



TOWN OF NORWELL
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TOWN OF NORWELL
2020 APR 21 PM 2:04
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Norwell Advisory Board Meeting Minutes 3/17/2020

The Advisory Board was called to order by Chair Peter Smellie at 7:00 P.M. Also present were Town Administrator Peter Morin and Board Members Mark Cleveland, Susan Darnell, Rick Goulding, Jesse McSweeney, Karen Reynolds, Julie Sim, and Kate Steele. Unable to attend was Harry Solis. The meeting was held in the Osborn Room and remotely, as allowed under the Executive Order dated March 12, 2020 suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law, Gen. L. c. 30A §20 et seq. and 940 CMR 29.01 et seq.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

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

Motion made to accept the Minutes of the March 10, 2020 meeting as printed. Seconded and passed 8-0-0.

Bills – None

Reserve Fund Transfer Requests – None

Correspondence/Notices – None

Action Items / Discussions – None

FY 2021 BUDGET OVERVIEW AND 2020 TOWN MEETING ARTICLES

Personnel Board Reclassification / Appendix Articles

Human Resources Director Barbara Childs advised that the Library Director and Board has asked the Town to change the title of Library Circulation Assistant to Library Associate and increase the position's pay grade from 5 to 7. The Personnel Board looked at the new job description, as well as pay for comparable positions in area towns, and has recommended an increase to Grade 6.

The Library also requested adding the position of "Technology/Young Adult Librarian"; the Personnel Board has recommended that the title be "Young Adult/Technology Librarian" to emphasize the focus on serving young adults, and that it be added at a Grade 10 as librarian positions typically require a Masters of Library Science. Ms. Childs noted that they are not recommending funding for the position at this time, but adding it to the Personnel bylaw now will allow the position to more quickly be filled once the new library opens.

Other proposed changes to the Personnel bylaw include an increase in the stipend paid to library employees working at least 4 hours on a Sunday above their 37.5 hour work week, and a 2% cost of living increase for non-collective-bargaining employees. Ms. Childs noted that this was in line

with had been offered in recent years as well as what had been negotiated with most collective bargaining units. The Personnel Board also recommended giving the Town Administrator the authority to offer additional vacation time to candidates as warranted, and allowing employees to take up to 10 days of accumulated sick leave for an illness in the family.

Ms. Childs also noted that the Personnel Board had approved requests from the Finance Director and Treasurer/Collector to upgrade the Payroll Administrator and Accounts Payable Administrator positions from Grade 7 to 8, but these upgrades must still be bargained with the SEIU Local 88. Mr. Morin recommended that no action be taken on this matter until negotiations with SEIU were complete. Ms. Childs received a request for another position upgrade the preceding Friday that Mr. Morin recommended be taken under advisement at this time.

Mr. Smellie asked whether Veterans Service Officer salary, at \$12K annually, was in line with other towns. Mr. Morin noted that the compensation had traditionally been funded as a stipend, but he had increased it by about 50% since he started as Administrator. All parties then reviewed proposed hourly rates for seasonal and flat hourly positions, including increases for seasonal laborers and building inspectors.

Motion made to recommend approval of the personnel plan under grade classification review, except for the grade increases for Payroll Administrator and Accounts Payable Administrator, and to recommend approval of the appendix articles. Seconded and passed 8-0-0.

Revolving Fund Articles

Mr. Moran recommended passage of an article authorizing the maintenance of revolving funds for (1) the Stetson Ford House, funded by rental fees; (2) the Recycling Center, funded by "pay as you throw" bag fees; and (3) the Council on Aging, funded by programming fees. This is an annual article.

Motion made to recommend the article authorizing the Stetson Ford House, Recycling, and Council on Aging revolving funds. Seconded and passed 8-0-0.

Mr. Morin advised that a second article proposed to set the amounts each of the aforementioned revolving funds could retain and carry over to the next FY. He would like to set lower caps for the Stetson Ford House and Recycling revolving funds, as he felt the current caps were larger than needed. As to the Stetson Ford House, he noted that the largest possible expense would be to replace the roof, which, at a \$25,000 cost, could likely be covered by current rental fees. He had no issue with the Council on Aging retaining all program fees.

Motion made to recommend the article allowing for retention of up to \$5000 in the Stetson Ford House revolving fund and up to \$10,000 in the Recycling revolving fund, with all other funds being turned back to the Free Cash, and with the Council on Aging revolving fund retaining all funds. Seconded and passed 8-0-0.

MISCELLANEOUS

All parties discussed the possibility of the Annual Town Meeting being delayed. Mr. Morin indicated that the Selectmen were considering the possibility and are anticipating more guidance from the state. In the event the State of Emergency continues into July, he is hoping the Governor would authorize towns to make continuing appropriations, based on the current FY, until a Town Meeting can be held. Another possibility is to convene with the moderator and one resident, then

immediately recess to a date and time certain. Town elections could be postponed by Superior Court injunction or legislation allowing towns to do so.

Mr. McSweeney noted that the restriction on restaurant activity will lead to a drop in meals tax revenue going into the OPEB Trust Fund, which pays for retired employee health insurance and other expenses. Mr. Morin was comfortable with this year's OPEB contributions even with a drop in meals tax revenue, noting it would still be significantly more than last year.

On the agenda for Thursday's meeting are votes on the FY 21 budget articles, CPC-sponsored articles, and a discussion of a retail marijuana cultivation bylaw sponsored by Elevated Access. Board members may attend physically or remotely under the March 12 Executive Order.

FUTURE MEETINGS

March 19, 24, 26, and 31; April 2, 2020.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made to adjourn at 8:00 P.M. Seconded and passed 8-0-0.

Peter Smellie, Chair

