



TOWN OF NORWELL
Norwell Town Offices, Room 112
345 Main Street
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
(781) 659-8000

Norwell Historical Commission Meeting Minutes

October 3, 2022

The meeting was called to order by Chair Nancy McBride at 5:30 PM. Present were Vice Chair Anne Greene, Treasurer Alan Prouty, and members David DeGhetto, Laurie Detwiler, and Lilly Cleveland. James Kelliher and Rachel Wollam were unable to attend. Also in attendance was Facilities Director Ted Nichols. The meeting was held in the Local History room of the Norwell Library.

AGENDA

Motion by Mr. DeGhetto to open the meeting. Seconded by Mr. Detwiler and unanimously voted.

Chair McBride added approval of the August 8 minutes to the agenda and corrected "24 Main Street" to "42 Main".

Motion by Mr. Detwiler to approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted.

MINUTES

The minutes of the August 8 and September 12 meetings were distributed and reviewed. One change was proposed to the August 8 minutes and two changes were proposed to the September 12 minutes.

Motion by Ms. McBride to accept the minutes of the August 8 meeting as amended. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted.

Motion by Ms. McBride to accept the minutes of the September 12 meeting as amended. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted.

TREASURER'S REPORT AND BILLS

The following invoices were presented for approval:

Name of Vendor:	Item/ Activity Description	Date of Invoice:	Amount:	Account Number:
1. Verizon	Communication Service to Jacobs Farmhouse – August 7 to September 6, 2022	September 6, 2022	\$44.18	81-000-7065-5780
2. National Grid	Electric Service to Jacobs Farmhouse –August 6 to September 6, 2022	September 6, 2022	\$47.02	81-000-7065-5780

3.	Ted Nichols/Town of Norwell	Jacob's Apartment & Barns – Painting Supplies	August 10, 2022	\$144.59	81-000-7065-5780
4.	MLB Restorations	Consultancy: Review Stetson Ford Needs	October 1, 2022	\$400.00	24-691-6131-4360
5.	Christopher Sullivan	Proofreading & Transcription Services: Minutes of Meeting of the NHC	September 7, 2022	\$137.50	01-691-0201-5780
Total of Billable Amounts Listed Above:				\$773.29	

Motion by Mr. Prouty to approve payment of the invoices. Seconded by Ms. McBride and unanimously voted.

Jacobs Farmhouse Update

Maintenance/Repair Schedule

Mr. Nichols advised that work on the carriage shed was about halfway done; they are waiting on a beam replacement on the south side of the building. Kitchen work is ongoing at the farmhouse, and stripping for future roof work has begun. Mr. DeGhetto suggested that the screens on the porch be covered with plywood for the winter.

Mr. Nichols is attempting to negotiate the amount of a change order for additional bathroom work, as it will cause about a \$25K shortfall if approved as proposed. He is also trying to negotiate a credit for the lack of on-site management, and has notified Town Administrator Peter Morin and CPC Chair Bob McMackin about the issue as the work, to replace rotted sills and level the floor, goes to handicap access and is not discretionary. Mr. Morin has indicated he will find sufficient funds to complete this work.

Select Board Chair Bruce Graham recently viewed the property with Mr. Nichols. The Commissioners would like one of their number to be present for future visits, but Mr. Nichols noted he was not in a position to deny a request from a Town official to view the property if a Commissioner was not available.

CPC Applications

Mr. Nichols distributed a revised draft CPC application for continued restoration of the Jacobs Farmhouse and outbuildings which increases the estimated total cost about 20%, from \$353K to \$421K, to account for inflation; he has divided the various jobs into four groups, ordered by priority, to allow CPC discretion to approve more or less funding.

All present discussed the appropriate level of funding to seek for this cycle; Chair McBride suggested a larger number may be palatable if it brought the restoration to completion, but Ms. Detwiler cautioned that too big an ask might reinforce Mr. Graham's suggestion that the carrying cost of the property was too high. Mr. Nichols asked about increasing the ask further to ensure that future inflation is accounted for, but the Commissioners preferred to leave the number as is.

Ms. Detwiler also suggested installing a high-efficiency gas-fired boiler, which would require a side exit but would make the property more marketable if sold, and be eligible for rebates from the state. However, Mr. DeGhetto has heard these units were prone to reliability issues and Mr. Nichols added they had had such issues with a unit at the Council on Aging.

Ms. Detwiler also suggested that a Commissioner be present to discuss the application with CPC and offered to assist, as it was important to properly sell the request and address any concerns. Mr. Nichols would prefer that the Commissioners be engaged in this process.

Mr. Nichols needs to transfer all information to the new application, after which he will send the draft for Chair McBride's signature. Ms. Detwiler suggested that the narrative make clear that the funding will meet the Commission's goal of addressing the backlog of maintenance at the property.

Stetson Ford House Update

Ms. Greene hasn't heard back from Town Administrator Morin about a proposed rent increase for the property; Ms. McBride suggested that she follow up with Assistant Town Administrator Darleen Sullivan.

All present discussed funding sources for \$112,970 in identified maintenance needs. Mr. Prouty indicated that about \$10K was available in the revolving fund for small jobs. Mr. DeGhetto opined that the rental proceeds, which revert to the Town annually above a certain amount, should be made available for maintenance.

Ms. McBride polled the Commissioners as to whether to prepare a CPC application requesting \$94K for maintenance and repairs to the property; a majority of the Commissioners voted 3-2-0 to delay the ask until next year.

James Library Historic Preservation Award Schedule

Ms. Wollam has been in touch with Norwell Spotlight TV regarding presentation of the Commission's Historic Preservation Award to the James Library, which will be done before the Select Board; a date for the presentation has not yet been determined.

NEW BUSINESS

42 Central Street

Building Commissioner Tom Barry is objecting to the Commission's request that the new owner of the property appear before the Commission to discuss his plans. Chair McBride will be discussing the matter, and how to interpret the Demolition Delay bylaw generally, with Mr. Barry, Select Board Chair Bruce Graham, and Town Counsel Robert Galvin.

Jacobs Farmhouse Usage

Nikki Bartley of Cross Street Flower Farm wants to rent the farmhouse for use as an office. Mr. Nichols noted that SB Chair Graham and TC Galvin would prefer that a commercial tenant occupy the property, but Mr. DeGhetto pointed out that the Jacobs family had specified that the property be used for nonprofit or educational purposes. All present discussed the nature of CSFF's operations on the property; Ms. Detwiler suggested that someone check with HNE as to their own use restrictions. Mr. DeGhetto suggested that at least two Commissioners visit the property each month, with proper notice, to observe operations there.

Demolition Delay Bylaw

Mr. Graham wants the Commission to try again to revise the Demolition Delay bylaw. Chair McBride would like to consult with Town Counsel before doing so, as the Commission's efforts last year to work on revisions with the Planning Board were not successful. All present discussed how to strengthen the Commission's role in the Town and looking at how such commissions function in neighboring towns.

Signage

Ms. Detwiler has reviewed the proposed language for a new sign at the Jacobs Farmhouse and two signs for the Norwell Village Area Historic District. The Commission authorized her to order the signs.

Motion by Mr. Detwiler to approve the expenditure of \$2250.00 for one new sign at the Jacobs Farmhouse and two signs for the Norwell Village Historic District as discussed. Seconded by Mr. DeGhetto and unanimously voted.

Form B

Ms. McBride advised that Janet Watson knows someone who can complete the additional Massachusetts Historical Commission Form Bs needed to update the Town's historic property inventory. Ms. Cleveland is looking into the process and may be able to assist.

NEXT MEETING

November 7, 2022 – Norwell Town Library, 5:30 PM

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Mr. Detwiler to adjourn at 7:14 PM. Seconded by Mr. Prouty and unanimously voted.

I hereby certify that the above minutes were presented and approved by a majority vote of the Norwell Historical Commission on _____.

Nancy McBride, Chair