

HALIFAX BOARD OF SELECTMEN
SELECTMEN MEETING
MONDAY, JULY 27, 2015 - 2:00 P.M.
SELECTMEN MEETING ROOM

Meeting came to order at 2:00 p.m. with Selectmen Kim Roy, Troy Garron and Thomas Millias. Also in attendance was Sandra Nolan, Town Accountant; Karen Trudeau, Principal Assessor; Terri Renaud, Building Inspector's Administrative Assistant; Barbara Gaynor, Town Clerk; Margaret Selter, Board of Health's Administrative Assistant; Pamela Adduci, Treasurer-Collector; Charlie Seelig, Town Administrator.

DISCUSSION

Town Hall Being Opened on Fridays

Tom Millias

The Board is trying to come up with a cohesive policy about opening the Town Hall on Fridays given the mix of elected and appointed officials and boards. Other than mandating that the building be open at certain hours, the Board of Selectmen does not have any power to compel most of the other departments to be open. Under either scenario (the building being closed or the building being open but some or many offices closed), visitors will be annoyed. One of the questions is whether many offices can be open on Fridays due to payroll limits. He is not sure that there is a need for offices to be open at 7 a.m., Monday-Thursday.

Pamela Adduci

The Treasurer-Collector's office is busy between 7 a.m. and 8 a.m. when bills are due. Karen Trudeau concurred with this. She has no staff available on Fridays other than herself.

Tom Millias

He is trying to figure out how much flexibility is available given the number of employees in each department and the number of hours they work each week.

Kim Roy

Many Town Halls are open on Friday.

Troy Garron

Halifax Town Hall was closed in the early 1990s to save money. The Town tried to reduce costs in many ways at that time including shutting off streetlights.

Karen Trudeau

There is an issue with employees being hired and told that their schedules would be Monday through Thursday and are now being told that they will have to work Fridays. What happens if they decide to quit and the Town is liable for unemployment.

Kim Roy

The hours of operation for each office cannot be dependent on the preferences of individual employees.

Sandy Nolan

It is unlikely that someone would have a valid unemployment claim on the basis of the change in hours.

Tom Millias

When the Town is looking to provide pay raises, if visitors are being helped instead of having offices closed, there is less negative reaction from taxpayers.

Sandra Nolan

The Town Accountant's office receives phone calls throughout the day on Friday, until the end of the afternoon. She is a salaried employee.

Margaret Selter

The Board of Health's office usually has someone in the office for at least half the day on Friday.

Tom Millias

It would be good to have someone in the office and the office be open on Fridays even for a limited number of hours. There is the argument that employees get more work done on Fridays. There have been individual discussions about the building being open on Fridays, but not a group discussion. It can be just as bad to have the building open, but offices closed.

Terri Renaud:

Some departments may need to make adjustments in their schedules. For instance, the Building Inspector's office is open at 7am, Monday-Thursday. Opening on Friday might change that to 9am.

Tom Millias

Contractors will adapt to changes in hours. The building should be open if it can be one.

Terri Renaud

If there are few visitors on Fridays, then it would make sense to revert to the 7 a.m. opening and be closed on Fridays.

Sandra Nolan

Many departments have already planned their summer schedules around vacations and days off for employees. Some offices that are closed during the summer may be open for a few hours each Friday in the fall. She is surprised to see how many visitors have come to Town Hall on the Fridays that we've been open.

Tom Millias

Some people come in to visit the Collector's office because they have to pay bills by that date.

Kim Roy

Is interest charged for Fridays when interest is being calculated for late bills?

Pamela Adduci

Yes, just as it is for Saturdays and Sundays.

Tom Millias

Are Friday openings doable for any departments?

Pamela Adduci

Full-time elected officials would have to work 40 hours per week whether the building is open or not.

Tom Millias:

Can department schedules be changed?

Pamela Adduci

When she was conducting interviews for jobs in her office, some people were specifically interested in the four-day work week.

Kim Roy

In those departments with multiple employees, they could rotate working on Fridays.

Tom Millias

Either you can or you can't work out a schedule.

Sandra Nolan

The Collector's office may want more hours on Fridays depending on the schedules of when bills are due.

Tom Millias

Departments that already have a 40-hour per week schedule could make changes in their schedules as they want.

Sandra Nolan

She is concerned about Fridays during the winter because of security issues. Perhaps the building can be open from 8 a.m. to noon, then the doors closed and people can make appointments.

Tom Millias

Being open all day on Friday may not be workable for everyone, but most offices could try for some hours on a regular basis.

Margaret Selter

The Board of Health office usually tells people to call and they will meet them at the door.

Barbara Gaynor

The Town Clerk's office has not decided about Fridays but she has been available, on an ad hoc basis, weekends and evenings.

Tom Millias

He would like to suggest some type of regular schedule.

Barbara Gaynor

Suggested being open on Fridays from 8 a.m. until noon.

Troy Garron

This would be up to the department heads and not be a mandate.

Sandra Nolan

Suggests that we leave the way it is now then do some publicity for the fall hours, 8 a.m. until noon with specific offices being available.

Troy Garron

Residents have talked with him about their frustrations with the building being closed on Fridays. If the building can be open on Fridays, we should do it, but there should not be a strain put on the departments.

Karen Trudeau

The Town Clerk is paid for 30 hours per week. She should not stress out.

Tom Millias

Anyone who can be open on Fridays should do it.

Margaret Selter

If someone comes in with something to drop off and an office is closed, someone else can sign for it.

Tom Millias

The Town Hall should be locked up if there is just one person in the building.

MEETING ADJOURNED

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:45 p.m.

Thomas Millias

Clerk

/pjm