

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Remote Open Session
8/5/20**

TOWN OF NORWELL
TOWN CLERK

2020 AUG 25 AM 9:51

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Present: Ellen Allen, Jason Brown, Alison Demong, Bruce Graham, Joe Rull, Peter Morin
Town Counsel Bob Galvin, Resident Don Mauch

Open Session

The meeting was called to order by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:06pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting was recorded and the audio file will be available on the Town website. Ms. Allen noted that this meeting will be conducted pursuant to 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.

Approval of Agenda

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda for August 5, 2020 as presented. Unanimously voted by roll call vote

BOS Reports - None

Town Administrator Report - None

Discussion/Action Items

Reorganization of the Board

a. Chairman

1. Chairman, "I will entertain nominations for Chairman at this time."
2. Alison Demong, "I nominate Ellen Allen for Chairman". Seconded by Bruce Graham.
3. Chairman, "Are there any other nominations for Chairman?"
4. No other nominations were made.
5. Motion; made by Alison Demong, seconded by Bruce Graham, to close the nominations for Chairman.
6. Chairman, "All in favor of closing the nominations for Chairman say Aye".
Unanimously voted by roll call vote. "The nominations are closed."
7. "Question comes on the nomination of Ellen Allen as Chairman of the Norwell Board of Selectmen. All in favor?" Unanimously voted by roll call vote. All congratulated Ellen Allen.

b. Vice Chairman

1. Chairman, "I will entertain nominations for Vice Chairman at this time."
2. Alison Demong, "I nominate Jason Brown for Vice Chairman". Seconded by Bruce Graham.
3. Chairman, "Are there any other nominations for Vice Chairman?"
4. No other nominations were made.
5. Motion; made by Alison Demong, seconded by Bruce Graham, to close the nominations for Vice Chairman.

6. Chairman, "All in favor of closing the nominations for Vice Chairman say Aye." Unanimously voted by roll call vote. "The nominations are closed."
7. "Question comes on the nomination of Jason Brown as Vice Chairman of the Norwell Board of Selectmen. All in favor?" Unanimously voted by roll call vote. All congratulated Jason Brown.

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c. Clerk

1. Chairman, I will entertain nominations for Clerk at this time."
2. Alison Demong, "I nominate Joe Rull for Clerk". Seconded by Bruce Graham.
3. Chairman, "Are there any other nominations for Clerk?"
4. No other nominations were made.
5. Motion; made by Alison Demong, seconded by Bruce Graham, to close the nominations for Clerk.
6. Chairman, "All in favor of closing the nominations for Clerk say Aye". Unanimously voted by roll call vote. "The nominations are closed"
7. "Question comes on the nomination of Joe Rull as Clerk of the Norwell Board of Selectmen. All in favor?" Unanimously voted by roll call vote. All congratulated Joe Rull.

Reappointments of BOS reps to the various boards

The board discussed the BOS reps to various committees and finalized the following assignments:

1. Ellen Allen – Community Housing Trust, Library Building Committee, Plymouth County Advisory Board
2. Jason Brown – Social Media policy and next steps (maybe a committee)
3. Joe Rull – MBTA rep., Traffic Study Committee, Complete Streets
4. Alison Demong – Cable Committee, Advisory Board Nominating Committee, Carleton Committee
5. Bruce Graham – Technology Committee (pending no. of seats), OPEB Trust, liaison to Planning Board

Town Meeting recap and vote to use signature stamp

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the use of the BOS signature stamps for the Warrant copies needed for the state election.

Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Ms. Allen gave a brief report of the Special and Annual Town Meeting held outdoors on 7/25/20. It was very successful, with about 262 people attending. Boston Sound did a terrific job with the audio; everyone in attendance was easily able to hear the speakers. All agreed that the meeting was well organized and well run. Kudos to Mr. Morin and also Ms. Mangan for all their hard work on the FY21 budget and financial statements in this state of emergency situation.

Mail in voting procedures – Pat Anderson

Town Clerk Pat Anderson reported that, beginning July 15, the state mailed early voting postcards to every registered voter. She also reviewed the options for residents to vote using an absentee ballot. These can be used to apply for the primary, general and any other elections taking place in 2020. As many state residents are registered as independents, they must choose one party's ballot for the primary election. Ms.

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Anderson reminded these residents to choose a primary ballot when completing and mailing the card back. It is also helpful to include a phone number in case the Clerk's office needs to contact the voter. There is still time to change your party affiliation until 8/22/20, which can be done online, in the Clerk's office, or by calling to request a party change card. This mail in balloting and early voting is keeping the Clerk's office busy, so Ms. Anderson has made arrangements for assistance with some day to day operations from other departments. She reminded all that the Town offers early voting in person (as well as mail in voting) from 8/22-8/28. To date, approximately 1700 (out of 8000 total) voters in the Town have registered to vote by mail or absentee ballot. The board thanked Ms. Anderson and her staff for all their hard work. All of this voting information will be posted on the Town's website; both the Home page and the Town Clerk's page. Reminder to residents; please use one of these easy options to vote!

Finalize Town Administrator's performance evaluation

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve final draft of the Town Administrator's performance evaluation as presented to the board. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

The evaluation will be posted on the BOS page of the Town website.

Fiscal Year 21 BOS and Town Administrator Focus Areas – review and finalize

The board discussed edits and additions to this draft list, which is attached to these minutes.

Accept with regret Victor Posada's resignation from All Are Welcome Committee

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to accept, with regret, Victor Posada's resignation from the All Are Welcome Committee. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

The board thanked Mr. Posada for generously volunteering his time to serve on this committee.

Citizen Petition for non-binding ballot question for May 2021 Election

Resident Don Mauch participated in this meeting, noting that his citizen petition speaks for itself. The petition poses the following ballot question:

"Do you favor revoking the Town of Norwell's Community Preservation Act (CPA) thereby removing the three percent (3%) surcharge on your real estate property tax bill?"

He added that the CPA (enacted in 2002) has undergone many changes in permissible use and the level of state matches. He opined that it would not be unreasonable to ask in a non-binding way if voters wish to continue this program. Mr. Mauch offered his personal view of the CPA.

The board asked the following question of Mr. Mauch: after years of filing petitions to repeal the CPA which have been voted down at the annual Town Meetings, why should the board now entertain this petition for a nonbinding ballot question which is not actionable, but just an FYI? Mr. Mauch replied that the BOS could act or ignore the

results of the ballot question, but he believes that the question would yield valuable feedback from residents.

Mr. Graham reviewed the timeline for the BOS decision to put this question on the ballot or not.

- The board has until 35 days before the election to put a non-binding question on the ballot.
- The board has up to 90 days before the election to decide whether to approve a citizens' petition to place a non-binding question on the ballot. If the board fails to approve such a petition by 90 days prior to the election, the petitioner may submit a second petition signed by at least ten percent of registered voters no later than 42 days prior to the election.

Ms. Allen asked the board for their opinions and comments. Opinions ranged from the policy of the process itself to the content of the petition. The following points were made:

- What is the purpose of this ballot question? Adding a question to a ballot is big decision.
- The question would produce opinion only and has no actionable follow-up.
- This would be setting a precedent, so the board would need to consider the policy itself before moving forward.
- The board is not sure that this would provide useful information.
- It is important to make a decision soon.

In response to a board question, Atty. Galvin stated that a ballot question would remain a citizens petition.

Motion; made by Alison Demong, to not accept the citizens petition as proposed.

The motion was left on the table pending further discussion.

- Mr. Rull and Mr. Brown would like to discuss this further before making a decision. Mr. Rull will write a draft policy for this issue and review it with Mr. Morin and Atty. Galvin.
- The board debated the issue and asked and answered questions. Mr. Mauch opined in favor of his petition and its purpose.
- Put on a future agenda for discussion within Mr. Rull's timeframe for review. The board reiterated their concern about setting a precedent.

Signatures to record the land swap with the Mauchs

Atty. Galvin and Mr. Mauch reviewed the history of this land swap in 2003. The deeds have been completed and the Planning Board approved the ANR a few months ago. When the deed is delivered by the Mauchs the transaction can be completed. Atty. Galvin presented a map of the parcels for review by the board. All thanked Mr. Mauch for his initiative in this swap.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, that the Board of Selectmen endorse the acceptance of Parcel A from the Mauchs, endorse the granting of Parcel B to the Mauchs and authorize Town Counsel to engage the engineer to prepare and record an 81X plan. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Approval of Meeting Minutes – 7/21/20 Open Session Minutes

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the minutes for the 7/21/20 Open Meeting. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

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Future Meeting Agendas

- IT update
- Vote to allow BOS stamp signatures on National Grid easement for land accessing Wompatuck state park
- Dissolve Carleton Property Committee
- Add At-Large seat to Town Technology Committee - maybe Alternate?
**in packet, the TM Article from 2011 creating the Town Technology committee w/member listing

Adjournment

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 8:45pm.
Unanimously voted by roll call vote.*

Ellen H. Allen

Ellen Allen, Chair