

**Town of Norwell  
Select Board  
Open Meeting Minutes  
5/25/22**

TOWN OF NORWELL  
TOWN CLERK  
2022 JUN 15 PM 3:44  
**RECEIVED**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to exit Executive Session, and adjourn to Open Session at 7:00pm.*

*Allen voting yes, Brown voting yes, Graham voting yes, Reardon voting yes, Smellie voting yes.*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the agenda as presented. Unanimously voted*

**Board Reorganization**

Mr. Graham asked for nominations for Select Board Chair.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to open the nominations for board Chair. Unanimously voted*

Mr. Brown and Mr. Graham expressed interest in the position. All voiced concern about the lack of civil discourse at board meetings over past year. Both objectivity and level headed management are key factors for this job. Observations were made that rotation of responsibilities and positions could be healthy for the upcoming year. In a prior era of the board, a yearly rotation of the Chair position took place. A leadership change could be beneficial. Mr. Brown offered to serve as Chair. Mr. Graham opined that Mr. Brown is a busy person and could have issues with the time commitment. Mr. Graham is comfortable serving as Chair and gave his overview of board membership. He expressed his extreme disappointment with the attitude and actions he has seen in the Town. He feels singled out with reference to the Wildcat property issue.

Ms. Allen opined that there is value to both responsibility turnover and continuity. She would like Mr. Graham to continue as Chair for another year and then would support Mr. Brown serving as Chair for the following two years.

Mr. Smellie would like a fresh start to the upcoming year.

Mr. Reardon respects both Mr. Brown and Mr. Graham and is torn between choosing one over the other.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to close the nominations for Chair.*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie to appoint Jason Brown as Chair. Mr. Brown and Mr. Smellie voting yes, Mr. Graham, Mr. Reardon and Ms. Allen voting no. The motion failed to carry.*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to appoint Bruce Graham as Chair. Unanimously voted.*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Bruce Graham, to open the nominations for board Vice Chair. Unanimously voted*

Mr. Brown nominated Mr. Smellie for Vice Chair.

Mr. Graham nominated Mr. Brown for Vice Chair.

Discussion ensued about the candidates for Vice Chair.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to close the nominations for Vice Chair.*



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*Motion; made by Bruce Graham, seconded by Ellen Allen, to appoint Jason Brown as Vice Chair. Mr. Graham, Ms. Allen, Mr. Reardon voting yes, Mr. Brown abstained, Mr. Smellie voting no. Motion carried to appoint Mr. Brown as Vice Chair (for clarification, the board noted members could vote only for one candidate. Mr. Brown got the majority of the votes)*

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Ellen Allen, to appoint Peter Smellie as Clerk. Unanimously voted*

#### **Approval of Meeting Minutes**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the 4-27-22 Executive and Open Meeting minutes. Unanimously voted*

#### **Memorial Day Schedule of Events**

Veterans Officer Dave Osborne reviewed the schedule of events for Monday, May 30<sup>th</sup>, which is also posted on the Home page of the Town website. FYI, the next round of CPA grant applications will include a request for money to preserve the veteran artifacts from WWI to the present, collected by Mr. Osborne. Mr. Morin will follow up with the library to request space in their preservation room for storage in the meantime.

#### **Select Board OML Complaint – AG finding and next steps**

Mr. Graham reviewed AG finding received on May 12<sup>th</sup> and recapped the background for this topic. In summary, a discussion of any topic not on the agenda violates the open meeting law. Mr. Graham defended his right to say what he said, which was reviewed by Town Counsel before the meeting. He accepted responsibility for his statements. Mr. Morin will follow up with a memo to the Chairs of the Town boards to explain this portion of the Open Meeting Law.

The board discussed how to handle Citizen Comments and Select Board Reports and Announcements at future meetings. Public comments will now be at the end of the agenda for each meeting. Anyone wishing to make a Citizen Comment should submit the topic for inclusion on the agenda at least 48 hours in advance of Select Board meetings.

All agreed that including topics on the agenda will allow the right to speak, encouraging discussion with civil discourse.

#### **Harbor Media Annual Report – Michelle Balconi and Adam Sayre**

Harbor Media's presence in the Town has made 'business as usual' during the COVID pandemic much better. Norwell Spotlight TV (NSTV) has hosted an increasing number of local programs, meetings, public hearings, interviews and fun events to bring the news of the Town to all of Norwell. NSTV has enabled committee members to attend meetings remotely using Zoom software, keeping everyone as safe as possible. Continuation of the hybrid meeting option allows both committee members and the public to attend meetings either in person or remotely.

Michelle Balconi reviewed Harbor Media's annual report with the board, citing milestones of the last year, including budget data, program updates, teaching and outreach events. Both Ms. Balconi and Adam Sayre reported on the newly completed inventory of all video and broadcast equipment in the Town. A copy of their report is available in the Town Administrator's office. Both gave highlights of their favorite programs.



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Mr. Brown asked about opportunities for high school students to get some experience in broadcast journalism. Per Ms. Balconi, that option is not available yet, but NSTV is hoping to get back to it in the future. They have a lot of internal training taking place right now as well as an intern project each year.

The board cited examples of the excellent programs produced by NSTV and also thanked the Cable Committee, Mr. Sayre and Ms. Balconi for their hard work. All gave kudos to Cable Committee member Gregg McBride, who was instrumental in bringing Harbor Media to Norwell. Mr. Reardon invited residents to apply to serve on the Cable Committee.

**Town Hall RFP Review** – Mr. Morin reviewed the draft RFP and Lease agreement with the board.

Both Town Counsel Bob Galvin and Mr. Morin hope to have a working document at the next meeting with all options. A starting point to be refined is to make the language more Norwell specific. Questions were asked and answered by the board regarding budgeting and financing.

**Conservation Commission:**

Marynel was present to introduce Mr. Luoma. She added that Con Com would like to add an Alternate member to the Commission to assist with quorum issues in the future. This would be a proposed Article for next year's Town Meeting.

Con Com member Roy Bjorlin submitted his resignation from the commission.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to accept with regret the resignation of Roy Bjorlin from the Conservation Commission. Unanimously voted*

Ms. Wahl reviewed Doug Luoma's application with the board. Mr. Luoma gave a summary of his background and reasons for applying for this seat.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to appoint Doug Luoma to the Conservation Commission to complete the remainder of Mr. Bjorlin's term, expiring 6/30/24. Unanimously voted*

**Adjacent MBTA Community Legislation discussion**

Mr. Graham gave a summary of this grant opportunity that was discussed at a prior meeting, subject to the MBTA's eligibility criteria. The proposal is to identify land in the Accord Park loop to qualify for Tier 3 development, rezone a portion of the land and reserve it for "as of right" multi family housing, without age restrictions and suitable for families. The number of proposed units for Norwell is 750. Compliance with this criteria equals eligibility for some types of state grants.

Town Planner Ilana Quirk was present to discuss this new legislation considering Norwell an MBTA adjacent community. Grant eligibility requires a board briefing on this topic, which was done too long ago to qualify.

Ms. Quirk noted that the Town just received a \$200K grant to finish the sidewalk to Town Center for the Complete Streets project.

She suggested looking at Accord Park for zoning options because of its proximity within a half mile of the Rockland Park and Ride.

Mr. Brown commented that the board should look at both sides of this new legislation, which is the state's offer of a heavy-handed approach to forcing this type of dense housing criteria. Per Ms. Quirk, this legislation allows communities to choose where they want to put the zoning and figure out what is realistic for Norwell. At least look at the area if the Town wishes to remain eligible. Discussion ensued about 40B housing,



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with Ms. Quirk adding that this new zoning would be "end of right" development controlled by the Town instead of the long 40B process. More discussion ensued about the pros and cons of such a development in Norwell. Ms. Quirk's point is that this topic is worth investigating. Ms. Allen cited a study done about the impact on the schools being minimal, adding that this is not really a good fit for a CHT type of project; it has nothing to do with Affordable Housing.

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, that the board look into how it might comply with the new legislation requirements to receive grant eligibility.*

*Unanimously voted*

Ms. Quirk will begin some preliminary studies on the topic.

### **Saint Helen's Committee Discussion, Cont'd.**

Mr. Smellie and Mr. Reardon recapped the Community meeting discussion at the Cushing Center on Monday, May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Next steps:


- Future meetings need mics for clarity of discussions.
- Get the true appraised value ASAP
- Develop a backup plan to have on the table in the event of a worst-case scenario such as a 40B development.
- Explore options for the land, including those contingent on financing criteria.
- Followup meeting in late June, including powerpoint presentations, a set agenda and good visuals.
- A completed fact sheet is essential!
- NSTV should attend and record the next meeting if possible.
- People felt comfortable at the meeting and shared opinions with respectful give and take. Other options were discussed.
- Per Mr. McBride, the appraisal work will start in June.

### **Future Meetings**

Future meeting dates and agenda topics were discussed.

### **Adjournment**

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to adjourn the meeting at 8:20pm. Unanimously voted*

  
**Bruce W. Graham, Chair**