

Norwell Board of Selectmen

1/13/21

2021 JAN 28 AM 10:02

Open Session – Remote meeting

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Present: Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Jason Brown, Bruce Graham, Joe Rull, Peter Morin, Marynel Wahl, Gregg McBride, Pat Anderson

Open Session

The meeting was opened by Chair Ellen Allen at 7:04pm. She announced that all votes will be roll call votes as the meeting participants are using remote access software. The meeting is being 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 as written. Unanimously voted by roll call vote

BOS Reports

Ms. Allen reported that the board has voted to hire Chief Edward Lee from Hopkinton as the new police chief. Further details will be discussed later in this meeting.

Mr. Morin reported that Public Safety developed a relationship with the Royal Nursing Home after they asked the Town for assistance during the early months of the pandemic. The Town was able to help them out. When the nursing home received their supply of COVID vaccines, the extra doses were offered to the Town as a thank you for their assistance. Medical transport workers were authorized to receive the vaccine in Phase I, so all of the Fire Department and most of the Police Department were able to receive vaccinations. At this point all fire personnel and all police who wanted to have the shot have been vaccinated.

Mr. Graham reported that 3 of the Selectmen attended the ceremony to honor Elinor Norris, who gifted the Norris Reservation to the Town. Kudos to Harbor Media/Norwell Spotlight TV, who did a fantastic job covering the ceremony. The gift was a generous gesture by a wonderful woman. Anyone interested in viewing the ceremony can watch the vimeo on the Town website. This gift is an important part of Norwell's heritage and helped to make the Town what it is today. All viewed a short recycling info video made by middle school student Evie Demong and her friends, filmed by Harbor Media. It had great information about the dos and don'ts of recycling.

Town Administrator Report

Mr. Morin announced with regret that Joan Osborne will be resigning from the BOA as of 3/12/21. It's been a pleasure to work with her. Although this is an elected position, the BOS may appoint a successor to serve until the Town election.

Reminder; time is of the essence if you wish to file a tax abatement for your real estate taxes. Please contact the Assessors Office for more information (which is also on the Town website).

The MMA conference this year will be held remotely. The dates are 1/22/21 and 1/23/21. Please register! The Town earns insurance rebates for those who sign up and attend.

Citizen Comments – None

Resignation from Con Com – Ellen Markham

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to accept with regret the resignation of Ellen Markham from the Conservation Commission, with the thanks of the board for her service to the Town. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Application to Conservation Commission – Tricia DeGuilio

Dr. DeGiulio gave a recap of her background and reasons for applying. All discussed the role of the Conservation Commission. Due to a potential conflict of interest the appointment was postponed to the BOS meeting on 1/27/21. All discussed appointing an alternate member in addition to this appointment because there is such a high learning curve. This will be an agenda item for the next BOS meeting.

Council on Aging Resignation

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to accept with regret the resignation of Amy Cabell from the Council on Aging, with the thanks of the board for her service to the Town. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Open space and Recreation Plan Update – Marynel Wahl

- Ms. Wahl gave a power point presentation on the status of this update and a brief overview of its highlights. A copy of the presentation will be on the Town website. The committee needs a letter of acceptance from the BOS. Ms. Wahl asked for feedback on the update and noted that the plan will be good for 7 years.
- All commented on this updated plan, voicing a few concerns: this plan is linked to an older master plan which doesn't address some of the current threats to this type of open space preservation, such as developer and commercial threats.
- Mr. Graham commented on the master plan from 2005, which is being updated by the Town Planner. Some suggestions were made for additions or edits to the plan. (Committee members Stacy Minihane and Heather Hanley also participated in this discussion.)
- Further discussion ensued about the compatibility of this plan/update to the master plan. There is a need for an implementation committee and possibly a staff person. Questions were asked and answered about the plan.
- The BOS will write a letter of support for this plan. All thanked the committee for their hard work.

Community Housing Trust – Wildcat AH project update

- CHT Chair Gregg McBride was present to update the board on the history of the land and this project, giving a slide presentation on the plans for this site.
- 6.4 acres on Wildcat were set aside for AH years ago when the Town took the land for tax title.
- Wylie Brown, architect at lbgo architects, has drawn up a set of plans for AH on this land. The presentation includes an overview of the concept and plan for the group buildings. There is an RFP ready to go out to developers for bids to build this project.
- The goal is to have a developer take over and manage this project, which will be a different project direction than 40 River Street. The CHT will not be as involved in the project, which will hopefully follow these design concepts so that it fits in to the community.
- Questions were asked and answered about the proposed project, with Mr. McBride noting that the RFP will serve to ascertain if this is a viable concept.
- The design is good for the land with underneath parking, but might be too costly. It will hopefully be as visually pleasing as possible.
- The hope is for a mix of market rate and AH rental properties with no restrictions on age, etc., so that all units would count towards the subsidized housing inventory (SHI).
- The timing of the development proposal is not firmed up, but the CHT is targeting February. A Q & A meeting will be held for the community when the timing is more certain, probably 3-4 months after the RFP goes out.

- All discussed project particulars such as unit number and size, number of bedrooms, etc. Much of the decisions will be left to the developers. The hope is for multigenerational housing.
- The board thanked the CHT for their hard work and opined that this is a great concept. Rental units are a much needed commodity in the Town. Mr. McBride thanked the CHT members and their admin assistant Kristen Ford for the hard work done by all.

The Trust has hired a professional AH consultant to monitor the Affordable housing units in the Town. 8 additional AH units have been discussed that might be eligible to be added to the Town's SHI inventory.

The CHT is about to purchase an AH unit at Silverbrook which needs repair before being sold, hopefully at a profit but still keeping its AH status. The Town missed out on the purchase of a prior AH Silverbrook unit which is now off the SHI inventory. However, the profit from the sale of this bank owned property was turned over to the Town and the CHT, who is using the money to fund the senior grant program. The board expressed support for the Wildcat project and are hopeful that it will succeed. All thanked Mr. McBride for joining the meeting.

Setting the date for the Annual and Special Town Meeting –

- Mr. Morin conferred with Town Moderator Bill Coffey and Pat Anderson to set the date for the annual Town meeting, choosing May 3rd and 4th, with the Town election on May 15th. The hope is to have the traditional indoor meeting, but it's too early to make that decision. The location decision will hopefully be made when the Warrant goes to print on April 1st.
- The Meeting Warrant will open this evening for 4 weeks.
- The Advisory Board will meet every week starting next week to review the proposed budget and Warrant Articles.
- Mr. Morin would like to go ahead and set the dates, staying as close to "business as usual" as possible. Both indoor and outdoor contingencies can remain open.

Motion: made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, that the board approve the Special and Annual Town Meeting dates for May 3 and 4, 2021, and the Town election date for May 15, 2021. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to open the Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrant on 1/13/21, closing on 2/10/21. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

The memo with this information will be posted on the Town website.

New Police Chief Contract

Mr. Morin recapped the contract highlights for new police chief Edward Lee.

- 3 year contract; 1/25/21-1/25/24.
- Starting salary of \$144,569, with a 2.5% increase with each year of satisfactory performance.
- He will be issued a Town-owned vehicle, clothing and cleaning allowance, 4 weeks of vacation to start.
- Each year of satisfactory performance with no notification from the BOS extends the contract by an additional year.
- Other standard benefits are included as reviewed by Mr. Morin.
- Board agreed to relocation within 15 miles of the job site by 6/30/22, with \$5K relocation payment.
- The board has reviewed this contract.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, that the board approve the police chief contract between the Norwell Board of Selectmen and Chief Edward Lee. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Set the Annual IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2021

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to set the IRS mileage reimbursement rate for 2021 at 56 cents per mile as of 1/13/21. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Approval of meeting minutes

Motion, made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the meeting minutes for the following meetings; 11/24/20, 12/9/20, 12/30/20, 1/5/21, both Open and Executive sessions. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.

Future meetings:

The next BOS meeting will be on 1/27/21. Agenda topics will include an inclusionary zoning discussion by Mr. Graham and an update on the state's plan for vaccinations at the local level. The Health Agent will join the meeting to answer questions.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to adjourn at 8:57pm. Unanimously voted by roll call vote.



Ellen Allen, Chair