

**Norwell Board of Selectmen  
Remote Open Meeting  
7/8/20**

TOWN OF NORWELL  
TOWN CLERK  
2020 JUL 24 AM 11:37

**Present:** Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Bruce Graham, Peter Morin

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**Open Session**

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:01pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting was recorded and the audio file will be available on the Town website. Ms. Allen noted that this meeting will be conducted pursuant to the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.

**Approval of Agenda**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda for July 8th as presented. Unanimously voted by roll call vote*

**BOS Reports**

Ellen Allen shared with the board Susan Curtin's email thanking her volunteers, the CERT team and other residents for all their hard work delivering food to residents during the pandemic.

**Town Administrator Report**

Mr. Morin congratulated Ms. Allen on her reelection to the Board of Selectmen.

**Discussion/Action Items**

**Tommy Scully – Eagle Scout Project**

Tommy presented his plan for a platform and a brick walk on the Town Common. He would like to do this project because the grass is a difficult walking surface for some people. The board thanked Mr. Scully for his proposal and commented that the COD will need to sign off on this project to ensure that all ADA requirements are met. Mr. Morin added that he will be happy to work through this project with Mr. Scully. Other departments and boards that will need to sign off include the Building Inspector, the NHC and Mr. Ferguson. All wished him good luck.

**Postpone Board of Selectmen Reorganization until after 7-25 Town Meeting**

Ms. Allen expanded on the purpose for postponing the reorganization of the board.

**All Are Welcome Committee Applicants: Interviews and Appointments**

**Tracey Carroll**

Ms. Carroll gave a summary of her background and reasons for applying.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to appoint Tracey Carroll to the All Are Welcome Committee for a term expiring 6/30/23. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

**Nick Salvatoriello**

Mr. Salvatoriello gave a summary of his background and reasons for applying.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to appoint Nick Salvatoriello to the All Are Welcome Committee for a term expiring 6/30/23. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

### **Cultural Council Applicant**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to appoint Norwell Salvatoriello to the Cultural Council for a term expiring 6/30/23. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

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### **IT Upgrades**

Mr. Graham reported to the board about his conversation with Mr. Morin with regard to the vulnerability of the Town Hall email and file servers.

- He recommended a move to the cloud as a better storage solution, which will be lower cost than maintaining and replacing the current hardware servers.
- Mr. Graham's IT vendor has worked with other municipalities to make this move. He will work with the vendor to get a price quote.
- The police department is already using this format, and he would like to see Town Hall move to this configuration.
- The IT support for this storage will hopefully be better than the current server support. He would like to target early August for this move.
- Mr. Morin thanked Mr. Graham for laying the ground work for this project and expressed the general dissatisfaction with the current support. He welcomed Mr. Graham's initiative and added that it would be a good first step. This project could be funded through a Town Meeting Article. The board thanked Mr. Graham for his efforts.
- Per Mr. Graham, the projected annual cost would be \$2592 (\$36 per year per person for 72 employees), plus a few thousand dollars to move everything. The projected cost will be less than the current setup's annual cost.
- Mr. Morin noted that this would replace a portion of the IT support provided by the school IT department, with the goal of replacing all of it soon. The current support situation is less than optimal. This element will hopefully be a quick transition. .

### **Town Meeting Logistics and Articles Update**

- Chief Reardon chose Boston Light and Sound to run the audio and other prep for the meeting.
- Residents can access presentation videos of Warrant Articles on Norwell Spotlight TV as there will be audio only at Town Meeting. Ms. Allen listed the available Article presentations, noting that hard copies will be included in meeting packets for all attendees at the check-in desk.
- A postcard with Town Meeting information and resources has been sent to all residents. The same information will also be available on the Town website.
- Copies of the Article motions will be included in the meeting packets. Ms. Allen will make all of the motions except for the Citizens Petitions Articles.
- The board discussed various health concerns with regard to the mechanics of the meeting. The following safety measures will be in place:
  1. Microphone sanitization procedures by Boston Light and Sound. Stage mikes will be assigned to each person, and the one open mike will be sanitized between speakers.
  2. Medical support and supplies tent as well as portapotties will be available.

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3. Per Mr. Morin, preparation is really the key; many hours have been spent on this activity to make sure that every base is covered.
  4. Thank you to Brendan Sullivan for his field design plan. Kudos to all who participated in the preparation. Attendance may be lower but not by a significant amount.
  5. Per Adam Sayre, videographer, the Article presentations have been drawing an average of 100 views.

### **Stone Wall Maintenance Discussion-postponed to a future meeting agenda**

### **Town Administrator Performance Evaluation**

Ms. Allen gave a brief introduction into the evaluation process, which must be done at a an open meeting.

#### **Jason Brown**

- Not much different than last year's comments. Mr. Morin has 5 "supervisors" with different agendas and requests. Mr. Brown practices his personal management style with Mr. Morin, including not micromanaging. He respects Mr. Morin's time as he holds a demanding position.
- With regard to accomplishments this year, the tendency is to focus on "what didn't get done" and areas for improvement, because everyone has room for improvement. As a reminder, to the targeted projects for this year now add the whole COVID-19 emergency situation. Mr. Morin has stepped up and met a number of challenges.
- He has identified a number of budget cuts for the board to discuss and consider in light of impending state and federal budget reductions.
- Complete projects highlight: the Hanover Mall negotiated mitigation settlement of \$300K for the Town. Kudos for a job well done.
- This has been a challenging year and Mr. Morin met these challenges head on.
- This is a demanding position with a limited staff, resulting in many tasks on Mr. Morin's "plate" without an assistant Town Administrator.
- The only thing, not really a criticism and should be taken with a grain of salt, Mr. Brown has heard from some residents that they are not satisfied with Mr. Morin's response time. The Town Administrator is not at their beck and call, and perhaps his response is not always what they want to hear.
- He is very busy and the board should look at his accomplishments. This is one person divided among many different issues and responsibilities. Perhaps the public should also be aware of a little battle fatigue in this strained environment. This is just something to be aware of – no criticisms or complaints.

#### **Alison Demong**

- When reviewing Mr. Morin's list of accomplishments, there is a lot to celebrate, especially with the pandemic and its far reaching issues.
- Similar sentiments to Mr. Brown's comments.
- Very appreciative of his time and energy and the difficult decision making processes with little guidance from the state with regard to local aid.

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- Very appreciative of his command of the Town's finances and budget. "We take it for granted that the Town is in good shape with regard to health issues and finances as a result of his hard work. Thank you!"
  - The board very active and has a long list of potential projects, which is so much for one Town Administrator to handle. All are aware that an assistant Town Administrator is currently not an affordable position, but would like to keep this on the back burner.
  - The board appreciates and respects how hard these past few months have been and would like to thank Mr. Morin for handling this ongoing crisis with skill and dedication.

#### **Bruce Graham**

- He remains pro-Peter, as noted in last year's review when his board term had just begun.
- Mr. Graham summarized the IT issues as discussed earlier in this meeting, noting that we are moving ahead. Mr. Morin stated to Mr. Graham that working with an IT professional will provide good support to move this project forward.
- Differs philosophically with Mr. Morin on shutting down Town Hall during the worst of the pandemic, acknowledging that Mr. Morin had the wellbeing of the employees as his primary concern. Mr. Graham would have perhaps taken a different approach with some risk with regard to inspections and contractors who were looking for a more immediate response with Town services. The point is that we have a strong Town Administrator who makes his own decisions rather than just following a Selectman's request. "It all worked out fine", per Mr. Graham.
- Mr. Graham remains pro-Peter.

#### **Ellen Allen**

- This must have been the hardest year of Peter's tenure because of COVID-19. There has been at least 3 times as much work as usual and Mr. Morin really stepped up to show his multi-tasking skills and how well he works under pressure.
- It's easy to be unaware of the incredible amount of time he spends on Personnel issues, which by nature is out of the public view because it has to be. Mr. Morin is extremely talented in dealing with many difficult issues, including (of course) all these budget related renegotiations. Kudos to him for his budget knowledge and expertise.
- The benefits of his management style are reflected in how the department heads have worked through the COVID pandemic. His strong relationship with the schools has worked well during this crisis. These benefits are the direct result of the long term approach that Mr. Morin takes to maintaining his work relationships with department heads and employees. Thank you very much, Peter, for all the hard work. No light at the end of the tunnel yet with Town Meeting and the budget, but hopefully you will enjoy a phone call free vacation coming up!

Mr. Morin thanked the board for their kind words, insightful comments and constructive criticism.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes – 6/24/20 Open Session minutes**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the Open Meeting minutes for the 6/24/20 open meeting. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

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**Future Meeting Agendas**

The board will meet next on 7/21 at 7pm.

Topics will include:

Appointment to Technology Committee –Nick Salvatoriello

Town Meeting Article - Zoning at Accord Pond Park amendment

Park View Inn – Exec. Session at 8/5 meeting

August 19<sup>th</sup> – IT update

**Adjournment**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 8:07pm.  
Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

*Ellen H. Allen*

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Ellen Allen, Chair