

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
January 20, 2016**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2016 FEB 11 PM 3:51

RECEIVED

Mr. McBride opened the meeting at 7:38pm, and introduced Jason Brown, Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Peter Smellie and Town Administrator Peter Morin. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved the agenda as written. Seconded by Peter Smellie and unanimously voted.*

REPORTS

Citizen Comments – None

Selectmen's Report -

Ms. Demong announced that the program about Tick Awareness is scheduled for February 29th at 7pm in the Little Theater at Norwell High School.

Mr. Brown: the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee met with a company who gave them a scope of services proposal. More information about the proposal will be included on next week's BOS agenda.

Town Administrator's Report

On January 28th Lt. Governor Karyn Polito will be in Norwell to sign the Community Compact Agreement between the Governor's office and Norwell. The agreement will provide technical assistance to the Town in seeking economic development and capital planning. It also makes the Town eligible to apply for grants in a number of areas. The ceremony is scheduled for 12:30. There will be a press conference which will provide more information about this program.

A second ceremony at the Weymouth Town Hall, later the same day (3:30), will formally award Norwell the status of Green Community.

The Town received S & P's formal rating letter for the bond issuance of \$3.8 million. The Town's AAA rating was maintained. The letter spoke of a very strong financial, budgetary and management performance, strong liquidity, and noted that there are very good policies in place and also in practice! The members of the S & P staff doing the audit were very impressed with Treasurer Darleen Sullivan, Finance Director Donna Mangan, Selectman Ellen Allen and Town Administrator Peter Morin. Ms. Allen gave an excellent overview of the Town's fiscal policies and history to S & P. Norwell should get a very favorable bond issuance in the next few days. Mr. McBride gave credit to Town employees Donna Mangan and Darleen Sullivan, Ms. Allen, Mr. Morin and former Town Administrator Jim Boudreau.

Fire Department Budget - Chief Andy Reardon

Chief Reardon gave an overview of his department's budget, which is a level service budget for FY 2017. He summarized the current personnel count, stating that, of the twenty uniformed personnel, fifteen are paramedics who are trained to the highest level of pre-hospital care. The department has been in the forefront of many initiatives, and continues to maintain a pro-active position in pre-hospital care. Chief Reardon gave an overview of the increases in some line items such as tuition reimbursement. Utilities expenses have changed with the creation of the public safety campus; the Police and Fire departments have agreed to underwrite one utility each at 300 Washington Street (gas and electricity). Computer costs were discussed by Chief Reardon and Mr. McBride. The department has two certified technicians who can work on the

equipment, which will save the department money. Chief Reardon commented that one of the best things the Town has done is to combine the location of the Police and Fire departments. This consolidation of locations makes routine business much easier. The Main Street Fire Station needs some additional repairs of about \$10-20K, depending on the bid. The Pine Street fire station also needs some repairs.

There is an Ambulance budget increase. The Ambulance expenses are a separate budget line item now, which allows for better cost tracking. Repair and maintenance is quite large, as medical supplies, which must be fully stocked in ambulances, have become increasingly costly. Emergency management budget – Code Red was implemented this year with a three year contract, and the cost is in this budget.

Mr. McBride asked for questions from the board:

Ms. Allen – Fitness benefit budget is higher. Chief Reardon stated that he allowed for the maximum amount just in case. His staff loves this benefit, and Union leadership has been very positive about getting this program in place. Per Ms. Allen, this seems like a good incentive – passing a fitness test to earn a stipend, which encourages a healthy Fire Dept. Both Police and Fire departments participated together in this program in October.

Mr. McBride - Overtime...why was it over budget last year? Per Chief Reardon, the department brought in extra personnel last January and February due to the weather, and further explained the complex scheduling system and how it affects overtime.

Mr. Brown - Code Red – Per Chief Reardon, this program is funded in the Emergency line budget. There is an annual fee of \$7000, and the Town signed a \$21K contract for a 3 year period. The department investigated 3 or 4 different services and chose Code Red as the best option. The service will be reviewed again when the contract is up for renewal or cancellation. The department wants to keep the public as well informed as possible within reasonable guidelines. Both the Fire and Police departments use social media very effectively.

Mr. Brown – is there a building maintenance line increase? Per Chief Reardon, some painting is needed at 300 Washington Street and there are Main street repairs issues that have been building up. The department tried to seek other funding from the CPC with no success.

Mr. Morin stated that he has reviewed the budget with Chief Reardon and understands his requests; by and large it is a solid budget.

Fire Department Capital budget – there are three issues, two primary issues. The purchase of the new fire truck is wonderful but there is still a need to replace an ambulance in July. There are only two ambulances for the Town, the third vehicle is a “Tri-town ambulance” which is shared and is a vehicle of last resort. Scituate, Cohasset and Norwell share this, with no desire to repeat this joint purchase. “Tri-town” is stored here because of the space. However, it does serve a purpose. This vehicle supports the towns that have beaches needing ambulance service, especially in the spring and summer. The cost is \$180K for a new vehicle. The department will be looking for an additional \$33K for a Lucas tool, which couples to a patient’s chest for CPR issues. They would like to purchase two, one for the primary ambulance and one to use in a fire truck. The tool gets very good reviews on its job performance as an additional set of hands. Chief Reardon stressed the importance of maintaining the fleet of department vehicles.

Mr. McBride – are we covering the costs of the ambulance with each run? Per Chief Reardon – yes. He then gave a summary of ambulance costs with regard to the federally mandated fixed fee, insurance payers, and the actual cost. The State Legislature was supportive of allowing the towns to set their own rates, and hopefully this administration will be supportive as well. Ms. Allen stated that the ambulance receipts cover about one third of the Fire department's budget, but as the receipts go into the general fund it's not possible to see that in the department budget.

Police Department budget – Chief Ted Ross

Chief Ross gave an overview of his operating budget for FY17. The major increases are items covered in the collective bargaining agreement and are detailed in the budget. An additional major increase is the request for a new patrol officer position. If this position is approved, the department will select a veteran officer to act as a fulltime School Resource Officer (SRO). This would be beneficial to the department, schools and the students. They are currently using a detective to work about 15 hours per week at the schools, but he can't do his regular job and that work as well. Chief Ross gave an overview of the duties of this SRO position, which include educator, counselor, and law enforcement officer, with security assistance and co-teaching for related legal subjects.

Mr. McBride asked why this is not a school funded position. Mr. Morin stated that he had recommended that it come under the Police Department budget as the chain of command would be the Police chief. Mr. McBride asked for Chief Ross' input. Per Chief Ross, the overall benefit is to foster a relationship with the students in the school. Right now this position is 10-15 hours per week, which limits it primarily to addressing bullying, teaching at assemblies, and meeting with schools to stage the mock car crash. The new SRO position will be integrated within the school Department, and the officer will be uniformed and armed. There won't be an office in the school, but the officer will have access to a work area/conference room and will have a laptop. The SRO will be available for other duties when school is not in session. This position is a state mandated requirement. The board expressed the opinion that this still seems like a school department budget expense.

Operating budget – the department will pay gas utility expenses, the Fire department will pay the electric utility expenses. The utilities budget is therefore \$4000 less than last year.

Police Department Capital budget – they are requesting two cruisers again this year.

There are no additional capital items. Personnel – there are currently 23 full time officers with one open position, which they will try to fill with a lateral transfer. If there are no applicants, they will contact HR. The SRO position would be created, but the department would hire from within and fill the vacancy with a new officer from the civil service list. Mr. Morin stated that it is the Chief's intention to fill the SRO from his current staff, and backfill with a new hire. He would like to increase the department to 24 full time people.

Ms. Allen – why has overtime expense for Police clerks doubled? Per Chief Ross, this budget item has been consistent since FY15.

Per Ms. Allen's questions regarding increased building maintenance costs, Chief Ross stated that they are starting to get maintenance contracts into place for the new station. Mr. Morin stated that he considers this a good budget, and he is the one who made the decision that the SRO position would be funded out of this budget. The BOS can choose not to support funding this, but the Chief has the ultimate decision to request this officer.

Mr. McBride asked how many hours per week for the school functions? Per Chief Ross, after school the SRO may be utilized somewhat by the department, but he will attend school meetings, etc. and will be involved in mostly school functions. The position doesn't require a vehicle. His shift will be worked out within the collective bargaining agreement.

On another matter, Chief Ross stated that department detectives conducted alcohol compliance checks, all Town licensed businesses passed. The Police department received an award for alcohol compliance.

Selectmen's budget – Peter Morin, Town Administrator

This budget is slightly more than a level service budget – 1.7% over level service. The increase is a request to expand the BOS office hours for Denise Nestor's position. Mr. Morin gave kudos to both Lynda Allen and Denise Nestor, citing the necessity for the BOS office to function well, plus the addition of new duties for the Stetson cemetery plots administration. Mr. Morin gave an overview of Denise's current duties. Not a large amount of increase in any other line items. Mr. McBride – do you anticipate being able to provide more support for the other committees? Mr. Morin – yes, Town Hall administration could do a better job of supporting the committees. This is warranted, and Mr. Morin could use a little more assistance and help with prioritization of his tasks and projects. Ms. Allen stated her support for this increase, and knows it will help with the cemetery duties. Ms. Demong – is there a tick budget? Mr. Morin stated that it would be part of the BOH budget.

Library Project Committee Update

Finalizing the Library project committee requires a mission statement and the decision to appoint the new committee for the duration of the project.

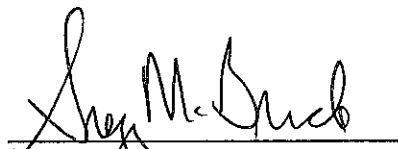
Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to make the mission of the Library Project Committee to conduct a feasibility study for a construction grant, hire an Owner's Project Manager, hire an architect, and solicit funds for feasibility study, including a reallocation of the remaining LTHSC article 11 ATM FY 2015 funds in the amount of \$23,422.08.

Appointments have been made for the duration until right before construction, when the PBMC will take over and this committee will be disbanded. Unanimously voted

PBMC members of this committee will include Laurence Gogarty and Gary Osborne, and BOS member Ellen Allen will serve on the LPC as well.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie. Unanimously voted to adjourn at 9:05pm



Board of Selectmen