



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW  
60 CENTER SQUARE  
EAST LONGMEADOW, MA 01028

**TOWN COUNCIL**

(413) 525-5400 ext. 1001

*Kathleen G. Hill, President*  
*Michael J. Kane, Vice President*      *Thomas C. O'Connor*  
*Donald J. Anderson*                      *Ralph E. Page*  
*R. Patrick Henry, Jr.*                      *Marilyn M. Richards*

**Approved 6/9/2020**

MINUTES  
Town Council Meeting  
May 12, 2020 at 6:00 pm  
East Longmeadow, Massachusetts 01028

**Present:** President Kathleen Hill, Vice President Michael Kane, Pat Henry, Ralph Page, Marilyn Richards, Don Anderson and Tom O'Connor

Council President Hill opened the meeting at 6:12 p.m. followed by a Moment of Silence. The meeting was conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020. Announcements were made in accordance with Mass General Law, and it was noted that the meeting was being audio taped as well as in a virtual remote format.

President Hill noted that all votes that are taken will be roll call votes.

**Public Comments:**

- A. Rural Lane Barricade - Joan Iwanicki, Glen and Elaine Helberg, Cal Raymond, Jr., Alicia and Mike Skurko, Michael Scavotto, Kari DiMauro, Rose Falvo, Michael Grieshaber, Brian Milbier – Joan Iwanicki -

Residents Elaine Helberg and Glen Helberg of 81 Rural Lane commented on the barricade stating that while the lack of input from the town is concerning they would like to add that the closure has created a logistical situation preventing access to homes within the neighborhood. Mr. Helberg stated there is a discussion that has labeled Rural Lane as a cut through street and feels that Rural Lane has been singled out as the only street that has been impacted; however we cannot lose sight that there is an entire neighborhood impacted by this closure which includes Pilgrim, Mayflower, Porter and Parker. Closing Rural denies access to anyone living off of Rural. Mr. Helberg feels that this closure will guarantee extra time for their commute home. GPS will continue to bring deliveries down Rural Lane as they formerly did to access Pilgrim and Mayflower residents. They have witnessed Amazon, FedEx, UPS and landscapers forced to make U-turns, or back up all the way down Rural Lane to exit. Mr. Helberg has also witnessed vehicles turning around and using part of his lawn to make that turn. The service trucks are not cutting through but rather accessing a neighborhood via a connecting street; and most importantly what impact will this have on the Police and Fire Departments access to the neighborhood asked Mr. Helberg. From a personal perspective their home is a unique situation where the mailbox address is on Rural but

the driveway is on Pilgrim and this dead end has cut them off from accessing their home via their own address. Mr. Helberg stated that looking out his front window the barricade is an eyesore. Mr. Helberg stated that they have lived here for many years and raised children here without any issues and feels the decision by the Town to put up this barricade without input from most residents about the ramifications the barricade would cause is extremely concerning and disappointing.

Calvin Raymond Jr. thanked the Council for letting himself and others be heard regarding the Rural Lane issue. Mr. Raymond stated that when this petition was put forth to close off Rural Lane effectively making it a dead end street; he is sure that the residents who signed the petition were not taking into consideration just how it would affect other local residents. A major concern that should have been taken into consideration prior to closing the road would have been for emergency services. By shutting down the connection to Pilgrim the people on Rural would not be affected due to delayed response times; however, those on Pilgrim and Mayflower would be adversely affected stated Mr. Raymond stated. Mr. Raymond respectfully asks that the Council remove the barriers at the end of Rural and to keep everyone's safety a priority.

Alicia Skurko of 40 Pilgrim Road stated that her house sits one house away from the road block and that her parents had built the home in the 1970's. Ms. Skurko stated that she and her husband moved here in 2015 when they inherited the house. Ms. Skurko feels that Rural Lane has never been a life threatening safety concern that some residents have exaggerated it to be. Ms. Skurko rode her bike down Rural Lane throughout her childhood and she and her husband enjoy this same activity with their one year old. Since she and her husband moved back they have witnessed young kids playing in their front yards on Rural Lane and Pilgrim Road, people walking and jogging. They have taken their son on many walks and cars drive safely by them. There are many people walking their dogs and children riding their bikes without any worries about not being safe due to speeding cars. Ms. Skurko said that in the 30 years that she has been in this neighborhood the observations described are fairly typical of the recreational activities seen daily on Rural Lane even before the barricade. This road is not a speeding free for all or a chronically dangerous cut through that some residents have exaggerated it to be. Ms. Skurko stated that some social media comments over the past few weeks have supported the closure of Rural Lane on the basis that they routinely walk along the road and have had their safety jeopardized by speeding traffic. Ms. Skurko asked how some Rural, Parker and Porter Road residents can claim they feel unsafe and sign this petition, yet they continue to walk, jog and ride down Rural Lane for many years without any issue. Ms. Skurko stated that any homeowner would certainly enjoy less traffic on their very own street and the stories used to depict a very unsafe Rural Lane caused by excessively speeding traffic is over exaggerated and unjustified. One resident of Rural Lane has documented being put directly in harm's way by a speeding car but it is Pilgrim Road and Mayflower Lane that are suffering the consequences of being more out of reach to emergency vehicles and daily driving through more dangerous intersections to appease these unfounded claims by Rural Lane homeowners.

Michael Scavato of 16 Mayflower Lane commented that he has lived here for 34 years and he and his wife raised two daughters who have spent their childhood playing, riding bikes and walking their dogs on Mayflower Lane, Pilgrim Road and Rural Lane and they have never felt any of those streets were unsafe. Mr. Scavato stated he is here to strongly object to the installation of the Rural Lane barrier that was previously approved by the Town Council. Mr. Scavato believes at the time the decision was made the Town Council had only heard one side of the issue because proper notification was not given to all the

residents of the neighborhood. Mr. Scavato would like to counter a claim made by one of the petitioners during a previous meeting in which that resident stated that Rural Lane becomes a cut-through in the morning for people coming to and from school, buses, delivery trucks, post office drivers, landscapers, and every other person getting to Porter cuts through is factually untrue. Mr. Scavato would like to know if there are any justifiable reasons why any commercial vehicle should not be allowed on Rural Lane. Mr. Scavato believes that the petitioners made it so that only Rural Lane residents should be allowed to use Rural Lane; which he strongly disagrees with. Mr. Scavato believes that this barrier now forces all traffic to navigate through the Parker and Porter intersection which is already a congested intersection. Mr. Scavato stated that there is no valid reason that anyone should be denied access to Rural Lane and feels that the barrier is disruptive and a significant source of inconvenience. The barrier is an eyesore and has divided the neighborhood and it should be removed immediately

Carrie DiMauro of 16 Mayflower Lane stated that she wanted to comment tonight so that she could share her strong objection to the Council's decision to close Rural Lane. She is not sure if the Council knew when they made the decision that there are 19 houses on the neighborhood beyond where Pilgrim Road and Rural Lane meet; from her perspective they were not factored in at all. Ms. DiMauro stated that her neighbors and she did not cut through Rural Lane that is how they entered and exited their neighborhood for decades. Ms. DiMauro feels that barricade sets a terrible precedent and it will open up the town to similar meritless petitions or possible expenses. Ms. DiMauro asked if the town planned on closing all the streets in town that are known cut through's and what criteria did Rural Lane meet to get it closed. Ms. DiMauro is asking that the Town Council take down the barrier immediately and to set a new precedent that closing a street will never be this easy and will always require a thorough review of all issues and impacted residents

Rose Falvo of 8 Mayflower Lane stated that she has lived there for 34 years and raised three daughters who were everywhere, Mayflower Lane Pilgrim Road and Rural Lane and they never had an issue. Ms. Falvo thanked the Town Council for allowing residents from Mayflower Lane, Pilgrim Road and Rural Lane to speak on the matter of the Rural Lane closure. The residents have started a petition to remove the barriers that were placed on Rural Lane on April 27, 2020; Ms. Falvo would like to know what the town By-Laws are. It is her understanding that residents within a certain distance must be notified in writing and be allowed to attend the meeting on a closure and speak about their concerns. Ms. Falvo does not feel that any of those steps were taken. M. Falvo would like the barricades taken down immediately.

Michael Grieshaber of 82 Rural Lane thanked the Town Council for revisiting this matter. Mr. Grieshaber has lived in East Longmeadow for almost 30 years; he has lived on Rural Lane for a little over two years and it quickly became evident how many people use Rural Lane as a shortcut to circumvent the traffic at the corner of Porter and Parker. The volume of traffic did not bother them as much as the rate of speed in which cars traveled down Rural Lane. Mr. Grieshaber stated that there are people in public forums that have argued that there are children and families all over town and what makes Rural Lane so special. If we have an opportunity to make our town a little bit safer wouldn't we as a community rather do that than risk someone being struck by a motor vehicle in a rural neighborhood with no sidewalks for the sake of shaving off a minute or two of your daily commute time. Mr. Grieshaber stated that out of everyone on Rural Lane he and his family will be the most affected by the closure of Rural Lane as they are the last house before the barricade. They now have to travel the length of Rural instead of just cutting down Pilgrim Road. When looking out their front door they get to see the bright white and orange barricade in

front of their house, but knowing that when their daughter is old enough to play in the yard with her friends they will be safe from any erratic or distracted drivers and that makes this inconvenience worth it.

Brian Milbier of 60 Pilgrim Road stated that he has lived in this neighborhood for about 30 years. Mr. Milbier reiterates the other residents' concerns that live on Pilgrim Rd. Mayflower Lane and some residents on Rural Lane regarding the lack of notification and the fact that it is going to take longer for safety vehicles to get here. The main item he wanted to bring up was that he has not seen the data that backs up the need to close Rural Lane compared to other places in town. Mr. Milbier would be interested in knowing the statistics that came out of the speed detecting trailer that the police had put out for quite a few days compared to other places in town. He would also like to know if we are seeing a large number of people getting injured from people speeding down Rural Lane. Mr. Milbier also stated that he has four children and no matter what street you live on you have to teach your children to be safe in the road. Mr. Milbier would like to make sure we are making decisions based on the data and having something that is backing up that decision and not making the decision out of emotion and listening to the person that is the loudest in the room.

Wendy Tetreault of 38 Rural Lane commented that everyone is asking about data and backing up data, the data shows that 2/3rds of all vehicles that were traveling on Rural Lane while the speed boards were out were going above the posted speed limit some were clocked as high as 70 miles per hour. We are not just coming up with imaginary numbers stated Ms. Tetreault. Ms. Tetreault said they have been very vocal over the past several years, they have put up signs along the street asking people to slow down and those signs were stolen. There have been several neighborhood meetings one of those meetings was attended by the Police Chief who gave them several suggestions, one of the suggestions was to reduce the speed limit from 35 to 30 and that made no difference. Another suggestion was to put in speed bumps but they were told that was not an option. Ms. Tetreault stated that one of the big arguments is the placement of the barriers. They never asked to have them placed at the end of Rural Lane. The barrier was their last resort; they did not want to cut off Mayflower Lane or Pilgrim Road. They understand and sympathize with Mayflower and Pilgrim because there was no notice. Ms. Tetreault asks that the Council understand where they are coming from and sympathize with them as they have taken every step and at no point did they want to cut off the rest of the neighborhood.

### **Council Comments:**

Marilyn Richards spoke about a seminar that she and Councilor O'Connor attended on Friday remotely. It was felt that some of the high points should be shared with the Council and the community; this particular seminar was hosted by the Mass. Municipal Association and the focus group were Select Boards and Councilors throughout the Commonwealth. The subject matter was State revenue and budget outlook; unfortunately it is a pessimistic subject matter to discuss. The seminar created more questions than answers. They learned that the legislature had announced that the FY2021 budget process was to be delayed probably until late July or early August. The budget process is unclear and it is unknown if they will do a joint budget between Senate and House or temporary budgets. The State has a Finance Oversight Committee and they revisited their numbers as to the projected revenues; right now they are looking at a four billion to six billion dollar shortfall. Councilor Richards stated that it is pretty sobering when you hear information like that. More recently some legislation was passed its Senate Bill 2680; it was passed by the Senate and still needs to go before the House. In essence this bill has a component that

offers cities and towns unable to meet the FY2021 June 30<sup>th</sup> budget deadline to adopt three one month budgets going forward. Councilor Richards stated, just to hit home about the enormity of this they are dealing with, they were given the number of the comparison of the April State tax collections of 2020 versus the April State tax collections of 2019 fell 54% 2.3 billion below April 2019 figures, Councilor Richards stated that it is overwhelming. There is some good news out there, there is the commitment from the State to honor the FY2020 budgets in doing so they are looking to the State rainy day fund, which has 3.5 billion; with the hopes that these dollars will help mitigate the FY2020 shortfalls throughout the communities. The State is also in receipt of 2.67 billion in Federal Cares Act dollars those dollars are being directed towards cities and towns to cover the unexpected expenses in response to Covid19. Councilor Richards stated that it is a gloomy outlook financially from where we sit right now but it is important to look to our community and have them understand that these are tough times and the level of service that we have come to expect and enjoy here in East Longmeadow may be significantly impacted as we adjust our budgets accordingly.

Councilor Page commented that back on October 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Town Council meeting the Planning Board had come in front of the Council with regards to a moratorium for ground mounted solar panels. Councilor Page thinks there was some misunderstanding, he has talked to Mary and the Town Attorney talked to them and he thinks it would be prudent if they sent a message or a letter to the Chairman of the Planning Board asking if they still want to go forward because a bylaw needs to be created for a moratorium. Councilor Page thinks that they were under the understanding that when they came in front of the Council and they voted to allow them to do the bylaw that the moratorium was just in place and that is not true. Councilor Page would like to get word to them that if they still want to do a moratorium that they need to create a bylaw. President Hill stated that she will communicate with Mr. Denver in writing.

*Councilor Anderson made a motion to move out of order on the agenda and move to item 8a Public Hearing. Councilor Richards seconded the motion. Roll Call vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Yes, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page – Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes*

**Public Hearing:**

Continuation of a public hearing to address a zoning change at Rear Pease Road (Parcel 33-1-0), a 21.26+/- acre site, from Residence AA to an Industrial/Industrial Garden Park zoning district., 6:30 p.m. Continued from April 14, 2020. President Hill opened the Public Hearing at 6:56 pm. Jeanne Quaqlietti, Town Clerk/Clerk of the Council read the legal notice into record.

James Martin, Attorney for the applicant was present and stated that this has been a long complicated process and did a brief review of what has transpired. This journey started in September of 2018 when his client came before the Council seeking to have it recommended by the Planning Board. In 2018 the Council voted unanimously to refer it to the Planning Board and the process began. The Planning Board conducted a hearing on November 29, 2018 at which time the Planning Board chose not to endorse the petition, during that period of time his client commenced litigation against the town challenging the validity of the restrictions on the solar bylaw. As a result of that litigation the Land Court issued a decision on August 20, 2019. Once the Land Court issued their decision the decision was made to go back to the Planning Board and proceeded to go through site and design review. There were Public Hearings held on November 19, 2019, December 3, 2019, December 17, 2019, January 21, 2020, February 4, 2020

and March 10, 2020. At each one of these hearings the petitioner addressed each and every issue that was raised by the town to its Planning Board on site design review and in the end the Fire Department, the Police Department, the DPW and the Conservation Commission had all indicated that they had no objections to the design of the project. Attorney Martin stated it is important to point out that at the hearing in February of 2020 when the petitioner appeared before the Planning Board he was notified at around 5:55 pm that the Town had retained new Counsel and that the new Counsel was advising the Planning Board not to vote on the site. This centered around the issue of frontage, it is important to note that the issue of frontage had been raised back in December of 2019 and at that time counsel for the town opined that the petitioner had satisfied the issue of frontage. Attorney Martin stated that the Town of East Longmeadow is still in litigation in Land Court before Judge Piper.

Attorney Martin stated that they are coming back to the Town Council to ask them to rule on the petition for a zone change. His client firmly believes in the benefits of solar and that the East Longmeadow Zoning bylaw was illegal, as found by the court and firmly believes that the town will benefit by this solar project. Attorney Martin said his client wants the town to have one last opportunity to rule on the zone change. Attorney Martin stated in regards to the zone change position that this parcel is landlocked and not accessible from East Longmeadow; it is very remote and does not apply to any residential uses.

Attorney Martin stated that this array as proposed can generate enough energy to power 1200 homes in East Longmeadow. It can also raise revenue for the town through pilot programs and other tax arrangements.

There were no public comments.

Council Comments/Questions:

Councilor Henry asked why is it necessary to change to industrial if the Land Court has ruled that it can be built in the residential zone that it already exists. Attorney Martin stated that the Land Court has issued a ruling for summary judgment and the town through its new counsel is now challenging that decision. Attorney Martin stated that it is a practical and reasonable solution.

Councilor Page stated that this is a vote on a zone change not a vote on a solar farm. Councilor Page said it is his opinion that because we are looking to change that to an industrial zone not only can a solar farm go in there anything can go in that area. This area is completely surrounded by residential AA and every parcel around it is residential AA. They are asking us to take one parcel in the middle of a residential zone and change that and allow industrial. Councilor Page is not for this and it is not because it is solar it is because of the zone change. Councilor Page also stated that the ZBA ruling was for a variance in frontage in a residential AA zone from 175 feet to zero for the residential AA zone, they were not there to discuss a variance to an industrial zone or an industrial garden park zone.

Attorney Martin commented that it is unfair to the public to describe this as a residential area; it is true that it is a AA and thinks this is unfair to the public to describe this as a residential area. Attorney Martin also stated that Councilor Page was right about the variance zone and that supports further the request to take it out of residential.

Councilor Anderson stated that he is not anti-solar and that he used to be on the Green Committee and what he suggested was instead of changing a residential zone to an industrial or industrial garden zone, to

explore a green bylaw. Unfortunately that has never found its way into this discussion. Councilor Anderson stated by the petitioners own admission that the shelf life of the solar panels are only about 25 years. This would require the town to have special bonding to handle what is going to be done if it is abandoned in 25 years and the zone change is forever. Councilor Anderson does not think all options have been explored.

Councilor Richards stated that the cardinal rule of zoning has always been when you go for a zone change you have to assume that anything that is allowed in that district could potentially be located on that parcel. We know that this is a residential zone and we know that currently Eco Source is doing its thing around this parcel but we also know that there is a residential development one parcel away from this location. We also know that this parcel is owned by a Connecticut entity that has access from Connecticut; what is to prevent a change in the use of Connecticut filtering into East Longmeadow. Councilor Richards stated that her position has not changed with respect to the zone change, it does not reflect solar and the value that it brings to a community.

Councilor Henry stated that with our legal expenses out of control he is not happy risking spending a lot of money that we seem to be spending to go forward on this when we could approve the project as in the residential zone without making the zone change. Councilor Henry stated he is against the zone change but he is in favor of the project. Attorney Martin stated that the Planning Board chose not to do that.

President Hill closed the Public Hearing

*Councilor Anderson made a motion to deny a zone change at Rear Pease Road (Parcel 33-1-0), a 21.26+/- acre site, from Residence AA to an Industrial/Industrial Garden Park zoning district. Councilor Kane seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Yes, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes***

**Town Managers Report:** Town Manager, Mary McNally gave her Town Manager’s report as shown in attachment A.

Approval of Minutes:

- A. April 28, 2020 Open Session Minutes – *Councilor Kane made a motion to approve the Open Session minutes of April 28, 2020. Councilor Henry seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Abstain, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes***
- B. April 28, 2020 Executive Session Minutes- *Councilor Richards made a motion to approve the Executive Session minutes of April 28, 2020. Councilor Page seconded the motion. **Roll Call Vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Abstain, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes***

**Communications, Correspondence and Announcements:**

- A. Residents Opposing the Rural Lane/Pilgrim Road Barricade- President Hill stated that we are in receipt of approximately 182 signatures of residents opposing the Rural Lane/Pilgrim Road

barricade. That is just for the record at this point and this matter will be taken up this evening under Old Business.

**Orders of the Day**

A. Licensing Matters – None

B. Financial Matters- FY20 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Budget Update – Olga Bones. Mary McNally stated that she had asked Olga Bones to be here tonight and that Ms. Bones is filling in as interim accountant on very short notice. Ms. McNally stated the Olga Bones prepared the reports that are in your packet and they are not much different than the reports that were provided at the end of the second quarter. There are several accounts that are over spent; those accounts are the same accounts that were identified by Ms. Menard in February.

The report is shown in attachment B.

President Hill stated that the Council appreciates Olga Bones multiple years of service to the Town and appreciates all of the dedication she has in trying to get the Council proper numbers when they need them.

Councilor Page asked if we paid Veteran Services in advance. Ms. Bones stated yes those are paid in July.

Councilor O'Connor asked what the balance was in the Water and Sewer Enterprise fund was. Ms. Bones stated that the Water expense has \$171,803.70 left and the Water Salary has \$212,034.39. The Sewer Expense has \$271,825.38 and the Sewer Salary is \$169,420.19.

**Old Business:**

A. Traffic on Rural Lane – Chief Dalessio and DPW Superintendent Bruce Fenney were present to answer any questions. Councilor Page stated that it was nice to look over the traffic data that was provided and 70% of the vehicles are exceeding the speed limit on Rural Lane. Councilor Page personally does not think the barrier in the location that it is in is a good choice for the Town. Councilor Page does think that some kind of calming to slow traffic is needed. Councilor Page asked Chief Dalessio if there was any other solution. Chief Dalessio stated that the way the Street is laid out it gives the perception that it is a wide street for traveling and leads people to travel faster than on a street with curves in it. Chief Dalessio stated that from his end the calming effect, line painting is what they do on bigger streets. He does not know if that is an option. From law enforcement point of view the presence of police would be a calming effect.

President Hill stated that one of the speakers stated that at one time the speed limit was 35 mph then reduced to 30 mph, is there an opportunity to reduce it even more? Chief Dalessio stated that thickly settled areas are normally 30 mph. It can be reduced to 25 mph.

Councilor O'Connor believes there needs to be a calming effect as well and thinks this might be a multi-phase process. Councilor O'Connor thinks there is also an opportunity to remove the barrier. Another deterrent to speed is the removable speed bumps. Councilor O'Connor would like to accomplish what we all hope to accomplish which is the safety of the neighborhood

Councilor Henry stated that he spoke against this at the April 28, 2020 Town Council meeting. Councilor Henry stated that while the Council is authorized to make this decision without a Public Hearing he feels we owed it to everyone to do so and personally apologizes for not holding a Public Hearing. Councilor Henry believes the blockade should be removed and that speed enforcement preferably with a speed bump or two is the appropriate response to the issue.

Councilor Richards stated that this decision was made in good faith and that the barrier was meant to be temporary. Councilor Richards stated that everyone is entitled to public safety and believes as a community we need to be more cognizant of our driving.

DPW Director Bruce Fenney suggested that Rural Lane be put on the Sidewalk Master Plan.

*Councilor Page made a motion to remove the traffic barriers placed at Rural Lane. Councilor Henry seconded the motion. **Roll call vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Yes, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes.***

President Hill stated that we have some action plans going forward. The barriers will be removed, the Chief will schedule more patrols and Bruce Fenney will look into costs for putting sidewalks in there and then give them a timeline where that will fall on the Master Plan. The intent is to investigate options not to disrupt the Master Plan stated President Hill.

*Councilor Henry made a motion that the DPW investigate costs surrounding the installation of speed bumps on Rural Lane. Councilor O’Connor seconded the motion.*

President Hill asked if Councilor Henry was talking about permanent speed bumps or the removable type. President Hill also stated that they would need Bruce Fenney’s opinion on are the removable ones really that removable. Mr. Fenney stated that typically a speed bump for traffic calming needs, which this area does not qualify for through Mass DOT regulations, are about \$55,000.00 a piece for a permanent one. There is also a significant cost for signage. Mr. Fenney stated he can look into the cost of the removable speed bumps.

Councilor Anderson asked if it was correct that you have to have crosswalks for a purpose, you just cannot have a random crosswalk with stop signs in each direction. Mr. Fenney said yes that is correct.

Councilor Richards stated that we are hearing from Bruce Fenney that there are certain items that do not qualify for a lane perhaps there is something less expensive they can look at it.

***Roll call vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O’Connor – Yes, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes.***

**New Business:**

1. **Town Council Financial Oversight Committee Update-** Christine Saulnier and James Broderick were present. Ms. Saulnier updated the Council on some of the activity that has been going on. Ms. Saulnier stated that to date the Financial Oversight Committee has been meeting virtually once a week since April 8<sup>th</sup> and after all that they have heard this evening on the financial front Ms. Saulnier thinks you all agree that this budget season is like no other. The Covid19 impact on the state was unforeseen. The Collector shared a chart with them showing the loss in revenue in a very short period of time. Ms. Saulnier stated that currently the Committee is anticipating the calculation of the recent reductions that were requested of the Department Heads.

All indications are that the state legislature will not finalize its budget until sometime this fall and we are trying to project a shortfall in state aid of at least 14%. At this time they do not know what the impact is going to be on local aid. The Governor's legislation has allowed communities to formulate a 1 ½ budget going forward in July up to three months' worth. The Committee suggests that the Town consider doing this. They have currently set a goal of having a tentative fiscal 2021 budget by the end of June, that goal is subject to change.

**Action Items:** Contact Mr. Denver about the moratorium.

*Councilor Richards made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:41 pm. Councilor Page seconded the motion. Roll call vote: President Hill – Yes, Councilor Anderson – Yes, Councilor O'Connor – Yes, Councilor Richards – Yes, Councilor Page –Yes, Councilor Kane – Yes, Councilor Henry – Yes.*

The next Town Council meeting will be May 26, 2020.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jackie Sullivan

Assistant Town Clerk

**Documents:** Agenda, Zone denial to J. Martin, Letter to J. Martin re: zone change, Town Manager report, Financial Oversight Committee update, Rural Lane document with signatures, Rural Lane document from March 10, 2020, Open Session minutes of April 28, 2020, Executive Session minutes of April 28, 2020, 3<sup>RD</sup> Quarter salaries report, 3<sup>RD</sup> Quarter General Fund Water and Sewer, 3<sup>RD</sup> Quarter Expense report.



TOWN OF EAST LONGMEADOW

Town Manager's Report

May 12, 2020

Good Evening:

The primary focus of the last two weeks has been budget preparation, employee staffing levels and emergency management. The Financial Oversight Committee has been meeting weekly and its Chair, Christine Saulnier, and Co-Chair, Jim Broderick, are here this evening with a report on their progress. The Department Heads will continue to attend the meetings of this subcommittee to answer any questions regarding their operations. The Finance Department employees are working diligently to resolve a number of payroll issues which remain from recent administrative projects and are taking responsibility for additional functions to assist operations in the absence of a Director. That position has been advertised and I hope to have a Finance Director in place soon. In the meanwhile, I have written to the Director of Accounts at the Department of Revenue to seek approval for deficit emergency spending as authorized by the Governor's Declaration of Emergency of March 10, 2020. (Mass. General Laws Ch. 44, section 31).

Budget and revenue concerns are compounded by the social distancing requirements which continue to create difficulties in staffing our offices and other workplaces. We continue to plan for the eventual re-opening of our public buildings at some time on or after May 18, 2020, depending on the Governor's directives. Plans are underway to provide essential "sneeze" guard protections in all customer-facing departments to help ensure a safe environment for the employees and members of the public. On May 6, 2020, the Governor's mask order went into effect. Enforcement of this order falls to local Boards of Health and Police Departments. The Town's policy on enforcement of this directive is to educate and encourage the public to cooperate and comply, reserving warnings and fines as a last resort. Despite these additional responsibilities and the stress on the public and the employees, we continue to work toward our goal of mature, reasonable and responsible management of the Town's services.

The Capital Planning Committee met the last two Mondays and began its rating of the various projects suggested by Departments. A report will be forthcoming in the near future for review. Covid-19 related expenses continue to be tracked for reimbursement. The weekly and/or daily conference calls and webinars continue the constant flow of information from a variety of sources, all of which attempt to provide guidance and support. This guidance is evaluated and passed through to the community.

Eight weeks into this emergency, the toll is beginning to show. Some offices are falling a bit behind in their workflow and many are anxious for an end to this seemingly perpetual crisis. We remind ourselves often of the underlying reason for it all and the countless lives lost, and the grief and mourning of our neighbors. I thank our employees at every opportunity for their patience, understanding, acceptance and diligence throughout this period. I will repeat here that the Town can be rightfully proud of the extraordinary contributions made by many of its employees working together to manage the taxpayers' needs and expectations.

Respectfully submitted,

Mary E. McNally  
Town Manager