

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Open Meeting Minutes
1/23/19**

TOWN OF NORWELL
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2019 MAR -7 AM 9:35

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Present: Ellen Allen, Gregg McBride, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Joe Rull, Peter Morin

Guest: Vin Bucca

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:05pm.

Future Meeting Agendas

Discussion of Personal Contract – Town Administrator will be postponed until next week.

Mr. Morin reported that the state cherry sheet was released today. The Town's state aid amount is up. The Governor's proposed Chapter 90 money is not as much as was hoped for.

Carleton Property Committee Discussion

Vin Bucca was present to discuss Agenda Item 3; the Whiting Fields. Ms. Demong read the BOS charge to the committee. The Carleton Property Committee would like some clarification about the Selectmen's charge to the committee in order to know if they can consider putting parking in one or more places. All discussed the feasibility of a road to access the back land. Mr. McBride agreed with Ms. Demong that it should be permissible to put some parking areas in different locations on the property near the fields. All discussed options and some preliminary thoughts from Con Com. Parking needs to be incorporated into any plan for this land, preferably off Main Street so people could access the entire area.

The board discussed traffic with pedestrian crossings on both Main and Lincoln Streets to access the Whiting Fields and the rest of the Carleton property. Mr. Bucca reported that there is a "historic livestock path" on the fields. Ms. Allen would like the committee to consider nearby parking possibilities and access paths within the fields while keeping the beautiful views. Mr. Bucca is opposed to a path behind the wall or even on that side of the street although plans are for the sidewalk to eventually be there. Discussion ensued about options that would be more economical than crossing Main Street back and forth. Complete Streets has suggested that the sidewalk/pathwalk be constructed behind the wall as it would be cheaper, safer and more expedient. This discussion will be continued to another evening. Mr. Morin noted that any decision about the property will ultimately be made by Town Meeting. Ms. Allen will follow up on clarifying the language in the charge.

Open Session at 7:30pm (Osborn Room)

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:30pm. She reminded all that the meeting is televised and recorded. All rose to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Citizen Comments –

Bernie Perry, 10 River Street, was present to read his letter about the improper display and condition of the American flags in the Town, including raising and lowering the flags. All discussed the responsibility for these tasks in Town. The recent lowered flag days included commemorating the death of former President George H. W. Bush. Mr. Morin expanded on the additional instructions from the state to fly the flag at half-staff, several of which were overlapping. The BOS office takes orders from the state house. Ms. Allen asked that the Veterans Officer put an announcement on his web page when the flag is lowered. Mr. Morin will also ask the Veterans Officer to recruit someone to oversee the raising and lowering of the flags.

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Selectmen Reports –

Plymouth County Register of Deeds will be at Town Hall tomorrow from 10am -12 pm. All are invited to come in for questions or information.

The State Ethics training on 1/30 has been cancelled. There is online training available to all Town employees, which needs to be updated every two years.

Mr. McBride reported that the Board of Selectmen and Mr. Morin attended the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) annual conference. The board will share some information and updates at a future meeting.

The MMA session on plastic bag bans will be covered on a future agenda when the advocates for a Town Meeting citizens petition article are present. This process in the Town will be approached slowly and methodically, with many discussions. The process may take at least a year. There is currently a citizen petition to just vote for the ban and then have Town government think about how to accomplish this.

Ellen Allen was elected president of the MMA and was congratulated by all.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the agenda as amended to remove item 4b which will be postponed. Unanimously voted

Town Administrator Report – Mr. Morin announced that the Town received a Community Compact grant for \$35K, which will be used to assess Pine Street field remediation issues. Mr. McBride will help start the process for this study. This former landfill, now partially a playing field, is under the care and custody of the Board of Health.

Discussion of the Town Administrator's Contract

Ms. Allen updated the town on Mr. Morin's candidacy for Town Administrator (TA) in Brewster and what comparable towns are offering their TA's for compensation. The board was unanimous in asking Mr. Morin to stay and withdraw from this candidacy. He agreed to this. His new 3 year contract offers:

1. Immediate increase to \$160K from \$150K,
2. An increase of 2.5% in both years 2 and 3 (no change)
3. An increase in his travel allowance
4. New \$100 per month deferred compensation
5. Agreement not to apply for other jobs for 3 years.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the details of the new Town Administrator contract with Peter Morin. Unanimously voted

The new contract will be signed when the edits are completed by Counsels.

Mr. Rull noted that the money spent to do a candidate search and interview process would far exceed the cost of these increases. Mr. Morin's excellence is a key factor in the success of the Town.

Mr. Morin said he appreciates the support from the board and residents who have expressed delight that he is staying. The attraction for Brewster was personal ties to the area, not the lack of anything in Norwell. He looks forward to finishing his career here in the Town, and thanked all the volunteers and employees for their good wishes.

FY20 Operating and Capital Budget Discussion.

Mr. Morin reported that the Governor's proposed state aid number increased about \$190K without the assessments, which increased about \$40K.

He has received and reviewed all of the budget requests for the Town departments and made reductions in some areas. There is not a significant revenue gap, which is good. The complete budget will be available tomorrow via email to the BOS. The following increases are planned:

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1. A Police officer (new hire) dedicated to traffic issues. All asked about the total number of police officers vs. 5 years ago; about the same- 24 to 25, with the School Resource Officer there will be 26. This will be a full time benefitted position.
 2. Accommodate a deputy chief in the Fire Department and increase the number of personnel. The Deputy Chief would be a promotion from within for one of the captains. The personnel increase will initially be covered by a S.A.F.E. grant (the application is due in September) and then gradually absorbed into the Town's budget over time. If received the grant would fund a position for more than two years. The ultimate goal is to reduce the current amount of overtime by adding full time personnel. The department needs some financial planning, as the staff has been plagued with injuries and personnel called up for active duty. There is support from the Advisory Board for these personnel additions.
 3. Additional staff hours in the BOS office to allow the Administrative Assistant more hours per week and also provide funding for a part time consultant to work on projects.
- All other departments are level service budgets.

Questions asked by the board included specifics about the Fire Department additions; the Deputy Chief would be an internal promotion and the hire of a junior firefighter, for a budget increase of about \$84K.

The Police Department would hire a patrol officer at a cost of \$45K for a partial year (9 months). The salary increases in the BOS office would be about \$14K, mostly for the consultant.

The board gave kudos to Mr. Morin for moving the Town to MIAA for health insurance last year. This is yielding cost savings for the Town. Gregg McBride asked for an update at a future meeting on the MIIA insurance move. Treasurer Darleen Sullivan will be at a future meeting to talk about this. The transition was smooth, with no interruption of coverage. The Town still has a mitigation fund but things are going well. The property and casualty increase is less than 3%. Because of weather damage, a number of claims were paid out. This negated any reduction, and MIIA also revalued all the buildings midyear, which was unexpected. The hope is that all will be well going forward, and next year's increase will be in the 3+% range.

Ms. Demong explained the project consultant idea to the board, adding that they would like to see an assistant Town Administrator in the future. There are a lot of projects that need attention but the number is too large for the Town Administrator to pursue them all. These need dedicated staff time, which is not currently available. There are many hidden jobs that the Town Administrator must address which are not visible to the public; for example, human resources is probably a third of his job. Mr. McBride added that assistant Town Administrator positions provide succession planning for the Town.

Capital budget update

1. Fire department – new truck, vehicle, equipment, joint police/fire repeaters for \$300K alone
2. Highway Department - \$500K for equipment/vehicles as well as paving money
3. Schools - \$60K for kitchen equipment
4. Design money for highway barn – separate Warrant Article.

The rest of the capital requests will be done by the 3rd week in February. All discussed other areas of the budget such as Free Cash, snow and ice funding needs, etc. The board will discuss finalized capital requests at the end of February.

Discussion ensued about the capital plan's timing and new requests from the highway surveyor.

Discussion of Town Meeting Articles

1. Bylaw Recodification and amendments plus zoning changes- General Code coming to fruition, sign bylaws
2. Streetlights
3. Speed limits in the town
4. Plastic bag ban
5. Carleton Property Articles - probably not
6. Electronic voting

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Ms. Allen would like to add bylaw changes to allow the Conservation Commission to add alternate members to their board.

Complete streets sidewalk money request

Article about purple trash bag money revolving fund - redefine uses for this fund. The Highway Department might take over this fund.

The Cushing Center would like to retain some of their revenue for repairs in a revolving fund, maybe less than \$10K. They have no funds currently that they can tap quickly.

CPC application for Jacobs Pond weed removal – the conservation fund could be used for this purpose as it is really pond maintenance. The current CPC ask is for \$15K.

Revisit the billboard vote opportunity - maybe this is a good year

Rezoning of Town Center – try again?

Traffic study and truck information overall – Mr. McBride added that the Traffic Committee has postponed the report for the time being. The committee will meet a month from now, but they do not yet have complete information. Discussion ensued about the procedure to put a truck ban in place. Mr. Morin could draft a placeholder Article, but the legal procedure is still TBD.

Neighboring towns would still need to buy into this ban, in addition to clear alternate routes before any truck ban is put into place. All discussed and articulated the process. Ms. Allen talked to Ellen Moshier about obtaining the Bridge Street truck ban base data, which would then allow the increased truck traffic on River Street to be measured in order to potentially justify a ban on River Street. All discussed appropriate next steps for the busy streets in the Town; trucks are a huge issue in our 'cut through' Town. Police enforcement has increased significantly. Mr. McBride added that the Traffic Committee's consultant stated that the Town must demonstrate alternate routes through Norwell. If a route is not available in the Town, then other towns will have to become involved. It will be important to have the traffic counts and interpret them within the study, and the information has not yet been analyzed to provide this information.

Mr. McBride will explore getting the final data on an accelerated timeline.

All discussed Complete Streets coming to next week's meeting to discuss current plans including the Town Center. Should the Planning Board be in charge of this? The BOS would like to schedule a joint meeting with the Planning Board to talk about all these projects. Ms. Allen will follow up with the Town Planner.

Adjournment

*Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 9:00pm.
Unanimously voted*



Ellen Allen, Chair