

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Open Meeting Minutes
9/11/19**



Present: Ellen Allen, Jason Brown, Alison Demong, Bruce Graham, Peter Morin

Ms. Allen called the meeting to order at 6:46pm in Open Session.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the 8/28/19 BOS Executive Meeting minutes. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve the 8/28/19 Open Meeting minutes. Unanimously voted

The board discussed options for the disposition of the Sgt. Samuel Stetson house and will expand on this discussion later in this meeting.

In preparation for the upcoming public hearing with Bo Café, the board reviewed the number of On premise All Alcohol/Wine and Malt licenses and Off premise (package stores) All Alcohol/Wine and Malt licenses currently available in the Town.

American Legion/Norwell Grange building update

Mr. Morin reported that three events must take place in order for the Legion to take possession of the Grange building:

1. Legion enters into a Purchase and Sale agreement with the Grange
2. Legion signs the Preservation Restriction Agreement (PRA)
3. Legion obtains the waiver of the option to purchase the building from the BOS

The Legion can then apply to the Community Preservation Committee for funding in the amount of \$458K to rehab the building.

Mr. Morin noted that the three items can happen simultaneously at the closing.

John Hornstra reported to Mr. Morin that he met with Norwell Farms to discuss their programs and their search for alternate space. He offered them the use of one of his fields to grow their vegetables but they were not interested in this option. Mr. Hornstra hosts a large number of field trips and 4H groups at his dairy farm. However, it is a working farm and doesn't really have an appropriate meeting space for these groups to convene as part of their visit. He is looking for a community center type place to host educational programs and meetings for visitors. He inquired about the use of the Grange for this purpose. Mr. Morin added that he offered Mr. Hornstra assistance in finding meeting space elsewhere in the Town, as meeting in the Grange building is not possible at this point in time (it does not have an occupancy permit)

Mr. Morin and Ms. Allen recently met with Historic New England (HNE) to review the Jacobs Farm license with Cross Street Flowers. Mr. Morin stated that HNE is on record that this license with a for-profit entity (Cross Street Flower Farm) is an acceptable use of the farm land. HNE noted during the discussion that other historic farm properties in the state (including their own) are following the same for-profit path as this license, many of necessity in order to remain viable entities. Mr. Mauch's letter objecting to this for-profit licensee therefore has no standing. Per Ms. Allen, it is possible to amend a PRA, but it is a laborious process.

BOS members have received emails of a threatening nature about the failure to address the Town speed limit issue by holding a Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Brown noted that the board will take up this issue in the next few months or so and also decide on a possible Special Town Meeting date this winter.

Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) Update

Ms. Allen updated the board on the following topics:

- The state reported a \$3.1B surplus for this year.
- The Governor is recommending a 20% increase in Chapter 90 funding in his proposed supplemental FY19 budget, as well as \$10.5M more for the Complete Streets and Small Bridges programs.
- An \$18B Transportation Bond Bill has been filed, which includes funding for a program that might help with improvements to Queen Anne's Corner. Details to follow about the application process.

The board discussed "cheap fixes" for crowded intersections on Route 53, noting the problems at the Route 3 access points and the Queen Anne intersection could benefit greatly from the state recalibrating the traffic signals.

- Climate resiliency – \$130M in the Transportation Bond Bill has been earmarked to implement items from the Municipal Vulnerability Program (MVP).

The board discussed the large number of grant programs from the state and the complexity and competition in the grant application process. Municipalities would be better served if the state just gave increased funding through Chapter 90 money

Ms. Demong and Mr. Morin will attend tomorrow's first MVP session.

All discussed the Capital Plan preplanning spreadsheet. Questions were asked about the increased amount of funding requested by the School department. Per Mr. Morin, this spreadsheet is a master "wish list" which hasn't been critiqued and edited. The original plan's project cost was \$21.2M over 10 years. Per Mr. Morin, several groups such as the Highway Department are asking for wish list items. The board expressed concern that the Highway department projected spending is unrealistic; Mr. Ferguson has requested \$1M per year over the next 10 years. The Police and Fire department budgets are reasonable.

Open Session – Osborn Room

The meeting was called to order at 7:30 by Chair Ellen Allen, who reminded all that the meeting is televised and recorded. Ms. Allen asked for a moment of silence to remember the victims of 9/11. All rose to recite the pledge of allegiance.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted

Citizen Comments**BOS reports and Announcements**

Ms. Allen reported that Sunday, Oct. 22nd will be Fun Day at the Jacobs Pond. There will be walks, tours and other fun activities. The information is also on the Town's website. All are invited.

The Town is working on economic development efforts with the MAPC, using funding from a phase two grant. Community outreach to get people engaged through public forums are planned, with the first one scheduled for Tuesday 9/24 at the Cushing Center from 7-9pm. Get informed and be part of the planning. Special attraction: Hornstra's ice cream will be served!

Mr. Brown reported that the Advisory Board Nominating Committee appointed three new members to the Advisory Board; Susan Darnell, Rick Goulding and Jesse McSweeney. Ms. Allen suggested that Mr. Morin schedule another "Budgeting 101" class.

NOV -7 2019

TOWN CLERK
PATRICIA M. ANDERSON**Town Administrator's report – None****Public Hearing for Bo Café – CV and Wine and Malt license.**

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to open the public hearing at 7:35pm. Unanimously voted

Mr. Brown read the notice of public hearing that appeared in the Patriot Ledger.

Arthur Iskendarian, owner of Bo Café, was present to review plans for his new location at 400 Washington Street at the former home of Extreme Pita. All reviewed his seating plan and noted that his servers are TIPS certified. The board discussed the All Alcohol and Wine and Malt licenses current available in the Town. Bo Café will be open from 8am -8pm, 7 days a week. No members of the public were present to speak.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to approve the CV and Wine and Malt license for Bo Café for the period ending 12/31/19. Unanimously voted

The Wine and Malt license fee will be prorated for the two months of 2019.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to close the public hearing at 7:41pm. Unanimously voted

All congratulated Mr. Iskendarian.

Norwell Grange Building /American Legion; status update

Mr. Morin updated the board on his conversation with Peter Kulka, commander of the Norwell chapter of the American Legion. Dr. Kulka assured him that the Legion understands the reversionary interest clause if they fail to complete the rehab. This is still in the preliminary stages, and it is not known if the Legion has had conversations with the local or state Granges. The Legion has an idea of the considerable work needed to rehab the building. Dr. Kulka indicated that they plan to ask the Community Preservation Committee for \$458K for this project, which would be in addition to approximately \$95K in goods and services that have been pledged to date. Town Counsel was consulted for next steps, and stated that the Legion would need:

- A negotiated P and S between the Grange and the Legion.
- The signed PRA would be required as well as the reversionary interest, which would apply should the Legion not meet the required timeline.
- The Town would waive their right of first refusal when the P and S is executed.

Ms. Demong noted that they are planning to ask for a large amount of funding from the CPC for a building not owned by the Town. The board noted that Town Meeting approved CPC funding (\$70K) for another building not owned by the Town (the James Library) in return for an easement.

The P and S is really the gating issue. If the Legion needs a traditional commercial loan, that might be problematic as the building is in very rough shape and could not be used as collateral. Further discussion ensued about the need for milestones with dates to ensure the Legion is moving forward. The town's reversionary interest would take effect if the milestones are not met. Mr. Morin stated that right now the Legion needs a P and S, which would be up to them to negotiate, hopefully with timing in sync with Town Meeting in the spring for a possible CPC article. The board is concerned about the large amount of CPC funding being requested and opined that this topic needs further discussion and review. All expressed concern about this potential ask. Mr. Morin reminded all that the Town doesn't own this property, and there is no option other than to turn it into a house lot. The PRA wouldn't allow it to be residential, which might be an issue. Discussion ensued about the prior purchaser who walked away and what will happen in future scenarios. Mr. Morin will call Dr. Kulka tomorrow with the updated list of points from the BOS.

Mr. Morin told the board there will be a CPC application filed for the Clipper Community Complex restroom project, which will be much less money than initially anticipated as a new

leaching field won't be needed. Under discussion is the option to add on to the snack bar restrooms.

Sgt. Samuel Stetson House Disposition (personal Town property)

Ms. Allen recapped the history and status of this antique property. The plan to move the house to the Stetson Meadows cemetery is under reconsideration, and it is not a realistic location for this house as it would serve no useful purpose. Mr. Brown gave an update on the meeting he held with representatives of the Cemetery Committee and Norwell Historical Commission. He noted the debates and differences of opinion on the disposition of this house. Ultimately the group agreed that the best solution would be for the Town to sell, gift or dispose of the property at this point. Per Town Counsel, the disposition decision doesn't need to go to Town Meeting because this is personal property, not real estate, and therefore under the authority of the Selectmen. There are reportedly potential interested parties, but no one has approached the Town Administrator's office to inquire. The board would have to follow some type of procurement process; issue an RFP, advertise or declare it surplus property and dispose of it. Its value will be offset by the need to move the house, which may have to be disassembled to move (a step which may prove terminal to the house). Per Mr. Brown, there are not a lot of options and the ones available are all costly.

Next steps: Mr. Morin will provide a range of options for disposal. The Town could hire a consultant to determine its value. The board could reach out to HNE for disposal ideas. One option discussed briefly was to auction the house.

Draft Update to the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)

Mr. Morin stressed that this update to the plan is both a wish list and a tool to identify needs so that any surprises are minimized going forward. The plan spending totals \$21M + over 10 years, which is almost identical to the original plan ask, though individual items have changed. It calls for an average of about \$2M per year in capital investments and varies year to year by department.

The last 3 years of capital spending, primarily through Warrant Articles, was as follows:

- FY2018 – \$3.071M in capital funding, \$157K of the total amount was not identified in the 10 year capital plan. The original plan identified \$3.408M in capital spending
- FY2019- \$2.423M in capital funding, \$82K of the total amount was not identified in the 10 year capital plan. The original plan identified \$2.013M in capital spending. A Green Communities grant funded \$42K of the \$2.423M.
- FY2020 – \$2.748M in capital funding, of which \$1.8M was spent on Highway, Tree and Grounds headquarters. \$498K was not identified in the 10 year capital plan. The original plan identified \$3.952M in capital spending.

There were some surprise items not in the original Capital Plan when requests were received, such as the school bell and phone systems, where new technology was installed to deal with emergency situations. The central fire station repairs were not anticipated to be needed as soon as they were.

Adding \$5M for Town Hall and \$5M for Highway Yard and Building work bring the total Capital Plan to ~\$31M. The board discussed ways to cut down and space out these asks. To date the Town has funded \$8.242M of \$9.373M, or about 88% of the amount identified in the 10 year capital plan.

Next steps: Mr. Morin noted that departmental input into this spreadsheet gave everyone the opportunity to be heard and ID department needs. It will also provide tracking for future asks if there are departures. Both Police and Fire are in relatively new facilities so their anticipated needs are not large. Discussion ensued about departments identifying needs in a timely manner. The requests from Police and Fire are appropriate, but they need to be known upfront. Mr. Morin will highlight and color code each request vs. the need and urgency.

The board commented on various aspects of the plan. Ms. Demong brought up Complete Streets items that could be added to a capital plan, but may be covered under the Highway

NOV - 7 2013

TOWN CLERK
PATRICIA M. ANDERSON

Dept. ask and through Chapter 90 money (some of which should go to these projects) Highway/ Tree & Grounds is requesting a stunning amount of capital funding. Ms. Demong asked about Town Center improvement, which would be competing for the same dollars. Debt needed to fund the Highway Yard and Town Hall projects will create a temporary spike in debt service. The plan is to smooth this by using ~\$600K of capital stabilization money for debt service the first 2 years. All discussed options for debt and funding.

Town Administrator – FY20 Goals

The board discussed and finalized the list of FY20 Goals for Mr. Morin in conjunction with the FY20 BOS Focus Areas. The list will be posted on the BOS and Town Administrator's webpages.

Jon Haskins Whiting Fields Stone Wall Clean-up proposal

Ms. Demong reported that the Carleton Property Committee reviewed and discussed this proposal to clear and restore a portion of the completely overgrown stone walls of the Whiting fields. Ms. Demong explained the scope of this project. The proposal for \$9K covers the clearing of both sides of the stone walls along Lincoln and Main Streets and could be completed within a few weeks. The committee voted 7-1 to recommend that the BOS vote to approve this proposal. Mr. Haskins will then maintain the walls as part of his license. The board discussed the need for more consistency with fieldstone wall maintenance throughout the Town. Glenn Ferguson thinks this price is fair. The one naysayer on the committee opined that Jon Haskins has been haying these fields for so long that he has let the walls get into this state and shouldn't need to be paid. The BOS didn't agree, as the Town didn't own the property and lease it to Mr. Haskins until July 2018.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to approve this proposal from Jon Haskins to restore the stone walls as defined in his proposal; for both sides of the walls from corner of Lincoln Street to Main Street opposite Jordan Lane (approx. 750 feet) and from 436 Main Street to Jordan Lane (approx. 600 feet), at a cost not to exceed \$9K. Unanimously voted

Other Discussion Topics

Ms. Demong reported that the state has given the Town a \$75K earmark for Town Center revitalization efforts such as sidewalks and curbs, storefront improvements, or whatever fits into the broadly defined scope. Mr. Morin noted that other communities have provided loans to local businesses to improve their locations. If they stay in the same location for five years, the loan can be forgiven. Per Ms. Demong, this earmark is very open ended and could be used for planning or construction, etc. It is a reimbursement program that must be spent within this fiscal year. The board would like to ask the Complete Streets Committee to be the point group for this project as they are well qualified to discuss these options.

Discussion ensued about asking this committee to come up with a project scope, which the BOS could approve. The board expanded on ideas to move forward, discussing the pros and cons of a new plan for Town Center. Mr. Graham cautioned that the board would need some more specific direction before spending these taxpayer dollars. Mr. Graham offered to attend the Complete Streets committee meetings to discuss this project further. Updates to come. The earmark followup and administration point person from the Town will be Mr. Morin.

Ms. Allen had followed up with Water Commissioner Peter Dillon about the Hanover Mall project letter of support for the mall developer's MEPA application which the BOS declined to send. The Water Dept. sent in comments and is working with PREP to have their concerns addressed.

Adjournment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Alison Demong, to adjourn at 8:56pm. Unanimously voted

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NOV - 7 2019

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Ellen H. Allen
Ellen Allen, Chair