

**Town of Norwell
Select Board
Open Meeting Minutes
1/18/23**

Mr. Graham called the meeting to order at 7:05pm

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the agenda as amended to rearrange the order of discussion. Unanimously voted

Approval of Minutes

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the Executive and Open Meeting minutes for January 4, 2023. Unanimously voted

Select Board Reports

Mr. Brown commented on messages received from residents concerned about snow removal on private roads in the Town. He asked to have the topic on an upcoming agenda for a board discussion. Per Mr. Brown, residents on private roads in the middle of the street acceptance process expressed concern that the Town isn't yet responsible for snow removal. Concern was also expressed about safety issues re: snowplowing and fire/ambulance access for emergencies. Mr. Reardon stated that no one should worry. If emergency access is required, Emergency Services can request that the Town plow the road. People should be aware but not concerned.

This will be discussed on the 2/15/23 Select Board agenda.

Town Administrator's report – None

Citizens Comments

Resident Kevin Riggs, 150 Main Street, expressed concern about the Town water quality. Mr. Graham invited Mr. and Mrs. Riggs to stay for the update from the Water Board, the next item on the agenda.

PFAS Update

Water Superintendent Jason Federico and Water Commissioners Fred St. Ours and Peter Dillon were present to update the board on this issue. Supt. Federico received a grant to upgrade the filter system at the South street plant. Mr. Dillon distributed an information sheet including FAQ's which will be posted on the Water Dept. webpage after the Water Commissioners board vote.

The funding for the treatment upgrade is for well #1 at the May 2022 Town Meeting. The department hired a great vendor for the filter system, who has designed vessels that can go inside the building. This project is moving ahead at a faster pace than other MA towns, with a projected early spring arrival.

Mr. Dillon and Supt. Federico outlined the installation steps and new innovations to the filter system. The plan is to open the treatment plant for operation by mid-August.

Mr. Dillon reminded all that well #1 is currently turned off. It is only needed when people use their automatic sprinkler systems in the summer, often in violation of the Town's

water restrictions. Well #1 is the Only well with PFAS tests over the limit. The speakers reminded all, "Please don't water your lawns illegally!"

Inside the system the PFAS level is under 20. The Water Commissioners will come back to the board with the updated test results in March. It is expensive to test, but the department will test all 4 schools, Jacobs Pond (which gets a large amount of road runoff) and some places at Third Herring Brook. These test results will be part of the Water Quality report in March.

Questions were asked and answered, many of which are contained in the fact sheet. Mr. Dillon recapped his original presentation to the Select Board, citing facts and figures about the prevalence of PFAS nationwide. He noted that PFAS is present in the artificial turf at the Clipper Community Complex and also in the rainwater - really everywhere.

The Water Dept. is doing everything it can to reduce the PFAS level in the water supply. Brown water is not related to PFAS, rather it is related to moving the water supply around through the rusty pipes.

In response to board questions about recommendations for home filtering solution, the DEP was quoted as saying that they are about ready to recommend the Brita system after additional testing is completed. Further discussion ensued about the efficacy of other types of filtration systems. In answer to questions about the safety of bottled water, MA requires testing for all bottled water companies.

Fred St. Ours commented on the Town's concern about drinking water, reiterating that residents do not need to be concerned. Pregnant residents and infants might consider using bottled water as added protection, but the standard is set for a lifetime of safe water drinking. These substances are an issue, but the two main offending products have been outlawed by the EPA for several years. The effects of the replacements for these products is unknown as yet. Massachusetts takes the lead in tough standards, FYI. The water is safe! Please don't be afraid to drink the water.

The Select Board thanked the Commissioners and Supt. Federico for coming in.

Town Administrator Appointment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to appoint Darleen Sullivan as the Town Administrator of the Town Of Norwell. Unanimously voted

Mooring Compliance Officer

JEF Fitzgerald was present to be reappointed as the Mooring Compliance Officer (formerly called the Harbormaster).

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to appoint JEF Fitzgerald as the Mooring Compliance Officer for a term expiring 12/31/23. Unanimously voted

Mr. Reardon gave kudos to Mr. Fitzgerald, who has volunteered and served the Town well for 48 years. Well done!

Change of Manager for Cheever Tavern.

Restaurant owner Michael Sheehan will be the new manager for this restaurant.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the Change of Manager for the Cheever Tavern. Unanimously voted

Daddio Limousine License Renewal

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve the license renewal for Daddio Limousine Service, expiring 12/31/23. Unanimously voted

Set Annual Mileage Rate for 2023: \$.655

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to approve \$.655 as the new 2023 mileage rate for the Town of Norwell. Unanimously voted

Set dates for ATM and STM and Town Election

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to set the dates for the Special and Annual Town Meetings as 5/8/23. Unanimously voted

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to set the date for the Annual Town Election as 5/20/23. Unanimously voted

Open May 2023 Special and Annual Town Meeting Warrants

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to open the Warrant for the Annual and Special Town Meeting on 1/18/23 and close the Warrant on 2/1/23. Unanimously voted.

Vote to approve expenses up to \$18,000 from the Jacobs Farm Endowment Fund

Ms. Sullivan updated the board on the completion of a project at this property that needs some additional funding. The expenses may be less than \$18K.

Motion; approve expenses up to \$18K from the Jacobs Farm endowment fund to cover the cost overrun for the current renovation project to complete the bathroom at the farmhouse. Unanimously voted

Update on the St. Helen's property.

Mr. Graham gave a recap of the Town's proposal to purchase this property. A one page summary will be posted on the Home page of the Town website.

The CPC did not approve the funding application for the purchase due to the appraised value, which was significantly lower than the bid amount. It is not legal under the CPA legislation to pay more for a property than the appraised amount.

The board expressed disappointment that the Archdiocese didn't want to assist the Town. There are other large ticket capital projects on the horizon that will need to utilize the Town's debt capacity.

The board and Ms. Sullivan have been working on strategies to contact the ultimate buyer and offer TIF incentives in an economic development zone, to be voted on at the ATM. The property will most likely be purchased by an out of state developer.

Mr. Reardon reported that a meeting was held for the community in 2022 to strategize about this property. He noted that the Archdiocese would not allow the Town to appraise, do test pits or assess the property. The Archdiocese also had the Town work through Town Counsel and the realtor instead of speaking directly. Access to the property was prohibited until it was convenient for the seller.

Mr. Reardon again noted that a prominent member of the Norwell community (the church) for 50 years essentially turned its back on the Town. He looks forward to working with the neighborhood on the potential project development.

Future Meeting Dates; 2/1/23, 2/15/23

Adjournment

*Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Pete Smellie, to adjourn at 8:03pm.
Unanimously voted*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. W. Graham", written over a horizontal line.

Bruce W. Graham, Chair