

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
January 27, 2016**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2016 FEB 11 PM 3:51

RECEIVED

Mr. McBride opened the meeting at 7:36pm, 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 -

Ms. Allen gave a summary of the Mass Municipal Association conference last weekend, which was attended by several BOS members and Mr. Morin. Highlights included economic development sessions. Ms. Allen mentioned a session on the "cadillac tax" which could potentially increase significantly the cost to the Town of its "rich" health plan.

Ms. Demong has already received RSVP's from Scituate and Pembroke to the tick awareness program invitation.

The Cable Committee (CC) had an open meeting last Thursday evening. The public was invited to attend and give feedback on the Town's cable service. There was not a big response, but email comments were received. The CC will keep all residents posted as the Town begins negotiations with Verizon and Comcast.

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Morin reminded all that Lt. Governor Karyn Polito is coming to the Town tomorrow for the Community Compact award ceremony. Norwell will be joined by the Towns of Rockland and Kingston. There will also be a ceremony awarding Green Communities awards at the Weymouth Town Hall. This marks a significant achievement for Norwell. The Governor's proposed State Aid "Cherry Sheet" was released, which contained unwelcome news on the assessments for Charter Schools. This largely offset increases in Chpt. 70 and Unrestricted General Government Aid receipts.

Zoning Board Review Committee (ZBRC)

Lois Barbour, Sally Turner (Chair), Pat Anderson, Town Clerk, ZBRC members, in attendance. Mr. Brown, Skip Joseph and Bob Woodhill are also members of the committee. The committee gave a summary of the proposal/presentation by Suzanne Owens of General Code to recodify and review the Town's bylaws. Ms. Anderson has talked to other cities and towns about this proposed project, and the majority of recommendations received were for this company, which has been in business for 54 years. It would be of great benefit to the Town to have a user friendly book of the bylaws. The project would clean up both the existing bylaws and the backlog of un-entered data, and create a more sophisticated booklet of the bylaws. The initial cost is the highest, after which the yearly maintenance is less money. It would still be an online .pdf. The initial cost would not include making substantive changes to the by-laws planning, which would still be a separate expense. Mr. Brown gave additional reasons for supporting this project, stating that for a long time the zoning bylaws have been inconsistent and contain a degree of

ambiguity. For example, the Building Inspector has to interpret the construction bylaws in order to correctly enforce the building code.

There are two components to this project:

1. Get an open structure framework to start. Plug existing bylaws into the structure and then look to see where the holes are in the product.
2. Do an analysis to see what is lacking and should be addressed.

Mr. Morin stated that the legal review component would be \$1500 if performed by Town Counsel. The proposal from General Code is \$14,800 to put the bylaws into proper outline format, which will be a 2 year process. The first component of the project will make the bylaws user friendly. The deep analysis will give the Town the opportunity to address inconsistencies and issues. Per Ms. Barbour, some of the ambiguity has been litigated by case law over the years, and the project should make sure to include those decisions in the review.

There is no budget for this initial cost of \$14,800 to get all the data formatted properly. The next cost will depend on what changes ensue and the amount of cross-referencing needed. The ZBRC voted unanimously to move forward with this proposal. Mr. Brown is looking for a vote from the BOS. Per Mr. Morin, the Town will use funds from the Legal budget.

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve spending \$14,800 from the Town's Legal budget for codification and formatting of the zoning bylaws. Unanimously voted Ms. Anderson would like to include the Town charter in the project, which is already included in the proposal (which includes the general bylaws, zoning bylaws, and the Town charter). Ms. Turner stated that not a word of the bylaws will be changed, but the review will probably find items that need changing in the process. The project could probably be ready for the May 2017 Town Meeting. In the meantime the Zoning Bylaw Review Committee will keep working on substantive open issues such as common driveways.

Darleen Sullivan- Treasurer, Bond Issue

Ms. Sullivan gave a summary of the results from the sale of bonds on January 21st to cover the borrowing of \$3.8 million, \$500K of which is for the new fire truck and \$3.3 million for the Main St road project. The Town did very well on the issue, coming in lower than had been budgeted. There were 6 bidders and all were very close. The net premium will cover the issuance costs and the excess could flow to Free Cash. The true interest rate is 2.14%, which is less than expected by about \$68K in projected interest costs. When compared with other AAA rated towns, Norwell is right in line with the rest of the country. S & P gave kudos to Town employees Darleen Sullivan, Donna Mangan and Peter Morin, and BOS members who were instrumental in making this sale happen. The strength of the Town's leadership and administrative policies were reflected in this issuance. BOS Clerk Peter Smellie read the bond issuance aloud. The notes and closing documents will need BOS signatures. The official close will be February 4th, with the sale proceeds wired to the Town the next day. *Motion: read by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, was unanimously voted. The text of the entire motion will be included as an attachment to these minutes.*

Mr. McBride gave kudos to all who were instrumental in the success of this bond issuance, with the thanks of the BOS. Ms. Sullivan had board members sign copies, which were notarized by the Town Clerk, Ms. Anderson.

Darleen Sullivan – Treasurer/Collector 2017 Budget

Ms. Sullivan gave a summary of the budget highlights, stating that it is very close to that of FY2016. It is not completely level - over by about \$1400. The budget is very tight right now for general expenses, and the department might be looking for some reserve funds. Ms. Sullivan explained the department's lower and higher costs using graphs, and stated that the department must adjust for regular increases. Office supplies, paper costs, and postage have increased.

There is a cost for compliance with the Affordable Care Act. Tax/title foreclosure costs occurred on a piece of land, which next year will hopefully be sold for some income. Salaries are \$264,182, which is less due to new hires at lower step rates.

There were some increases in General Expenses; lockbox costs, abatement interest is unanticipated but is now lower than it used to be. There are regular increases for various vendors, but these are minimal. Although there are small cushions in some areas, the overall budget is still pretty level and tight. The department needs a large amount of paper copies that must be kept by law and for audits, especially certain records with signed documents, etc. Mr. Brown asked about the large variance in postage costs over the years. Prior to last year, the Treasurer's office covered all of the Town Hall postage. It is now a single line item in the Selectmen's budget, but there are residual postage costs for the Treasurer/Collector's outside vendors that need to be included in her budget. The board thanked Ms. Sullivan for her hard work.

Planning Board Budget – Chris Dilorio, Town Planner

Mr. Dilorio stated that the department is submitting a level budget. There is one step increase in salary for the office administrator. The union employee contract is up for salaries in FY 2017, so the budget won't stay level for the next fiscal year. The BOS thanked Mr. Dilorio for his hard work.

Conservation Commission – Nancy Hemingway, Conservation Agent

The department is submitting a level budget this year. Actual expenses were higher last year due to pathway and trail maintenance. This line item will now be included in the budget, and has been increased to \$10K, including materials. The Commission has reached out to other departments for help with projects. Tree and Grounds has assisted if the work is too much for the senior workers. A projected budget is being generated by Tree and Grounds which will be ready soon. Some senior workers did a conservation training class through the department and indicated that they would like to do more. Barbara Childs is going to try to sponsor another training session, which is not a significant expense and can be incorporated into this budget. Ms. Demong asked about a budget for the GIS system. Per Agent Hemingway, a new GIS system would require buying computers and hand held equipment, but the Town is doing well for the time being without this investment. Mr. McBride suggested going back to the CPC for funding to upgrade the system.

Adopt a fire hydrant program

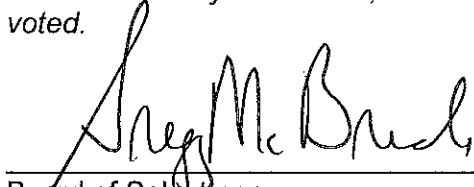
At the MMA annual meeting a presentation was given on this program. Ms. Allen and Ms. Demong thought this would be a good idea for the Town. Residents could get involved and do a great service by "adopting" a hydrant and assuming responsibility for digging it out after a snowstorm. The best way to do this would be to purchase People GIS, but this is a bigger decision since it involves multiple uses for the town. It is not practical to consider this for this winter. Nevertheless, an Adopt a Fire Hydrant program could significantly cut the workload of Town departments as there are 700 fire hydrants in Norwell. "Adopters" could be allowed to paint the hydrant as they wished, within reason. Ms. Allen has reached out to the Police, Fire and Water departments to get feedback about this program. They were all supportive, but had different thoughts about painting the hydrants. The program worked well in Boston, but it might be an issue with less density here in the Town. Snow covered hydrants in the Town were a serious problem last winter. The Water department might be interested in funding gift certificates for fire hydrant adoption in lieu of personal painting. The board is interested in endorsing anything that will raise awareness of this need, and discussed various programs that could be implemented. Mr. McBride would like to encourage residents to please dig out the fire hydrant nearest to you! The board tabled this for now, but will come back to it during next week's meeting and ask for People GIS to make a presentation to department heads.

Accept Resignation of Paul Foulsham, Highway/Tree and Grounds Director

On January 25th, Mr. Foulsham sent a letter of retirement to the BOS, effective 2/12/16. Mr. McBride read the letter aloud for all. The board wished Mr. Foulsham well in his retirement. There will be a discussion about the open position going forward. Per Mr. Morin, in the short term it is the responsibility of the BOS to fill the position between now and the election. They can also consider changing the position from elected to appointed with a Town Meeting Article and Town Election ballot question. This would not require a charter change. Ms. Allen proposed that the job should be an appointed position, and would like to have the BOS put an Article in the Warrant. As February 12th is two weeks away, an interim measure could be to ask Chief Reardon to fill this role. Ms. Allen spoke to Chief Reardon, who is willing to do this and is a Town resident. A current job requirement is that this elected official must be a Town resident, while an appointed position would allow a candidate to live in another community. Ms. Allen said she believes the job needs someone with union experience as well as heavy equipment maintenance experience. She also expressed the opinion that the BOS should make this decision next week. Discussion ensued about the pros and cons of asking the Fire Chief to do a second full time job. The BOS would like Chief Reardon to come in to discuss this appointment, which should be in a public meeting. Per Mr. Morin, the search doesn't need a recruitment process; the Town could look within current employees and/or Town residents. Mr. Smellie would like to make it very clear to anyone wanting to pull papers in February that this position may change to an appointed one at the Annual Town Meeting. Ms. Allen would like to thank Mr. Foulsham for his many years of hard work, and the BOS wished him all the best for retirement.

Adjourn

Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adjourn at 9:27pm. Unanimously voted.



Board of Selectmen