

**Town of Norwell  
Select Board  
Open Meeting  
9/20/23**

**Present:** Jason Brown, Bruce Graham, Brian Greenberg, Andy Reardon, Pete Smellie, Darleen Sullivan, Kim Roy

Mr. Smellie called the meeting to order at 7:07pm.

All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

*Motion; made by Bruce Graham, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to approve the Executive and Open Session minutes for the 9/6/23 meeting. Brown, Greenberg, Reardon, Smellie voting yes, Graham abstained as he was absent for both sessions.*

**Select Board Reports**

Jason Brown offered condolences to the Hartigan family on the passing of long-time resident Dick Hartigan. He was a former member of both the Select Board and the Advisory Board. He will be missed by all.

Mr. Graham attended the dedication of the Hemingway memorial garden. Kudos to Sarah Baker, Marynel Wahl, Will Saunders, the Conservation Commission, and Gibraltar Stonecraft. The garden is a beautiful tribute to the late Nancy Hemingway, who served as the Town's Conservation Agent for many years. A lovely time was had by all.

**Town Administrator's Report**

Ms. Sullivan also offered condolences to the Hartigan family.

The annual Veterans lunch was a big success, with over 200 attending the event. Thank you to Veterans Officer Dave Osborne for organizing this great party.

**Citizens Comments - None**

**Beautification Committee Application - Grace Montgomery**

Ms. Montgomery gave a summary of her background and reasons for applying. The board thanked her for donating her time to serve on the committee.

*Motion; made by Andy Reardon, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to appoint Grace Montgomery to the Beautification Committee for a term expiring on 6/30/26. Unanimously voted*

**OPEB Performance Review and Actuarial Report for 6/30/23**

Actuary Dan Sherman and Brian Callow, Rockland Trust, were present to review the fund numbers with the board.

Mr. Sherman's comments:

- 7/1/22 to 6/30/23 was a roll-forward year with no modifications to participants.

- All assumptions were realized for the prior year. the \$5.7M assets increased to \$7M+.
- At 6/30/23, the liability rolling forward is \$46M; at the discount rate of 7.5% the current unfunded liability is \$39M.
- Large gains will be amortized over the remaining plan years. Non-cash income generated and recorded on the books was \$927K.
- The fund generated income of 15.4% at the funded ratio, which is an outstanding return and better than most peers.
- The unfunded liability is not a large detriment to the Town's financial condition.
- "Keep up the good work!"
- In answer to questions from the board, the current plan covers the liability cost of funding new hires.

**Brian Callow – Rockland Trust account representative.**

Mr. Callow reviewed the OPEB investment portfolio of pension assets with the board. Questions were asked and answered about the fund and investment balances. Copies of both reports are available in the Town Administrator's office.

**Community Compact Grant – vote approval and sign**

Ms. Sullivan and Ms. Roy reviewed the grant award with the board. The grant will be used to fund a personnel grade and salary review of all positions at Town Hall.

The review will include:

- compensation and wage analysis
- job description rewrites
- grading for 60 positions

*Motion: made by Jason Brown, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to accept the Community Compact grant. Unanimously noted*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to authorize the chair to sign the agreement on behalf of the board. Unanimously voted*

**Select Board Focus Areas Review**

The board continued to review the list of highlighted focus areas. Discussion ensued about the Town Charter's procedure for appointing Advisory Board members, focusing on the 3 appointed positions that make up the Advisory Board Nominating Committee (ABNC).

The board discussed the pros and cons of restarting the Government Study Committee to address perceived issues in the Town Charter, with reference to Advisory Board's responsibilities and financial oversight prior to the adoption of the Charter. Ms. Sullivan's comments rebutted this statement, highlighting recent AB meetings which included lengthy budgeting reviews and discussions.

Mr. Brown noted that the CPA fund has underwritten the majority of large/capital projects over the past ten years without proper consideration for the operating costs incurred with each project.

The board's unfavorable comments about the Town website were addressed by Ms. Roy, who noted that Civic Plus has an upgrade to the current platform which fixes a number of the issues. She has set up a meeting to review upgrade costs, vendors and other towns' websites for comparison. Further discussion addressed options for social media.

Questions were asked about expanding the senior work program and maybe deleting the income requirement. Per Ms. Sullivan, there is healthy participation right now. This topic will be on the next meeting agenda for further discussion and possible next steps.

**Future Meeting Agendas/Dates; October 4<sup>th</sup>, October 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Adjournment**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to adjourn at 8:27pm.*

*Unanimously voted*

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Peter W. Smellie, Chair