

TOWN OF NORWELL
Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2017

TOWN OF NORWELL
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The Advisory Board was called to order by Roger Hughes at 7:00pm. Present were Susan Powell, Mark Maiellano, Ralph Gordon, Amy Koch and Karen Reynolds. Jacky McClean, Jane Stout and Tim Greene were absent. Also present was Town Administrator Peter Morin.

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

Acceptance of Minutes - Roger asked for questions or comments about the February 28, 2017 Meeting Minutes. With no discussion or comments, motion to accept the Minutes from February 28, 2017. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

ACTION ITEMS / DISCUSSIONS

FY 2018 School Department Budget Review was moved to March 28, 2017.

South Shore Vocational Technical School - Superintendent Tom Hickey and Board member Bob Molla presented an informative and thorough budget, then fielded questions. The Mission of the SSVo Tech is to have students college and career ready; achieve competency in technical and academic standards; and develop work habits that foster independence, self-awareness, civic mindedness and a commitment to personal growth. Several accomplishments and highlights of the last school year include the completion of the Boiler Project, restart Soccer Team, partnering with North River Collaborative for a project with Collision Technology; and Dual Enrollment Initiative with Quincy College. Also the School is beginning a new Horticulture and Landscape department. This budget allows for an investment of \$367,000 for Capital expenses such as equipment for the Horticulture and Landscape Department, security cameras, barn renovations into a locker room and MSBA Feasibility. It is important to note that SSVo Tech budget covers costs not typically found in school district budgets such as health insurance, which increased 11%, retirement, debt, unemployment, OPEB, and snow removal. This is \$2,138,573 or 16.6% of the budget. The total budget for SSVo Tech for FY18 is \$12,920,216. This is a 3.73% increase from FY17. Norwell has 15 students attending as of October, 2016. Our portion is \$249,245 which is an \$86 increase from FY17. Mr. Hickey answered questions and discussed the formula for assessing tuition. Motion to approve the request from the South Shore Vocational Technical School for the total budget of \$249,245. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Permits and Licenses for Delinquent Taxpayers - The Treasurer/Collector, Darleen Sullivan, presented this Article which asks the Town to vote to change the General By-laws of the Town to conform with the State law that was enacted as part of the Municipal Modernization Act. Town By-laws state that permits and licenses can be withheld for delinquent taxpayers only if the delinquency is for 12 months or more. This updated By-law says permits and licenses can be withheld if *any* taxes are delinquent. Norwell has a high rate of tax collection and unpaid

taxes are reported to Department Heads on a regular schedule. The Town works in good faith with residents to set up payment plans to collect back taxes. Ultimately, the decision of granting a permit or license is given to the Department responsible for the permit. Motion to accept the Article for Permits and Licenses for Delinquent Taxpayers for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting as drafted. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Personnel on Military Training or Leave - This Article specifies the benefits entitled to an employee fulfilling his or her military duty. These benefits include continued pay at his/her regular Town base salary for the first 30 days, shall not lose seniority, accrued vacation or sick/personal leave. After that time, he/she will receive the base salary reduced by any amount received from the United States as pay for military service performed during that same pay period. The employee shall also continue eligibility for health insurance benefits he/she would have received if not called to active service. Motion to accept the Article for Military Training and Military Duty for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting as drafted. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Authorization of Revolving Funds - There are two Articles: One seeks to authorize or reauthorize the revolving funds; One seeks to amend the General By-Laws by adding a new section to establish and authorize revolving funds for use by certain town departments in connection with the operation of programs or activities that generate fees to support the expenses of those programs. In the past, the Town had three revolving funds. The Stetson Ford House uses money collected from rent to maintain the property. The Recycling Program use bag fees to maintain and improve the Recycling Center, and a Student Parking Fee that will now fall under the School Special Revenue Fund and will not be part of revolving funds. This year the Article seeks to add a revolving fund for the Council on Aging for Senior Center costs for trips and life-long learning programs. Motion to accept the Articles for Authorization of Revolving Funds for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Schools based Medicaid Funds - This Article seeks \$3,000 for School based Medicaid claim services. This is a housekeeping Article and these funds are used to pay for the services of an outside vendor to process claims for Medicaid reimbursement to the Town. Motion to accept the Article for Schools based Medicaid Funds for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

South Shore Women's Center - This Article seeks \$4,000 to contract with the South Shore Women's Resource Center for domestic violence intervention and prevention services for Norwell residents. Supporting the South Shore Women's Center is an important avenue to create awareness and advocate for residents experiencing domestic abuse. Motion to accept the Article for the South Shore Women's Center for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Elimination of the Lodging Tax - This Article seeks to revoke Article 20 of the May 2016 Annual Town Meeting and further reject the provisions of Massachusetts General Law relating

to the imposition of a local excise tax of 6% of the total amount of rent of any room in a bed & breakfast, hotel, lodging house or motel located within the Town of Norwell. This tax was meant to generate an additional \$20,000 in tax revenues. While this is a modest amount, it hits residents least able to pay. When this Article was passed, the State was assessed this tax as it was paying the bill for residents at the homeless shelters in Town. After the Article was enacted, new regulations at the State passed and a new system for paying rent at homeless shelters was put into action. Now residents with few resources are required to pay that extra tax. The Town feels this is an undue burden and asks to revoke the 2016 Article. Motion to accept the Article for Elimination of the Lodging Tax for the Warrant for the Annual Town Meeting. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

The following Articles were indefinitely postponed: Reduction of the Tax Rate, Transfer into Capital Stabilization Fund and Transfer into OPEB Trust Fund. Also the request for a Police Transfer was not needed.

FUTURE MEETINGS

Thursday March 9, 2017

Tuesday March 14, 2017

Adjourn - Motion made to Adjourn. *Seconded and passed 6-0.*

Roger Hughes, Chairman