

Bindelglass Updates Town on Progress, Challenges



April 14, 2020

Good afternoon,

I hope you all had a peaceful holiday weekend.

I am happy to report that things in Easton are relatively quiet. We have 18 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in town and two deaths, again our condolences to the families. Other First Selectmen in neighboring towns are often stern with their residents regarding how they adhere to social distancing. I honestly believe that the people of Easton have taken this to heart and are doing a great job! It makes me very proud to be your First Selectman.

This, however, is not the time to relax. Governor Lamont and other northeast governors are taking the lead in deciding when and how it will be safe to return to work and our daily activities. We will await their guidance. Yesterday, for a brief moment, our Department of Public Works and our first responders focused on storm damage rather than dealing with the virus, and they did a great job.

With a little breathing room, we can start to think about our normal business. Please

remember that the budget proposal is posted online. Please review it and respond by email to BOF@eastonct.gov with questions and comments. Should you need a hard copy or know of a neighbor who does not have access to a computer, please call my office, we will gladly mail out. Going forward, we will discuss a possible electronic Public Hearing. Today, we brainstormed about **safe** ways to hold a budget referendum. The Board of Selectmen will also be discussing the state mandated options for deferring July property tax payments **or** for reduced interest for late payments. This decision must be made and submitted to the state by April 25, 2020.

Several boards and commissions continue to meet remotely. Cyber security experts, who live in town and with whom I have consulted, feel the platforms being used are secure and safe. People should always use good passwords, and practice being attentive to who is joining a meeting. During a Zoom meeting last night for the South Park Advisory Committee, eight members of the public were present which indicates to me our residents are able to access these meetings and participate in Public Comment. *(THE SOUTH PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE AGENDAS AND MINUTES ARE LOCATED UNDER THE LISTING OF THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN.)* I have tasked the Town Hall staff to continue to forge ahead on designing new and improved programs. I believe that our Boards and Commissions and Committees should do the same. Fact finding and discussions can and should continue, building a sound foundation for future decisions for our town. We will as always, include the residents of Easton on all major decisions.

Somewhat to my surprise, the Westport Weston Health District is ready to resume talks about Easton joining the district. Prior to the start of the pandemic, there had been three public informational meetings regarding the WWHD. The presentation made by Mark Cooper, Director of the Health District has been available online for some time. We are going to model the approval process for joining the district after the budget process. An updated Westport Weston Health District presentation will be posted on the website for 30 days with the ability to comment by email. The plan is to include this as a question on the budget referendum. We will not proceed with joining the Westport Weston Health

District without a vote.

I will be in touch again before the end of the week. EASTON, we are doing a great job!
Keep it up now more than ever.

Be safe and be well.

Dave Bindelglass