

**TOWN OF NORWELL
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2017**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2017 MAR -8 PM 3:48

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The Advisory Board was called to order at 7pm by Roger Hughes. Present were Susan Powell, Jacky McClean, Jane Stout, MAmy Koch, Mark Maiellano, Ralph Gordon, Tim Greene and Karen Reynolds. Town Administrator Peter Morin was also present.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Acceptance of Minutes - Roger asked for questions and comments about the January 17, 2017 Meeting Minutes. With no discussion or comments, motion to accept the Minutes from January 17, 2017. *Seconded and passed 9-0.*

Bills - Advisory Board has a bill for \$55.22 from WB Mason for the budget workbook binders for each Board member. Motion to approve the payment of the bill of \$55.22 to WBMason for binders for the AB members budget books. *Seconded and passed 9-0.*

Transfer Request - The Facilities Department requested a transfer from the Reserve Fund for \$8,000 to pay a bill for the survey and design of accessibility requirements to the Jacobs Farm House to place it in compliance with the Commonwealth's Architectural Access Board. Jacobs Farm is the headquarters for the Norwell Historical Society which hosts two or three events per year, offers private tours and school tours for Cole and Vinal School students.

Recently a complaint about noncompliance of accessibility to a public building was filed with the Commonwealth. The requirements for accessibility include ADA compliant doors, bathrooms and access to the second floor. Also, three parking spaces will be made available. Jacobs Farm House was open to the public until Town Counsel advised closing the building and the BOS voted in November to close it until further notice.

Members of the Historical Society, Commission on Disabilities and Board of Selectmen attended the AB Meeting to discuss and answer questions. The Historical Society and Historic New England, a watchdog group, requires that the repairs keep the structural integrity of this historical site. Conversation included lengthy discussion on requesting a Reserve Fund transfer, making a request from the CPC, presenting an independent Article at Town Meeting or using the balance in the building maintenance line in the Facilities budget. A last resort is to use the remaining funds in the Historical Budget that has been earmarked for monthly maintenance of Jacobs Farm House.

Historical Society and Board of Selectmen believe that this issue is not only a problem for the Historical Society, but for the Town because it is a public building and must be made accessible or face daily fines imposed by the Commonwealth's Architectural Access Board (AAB). The bill for \$8,000 is both extraordinary and unforeseen which meet the requirements of a Reserve Fund Transfer. However, the design costs would be an appropriate use of Community Preservation funds. Unfortunately, the Community Preservation Committee closed its rigid application for funding deadline before the Town was warned by the AAB. The option of waiting for Town Meeting is not feasible as the daily fines will add up quickly and become overburdensome to the Town. If it is decided to use the balance of the budget for the Facilities Department, then the Facilities Department will be asking the AB for a Reserve Fund Transfer in the near future. This predicament must be attended to swiftly or financial consequences will add up rapidly. Motion to approve the request to transfer \$8,000 from the Reserve Fund to the Facilities Department to pay a bill for survey and design of accessibility requirements to the Jacobs Farm House. *Seconded and passed 6-3.*

ACTION ITEMS / BUDGET DISCUSSIONS

Town Administrator Peter Morin presented several department budgets. The State granted an increase of 3.9% in local aid, but TA is unsure of assessments which will be available this week. The complete Town budget will be balanced for the next AB meeting.

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1. **Treasurer Collector** - The Treasurer Collector, Darlene Sullivan was also present to discuss the budget of her department. First, she was thankful for the approved increase in personnel for her department in FY 17. She now has five full time competent staff including her which allow this department to function accordingly. The Treasurer Collector renegotiated her contract with the Town to reflect the competitive market value for this position. This and the contractual salaries and wages of her staff account for the increase in this department's budget. The AB decided to continue discussions after reviewing the complete budget.
2. **Health Insurance** - The Town is staying with the Mayflower Group. It is the goal of the Town to work with each Union to discuss new options for plan design and insurance group. This budget has potential for change. AB will continue to discuss this budget in the future.
3. **Debt: Principal and Interest** - It is a Town policy to maintain a percentage of debt proportional to the total budget. This budget will not change due to local aid. Motion to accept the recommendation of the Town Administrator for the total amount of \$3,218,182 for Debt: Principal and Interest. *Seconded and passed 9-0.*
4. **FY 2018 Budget Status: Report on State Aid and Local Revenues** - The governor announced a 3.9% overall increase in State Aid. It has not been disbursed, and the Town is hopeful to see an increase in the final numbers compared to last year. We are now more than six months into the FY 2017 budget and we have used 52% of the budget. The Town Accountant is pleased that Town is within its budget and local receipts are on target.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday January 31 at 7pm in the Osborne Room.

Adjourn - Motion made to adjourn. *Seconded and passed 9-0.*



Roger Hughes, Chairman