

**Dover Select Board
Special Meeting Minutes
Virtual Set Up
Tuesday, March 24, 2020**

THESE MINUTES ARE NOT OFFICIAL UNTIL THEY HAVE BEEN APPROVED BY THE DOVER SELECT BOARD

Select Board members present via phone or internet: Josh Cohen, Victoria Capitani, Dan Baliotti, Sarah Shippee, Joe Mahon

Also, present via internet: Office Manager, Jeannette Eckert

Public via call in or log in: Tabi Freedman, Marco Tallini, Jim McDevitt, Joan Milgram, Eric Durocher, Lauren Harkawik, Paul Fisher, Mike Garber, Olga Peters, Steve Neratko, Randy Johnson, Tim Dolan, Maggie Lewis, Shannon Wheeler, Linda Sherman

Public via Town Hall: Andy McLean, Randy Capitani

Regular Meeting Called to Order at 6:30pm by Chair Josh Cohen via Zoom

I. Public Comments:

Joe Mahon inquired about doing anything in Executive Session at the end of the session; as one had not been warned, it will need to wait until next meeting

Josh Cohen pointed out that it could take place in future via Zoom as he has the ability to lock other people out who are not taking part in the Exec Session

II. New Business:

A. Consider Commercial Emergency Assistance Program (Economic Development)

Josh read the program wording into the record and then opened it up for discussion

The full FINAL program wording can be viewed on the Dover website:

https://www.doververmont.com/sites/default/files/final_commercial_emergency_assistance_program.pdf

Highlights of the program:

Criteria:

The Economic Development Department and Select Board will evaluate the following criteria:

- The business is physically located within the Town of Dover.
- The business was in operation prior to January 1, 2020.
- The business was open during the months of January and February 2020.

Terms:

Each approved business will receive \$1,000.00 in Emergency Assistance each month, beginning during the first month of approval.

Once approved, the business will continue to receive monthly Emergency Assistance until one of the following occurs:

- COVID-19 State of Emergency within Vermont is lifted; or
- All businesses are otherwise allowed to continue normal operation within Vermont; or
- The amount funded for Emergency Assistance runs out; or
- The Select Board otherwise ends the program.

Comments/Questions:

Andy McLean applauded the efforts and feels it a wonderful use for the 1% money; might allay some fear in the small business owners, believe you are doing the right thing; don't be

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afraid to dedicate a large amount toward this, \$100,000 is a good amount but don't be afraid to dedicate more; spigot from 1% is not going to get shut off
Believe the applications should be open to Dover homeowners & taxpayers who have small businesses in Wilmington, they are our friends and neighbors, don't think you should exclude people in the Valley
A lot of you (Select Board) are small business owners, may feel a conflict of interest—should not need to worry about this; these are crazy times and you need to act; everything you do is public and best policy is to acknowledge that

Sarah Shippee: We need to get a gauge on how many people will want to take advantage of this; since the 1% money comes in from Dover businesses, they should be given first dibs on this funding; will \$1000 a month make a difference in the lives of business owners? Has anyone had any feedback on that?

Vicki Capitani: Owns of a business located in Wilmington. Wilmington is looking at a revolving loan fund at 0 to 1% interest. I have shared our draft with Gretchen Havreluk, Wilmington will not be doing something of this magnitude. I believe we may give out \$100,000 in one month and go from there; it is a place to start

Steve Neratko: We did look at the amount and believed it was a good starting point; Active business ID's in Dover is numbered at 400; Some may have multiple businesses and that should be looked at when applications come in. Believe most businesses will be happy with this assistance; pilot program for everyone, Dover is really the first community putting something like this together; this is still new, \$1000 would make a difference in different ways; hopefully we'll be a little bit ahead of the curve when coming back from this

Olga Peters: Asked for a little background on the program and how it came about
Vicki: Only been percolating for a couple of weeks; This is Steve's last week as Econ Dev Director, asked him to use his expertise on this before he leaves

Eric Durocher: Are these funds expected to be repaid? **No**. Will business owners be required to attend Select board meetings when their application is up for review?

Josh: Not necessarily, Shannon will be reviewing prior to the Select Board meetings and any questions will be answered prior to. Although we do encourage business owners to attend any meeting

Vicki: One-page application; This could get rolling as soon as next week; if you have an active Dover business and done all your filing, you should be good to go

Eric: Closely reviewed each week as applications come in? Is Shannon keeping an eye on the funds as they are going out?

Sarah: It's about helping as many people as we can. Funds will be there going forward to the best of our ability

Joe Mahon: Will this affect any State or Federal funds they might be eligible for? How will we keep accountability? Will we need 1099's on these businesses? This is just handing them a check with their personal name on it. There is accountability on DO-IT & DASP with receipts; this is different, concern is that we are doing it correctly

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Marco Tallini: Unsure, I will check on it. 1099s are for vendors who perform work for the Town, or that its employees can't otherwise perform over \$600.00. It's a fair question
Josh: The difference is that this isn't a reimbursement this is a pay it forward and we hope it is used on business. We still have the applications and the accountability
Vicki: We will have the tax ID# and Fed # and we will have that record
Sarah: We should get that info as soon as possible. Business owners should know if they are getting these documents from us in case that makes a difference to them in applying. Are we going to have a measure of what the funds are being used for?
Josh: We will need to trust they use it for business
Joan Milgram inquired via chat if this applies to Air BnB businesses?
Josh: Yes, if they have a Vermont ID#
Dan Baliotti: Believe \$1000 is a good starting point, will be somewhat of a help; as it goes along will decide what to do next as necessary

Andy: Proposed policy states that each approved business will receive \$1000 per month; building in a bit of scalability, is there a way to apply for this but in a smaller amount?

Vicki: If someone wants \$500 or \$200, its a legitimate question; it could be scalable up to \$1000/mo.

Marco: A lot of hospitality-based businesses are going into mud season, may already be closed but may need help in a couple of months when they open back up in full swing. Is that a consideration?

Joe: Understand the concern, this is just to help out in the interim. Not sure how long this is going to last. We could start another program to help businesses get back up. We can discuss it. This is just a starting point

Vicki: Believe we need to be nimble; we will learn as we go, but the need is immediate

On a motion by Joe Mahon, seconded by Vicki Capitani, the Board unanimously approved the program proposal as stated with a change in the first statement under Terms to read "will receive **up to** \$1000.00" and include a line for the amount of money being applied for.

Jeannette inquired about the next meeting April 7th ---will most likely be virtual as well

Andy: Governor's new order exempts essential local govt. operations. Legislature is working on facilitating these meetings without the need to have a public space available; so, you should be able to continue meeting this way

Marco inquired as far as writing checks for these funds, could applicants provide banking info so checks could be processed electronically to their accounts?

Josh: Perhaps not a part of the application but to provide it after the funds have been approved

III. Adjournment at 7:08pm by Chair Josh Cohen

Respectfully submitted by Jeannette Eckert

Public notices of these minutes have been posted at the following locations: Dover Town Clerk's Bulletin Board, Dover Town Meeting Bulletin Board, Dover School Dover Free Library, East Dover Post Office, Town of Dover Website: www.doververmont.com