



TOWN OF NORWELL
Norwell Town Offices, Room 112
345 Main Street
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
(781) 659-8000

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2022 MAY 23 PM 12: 22

RECEIVED

Norwell Advisory Board Meeting Minutes March 22, 2022

The Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Jesse McSweeney at 7:00 P.M. Also present were Town Administrator Peter Morin, Finance Director Darleen Sullivan, and Board Members Bob Perniola, Brian D'Souza, Elizabeth Hibbard, Peter Leppanen, Ned Maguire, and Dane Hutchison. Unable to attend were Mark Cleveland and Susan Darnell.

AGENDA

Motion by Mr. Perniola to approve the agenda as printed. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Minutes

The minutes of the March 10 meeting were distributed and reviewed.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to accept the Minutes of the March 10, 2022 meeting as edited. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and approved by a 6-0-1 margin, Ms. Hibbard having abstained.

Bills – None

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests – None; some requests are forthcoming

Correspondence/Notices – None

Action Items / Discussions – None

2022 TOWN MEETING ARTICLE OVERVIEW

Central Street Land Articles

Central Street Land Swap

David and Julie Rouse, 180 Central Street, present. The article proposes an in-kind land swap between the Rouses and adjacent town-owned land that will give them the needed setbacks to build a garage on their property. Mr. Morin noted that the adjacent town lot is not buildable or of any notable value. The Select Board has endorsed the article, and the Rouses would pay all the legal and other costs to effect the swap.

Mr. Hutchison inquired why a zoning variance wasn't sought or granted. Mr. Morin opined that this situation met all the criteria for one, but ZBA was concerned about setting an undesirable precedent and supported the article as an alternative. Several members commented on the novelty of this approach to avoiding a variance. Ms. Rouse indicated that their neighbors had no issue with the swap.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Central Street Land Swap article of the 2022 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Transfer to Conservation

The article, which will require a 2/3 vote at Town Meeting, will transfer two town-owned lots off Central Street, Block 46 Lot 43 and Block 46 L37, to Conservation Commission custody. Conservation Agent Will Saunders noted that the two lots are mostly wetlands abutting Torrey Pond and Second Herring Brook; the transfer will add to the buffer around these water bodies. The lots are not usable for recreational purposes and will remain in their current state.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Central Street Land Swap article of the 2022 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Community Preservation Committee

Chair Bob McMackin and Clerk Bob Norris present to discuss articles approved by the Community Preservation Committee related to the expenditure of Community Preservation Act funds. Mr. McMackin thanked Judy Gillis, acting chair for most of this year who recently moved out of town, Town Counsel Robert Galvin, and Administrative Kristin Ford for their assistance, and briefly discussed how the nine-member committee worked to evaluate requests for funding.

Mr. Hutchison asked about Committee financials in general; Ms. Ford indicated that the Committee had a budget of about \$1.5 million; of this, they retained about 5%, or \$75,000, in reserve and made 10% distributions to reserve funds for affordable housing, historic preservation, and open space preservation as required by law. They are recommending distributions of about \$703K in grant funding in Annual Town Meeting articles as well as about \$261K in Special Town Meeting articles to be paid out of past reserves. Town Accountant Christine McCarthy advised that about \$1.6 million in funds were outstanding for current projects as of the end of February. Ms. Hibbard asked if there were any clawback provisions; Ms. McCarthy indicated that accounts with unused funds get closed out and the funds returned to CPC.

Special Town Meeting CPC Articles

Woodland Trail Rehabilitation

The article requests funds to pay for Trees & Grounds workers to remove trail hazards, such as leaning and fallen trees, beyond the scope of typical maintenance. This will be Year 3 of a four-year plan for hazard removal.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Woodland Trail Rehabilitation article of the 2022 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Signage and Maps for Conservation Land

Mr. Norris indicated that an account from 2014 to pay for signage and maps on Conservation properties had been closed out in error; this article would replenish the account so the Commission can update its maps and signage.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Signage and Maps article of the 2022 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Jacobs Pond Dam Improvements

The article allocates funds for a design study for state-required repairs and improvements to the Jacobs Pond dam, including construction of a fish ladder allowing fish access into and out of the pond. Conservation Agent Saunders added that the state had identified deficiencies with the dam that required repair. There are multiple sources of grant funding for these repairs, but the design studies must be in hand in order to pursue the grants.

Several members commented on the cost of the design work and the uncertain cost of the future work. Mr. Norris reiterated that state and federal grants were available to fund the majority of the work once the design study is done. Ms. Hibbard asked about separating out the fish ladder project to save costs. Mr. Saunders opined that it made sense to study the dam repairs and fish ladder jointly as opposed to piecemeal, as doing so makes the future work eligible for additional grants that are available for the restoration of fish habitat. The Commission has been working with the North and South Rivers Watershed Association to remove several dams in Third Herring Brook downstream of Jacobs Pond. The fish ladder, once finished, will allow certain migratory fish to access the pond for the first time since the brook was dammed.

Mr. Leppanen asked additional questions about who would perform and oversee the work. Mr. Saunders is in conversations with several engineering firms; once work begins, Highways/Trees and Grounds Commissioner Ferguson would be the main contact with the firms doing the dam repair work. Mr. Maguire suggested that the Town inquire about state funds to repair any damage to Route 123, a state highway. Mr. McSweeney opined that the funds were needed to ensure the dam doesn't fail or require major repairs in the future.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Fish Ladder and Dam Improvements article of the 2022 Special Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and passed 7-0-0 by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Annual Town Meeting CPC Articles

Clipper Community Complex Phase 2

The article allocates funds for the design/engineering study of renovations to the Clipper Community Complex, which will ultimately replace playing fields and courts, as well as fencing and dugouts. Mr. Norris indicated that the complex was very well used, but is in need of maintenance to maintain its popularity.

Mr. McSweeney recommended a change in the article wording to specify the "front practice field". Mr. Leppanen asked who maintained the Complex; Mr. Morin indicated that under a memorandum of understanding, Trees & Grounds maintained the fields, and Schools, Recreation, and volunteers handled trash removal and other tasks; the Memorandum may need updating in the near future. Mr. Morin indicated to Mr. Perniola that CPC funds could not be used to purchase astroturf for the fields, and this would be funded through user fees.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Clipper Community Complex Phase 2 Study article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting as edited. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by

roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

CHT Distribution

This article makes an additional \$100,000 transfer of CPA funds to the Community Housing Trust to be used to obtain, maintain, and retain affordable units in town. CHT periodically requests such distributions from CPC so they could have funds on hand to make emergency repairs or purchase a deed-restricted unit to keep it part of the town's Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). The funds are also used to engage consultants to answer questions that arise during projects. The Trust currently has about \$592,000 available in the reserve fund. Last year, funds were used to purchase and rehab an affordable unit at Silverbrook; when the unit is sold again, the proceeds go back into the fund. Ms. Hibbard commented that such distributions were essential to helping the Town maintain its SHI.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Community Housing Trust Distribution article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$100,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and passed 6-1-0 by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola no, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Cushing Temple

The article allocates \$12,000 to reset the granite block boundary and refresh the landscaping around the Cushing Temple; bids were solicited and received for the work. Mr. McMackin indicated that the "no" voter on the CPC vote preferred to use funds to support living things and activities rather than memorials.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Judge Cushing Tomb Restoration article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$12,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Form B (Historical Commission)

The article would allocate funding for a vendor to complete an estimated 70 additional Massachusetts Historical Commission Form Bs to complete the Town's state-required inventory of historic properties. Mr. Norris noted that the Historical Commission had received a quote of \$300 for each form completed, and any excess funds would be reverted back to the Town.

Several members questioned whether the filing of a Form B for a property created an encumbrance on the owners of such properties. President Wendy Bawabe of the Norwell Historical Society stated that most owners were aware that they owned a Form B eligible property because this is shown in the records at the Assessor's Office. The Town is required to maintain an inventory of such properties, and this article would provide the funding needed to make the inventory complete and bring the Town into compliance. Given the detailed nature of the forms, the state prefers that they be completed by a professional. Mr. Morin added that updating the inventory would not impose any additional regulation on such properties but, by improving the historic property inventory, will allow the existing regulations governing them to work better.

Rehab Trail Improvements

The article allocates \$55K to maintain wetland crossings and boardwalks on Conservation properties. Mr. McMackin noted that the trail system had seen a large uptick in usage over the pandemic.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Trail Improvements article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, for \$55,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Donovan Field Invasives Removal

The article allocates \$35K to remove woody invasives along the edge of the farm field to protect the ecosystem of the brook; Conservation Agent Saunders indicated that field farmer Jon Hornstra and volunteers have assisted in this effort in the past.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Donovan Field Invasives Removal article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, for \$35,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Clipper Community Complex Restrooms

This article would allocate an extra \$241K in funds for renovation of the Clipper Community Complex restrooms. The project has already received \$300K in grant funding, most of which remains available. Athletic Fields Committee Chair John DiFrisco advised the additional funds were needed due to a significant increase in materials cost and a recent change in plumbing regulations that almost doubled the number of toilets required to be installed.

Mr. McSweeney asked whether the \$241K increase would be sufficient to complete the project given the increase in cost of materials. Mr. DiFrisco could not say for sure but noted they had worked in a cushion to the estimate.

Motion made to recommend the Clipper Community Complex Supplemental Funding article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$241,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Osborne Field West Design

The article allocates \$19K for a feasibility study regarding uses for the West side of the Osborne Field property.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Design Concepts Study, West Osborne Field article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$19,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Reserve Allocations

This annual article authorizes distributions to the Affordable Housing, Open Space, and Historic Preservation reserve funds of \$150,000 each, \$450,000 total; these 10% distributions are required by law. Ms. Ford advised that the Historical Commission wished to reduce this year's distribution

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Form B Update article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$21,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

First Parish Cemetery Restoration

The article allocates \$8K to restore some of the oldest gravestones in the cemetery. Mr. McMackin indicated that an abstention in the CPC vote was from a member absent during the presentation.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the First Parish Cemetery Restoration article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, for \$8,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Jacobs Pond Weed/Invasives Control

The article requests \$15,000 for control of invasive purple loosestrife at Jacobs Pond. Mr. McMackin, who also sits on the Conservation Commission, noted that they had discovered a natural treatment that cost significantly less than the originally planned treatment.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Jacobs Pond Invasives Control article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, for \$15,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Carleton Property Trail

The article allocates funds to continue the expansion of ADA-compliant trails in the Carleton property with a link to the Miller Woods trail system. The Conservation Commission has applied for a second MassTrails matching grant which, if received, will allow the Commission to return much of the allocated funds to CPC.

Agent Saunders indicated to Mr. Maguire that ADA-compliant trails do not require a hard surface, and can be constructed of natural woodland materials and have a slightly steeper grade than other walkways.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Phase 2 Carleton Trail Network Article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Norwell Community Gardens

The article allocates \$72K for the planting of a flower field, memorial garden to late Conservation Agent Nancy Hemingway, landscaping, and benches on 2.5 acres of conservation land across from Donovan Field.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the Norwell Community Gardens article of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting, for \$72,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

to \$100,000 due to reduced need, but did not have a quorum to vote to request this. The matter was tabled pending further information.

Snow and Ice Deficit

This article will allocate funds to cover the 2021–2022 snow and ice removal deficit. Ms. Sullivan indicated that the \$286,215 expense figure was unlikely to change at this point.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the 2022 Special Town Meeting Article allocating \$286,215 for payment of snow and ice removal expenses. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

October Storm Deficit

This article will allocate \$386,000 to cover equipment rental, tree and debris removal, and other expenses associated with the October 2021 storm. Mr. Morin indicated there would be no further adjustments to this amount.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend the 2022 Special Town Meeting Article allocating \$386,000 for payment of expenses associated with the October 2021 storm. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Capital Budget (Article 3)

Chair Tim Greene present for the Capital Budget Committee, which works with Mr. Morin to review and approve requests for capital spending. The Committee is recommending \$1,552,000 in capital spending out of \$2.142 million requested, \$850,000 of which will be funded through bonding. The approved requests include the following:

Fire Department

Pumper Truck	\$850,000, funded through bonding
Second floor tile	\$20,000

Water Department

Pfas Filters at South Street facility	\$2.9 million - bonded by Water Department
---------------------------------------	--

School Department

Sparrell Generators	
Vinal HVAC system	
Kitchen equipment	\$75,000; have requested additional detail
Replace van	\$25,000

Mr. Morin indicated that he was not recommending \$500,000 in funding to replace the elevator at the Sparrell building due to additional associated costs.

Highway Department

One new, three replacement pickups	
Heavy Truck	\$240,000

The Committee also recommended the distribution of \$25,000 to digitize town records, which will be supplemented with a \$65,000 Commonwealth Compact grant obtained by Finance Director Darleen Sullivan. This multiyear project will ultimately reduce the need for physical space to store records.

Motion by Mr. Perniola to recommend Article 3 of the 2022 Annual Town Meeting for \$1,552,000. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D'Souza yes, Maguire yes.

Human Resources/Personnel Board

Human Resources Director Barbara Childs present along with Jane Stout, of the Personnel Board. Ms. Childs briefly described the ongoing process by which she and the Pers. Board vet proposed changes.

Reclassifications

The following reclassifications are proposed:

Replacing the Grade 9 Council on Aging Program Coordinator with a Grade 13 Service Coordinator position. The new position will have an increased emphasis on social work and community outreach, require a social worker license, and will have a \$5425.14 salary increase.

Replacing the Water Facilities Manager position with a Grade 15 Assistant Water Superintendent position. Ms. Childs noted that it had been difficult to attract candidates for Water Facilities Manager, and the position had been vacant for years. The new position will include additional duties that will allow the holder to fill in for the Water Superintendent; the new salary will be roughly equivalent to an Assistant Trees & Grounds Superintendent.

Creating a "Senior Administrative Assistant" to the Town Administrator and Select Board, whose additional duties will include coordinating all IT requests from Town Hall, COA, and the library as well as Web site updating. The Town's contract with its IT services provider included a limited number of tech support calls, and Mr. Morin opined it will save money to triage the requests in-house. He also noted that this would not add an assistant to his office, as one of his two existing assistants would be promoted to the new title.

Other proposed changes include making the Water Superintendent position a "personal contract" position at a cost savings of \$4428.84 and leaving the Town Planner position vacant and creating a Director of Planning and Economic Development position, to be filled by Interim Director of Planning Ilana Quirk, as a personal contract position. Mr. Morin noted that Ms. Quirk, as an experienced municipal attorney, is able to assist with bylaw revision and other strategic tasks, and reduces the need for consultations with Town Counsel.

Also included in the article is creation of the Assistant Town Administrator position referenced in Article 10 of the Annual Town Meeting. Mr. Morin noted that this was part of the succession plan he had recently been tasked with creating; Article 10 will allow the Finance Director to be appointed as Assistant Town Administrator and perform additional duties accordingly. Mr. Hutchison asked whether there was a specific need for the position, and expressed concern at the perception of creating a specific line of succession that might disadvantage those in other positions who might be interested in becoming TA. Mr. Morin affirmed that the TA position had become too much for one person to handle; while other towns utilized ATAs from other backgrounds such

as Planning or Building, he preferred that candidates have a strong financial background due to the importance of the budget and based on what he has seen work in other towns.

Mr. Perniola asked Mr. Morin if the reclassifications were sustainable fiscally several years down the road; Mr. Morin opined they were, noting that several were not actually additions to the budget but rather “upgrades” of existing roles with additional duties added, and the Water Department changes would be paid for out of their own revenues.

Personnel Bylaw Revisions

Proposed changes to the Personnel bylaw include a 2% cost of living increase for all non-collective-bargaining employees and observation of the “Juneteenth” Federal Holiday.

Personnel Appendix A

Ms. Childs distributed a revised Appendix A, to the Board, which contained several rate changes which will be published to and voted on at Town Meeting. Voting on the three personnel articles was tabled to allow Board members more time to review.

MISCELLANEOUS

All present observed a moment of silence for late NHS student Nick Wanderly.

Mr. Morin advised that going forward, there needs to be an Advisory Board member on the Capital Budget Committee per Town bylaw. Mr. Leppanen volunteered to serve as liaison.

Motion made by Mr. Perniola to nominate Mr. Leppanen as Advisory Board liaison to the Capital Budget Committee. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted by roll call: Hibbard yes, Leppanen yes, Perniola yes, McSweeney yes, Hutchison yes, D’Souza yes, Maguire yes.

FUTURE MEETINGS

March 24, 29, 31

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Hibbard to adjourn at 10:42 PM. Seconded by Mr. Leppanen and unanimously voted.

Jesse McSweeney, Chair