

**Town of Norwell
Select Board
Open Meeting
12/6/23**

Present: Jason Brown, Brian Greenberg, Andy Reardon, Peter Smellie, Darleen Sullivan

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. All rose to recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

Agenda Approval

Motion; made by Andy Reardon, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to approve the agenda as written. Unanimously voted

Minutes Approval

Motion; made by Andy Reardon, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to approve the Executive and Open Meeting minutes for 11/15/23. Unanimously voted

Select Board reports – Congratulations to the boys' and girls' soccer teams for such a great season. Norwell won the Thanksgiving day football game with Hanover. Well done!

Kudos to the Police and Fire departments from Norwell and the surrounding towns for handling the recent incident on Forest Street with patience and tact. It was resolved peacefully.

Town Administrator Report – Ms. Sullivan added her thanks to the Police and Fire departments as well.

Citizens Comments – none

DPW Updates

Highway Surveyor Glenn Ferguson was present to give his status report for the Highway/Tree and Grounds departments. There are over 80 miles of roads, 16 miles of sidewalks and 483 streetlights in the Town. His slide show included the status reports for Town owned land, sidewalk projects, storm drainage, recycling and the cemeteries. His departments partner with Conservation on projects and maintenance.

Bay Path Lane and River Street, were paved as part of Mr. Ferguson's plan to pave about 5 miles of road per year. The Town inherited a gas line upgrade from Eversource called the Beach Betterment Project. Phase One of the project involved River Street for two years. Spring of 2024 will see the project continuing for Phase Two, from Dover Street to Bridge Street, which will complete the Town's portion of the project. Main Street will be partially closed down to one lane for most of the project. Mr. Ferguson has negotiated with Eversource to cover the cost of repaving the roads affected by their large projects. Eversource gave the Town over \$1M to repave River Street and

hopefully will cover the majority of the Main Street work. Mr. Ferguson has a good relationship with Eversource.

The Tree and Grounds department rehabbed a large portion of the Carleton fields stone walls and paths using CPA funds. There are handicapped signs at both parks. Tree maintenance is a big activity. National Grid underwrote tree trimming for the length of Main Street at a cost of \$1M. Mr. Ferguson asked the sidewalk “petitioners” for patience. Sidewalks cost about \$500 per foot and there is not enough funding to do them all at once.

Town signage was cleaned up; areas with duplicate signage were corrected.

Mr. Ferguson took responsibility for the sidewalk construction at the Norwell/Hanover line that abuts Merchants Row. He did not use taxpayer funds but underwrote the \$50K cost with money from the Hanover Mall mitigation fund. He noted that he should have let everyone know about the project, but was worried about public safety, especially for the kids using that piece of Main Street to walk to Merchants Row.

He spoke about the annual Chapter 90 money not covering the cost of paving, which has to be supplemented with Town funds. Green, Pine and High Streets will need to be paved in the near future.

There are multiple areas of the boardwalks that need rehab. Hopefully this will be done with CPA funding. Mr. Brown reminded everyone that this is a key reason that maintenance budgets are now an integral part of the CPC application process.

The highway barn project is almost complete. Per Mr. Ferguson, it is 8 months ahead of schedule and on budget. He thanked all of his employees and summer staff for their hard work and dedication.

Mr. Reardon asked about staffing to maintain the current and future CPC projects. Mr. Ferguson thinks the staff is adequate right now, but Mr. Reardon noted that planning for additional staff should be considered 5 years in the future. Maintenance of the conservation land is a concern. Mr. Ferguson added that once his department is in the new building the staff will be more efficient and effective.

Mr. Brown suggested time logs for department tasks which would be helpful for future project costs.

Assessor Board member James Koehler suggested that Mr. Ferguson investigate tree maintenance funding from National Grid, as the utilities are paid to do this work. It might be a way to help underwrite this work. More money questions were asked and answered.

National Grid Pole Hearing 1: Longwater Drive/Main Street/High Street

The board opened the public hearing at 8:08pm.

National Grid rep Jarad Aker joined the meeting via zoom.

Brian Greenberg read the notice of public hearing at 8:10pm.

Mr. Aker stated that this pole will handle equipment for the electrical distribution system near 42 Longwater Drive (Clean Harbors).

Mr. Ferguson noted that the current poles are overloaded and are falling over, asking why National Grid is applying to add more poles on this street. At least half a dozen

poles on this road on this road have been lost to date. Mr. Aker did not have any knowledge of this topic. Nation Grid rep Joe Carroll opined that Verizon, who shares the poles, owns 50% of the oversize weight, and has done nothing to alleviate this problem. He is going to contact the Verizon rep to discuss this issue. There is also a high-pressure sewer line adjacent to the existing poles.

The board expressed concern about this installation; not enough is getting done to remedy this situation as Verizon doesn't take responsibility.

The board will postpone approval until these issues are addressed. Mr. Aker concurred about the concern for falling poles. Ms. Sullivan will connect with National Grid reps and Verizon to follow up on these issues.

Motion; made by Brian Greenberg, seconded by Jason Brown, to continue the public hearing to December 13, 2023 at 7:15pm. Unanimously voted

National Grid Pole Hearing 2: Longwater Drive/Pond Street

The board opened the public hearing at 8:20pm.

Mr. Greenberg read the notice of public hearing at 8:22pm.

Motion; made by Andy Reardon, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to continue the public hearing to December 13, 2023 at 7:30pm. Unanimously voted

License Renewals

Annual License Renewals The attached list of Norwell businesses renewed their licenses for 2024.

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Brian Greenberg, to renew each license category as follows for the period 1-1-24 to 12-31-24: Retail Package Store All Alcohol, Retail Package Store Wines & Malt, Common Victualler All Alcohol, Common Victualler Wines & Malt, Amusement (weekdays), Amusement (Sundays), Common Victualler, Motor Vehicles Class I, Motor Vehicles Class II, Motel licenses. Unanimously voted

CPC Application for Carleton property – vote to rescind Select Board application

Mr. Greenberg stated that he is committed to this project for more Affordable Housing in the Town. Questions were asked and answered about funding and Community Housing Trust (CHT) involvement. He would prefer to wait until the CHT has another meeting, then rescind or amend this motion.

Board of Assessors/Assessors Department overview – Cyclical review project update

Assessor Board members Mary Granville, Ted Dawe and James Koehler were present to update the board about this project.

Chair Mary Granville opened her meeting at 8:30pm.

The Assessor board hopes to have the Tax Classification hearing at next week's Select Board Meeting next week on 12/13/23.

Ms. Granville reported that residential cost rates increased 10-15%, land values increased 30%. The average property increase was 15%. All values are up to date on the recent disclosure list posted on the Town website. The disclosure period for residents to comment and/or edit their property cards ends on 12/11/23.

All of the new assessments will eventually be online. Right now, this is just a listing of the assessed value.

The Board of Assessors moved to adjourn their meeting at 8:35pm.

Future Meeting Agendas/Dates; December 13th, January 10th, January 24th

Adjournment

Motion; made by Jason Brown, seconded by Andy Reardon, to adjourn at 8:38pm.

Unanimously voted

Peter W. Smellie, Chair