



TOWN OF NORWELL
Norwell Town Offices, Room 112
345 Main Street
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
(781) 659-8000

Norwell Advisory Board Meeting Minutes February 6, 2024

The Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Elizabeth Hibbard at 7:30 PM. Also present were Town Administrator Darleen Sullivan, Town Accountant Christine McCarthy, and Board Members Bob Perniola, Brian D'Souza, John McGrath, Matthew Hanson, Thomas Sullivan, Ed Maguire, John LaCara, and Dane Hutchison.

AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Perniola to approve the agenda as submitted. Seconded by Mr. LaCara and unanimously voted.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Minutes

The minutes of the January 25 meeting were distributed and reviewed.

Motion by Mr. LaCara to accept the minutes of the January 25, 2024 meeting as submitted. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests

None

FY 2025 BUDGET OVERVIEW BY DEPARTMENT NUMBER

Town Administrator Darleen Sullivan gave a brief overview of the following budgetary requests.

Veterans Officer - #543

Veterans Service Officer Dave Osborne present.

The proposed budget includes an increase in Mr. Osborne's stipend. He signed up an additional veteran for benefits and anticipates another in the near future, which will increase the cost shown on the budget. Ms. Sullivan gave the new budget total as \$40,500, 75% of which will be reimbursed by the state.

Mr. McGrath asked about the possibility of further changes due to additional veterans becoming eligible or ineligible. Ms. Sullivan thinks the current number is safe due to attrition, which Mr. Osborne estimates to be about 11 veterans per year; she would ask for a small reserve fund transfer if needed. Mr. Osborne noted that the veterans who do remain often require more services. Any unused funds eventually return to the General Fund in the following fiscal year.

Mr. Osborne provides other services including decorating veteran graves, organizing the Memorial and Veterans Day ceremonies, and hosting an annual veterans' luncheon completely supported by

donations. He would like to replace 84 missing medallion markers at the Washington Street cemetery; he has 40 on hand but needs to secure funds to purchase another 50 or so; Ms. Sullivan and Mr. Hutchison can assist. The Board thanked Mr. Osborne for all his efforts.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 543, Veterans Officer, in the amount of \$40,500. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Treasurer/Collector - #145

Treasurer/Collector Pam Adduci present. The proposed FY 25 budget of \$507,332.60 reflects contractual salary increases and possible vacation buybacks. The Banking Services line is down to \$7600, as she has stopped using Brinks to transport funds; Professional Services is slightly up due to increased fees. The budget includes an admin fee for a 0% PFAS mitigation loan, which will go down as the debt goes down.

Mr. LaCara met with Ms. Adduci, and all seems in order. Norwell has a good bond rating due to its conservative debt policy.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 145, Treasurer Collector, in the amount of \$507,332.60. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Debt Service

Under Levy Debt - #750

Ms. Adduci read through the following line items denoting under levy debt principal carried within the Town's operating budget:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
Cemetery	\$55,000	2034
Main Street Road	\$220,000	2031
2018 Roads	\$145,000	2028
2022 Road	\$75,000	2042
Cole Parking	\$65,000	2027
Highway Barn	\$245,000	2042
Town Hall	\$90,000	2053
Total	\$895,000	

2014 Water Main debt, self-supported by Water Department fees, has a principal of \$60,000 and expires in 2034.

Debt exclusion principal and expiration dates are as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Principal</u>	<u>Expiration</u>
2005 School Building	\$485,000	2025
Police Station	\$250,000	2034
Library 2020	\$300,000	2040
Library 2	\$95,000	2042

Ms. Sullivan noted there were two library line items due to their taking advantage of a low interest rate and to cover the final town cost after state reimbursements. Total under-levy, Water Department, and excluded debt principal is \$2,085,000.

Ms. Sullivan noted the Town often gets a premium on their bonds which can cover the cost of borrowing. Mr. Perniola appreciates knowing the expiration dates on the debt and would like other departments to provide this going forward if they are asking for an exclusion. Ms. Sullivan tries to time the debt to keep service costs as level as possible.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 710, Debt Retirement, in the amount of \$2,085,000. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Interest on Long-Term Debt - #751

Ms. Adduci read through the following line items denoting long-term debt interest carried within the Town's operating budget:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Cemetery	\$16,937.50
Main Street Road	\$26,260.00
2018 Road	\$20,500.00
2022 Road	\$32,325.00
Cole Parking Lot	\$8125.00
Highway Barn	\$129,865.00
Town Hall	\$203,100.00

2014 Water Main interest, self-supported by Water Department fees, is \$19,950.00.

Debt exclusion interest is as follows:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Interest</u>
2005 School Building	\$8730.00
Police Station	\$83,125.00
Library 2020	\$135,000.00
Library 2022	\$50,140.00

Total under-levy, Water Department, and excluded debt interest is \$745,057.50.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 751, Debt Interest, in the amount of \$745,057.50. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Interest on Short-Term Debt - #752

Ms. Sullivan advised there is no interest on short-term debt in the budget.

Advisory Board - #131

Ms. Sullivan recommended a level-funded budget of \$2200.00 to cover the preparation of meeting minutes.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 131, Advisory Board, in the amount of \$2200.00. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Commission on Disabilities - #190

Ms. Sullivan recommended a level-funded budget of \$2000.00 for brochures and other outreach.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 190, Commission on Disabilities, in the amount of \$2000. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Cushing Memorial - #191

Ms. Sullivan recommends a slightly increased budget of \$74,191.97 to cover salaries for two part-time employees, utilities, advertising, office supplies, and basic maintenance. The building, which previously served as town hall and police station, has several renters and is available for meetings and functions; it brings in about \$50,000 in rental income annually. Any unused budgetary funds are turned back to the Town. Facilities Director Ted Nichols is reviewing some capital spending requests for the building.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 191, Cushing Memorial in the amount of \$74,941.97. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Beautification - #199

Ms. Sullivan recommended a budget of \$3500.00. The Commission beautifies traffic circles and other areas of town, and the Committee provides recognition to town residents and organizations.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 199, Beautification Committee, in the amount of \$3500. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Sealer of Weights and Measures - #244

The Sealer receives a stipend to measure the calibration accuracy of gas pumps and commercial scales, and responds to resident complaints. Affected businesses pay fees that accrue to the Town.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 244, Sealer of Weights and Measures, in the amount of \$7500. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

Historic Commission - #691

The Historic Commission administers the demolition delay bylaw and assists with the management and maintenance of Town-owned historic buildings. A level-funded budget of \$4K is recommended to cover meeting minutes, homeowner education brochures, and postage. The Commission also supplements funds from the Jacobs Farmhouse Trust to cover utilities.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the budget for Department 691, Historic Commission, in the amount of \$4000. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. Sullivan is wrapping up meetings with Department heads and hopes to have final numbers for some of the larger budgets soon. South Shore Vo-Tech, SSRECC, and Norfolk Agricultural are on the agenda for next week. The School Department has requested a mid-March meeting date.

FUTURE MEETINGS

2/8, 2/13, 2/15, 2/27, 2/29, 3/5, 3/7, 3/12, 3/14, 3/19, 3/21, 3/26, 3/28

Town Hall, Osborn Room

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was by Mr. Perniola to adjourn at 8:31 PM. Seconded by Mr. McGrath and unanimously voted.
