

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
4-15-21
Open Session – Remote meeting**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2021 MAY -6 P 12: 25

Present: Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Joe Rull, Peter Morin, Barbara Childs, Fire Department personnel, Deputy Fire Chief (DC) Dave Kean

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Open Session

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:05pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting is being 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 Alison Demong, to approve the amended agenda as written. Unanimously voted by roll call vote

Ms. Allen reported that the board met in Executive Session before this meeting to discuss Chief Simpson's decision to take the job in Marshfield with no notice to the Town. The board will not take any action this evening and will consider next steps after Mr. Morin meets again with Chief Simpson.

DC Kean stated that when Chief Reardon retired and Chief Simpson was promoted, a good plan was put in place and the department is prepared to continue on that path. He has no issue working with the BOS and Mr. Morin to move ahead with business as usual.

Mr. Rull thanked the fire department for all they do to support the Town and invited the firefighters to ask questions.

Sean Ford, Firefighters Union president, stated that the department was caught off guard, but there will be 21 department individuals who will come to work and support the Town. DC Kean has been with the department for 25 years and has very capable people to step up and carry on.

Ms. Allen added that the board is sensing confidence in the department and its leadership without Chief Simpson.

Mr. Morin noted that he hasn't received written notice from Chief Simpson, but will have a discussion with him about the appropriate time to transition before taking the next step.

Questions were asked and answered about the timetable for the transition. The hope is to have a plan in place to announce at the BOS meeting on 4/21/21.

Mr. Brown added that the purpose of this meeting is to hear comments from the firefighters about the department and the transition.

DC Kean stated that he spoke for everybody; everyone was comfortable with the current internal workings of the department and will continue to progress as a department.

Per Mr. Morin, the normal way for this to flow would be that the chief would provide notice about his plan to leave, but he still has not received written notice from Chief Simpson. The board cannot take a next step until they receive the chief's written intentions.

Mr. Brown stated that the board has great confidence in the Norwell Fire Department command structure with or without Chief Simpson. There is no sense of weakness. It was a shock to learn of his departure on such short notice so early into his 3 year contract, but legally no action can be taken. Once his departure is finalized a clear plan can be put into place with the department. Ms. Allen stated that the board hopes to have a plan with a timeframe in place by next week's regular meeting on Wednesday, 4/21/21. It's great to hear confidence in the organization from DC Kean and the union president.

DC Kean added that the department appreciated the work being done by the board and knows that this is a tough situation for everyone. Please reach out to him or Firefighter Ford if you need anything.

The board thanked everyone again for joining the meeting.

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

Ellen H. Allen

Ellen Allen, Chair

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