

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
March 23, 2016**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2016 JUN -6 AM 11:00

RECEIVED

Mr. McBride opened the meeting at 7:30pm, and introduced Ellen Allen, Jason Brown, Alison Demong, Peter Smellie and Town Administrator Peter Morin.

Mr. McBride reminded all that this meeting will be re-broadcast on the local cable channel.

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the agenda as written.

Unanimously voted

REPORTS

Citizen Comments

None

Selectmen's Report

Ms. Allen stated that the OPEB Trust Board has decided to stay with their current fund administrator.

The Library Project Committee is interviewing 8 candidates for OPM and will try to make their selection before the end of April.

Ms. Demong announced that the Complete Streets Committee put out an RFP to consultants for a prioritization plan. There are 2 applicants to choose from, and this work will be underwritten by the state grant.

Mr. McBride – the Town Clerk reminds all that there is a special state primary for a senator, and absentee ballots are available until April 11th. Absentee ballots must be applied for before 12 noon on April 11th, after which time the Clerk's Office will close to prepare for the election. The Conservation Commission is announcing a program called Adopt-a-Trail at their Open House on Monday, March 28, from 4-7 pm. There will be a small training program for all who wish to be involved in maintenance and stewardship of the Town's trails. Conservation Day will be held on June 5th.

Friends of the COA are having a bake sale tomorrow, March 24th, from 9am-3pm at the COA, which is located at 293 Pine Street.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Morin met with Linda Murphy and representatives of Columbia Gas re: plans for gas main replacements throughout the Town. Columbia Gas is trying to schedule 3-5 years of work on roads that have not been recently paved. Mr. Morin mentioned areas of the Town that will be under construction. Ms. Allen cautioned Mr. Morin and Ms. Murphy that a close eye should be kept on the workers, as serious problems have occurred during past construction projects with this company.

7:40 CVAA License Transfer, Tokio Tora, 434 Washington Street

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to open the public hearing as advertised in the Patriot Ledger for the transfer of Tokio Tora's CVAA license and CV license to Good Fortune, LLC, dba Tokio Tora Restaurant at 434 Washington Street. Unanimously voted

Clerk Peter Smellie read the legal notice as printed in the Patriot Ledger. Attorney Joe Sullivan represented Good Fortune, LLC and gave a brief overview of the new owners' work history. They will be taking over the business as soon as the licenses have been approved. Attorney

2016 JUN 16 AM 11:00

Sullivan mentioned that both are TIPS certified, and will serve as sushi chef and front of house management. Mr. McBride asked if any other workers are TIPS certified. Per Attorney Sullivan, family members who might be asked to work will obtain TIPS certification. Ms. Allen asked if both were US citizens; answer – yes. The BOH asked that a food permit be obtained, which is currently pending. All departments contacted have no concerns, and all taxes are current. New owners Jin Song Wu and Jiang Hau Guan have no plans to change the interior setup.

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the transfer of the CVAA and CV licenses of Tokio Tora to Good Fortune, LLC, dba Tokio Tora, subject to obtaining a food permit from the BOH that would be valid until 12/31/16. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to close the public hearing at 7:47pm. Unanimously voted

7:50pm Softball Field Proposal Access and Softball Field Committee

Jim Rogers represented the Girls Softball Committee. Ms. Allen gave a recap of the CPC application and activities to date, reminding all that this portion of the South Street land desired for softball fields is under the control of the BOS, and is only available for Open Space and Recreation. The project would need the approval of the BOS to move forward with building plans. Mr. McBride asked that the presentation be kept to less than 15 minutes. Mr. Rogers repeated the presentation that was given to the CPC, with the history of the girls softball team and the overview of the plans for two softball fields. The CPC approved \$150K for due diligence for this project with two contingencies; BOS approval of the field use and Library Board Trustees approval to utilize the current library's parking lot for project construction access. Players for this league now number 152. Mr. Rogers gave an overview of the proposed project budget, which totals \$1.6 million over a four year period. Mr. McBride asked Ms. Ivas if the Library Trustees would like to comment at this time. Mr. Rogers stated that they are on the April 13th meeting agenda with the Library Trustees. Per Ms. Ivas, the concern of the Trustees is the construction demolition of their current parking lot. Both projects would need to be coordinated so as to have the least impact. Per Ms. Allen, there is concern about the length of time that this disruption would involve. All viewed the map of the proposed fields and library.

Mr. Brown asked about potential funding outside the CPC funding of the initial \$150K, and also discussed other Town projects that would be taxpayer funded. He is concerned about the rest of the CPC funding after the feasibility study is done. Mr. Rogers stated that there will be some private fundraising, but not on the scale of funds that were raised for the CCC. The board expressed concern about this project competing with other potential projects, funding ability and future CPC commitments. Discussion ensued about budgets, funding and the group's perceived lack of interest by the Town in repairing or rehabbing the existing fields to allow their group the use of a decent field. Ms. Demong reminded Mr. Rogers that they had not contacted the BOS to discuss this issue, to which Mr. Rogers replied that they had approached the School Committee. Ms. Allen asked that the group please make it clear to all that they did not ask the BOS to consider these repairs. There was a lengthy discussion about fields sharing and consideration of other potential locations such as Green Street (too expensive and not included in the Gale report). Mr. McBride stated his surprise at the large amount of \$150K for a feasibility study and asked to what extent they have looked at the other fields. He also stated that the fields are Town resources, the use of which can be addressed with the schools.

Ms. Allen contacted a member of the school committee for an official response; which was read into the minutes. (See memo as attachment)

The memo to Supt. Matt Keegan gave an overview of field use for school athletic programs as well as proposed updates to Woodworth 3 and 4 using school funding. Ms. Allen will send this memo to the rest of the board. The Schools consider these fields to be acceptable and in compliance for the High School teams.

Ms. Allen has concerns with the proposal for this project. The South Street land is an environmentally challenging location, and she would like to find a way to address this problem by creating better fields now rather than 5 years from now. It would be a better use of funds to

create a multipurpose field rather than single use fields. For example, by creating a new multipurpose field at Osborne, sports usage could be re-distributed in a more equitable manner. Scheduling issues could be addressed in a shorter amount of time if existing fields were rehabbed. There is a BOS Article in the Warrant to address conditions at Woodworth 3. Ms. Allen reminded all that field use by all Town sports is an allocation issue. Discussion ensued about recommendations made in the Gale report.

Ms. Demong stated that waiting a year makes sense, and expressed her disappointment in the AFC, who have not done enough homework to arrive at the best solution. Bob Ward, also part of the Softball Field Committee recapped the issues with the current Osborne field. Once again, scheduling is an issue, per the board. Mr. McBride halted the discussion at this point and pledged to do a better job of scheduling. He stated that it would be premature to start designing fields while the library plans are not yet well defined. Rich Webber, AFC Chair, defended the AFC's work on this proposal. Funding to rehab existing fields and better scheduling could help the situation. The board again expressed the opinion that it is too premature to make this decision, and all parties should get input from the library first. The Recreation Department and the AFC should work together to develop a short term plan for scheduling issues relief. Ms. Allen reminded all that there is an Article on the Warrant to improve Woodworth 3. More discussion ensued regarding scheduling issues. Mr. McBride stated that he would recommend that the BOS not vote until they hear from the library trustees. The board will try to get the groups involved to work together for a scheduling solution, and the BOS will revisit this issue at another time.

Creation of the DPW Committee

Ms. Allen and Ms. Demong would like to discuss this issue. Per Ms. Allen, this is an opportune time to consider a DPW Director. Committee participants could include the Water Dept., Highway Dept., Cemetery Committee, Recycling/Trash. This would be a study committee, which might be prudent as the last study was done in 2002. Mr. McBride asked if the board should wait to see how the vote goes at Town Meeting to make the Highway Supervisor an appointed position. After discussion about the pros and cons of such a committee, the board agreed to put the topic on the BOS meeting agenda for May 11th.

Sign Indemnity Agreement for Fieldstone Way and Forest Ridge

The agreements are not ready yet; this topic will be continued to the next meeting.

Hours for Special Election on May 10, 2016

Mr. Morin has not received the approval letter from Mr. DeCoste. It is in progress. Mr. McBride again stated the hours for the special election.

Main Street Sidewalk Costs/Potential Override

Mr. McBride read the latest petition for an override, and gave a summary of the status of this project. He opened up the conversation with the board. Mr. Morin stated that there is a placeholder Article on the Warrant, and will put the wording in for a contingent override if voted. A BOS vote for debt exclusion will be needed.

Town resident Mary Beth Shea gave her views on allowing a vote at Town Meeting, and stated her appreciation for the amount of time the BOS has spent on this issue. An override would need a 2/3 vote to pass at Town Meeting and subsequently go on the ballot. Mr. McBride asked for other input from the board and audience.

Mr. Brown made the following statement:

"We are not just talking about sidewalks. There was a funding source that has gone away, and this has become a project that has arguments on both sides. The question at hand is about the funding source. Originally, the BOS discussed under-the-levy, available funds (chapter 90), which really need to be used for existing road repair. The board appreciates that residents want this project but disagree with the funding method. There are far more projects than available money. The AAA bond rating indicates the excellent state of the Town government - deliberate

2015 JUN - 6 AM 11:00

performance metrics that enhance the Town's financial position. The board just doesn't see the way to do this in a prudent financial manner. Does this project rise to a level of need that calls for putting an override on the Warrant? It is a want vs. a need. I will not vote for it. The purview of the BOS is to be the "gatekeeper" and decide what goes on the Warrant and what does not. For example; an operational override would warrant a vote. A second scenario could occur in which the need is great and there are valid reasons (e.g. the police station), approval of which took two years. That override addressed a requirement for Core Services. The Town does not HAVE to provide a sidewalk, and this would be at the opportunity cost of much needed future overrides. I suspect that the Town has reached the maximum limit of residential taxes. I hear loud and clear that there is a huge need to control the Town's taxes, and I have a moral obligation to protect the 98% who don't want to pay more taxes. I would like to put a citizen's petition on the Warrant to either fund the granite curb and/or the sidewalk, and then "you", the residents, do the hard work of deciding the choices where there would be a serious opportunity cost. Then you would be living within the Town's means."

Mr. McBride recapped Mr. Brown's statements, verifying that Mr. Brown was asking to put a yes or no vote for the sidewalks on the Warrant and have residents make decisions to cut other areas. Per Mr. McBride, this is really a false choice which the board could not support, because the board works very hard to come up with a reasonable budget. They wouldn't want to give people a choice to cut much needed budget items. This is still about needs vs. wants, and more discussion ensued about the wisdom of doing an override for this project, using reserves, cutting budget items, etc.

Ms. Allen stated that last year the Town took a vote to fund this project with money that is no longer an option. This Article, which could be a one time, unique override, would be offering a form of "other additional tax" like the CPA tax. The board owes it to the Town to let them decide whether to tax themselves with a 2/3 vote which would then put the override on the ballot. The BOS may do a presentation at Town Meeting of future possible overrides such as the new library and capital school improvements and let people choose, ensuring that people make fully informed votes. Ms. Allen also reminded all that the Complete Streets program will be making recommendations as well as a road survey plan about what projects should be incorporated going forward. Ms. Demong agrees with both Mr. Brown and Ms. Allen, and would support the override because of last year's vote, but with a presentation to explain the opportunity costs. Mr. Morin gave an overview of the average household's tax increase, which would be about \$30. A resident in the audience stated that he trusts the BOS to make the financial decisions to come up with a responsible budget. He doesn't think the Town needs a sidewalk.

Motion: made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to word the Article in the Warrant to request permission for the Town to borrow the funds for \$1.4 million dollars to do a sidewalk on Main Street as debt exclusion. Four members voted yes, 1 member voted no. Motion carried

Mr. McBride will speak about this and vote against it at Town Meeting. The people who wanted this Article on the Warrant will have their say. Peter Bloomfield would like to include this Article in the Special Town Meeting. Mr. Morin will move the Article to the Special Town Meeting on the Warrant.

Open and Close Warrant for Special/Annual Town Meeting

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to open the Warrant for the Special Town Meeting and the Annual Town Meeting. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to put the Right to Farm Article on the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to move the Main Street Article from the Annual Town Meeting to the Special Town Meeting. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to insert an Article in the Special Town Meeting to expend repair funds for Woodworth 3 field. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to close the Warrant for the Special and Annual Town Meetings. Unanimously voted

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2016 JUN -6 AM 11:00

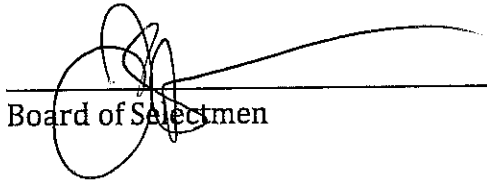
Next Meeting Agenda Topics

RECEIVED

Mr. Morin asked the board about interviewing police candidates for promotion; answer – yes, they will interview candidates. There are 4 applicants, and the board will review the Police Chief's recommendation.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adjourn at 9:30pm. Unanimously voted


Board of Selectmen