

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
January 13, 2016**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2016 FEB 11 PM 3:51

RECEIVED

Mr. McBride opened the meeting at 7:38pm, and introduced Jason Brown, Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Peter Smellie and Town Administrator Peter Morin.

MOTION: Ellen Allen moved the agenda as written. Seconded by Peter Smellie and unanimously voted.

REPORTS

Citizen Comments – None

Selectmen's Report – None

Town Administrator's Report – The recent emergency situation at 89 Stetson Road was cited by Mr. Morin, who stated that the incident was resolved with no injuries, and gave commendations to the Police and Fire Departments for their expert handling of the situation. Both departments were thanked by the BOS.

Mr. Morin and Ms. Allen had a conference call with Standard and Poor to discuss the Town's rating re: the \$3.8 million bond issuance to purchase the new fire truck and do the construction work on Main Street. He is anticipating that the Town will maintain its excellent bond rating and looks forward to a very successful bond issuance.'

SSRECC – the organization is considering a change in the funding formula. Per Mr. Morin, the current formula would work better for the Town. This topic should be included on an agenda in the near future with a talk about capital needs, functions and duties. The Advisory Board should be invited as well. The BOS concurred.

Announcements

Norwell Police Dept. honored William Crowley as a Traffic Safety Hero at a luncheon in December. The Police Department also received a gold award from AAA Northeast for child safety seat installations and designated driver programs.

State of the Town Breakfast will be held on January 28th. To RSVP, go to the Norwell Chamber of Commerce website for more information. All are invited to attend.

Volunteers with "A Simple Gesture" program recently collected donations of food from 115 homes to donate to the Norwell Food Pantry. FYI, the next pickup in Town will be Saturday, March 11th. This is a great initiative; for more information go on Facebook to "A Simple Gesture".

Main Street Pathwalk Discussion

Resident Peter Bloomfield, Paradise Drive, stated his disappointment in the legal decision, and is here to ask the BOS to pursue a pathwalk/sidewalk in a fiscally responsible manner. There is now a petition with over 300 signatures in support of a sidewalk on Main Street. The need is not changed by a lack of CPA funding. He commented on the many residents who love the Forest Street pathways and would like to see one on Main Street. Mr. McBride gave a summary of the status of this potential project. The BOS chose not to file an appeal to pursue this funding. They

have asked the Highway Supervisor to continue with permitting for an impervious surface, and are hoping for an order of conditions for the Main Street road repair. It would be a whole separate issue to finance sidewalks with Town funding, and currently there is no money to do this. The project might be done in sections at some point in the future. The BOS has NOT abandoned this project. The residents' desire is Very clear and a petition was not needed to show support. The board will have to see where the Town is with budgeting before making any further decisions or commitments.

Ms. Demong reminded everyone that there will be a sidewalk from Assinippi Ave. to South Street, which was already included as part of the Main Street project. There is also another petition being circulated for sidewalks on other main streets in the Town. A Complete Streets Committee has been formed by the Town, which should eliminate the need for this type of petition for a project. Grant funding may help with future planning for certain areas of the Town, including sidewalks. Ms. Allen stated that, while wanting to honor the wish for sidewalks, the Town does need to begin working on with the Main St. project. The future sidewalk will probably not have a granite curb, but there may be other ways to provide security for pedestrians. The BOS is working with Mr. Morin on a bigger capital plan, and will keep the Town posted. Mr. McBride stressed the importance of getting the various departments and committees (through Complete Streets) in the same room so that all are working towards the agreed upon goal.

Pathwalks questions from residents:

Question: re: pathwalks/crosswalks; are flashing lights planned for the existing sidewalk on Circuit and South streets? Answer: No, but it is a good idea.

Question: Brian Greenberg, Cross St.: will the Complete Streets meetings be public? Answer: They are now on Fridays at noon, per Ms. Demong, who stated that the committee is still waiting for guidance from the state. There is not much to report yet. But minutes will eventually be posted on the Town's website. These are public meetings.

Question: There is some confusion about the Town Meeting Article – is the project now dead, and would another Article be required with a re-vote? Answer: yes. The last Town Meeting vote was specific with regard to funding. Per Mr. McBride, the Town may be able to do portions of the project over time. Ms. Allen reminded all that the Town can't spend any source of funds without a Town Meeting vote.

Question: Is there a detailed cost breakdown available for review? Answer: Per Mr. McBride, a series of appropriations was made over the last few Town meetings, but so far only funds for permitting and engineering have been expended. The Town is doing a Bond issuance next week for \$3.8 million to pave Main St. from Town Center to the Hanover line including a sidewalk for the portion from South St. to Assinippi Ave. He also reminded all that redoing the roadway plus sidewalks was less costly because it was bid as a total project. In the future a sidewalk might be more expensive as a standalone project than as part of the road repair. Maintenance costs are not known yet. Foregoing a granite curb would save about \$450,000. The sidewalk would cost an extra \$1 million as a separate project. As an additional reminder: 85% of this cost comes out of residents' pockets. Remember this and support economic development!!

More question and answer discussion ensued with residents attending the meeting, with the majority of the questions covering the same subjects as recorded above. Ms. Allen stated that exploring private funding might provide some options if residents would like to pursue that.

Steve Ivas gave an example of sidewalks in a town west of Boston that got easements from residents for a sidewalk on their land.

Medical Marijuana Update

Mr. McBride gave a summary of events to date: the BOS has been approached by a couple of companies, and 2 have been provided with a "letter of non-objection". The 2 companies are still in that position. Mr. Morin gave a presentation with a status update and background. The statewide vote was 63% in favor of legalizing medical marijuana, with a 60/40 pass margin in Norwell. The ban has been lifted on medical marijuana at the federal level. A purchaser can now use credit instead of cash for medical situations, which has simplified some of the security issues. All MA communities are required to have zoning for medical marijuana and zoning areas are limited. In Norwell the areas are limited to parts of Longwater Drive and Accord Park Drive. The facility still must be 500 yards from residences, school or day care facilities. There are 4 applicants licensed in MA, with 155 pending applications at the Dept. of Public Health. Support letters have been issued in Hingham, Rockland and Marshfield. Norwell is a good central point. The primary reason that the BOS has issued letters is due to the fact that these facilities are likely to be very close to the Norwell border. If the Town licenses a facility, the Norwell Police can directly supervise activity, and the Town will get the revenue! This is a very good alternative to overrides and higher taxes. This is also low impact in commercial development and studies have shown that it does not raise crime incidents. The business could provide up to \$1.5 million in revenue over the next 5 years, in addition to generating ongoing property and other tax revenue. The 2 companies in receipt of letters of non-objection are Mass Medi Spa and the William Noyes Webster Foundation. Mr. Morin highlighted Mass Medi Spa's guidelines, including 24/7 security by Signet Security, whose offices are on Longwater Drive. This company will cultivate and dispense its product onsite. The ZBA is reviewing this application.

Mr. McBride invited comments and questions from the audience. A Germaine Road resident voiced concerns about Mass Medi Spa based on his internet research into the company, as well as the proximity of the proposed facility to Cole School. In answer to his question about why the Town would consider allowing this business to operate in Norwell, the board members reiterated their desire to encourage economic development instead of tax increases. They also indicated that this concern was premature. Mr. Morin added that, in the absence of a town's zoning guidelines, the State would step in to prohibit this business activity in public areas with children. He also stated that a host agreement would NOT be a precursor to recreational sales. If there is a change in legal circumstances this agreement becomes null and void. Ms. Allen voiced her concern about 3 ballot questions that address the legalization of marijuana. Governor Baker does not support it, but the consensus is that legalization of recreational use is coming. Mr. McBride reminded all that the BOS was criticized for the Economic Development Plan, and that the last major override was 4 years ago. He stated that there is a problem in the Town with high residential taxes, and there is an ever increasing need for economic development. Good proposals have been voted down when residents should be maximizing these economic areas to the benefit of the community. A \$10 million building would generate \$165,000 in real estate tax revenues. Mr. Morin stated that the Town's entire commercial tax base needs work, and the industrial parks need to be repurposed by changing the way business is conducted. This opportunity is attractive because it is LOW traffic, and would not impact the already overburdened main roads in the Town. Another Germaine Road resident expressed concern about the children in the Town. A Main Street resident voiced her concern about the "mixed message" to children if the facility was allowed to conduct business. Discussion ensued about the pros and cons of medical marijuana vis-a-vis other legal drugs available at drug stores that can lead to addiction. Mr. McBride redirected the conversation back to good organizations with good security plans that will be considered.

Ms. Allen introduced Meg Dougherty, head of the Norwell VNA and asked her to give an overview of medical marijuana use in the VNA facilities. Ms. Dougherty gave short summary of diseases and conditions that respond to medical marijuana, such as migraine-like headaches and severe nausea. She also stated that medical marijuana is a "whole different ballgame" as the patient is the determinant of the dose. A medical doctor cannot prescribe it, but can certify the diagnosis that will allow a prescription for medical marijuana. This is about pain relief and is very different from recreational marijuana. Ms. Dougherty cited such conditions as chemo symptoms (unrelenting) that justify medical marijuana.

More discussion took place about types of businesses suited to Norwell. Susan Solis, EDC member, stated that she would rather have \$1.5 million in a business with great security than have residential taxes go up again. The EDC has presented many plans that have been turned down for inconsequential reasons. The Committee comes up with great ideas, but a small group of people work to get good ideas turned down. She stated that she is tired of seeing people leave for lower residential taxes in other towns. Norwell should be more competitive, and it would be great for Norwell get this benefit!

Police Chief Ted Ross gave his perspective on the security plan for the Mass Medi Spa facility. Background checks for personnel were conducted by DPH. The Norwell Police would also review these background checks. Regarding the concern about cash on hand; Chief Ross has spoken to the police chief in Franklin where a facility has been operating for over a year. Per Franklin's police chief, there has been a 0% increase in crime, and "you wouldn't even know it's there". Chief Ross also spoke to the Chief of Police in a New Jersey county that has had a facility for several years. There has been no increase in crime in or around the facility and there have been no complaints from the public. Chief Ross is still waiting for information from the Salem and Brockton Police Departments. Chief Ross, Mr. Morin and Fire Chief Andy Reardon met several times with this company to review security plans. The State mandates minimum security requirements, both interior and exterior. Chief Ross is not endorsing these proposals, but will keep the Town posted. There were more resident comments along the same lines as previous discussions, with some stating their opposition to this plan.

Mr. Morin reminded all that the assessed value of the proposed business property will change due to the sale, and it will also generate personal property tax, which taxes equipment in use at the same rate as residential tax. The revenue stream won't stop after the \$1.5 million, and it would be treated as a continuing community benefit. The approval process will be addressed by the DPH, which will answer many of the questions regarding the company's personnel and financial status. If they don't succeed at the State level, it's a moot point for Norwell, who will move on to another company. If the State permits are approved, they would need a special permit from the ZBA, and then approval from the planning board. Mr. McBride thanked all for coming, and stated that the BOS will take all these concerns into consideration. However, All residents need to understand the value of economic development; if there is none taxes will increase for sure.

Set date for Special and Annual Town Meeting

Pat Anderson, Town Clerk, reviewed the election calendar with the board. There is a Primary Election for Senator Hedlund's seat, and a Special Election for his replacement, in addition to the other scheduled elections. Due to the conflict with an election, Ms. Anderson would prefer to hold Town Meeting on May 2nd instead of May 9th. Mr. Morin conferred with Mr. Coffey, who is available to moderate the meeting on May 2nd. *Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to set the date for the Special and Annual Town Meeting as May 2nd and May 3rd, in order to coordinate with the election on May 14th. Unanimously voted*

Ms. Anderson updated the board on new political parties and designations and explained the enrollment process for the new parties. Mr. Morin would like to close the Warrant on March 2nd, a longer period of time, which will hopefully allow for less need to reopen the Warrant after closing.

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to open the Warrant for the Special and Annual Town meeting today, January 13th, and close the Warrant on March 2nd.
Unanimously voted*

Library Project Committee – Jeanne Ivas

Chris Smith and Jeanne Ivas will be members of the library project committee, as well as Becky Freer (until February 24th). Laurence Gogarty, PBMC Chair, has several PBMC members who want to be on this committee. Mr. Morin and the BOS have looked at the composition of this committee and would like it to be as follows: 3 library representatives (two trustees plus the library director), 3 PBMC members and 1 Selectman. All would like to appoint Scott Brodsky from the PBMC (alternate member) and ask the PBMC to choose two additional committee members. All agreed that this will work well.

Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to form this committee as stated above. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to appoint Scott Brodsky to the library project committee. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Peter Smellie, seconded by Jason Brown, to appoint Ellen Allen to the library project committee. Unanimously voted

Acceptance of Capital Budget Committee Resignation

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to accept with regret the resignation of Kevin Burns from the Capital Budget Committee. Unanimously voted

Ragnor Relay Cape Cod Race Request

The race will follow the proposed route with police details as indicated. The runners will run on the left side of the road against traffic. Both the Police and Fire Chiefs have reviewed the route.

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the request from the Ragnor Relay Cape Cod Race for the race on May 13th, from 6am to 11:30am, with conditions as stated in the approval letters from the Police, Fire, and Highway Departments. Any changes in the route or hand-off of the runners must be approved by the Police Chief and any other necessary Town Departments. Unanimously voted

McCourt Foundation Bicycle Ride Request

Both Police and Fire Chiefs have approved the ride plan. *Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the McCourt Foundation Bicycle Ride on October 1st, 2016, with conditions of approval from the Police and Fire chiefs. Unanimously voted*

Green Community Update

Using the initial Green Communities grant money, the energy management systems at two schools will be updated, at a cost of \$106,000. The remainder of the grant money (~\$41K) will be put towards projects at Town Hall. All of these improvements will fit within the amount of the grant. The consultant has been through the buildings, all documentation is in place, and there is no problem meeting the Jan. 22nd deadline for the application. The two schools were identified as the most in need. The town should have no problem reducing the Town's energy use by 20% over the next 5 years based on the analysis that was done to apply for the GC designation and grants. Mr. Morin and Dave Sutton met on Monday with the representative from Colliers, and

identified the problems in the preliminary facilities audit. Dave Sutton is reviewing his findings and will submit changes by Friday, hopefully in time for the next draft.

Ticks Update

Ms. Demong and Ms. Allen met with the BOH, who is very receptive to partnering with other communities. The BOS will finalize the draft letter to surrounding towns. It would be ideal to have 4 towns, but Norwell should invite 8 towns in order to see who attends the meeting and wants to go forward. Mr. McBride is still concerned about the \$8000 cost of the program being articulated in the letter, so it may not be included. Mr. Smellie would like to publicize this through the schools. The BOS would like to see if the Town wants to pursue this after the talk. All agreed with the edit to remove the \$8000 cost from the letter, and inform interested towns after the initial meeting. Mr. Morin will book a meeting room. Ms. Demong will work with Mr. Morin to send out the letter. Dr. Mather will send information to Ms. Demong for publicity.

Upcoming meetings

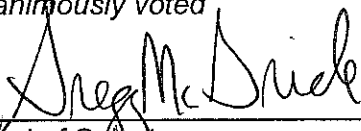
Ms. Allen spoke to Mr. Morin about a draft audit with S & P in conjunction with the upcoming bond issuance, indicating that a budget-to-actual financial statement might be needed at that time. The AB will be invited to the BOS meeting for that agenda item.

The SSRECC appears to be growing disproportionately. The entity works well but wants to grow and improve, and by doing so will eventually run out of grant money. The SSRECC was sold to residents as cost neutral or a cost savings, per Mr. Brown. If it doesn't meet this criteria, then residents might want to opt out. Mr. Morin agreed with this concern. If it doesn't save money then the Town may wish to move in a different direction and he would like to be out ahead of the decision.

The BOS should have Paul Foulsham come in to discuss his budget and capital needs. If Mr. Foulsham attends an upcoming meeting he should also plan to discuss the need/lack of need for a Town Engineer. Departments will be asked to tally up aggregate consultant engineer cost data in order to assist in making the decision.

The January 20th BOS meeting agenda should include a draft budget for review.

Adjourn – Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adjourn at 10:12pm.
Unanimously voted



Board of Selectmen