Windham VT Selectboard Meeting Minutes

December 23, 2021 Special Meeting

Via Zoom: In-Person:

Kord Scott, Selectboard Maureen Bell, Selectboard Chair

George Dutton, Selectboard Vance Bell, various positions

Dawn Bower, various positions

Kathy Jungermann, various positions

Jim Lawler

Imme Maurath, various positions

Stephan Maurath

Barbara Jean Quinn, Social Services Committee

Kathy Scott, Treasurer

**Call to Order**

Maureen announced the meeting and called it to order at 7:01 PM

**Public Comment:**

None.

**Act on Rule for Face Coverings in Public Buildings**

With the situation being so fluid and new positive cases of Covid popping up in Town, we thought it would be prudent to talk about a Face Coverings Rule.

Maureen typed a draft Rule, sent it around to Kord and George and will present here, with a slight change. Maureen shared an email she received from her medical provider at Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center in which they called the Covid situation in New England dire. They say the majority of people they see as Covid patients are unvaccinated. They are encouraging people to get vaccinated and boostered, wear a mask, keep safe distances and wash hands.

Maureen then shared the document we will discuss tonight, which says “All individuals in the Town of Windham, VT shall wear face coverings over the nose and mouth while indoors at locations that are open to the public – The Town Office and The Windham Meeting House.” She doesn’t think we need to regulate the Town Garage because that is not open to the public.

George questioned whether an organization like Meadow’s Bee Farm would be affected, since they do offer events “open to the public”. Maureen didn’t think that would be covered because they are on private property. George stated that when Brattleboro enacted their Face Covering Rule, it affected his business, which is of course, on private property. He’s concerned about when the school kids go to the farm. He’s concerned about the term covering Public Buildings.

Maureen asked him if he thought we should be covering all public gatherings. He wasn’t suggesting that – he just wanted clarification of the terms. Maureen then went on to read the guidance from Vermont League of Cities and Towns which says we can customize their Rule Model as we see fit. George said he feels that enacting this Rule in Municipal Buildings is a good start and we can take another look at it before it expires. Kord was of the same opinion. He also said he had been hopeful that people would be using their common sense, but after what he saw at our last Selectboard Meeting (an unmasked individual refusing to put on a mask when requested to do so), he feels this is a good start.

The initial action is good for a period of 45 days, which, if signed tomorrow, will take us to February 7 and a Selectboard Meeting. At that point we can re-evaluate and either renew this for another 30 days and continue that through April 30, 2021 or let it expire.

The exceptions pointed out in the model rule are for religious officiants during a service and children under 2. Kathy Scott doesn’t feel that a religious officiant needs a mask exception. George agreed with this.

Maureen mentioned that she heard from our Health Officer, Marcia Clinton, who feels this should have already been enacted. Joyce Cumming expressed her support in an email as well. Kord pointed out that both Claremont and Lebanon have mask mandates in place.

No one was sure if the school kids are required to wear masks when they visit Meadow’s Bee. George knows that they are not required to wear them when they are outside at the school. Kord confirmed that they wear them on the school bus.

Stephan expressed his concern about the way things are dealt with at Meadow’s Bee. He feels the proprietor has an agenda, which doesn’t mean the she can’t have common courtesy to the rest of us. He would like us to keep an eye on the situation there. George asks if we could reassess this in 30 days, rather than 45? Don’t see why not.

Dawn asked if we should be posting signs around Town. Maureen confirmed she made up signs for The Meeting House and the Town Office.

**Motion:** To accept the Rule for Face Coverings in Public Buildings effective

December 24 eliminating the section about the religious officiant – moved by Maureen. All voted in favor.

**Adjournment:**

**Motion**: To adjourn the Selectboard meeting at 7:21 PM – moved by George. All voted in favor.

Maureen Bell

Acting Selectboard Clerk

Attachment: Unsigned draft copy of Rule Requiring Wearing Face Coverings indoors in Public Spaces