

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Open Meeting Minutes
10/16/19**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2019 DEC 13 AM 10:09
RECEIVED

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

The meeting was called to order at 6:51pm by Ellen Allen. All discussed the overture by Elevated Access asking the board to consider a bylaw change from allowing cultivation of medical marijuana only to cultivating and selling medical and recreational product. They will be invited to a BOS meeting to discuss this topic.

Mr. Morin updated the board on the Deputy Fire Chief position to be appointed this evening. He reviewed Deputy Chief (DC) Jeff Simpson's background with the board. DC Simpson has strong financial skills and will be a key participant in the Fire Department's annual budgeting process. The position this year was funded for \$84K, including the addition of 1 firefighter. There is a net annual increase of about \$80K. There will be some offset over time as the hope is that fewer forced overtime hours will occur due to injuries, military leave, etc. The department has lost two people in the last year. The creation of this position and the new hire will bring the department to full complement. The board discussed succession planning with regard to the Fire Chief and his prospective retirement. Discussion ensued about departmental costs.

Ms. Allen announced the date for the next MAPC meeting on 11/19/19 at 7pm at the Cushing Center. A flyer with meeting information will be included in the Town's next water bill mailing. Ellen M will post the board for this meeting.

Police Chief Ross was present to update the board on the 6 or 7 police department candidates who will be interviewed at the BOS meeting on 10/23/19. He explained the interview process to the board and asked if they wished to continue doing these interviews. The department request is to hire for 3 positions. He will give his hiring recommendations once the interviews are completed, noting that there may be bypasses in the order of civil service list eligibility. He also explained how the candidates are rated, using several factors. The board discussed the pros and cons of doing candidate interviews. Chief Ross will be at the meeting regardless of the BOS decision on interviews. Mr. Morin suggested at least interviewing the chief's recommended candidates. Ms. Allen cited the pending civil service case as a precedent for interviewing the complete list of candidates, noting that the meeting video and minutes of the interviews were important exhibits. "Vote the way your instincts tell you to" was the advice given to the board. Mr. Brown added that the board is responsible to the residents as well as Chief Ross. Interviewing sends a message to the candidates "that these are the people I work for in addition to the Police Department." Mr. Brown wants to follow the usual procedure and let the public see the process. The board consensus is to interview all candidates.

Chief Ross and Mr. Morin met with School Supt. Matt Keegan to discuss the request from South Shore Charter School to hire a permanent school resource officer (SRO). This school will be asked to set aside \$500K to underwrite the projected annual cost of this position.

Mr. Morin updated the board on the IT assessment done by Green Pages. The Technology Committee has done a large amount of work, which is contained in the executive summary. The IT systems all need updates. An application has been submitted for a Community Compact grant to test the security of the Town's systems. This is a topic for an upcoming Executive Session agenda.

The board decided to authorize the Chair or Vice Chair of the board to sign the Town's annual license renewals after a vote of approval by the Selectmen.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to authorize the Chair or Vice Chair to sign the annual licenses after the board's vote of approval. Unanimously voted

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2019 DEC 13 AM 10:09

Open Session – Osborn Room

The meeting was reconvened in the Osborn Room at 7:35 pm by Chair Ellen Allen, who reminded all that the meeting is televised and recorded. All rose to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted

Citizen Comments

Peter Kulka, commander of the American Legion post in Norwell, announced that the sale of the Norwell Grange to the Legion will not go forward. The local chapter of the Grange organization is being re-subscribed by residents, and the group will hopefully be able to rehab the historic building. He thanked the board for their efforts to help them find a home for this Norwell Legion chapter. Ms. Allen noted that there are some veterans who are part of the Grange organization and perhaps an agreement to share the property could be reached. Per Dr. Kulka, that would not be feasible as the Legion had planned to partner with other organizations on the renovation and use of the property. There may be another location in the Town for the Legion in the future.

BOS Reports and Announcements

The second MAPC community forum will be held on Tuesday, 11/19, at the Cushing Center at 7pm.

This Friday at noon there will be a joint meeting of the Complete Streets and Traffic Study Committees to work on Town Center planning.

The South Shore Coalition is hosting a regional meeting with the MAPC on Thursday, October 24th at Accord Park. There will be a tour and discussion of the possible zoning changes.

Town Administrator's Report

An ad for the auction of the Sgt. Samuel Stetson house will be published tomorrow. The auction will be held on 11/8/19 at 1pm, at the site of the house on Stetson Shrine Lane.

The CPA funded project to construct the baseball diamond at the Osborne field will begin on Monday, 10/21/19. Construction will take place from 7am-3pm each day. During construction the pathwalk may be blocked, so walkers may be rerouted around the fenced-off construction area. The project is expected to take 2-4 weeks to complete, but is weather dependent. Residents please use caution. All sports teams have been notified and will use other fields in the Town.

Swearing-in Ceremony - Deputy Chief Jeffrey Simpson.

Chief Andy Reardon welcomed everyone to the ceremony and gave a recap of the creation of this position. DC Simpson began working as a call firefighter for the Fire Department in 1991 and was promoted to Captain in 2001. He has an outstanding record and list of accomplishments with the department. Chief Reardon welcomed DC Simpson, his family and members of the Fire Department to the ceremony, where he was sworn in by Assistant Town Clerk Laurie Davis. The board congratulated DC Simpson, and expanded on the list of impressive skills that he brings to his new job.

Traffic Study Committee Update

Traffic Study Committee (TSC) members Chief Ross (Chair), Ellen Moshier, Chief Reardon, Joe Rull (BOS rep), and Glenn Ferguson were present for this discussion. Chief Ross welcomed traffic consultant Jeff Dirk from Vanasse and Assoc., Inc. Mr. Dirk gave a power point presentation for the latest Speed Zone Study done on Main Street, Grove Street and River Street.

A copy of the report is attached to these minutes. Mr. Dirk explained the types of speed limits in the Town and how the study assessed the regulated (by the state) speed limits and average rates of speed. The three Town roads were chosen for the study because Main Street has multiple speed limits along its length in the Town, Grove Street is a cut through street and is densely settled, and River Street from the Town Center to Chittenden Lane is also a cut through street and densely settled.

Mr. Dirk explained the process of petitioning MassDOT to change the regulated speed limits:

1. Perform the study to provide technical data to support a request to MassDOT to change the state regulated speed limits along portions of Main, Grove and River Streets. This piece is now done.
2. Review results of the study, which found that the current speed zoning is inconsistent with abutting land use, motor vehicle crash trends and driver expectation.
3. Recommend to MassDOT that speed zoning changes be considered as detailed in the study presentation.
4. If MassDOT agrees, they will send a legal document back to the Town for the Board of Selectmen to sign.
5. These changes will go through the approval process with the Registry and the BOS.

Mr. Dirk explained the reasoning and guidelines behind the recommended changes. Questions were asked about expanding the speed limit change areas. Proposed and suggested changes to speed limits and traffic calming were discussed at length.

The timeframe for MassDOT review and approval of recommendations for changes would be 30-60 days. The TSC has already begun the change request process by meeting with MassDOT. The board asked many questions about other areas of concern in the Town, in particular High Street, Prospect Street and the Norwell Homes areas. Per Mr. Dirk and Chief Ross, enforcement would be a first step, then consideration of traffic calming measures. The posted speed limits are proper (per guidelines) for High and Prospect Streets, but increased signage and perhaps traffic calming would help. Any additional requests to lower the speeds must be reasonable and supported by the data. Mr. Rull thanked the TSC for their hard work. He added that he would like the speed limit on River Street to be still lower and include a larger portion of this road as the average speed is still too fast, but he recognizes there are limitations on what can reasonably be expected from the state regarding changes.

All discussed lowering the speed limits with regard to driver behavior, along with examples of traffic calming measures and their rate of success. The goal is to have a consistent message conveyed by the signage in conjunction with traffic calming. Targeting patrol placement for the highest speed time period will produce the best results for enforcement.

Discussion continued about Town-wide speed limits with regard to MGL statute 17C, which would allow the Town to adopt a speed limit of 25mph on nonregulated roadways and could be posted on all entry roads to the Town. Questions were asked and answered about options available for traffic calming vs statutory speed limit posting. Norwell Homes was used to illustrate a problematic traffic area. Chief Ross would like to use enforcement in combination with traffic calming and education. Mr. Brown noted that the board needs to manage the expectations of residents about changes and actual speed limits. Mr. Dirk reminded all that the Town cannot post a speed limit lower than 25mph unless there are special circumstances; school, bridge, loading zone, etc.

Stop sign installations usually need a pre-installation engineering study and review of criteria, but in some instances, discretion would allow signage.

Ms. Demong asked for Mr. Dirk's recommendation for roads that are too wide where residents are driving faster than the neighborhood supports, or how to retrofit the streets to the neighborhoods. Peer pressure can also be used as a traffic calming policy. Create a document with procedures.

The TSC would like the BOS to approve the recommended changes. The board gave kudos to Mr. Dirk for a job well done. Ms. Allen tasked the TSC with the creation of a recommendations for the BOS to approve.

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2019 DEC 13 AM 10:09

RECEIVED

Resident; Cheryl Reed, Hemlock Drive

Ms. Reed gave examples of speeding on Main Street near and at the intersection of South Street to the high school and library. She asked if a traffic light was needed as traffic has gotten worse and cars aren't slowing down. The student drivers are speeding and large truck traffic is an issue. Mr. Dirk noted that traffic lights are a state issue. Because there is no pedestrian crossing and the sidewalk is on the high school side, the intersection wouldn't meet the criteria for a traffic light. Perhaps research for the South Street/Main Street intersection would support the criteria for a light. The study also looked at crash data at intersections on Main. The impending construction for the Hanover mall will impact South Street and traffic will increase significantly. Mr. Dirk noted that traffic conditions in the Town in connection with the PREP project have been filed with the state. A future study may have to research the possibility of traffic lights on South. This topic will be discussed in a separate outside meeting with Mr. Dirk and PREP. Mr. Morin will reach out to Ed Callahan as well as the Hanover Town Administrator to schedule a meeting with the BOS.

Ms. Allen asked about Chief Ross's and Mr. Ferguson's conversation with the owner of PA Landers regarding the number of company trucks on River Street, speeding and excess truck traffic. The owner brought driver logs for review to the Chief and explained that every driver goes through training when hired. The GPS systems in the trucks record the traveled speeds and routes. If complaints are received by the company with the specific truck information, the driver is ID'd and reprimanded up to and including termination. He also stated that the company is very receptive to complaints from residents. Chief Ross has the contact information for PA Landers. The group opined that the truck speed seemed more reasonable in the two-week measurement period. Further questions were asked and answered about the study data, traffic calming and Chapter 90 compliance. Mr. Dirk stated that MassDOT offered to review speed limits along the whole length of Route 53 within the Town at no cost to the Town. The board thanked Mr. Dirk for his presentation and generous amount of time for questions.

CPC Applications – BOS projects

Ms. Demong is working on a draft of a CPC application for \$90K to clear the stone walls at the back of the Carleton property on the Whiting Fields. She met with the Norwell Historical Commission to look at a map of these project areas and stated that Con Com also supports this idea. The BOS and NHC are meeting on Monday to discuss this project.

Open Warrant – Winter Town Meeting, 2/10/20

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to open the Warrant for the winter town meeting to be held 2/10/20, and to close the Warrant on 11/6/19. Unanimously voted

Future Agendas

Traffic Control Officer – funded position - discussion

Sign bylaw, Graham and Demong - 11/6 agenda

Mr. Morin - placeholders for the warrant.

Samantha Woods, NSRWA, wants to attend a BOS meeting to discuss stormwater.-mid-Nov
Stormwater bylaw 11/13 with MS4, Graham/Morin will draft

Adjournment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to adjourn at 9:30pm. Unanimously voted

Ellen H. Allen
Ellen Allen, Chair

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2019 DEC 13 AM 10:09

RECEIVED