

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
November 30, 2016**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK
2016 DEC 28 AM 10:44

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Open Session

Ms. Allen informed the board that Paradise Drive was repaired for much less money than the original estimate, with the cost split between the Highway and Water Departments, as the Water Department needs access to their land at the end of this street. The total cost was \$25K.

Minutes Approval

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to approve the Executive Session minutes for June 15, 2016, July 13, 2016, July 28, 2016. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Ms. Allen, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to approve the Open Meeting minutes for October 26, 2016 and November 2, 2016. Unanimously voted

The November 2nd Executive Session minutes will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

The board continued the meeting in the Osborne Room; called to order at 7:33pm by Vice Chair Ellen Allen.

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the agenda as amended to postpone item 4d. Gift fund request. Unanimously voted

Citizen Comments

None

Selectmen's report

None

Town Administrator's Report

None

Annual Public Hearing for the Tax Rate

Motion; made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Mr. Smellie, to open the public hearing. Unanimously voted

Mr. Smellie read the notice of public hearing.

Present: 2 members of the Board of Assessors (BOA); Joan Osborne, Bill Hauser
Barbara Gingras, Darleen Sullivan, Donna Mangan

Ms. Osborne gave a presentation explaining the process of setting the tax rate, which includes votes by the BOS as noted in the presentation. The tax rate summary as a factor of one would provide a single tax rate, which does not shift the burden to the commercial and industrial properties. Slides compared the tax rates last year and this year. The tax rate decreased by 5 cents per thousand, but property valuations increased. Residential property value increases were higher than commercial property value increases.

Taxes have increased as a result of property value increases and new levies for projects like the police station. Ms. Osborne showed a comparison to other towns, all of whom have a tax rate factor of 1 except Hanover, where the mall brings in more commercial revenue. The ratio of residential to commercial property in the Town is 86% to 14%. Residential market rate growth has outstripped commercial growth. Ms. Osborne stated that recent property sales indicated

significant undervalues in certain areas of the Town. Questions were asked and answered about a possible shift of the tax burden to the commercial base, which is harder to plan due to the disproportionate ratio of residential to commercial property. Mr. McBride added that this is the main reason for supporting economic nonresidential growth.

Ms. Allen asked about the BOA's recommendation to the BOS. The board members would like to stay at a factor of 1 as there is not enough of a commercial tax base to make the shift. In addition, the Town will not adopt the allowed exemptions for Open Space, residential exemption and small commercial exemption.

Ms. Allen asked for comments from the audience.

Motion; made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Peter Smellie, that the Board of Selectmen not adopt an open space discount for fiscal 2017. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Peter Smellie, that the Board of Selectmen not adopt a residential exemption for fiscal 2017. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Mr. McBride, seconded by Peter Smellie, that the Board of Selectmen adopt a single tax rate of 1 for fiscal 2017. Unanimously voted

Committee Applicant

Meghan Steinberg, committee applicant, introduced herself and gave an overview of her background and reasons for applying to join a Town board. Per Ms. Allen, the open seat on the Personnel board would fit well with Ms. Steinberg's background. There were no questions from the BOS. All thanked Ms. Steinberg for applying and welcomed her to the Personnel Board.

Motion: made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Peter Smellie, to appoint Meghan Steinberg to the Personnel Board for a term expiring June 30, 2017 (which will then be rolled over for a full term). Unanimously voted

Library Grant Application – Jeanne Ivas

Jeanne Ivas, Scott Brodsky and Judy McConarty were present to give an update on this project and the application.

Ms. Ivas reported that this board is meeting tomorrow night for more info and updated the BOS on the following.

1. Feasibility study is moving along
2. Working on the preliminary interior and exterior design
3. Cost estimate – still in the range mentioned in previous meetings, but the committee doesn't have the total project cost. Ms Ivas highlighted the items needed in addition to the construction costs; soft costs, permits, temporary location, shelving, etc.
4. Hazmat and geotech surveys are underway

Questions about the construction process and costs were asked and answered by the BOS and the Library board members.

Ms. Ivas reviewed the Warrant Articles that will be needed at Town Meeting in May. There is no funding request scheduled yet.

The Mass. Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) needs Town Meeting approval of the preliminary design and an Article with some presumed cost but no appropriation of money.

The next Article will include the acceptance of a grant and approval to expend the total amount of the building costs.

Grants will be announced in 2017; this project expects to be put on the waiting list. The Town must approve funding for the whole project, including 3 years of project escalation before any grant is awarded.

Per Mr. McBride, the total cost for the design submitted will definitely be discussed at Town Meeting.

The last item is the application itself. Ms. Ivas will get the board a copy of the 38 assurances in the application; name, title and signature of the government officials. She gave specific information about the signers for the last application. One application question for the board: who is the sole awarding legal authority for this project? Answer; Mr. Morin would award a contract but not make the decision, which would probably fall to the Library trustees. Mr. Morin

will follow up with Town Counsel for an answer. The timeframe for application: all signatures by the end of December. The deadline is January 26th, but the committee would like to submit by the middle of January.

Ms. McConarty stated that the library project page has the latest information and is on the Library website. Ms. Demong asked about the possibility of private fundraising-updates. Per Ms. Ivas, it is too early to begin private fundraising as the plan is not complete. The MBLC expects the Town to try hard to do private fundraising, but there are no % expectations. All thanked the committee members for coming in.

Callie's Run Race Request

The race organizers submitted a request for April 9th. All boards and departments have approved this event. The Police Chief has asked that the race coordinator contact the Police Department for two-person details, and requested that any medical requirements go through the Fire Department.

Mr. McBride brought up residents' concerns about inconvenience, especially on South Street, which has runner traffic in both directions. Is there another route that would work? He would like to ask the race coordinators to explore other options. Mr. Morin updated the board about measures taken in other races earlier this year to alleviate this problem, which worked well. Mr. McBride would like to make sure the phone number for the command post is available to all residents who might need to exit their roads.

Motion; made by Gregg McBride, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the request for Callie's Run Road Race on April 9th, 2017 with the condition that they adhere to the requests from the Fire Chief and the Police Department about an operations plan that includes a resident's contact phone number to exit their roads. Unanimously voted

Cemetery Rates

Mr. Morin stated that the Cemetery Committee met with a consultant who advised them to include two additional costs, updating the rates as reflected in the change sheet. He added that these costs are in line with other communities' availability, which is limited. The Town needed updated actual costs for perpetual care. These rates are a considerable increase. The board will delay a motion to approve until all is explained. Mr. Morin will get further info for all and update the schedule for the next meeting.

Future Meeting Agenda Items and Upcoming Meetings

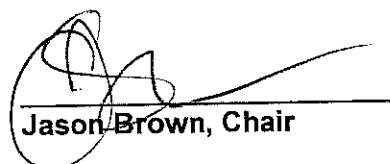
Mr. McBride gave a quick update about the 40 River Street project, adding that Ms. Van Campen is happy to answer any questions, but will not attend the next meeting unless the board has specific questions. Mr. Brown will sign the letter of support. Any final questions – no. Jacobs farmhouse- next meetings, invite the license holders, Norwell Farms and the NHC to discuss license changes

Capital plan discussion on December 21st, the Abrahams group is not able to attend. The Advisory Board, the school board, the Capital Budget committee, PBMC and Facilities Manager Dave Sutton will be invited.

Health insurance discussion – December 14th

Adjournment

Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adjourn at 8:49pm. Unanimously voted


Jason Brown, Chair