to serve on the ZBA, but thanks to outreach and recruitment efforts by committee members, Councilors and Town Manager, there were more applicants that the Town typically sees for the ZBA and OCA was able to recommend appointments for all the vacancies on the board. Councilor Ross thanked OCA members and staff.

**MOTION:** Councilor Ross moved, second by Councilor Pam, to appoint to the Zoning Board of Appeals under Charter Section 2.9 (c), effective immediately, as recommended by the Outreach, Communications, & Appointments Committee:

- For terms expiring June 30, 2023, Dillon Maxfield and Tammy Parks
- For a term expiring June 30, 2021, Keith Langsdale
- As Associate members, for terms expiring June 30, 2021, Sharon Waldman (reappointment), Peter Berek, Robert Greeney, and Craig Meadows

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to appoint to the Zoning Board of Appeals under Charter Section 2.9 (c), effective immediately, as recommended by the Outreach, Communications, & Appointments Committee:

- For terms expiring June 30, 2023, Dillon Maxfield and Tammy Parks
- For a term expiring June 30, 2021, Keith Langsdale
- As Associate members, for terms expiring June 30, 2021, Sharon Waldman (reappointment), Peter Berek, Robert Greeney, and Craig Meadows

**c. Environmental and Climate Action Committee – Advance name of Councilor to Town Manager**

President Griesemer explained the purpose of the vote is to recommend the Councilor to the Town Manager for appointment to the committee.

**MOTION:** President Griesemer moved, second by Councilor De Angelis, to recommend the Town Manager appoint under Charter Section 3.3 (c) Councilor Sarah Swartz to the Energy and Climate Action Committee.

**VOTED** Unanimously by roll call to recommend the Town Manager appoint under Charter Section 3.3 (c) Councilor Sarah Swartz to the Energy and Climate Action Committee.

## **9. Committee Reports**

- a. Community Resources Committee:** Councilor Hanneke reported that the committee had a discussion with the Planning Director and Building Commissioner about zoning updates, and the committee heard an economic update from the Amherst Business Improvement District (BID) and Chamber of Commerce at their last meeting. President Griesemer added that the BID and Chamber will attend the May 4 Council meeting with proposed bylaw changes.
- b. Finance Committee:** Councilor Steinberg reported that the Finance Committee and Budget Coordinating Group heard a presentation about the depth of the circumstances regarding the budget. The plan is to adopt a one-month budget for July, which will allow time to work on an FY 21 budget, with an expectation to adopt the FY21 budget by end of July. If the legislature has not completed its budget or if there are remaining uncertainties, the Town may adopt additional month-to-month budgets for up to 3 months. This will be a difficult process, which begins with the May 11 presentation to the Council, School Committee, and Library Trustees from Town Manager. When three non-voting members were appointed to the committee, language was added to the motion that the Council would evaluate prior to the reappointment process. Governance, Organization, and Legislation committee asked that Finance Committee provide input before they began the appointment process. Finance Committee found the addition of non-voting members was successful and voted 5-0 to adopt the following motion: "From the perspective of the Finance Committee members, we have evaluated and continue to see the value of having nonvoting residents on the Finance Committee."
- c. Governance, Organization and Legislation Committee:** Councilor Ryan reported that the committee reelected George and Pat as Chair and Vice Chair. The committee will be working on proposed bylaws and non-voting Finance Committee member appointments.
- d. Joint Capital Planning Committee:** Councilor Schoen reported that based on what we hear in FY21 budget in terms of revenue, will not be able to adhere to a strict 10% of revenue to be allocated to capital, and spoke about essential budget needs for the coming year.
- e. Outreach, Communications, and Appointments Ad Hoc Committee:** Councilor Ross noted that the committee is operating as an ad hoc committee. The committee will moving on to planning board appointment recommendations as, terms are expiring June 30. The Planning Board vacancy notice is published, interviews will be conducted in late May. The committee is also discussing improvements to the Community Activity Form.
- f. Town Services and Outreach Committee:** Councilor DuMont reported that the committee expects to receive Town Manager appointments as terms expire in June. The committee will work to develop a process to evaluate items referred to the Committee. The committee began to review the wage theft bylaw.

President Griesemer noted that the Budget Coordinating Group met and the written report is in the packet.

## **10. Approval of Minutes – Approved via Consent Agenda**

## **11. Town Manager Report**

Town Manager Paul Bockelman spoke about:

- Public ways request for the Farmer's Market coming up on the next Council agenda
- Council meeting Friday, May 1 at 10:00 to hear information about block rates for water and sewer with Tata and Howard representatives

- DPW is out preparing roads for paving
- Sewer break on Red Gate Lane was repaired
- Senior services
- Kendrick Park playground May 6 public hearing on site plan

Councilor Steinberg asked about staff working on a virtual platform with the American Camping Association, noting that the reason for camp is summer care and enrichment for kids, and asked about plans to reopen the golf course or swimming pools.

P. Bockelman responded that the status of summer programs is unclear; the idea is to prepare to offer programming remotely. One employee is currently maintaining the golf course, there has not been a decision regarding opening the golf course yet, but residents will need summer recreational activities and the Town may look at opening with reduced occupancy limits.

Councilor DuMont thanked the Town Manager and asked about sharing the report.

Councilor Brewer commented that while the concept that golf may be played while maintaining social distancing, if golf is allowed but basketball is not, it may highlight socioeconomic issues; regarding the Kendrick Park playground, want to be clear that zoom is not the same as real life meetings or emails, but they are best we can do under circumstances and the Town is not hearing from as many people; spoke about the burden on staff and moving forward with a narrower community view; and the need for new ways of engaging people.

Councilor Pam commented that she sent the Town Manager report with constituents and received positive feedback, asked about how we will have a hearing on Kendrick Park with community involvement, commented about skateboarding as a good sport for social distancing, and asked about a past Town Meeting approval of a skate park.

Councilor Schoen commented about tennis courts as a social distancing sport, it will be important to bring the Kendrick park playground budget at or below forecast, and the need to take into consideration maintenance costs and sustainable playground equipment.

## **12. Town Council Comments**

President Griesemer spoke about holding district meetings and office hours in a way that will not overwhelm staff.

Councilor DuMont asked about meeting every two weeks.

President Griesemer stated that the Council should anticipate meeting on May 4, May 11, and May 18; the following Monday is a holiday; noted the upcoming budget season.

Councilor Brewer asked for a list of upcoming agenda items.

President Griesemer spoke about the budget calendar and required public hearings and forums.

## **13. Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated by the Chair 48 Hours in Advance of the Meeting - *None***

## **14. Executive Session – *None***

## **15. Adjourn**

President Griesemer declared the meeting adjourned at 9:11 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,





Athena O'Keefe

Clerk of the Council

**Record of Agenda Packet Materials and Documents Presented**

00. 04-27-2020 Draft Motions for Town Council  
00. 04-27-2020 FINAL Town Council Agenda  
10.a. 04-13-2020 DRAFT Special Town Council Minutes  
10.b. 04-14-2020 DRAFT Special Joint Town Council School Committee Minutes  
2020-04-27 OCA Report to Town Council  
5.a. Juneteenth Proclamation 2020  
7.b. Finance Committee report 4.27.20  
7.b. Town Manager COVID-19 Memo to Town Council Extension of Timelines - 04-23-2020  
7.c. Town Manager Memo on Intermunicipal Agreements - 04-24-2020  
7.d. 04-13-2020 Finance Committee report  
8.a. Report 2020-04-27 TSO dd  
8.a.1. Finance Director - Mangano Cover Letter - Redacted  
8.a.1. Finance Director - Mangano Resume - Redacted  
8.a.1. Finance Director Appointment - 04-17-2020  
8.a.2. License Commissioners- Appointment - 04-16-2020  
8.a.3. Conservation Commission Appointment - 04-17-2020  
8.b. 2020-04-27 OCA Report to Town Council  
8.b. Zoning Board of Appeals OCA Recommendation 4-16-2020  
8.c. Memo to Town Council regarding Councilor interested in Appointment to ECAC 4-22-2020  
BCG Presentation- 04-23-2020 FINAL1 (003)  
Budget Coordinating Group Report - 4-25-2020  
Conservation Commission Appointment - 04-17-2020  
COVID-19 Town Council Presentation 04-27-2020 FINAL  
Finance Director Appointment - 04-17-2020  
License Commissioners- Appointment - 04-16-2020  
Memo to Town Council regarding Councilor interested in Appointment to ECAC 4-22-2020  
Town Manager Report 04-27-2020