

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES – November 7, 2022**

**6:00 p.m. - Chair's Introduction to Remote Meeting**

Chair Cohen stated that this Open Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was being conducted remotely consistent with the July 16, 2022 Act Relative to Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency and that all members of the Board of Selectmen are allowed and encouraged to participate remotely.

Chair Cohen noted that the Order allows public bodies to meet entirely remotely so long as reasonable public access is afforded so that the public can follow along with the deliberations of the meeting. He added that ensuring public access does not ensure public participation unless such participation is required by law. Chair Cohen noted that this meeting will allow for Public Comment throughout the agenda. He indicated the various ways that the public may view or participate in this meeting as listed on the posted agenda.

Chair Cohen confirmed that the following members and persons anticipated on the agenda were remotely present and could be heard.

**Board of Selectmen**

Mitch Cohen  
Julianne Hirsh  
Kristen Wixted  
Jason Perreault  
T. Scott Rogers

**Others**

John Coderre, Town Administrator  
Becca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator  
David Parenti, Fire Chief  
Brian Griffin, Police Lieutenant  
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director  
Jason Little, Finance Director

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

Chair Cohen announced that the Board will enter into Executive Session and will return to the open meeting at 7:00 p.m.

**EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to enter into executive session pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (Collective Bargaining – update on negotiations with the Dispatchers Union) (Litigation – update on SA Farms) due to the Chair's determination that a discussion regarding these matters in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the Board; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

**7:00 p.m. – OPEN MEETING**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Cohen invited comments from the public. There were none.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 17, 2022 MEETING**

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the October 17, 2022 meeting minutes; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

**7:00 p.m. - CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING**

To consider an application from G&I IX FORBES WHITNEY LLC to amend the existing aboveground storage license for premises located at 30 Forbes Road by increasing the on-site storage of flammable and combustible liquids, flammable gases and flammable solids.

Mr. Coderre indicated that the Planning Board approved an application by Aspen Aerogels for a Modification of Special Permit of Use and Special Permit per the Groundwater Protection Overlay District Bylaw. It is his understanding that all Planning Board questions, comments and concerns that were expressed during the original Public Hearing held on September 27, 2022 have been addressed.

David Bielunis, George Gould and Rachael Weiskind were present to answer any questions. In response to a question by Selectman Hirsh, Mr. Coderre confirmed that the license would stay with the property in the event that the property is sold. There were no comments from the public.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to close the public hearing; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote approve the application of G&I IX FORBES WHITNEY LLC to amend the existing aboveground storage license for premises located at 30 Forbes Road by increasing the on-site storage of flammable liquids from 880 gallons to 2,000 gallons; combustible liquids from 380 gallons to 500 gallons; flammable gases from 390 cubic feet to 2,000 cubic feet with the addition of 11 lbs. of flammable solids all to be stored in specified storage rooms and other approved storage containers; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

**HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION CHAIR NORM CORBIN**

Presentation on the Northborough Historic Preservation Plan.

Mr. Corbin indicated that the Historic District Commission has completed its Historic Preservation Plan. He reviewed the highlights of the plan and the Town's top preservation priorities. He noted that the plan can be found on the Historic District Commission page on the Town website. Hard copies will also be available at the Town Hall, Library and Senior Center. Board members thanked Mr. Corbin and the Historic District Commission for creating such an important and informative document.

Mr. Corbin responded to a public comment from Laura Ziton of 17 Franklin Circle that the Historic Preservation Plan details future projects, but does not detail any particular source of funding. Although typically the Historic District Commission seeks funding for specific projects through the Community Preservation Committee.

**REPORTS****Julianne Hirsh**

- Noted that Veterans Day is on November 11<sup>th</sup>. Thanked all veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.
- Noted that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recently met and will be scheduling public hearings as they review applications for CPC funding. She asked if the Board could communicate with the CPC to see if any of the projects before them would be better funded through ARPA funds.
- Participated in the walkthrough of the White Cliffs. Thanked Facilities Manager Shawn Thompson for his upkeep of the property. Asked if Mr. Thompson can report on the condition of Town owned properties to see if any projects can be funded through the use of ARPA funds. Mr. Coderre responded that the assessment of Town owned properties can be found in the existing 6-year Capital Improvement Plan. He noted that any projects that Mr. Thompson and DPW Director Scott Charpentier feel are necessary are included in either the operating budget for maintenance of municipal buildings or the Capital Improvement Plan. He will make a request to the Board if the need for ARPA funding arises. Mr. Charpentier added that a grant application has been submitted to the State to fund a self-evaluation in accordance with ADA requirements, which will include a professional assessment of all of the municipal building facilities.

**T. Scott Rogers**

- Thanked the members of the Boros Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) and all others who helped coordinate the participants and spectators for the Veterans Rolling Rally down Main Street this past Sunday.
- Looking forward to the Veterans Luncheon that will be held at the Senior Center on November 9<sup>th</sup>.
- Asked that residents keep leaves and grass separate from brush when dropping them off at the Highway Garage.
- Noted that the Planning Board has initiated a discussion to dissolve the Groundwater Advisory Committee. He will continue to monitor these conversations and hopes that the Planning Board understands the importance of having a Groundwater Advisory Committee.

- Noted that November 8<sup>th</sup> is Election Day. Residents can vote in-person at the Melican Middle School. Mail-in-ballots should be returned by using any of the drop boxes located at Town Hall.

#### Kristen Wixted

- Thanked the Public Works and Engineering Departments for organizing this year's annual Hazardous Waste Removal Day on October 29<sup>th</sup>.
- Noted that the Community Affairs Committee held their annual Jack-O-Lantern Stroll at the Town Common. Thanked them for planning this event and thanked all who participated.
- Noted that the Community Affairs Committee has scheduled this year's tree lighting event for December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 4:30pm. Chair Cohen added that Hanukkah will not overlap with the tree lighting as it did last year. The Menorah will be on display during the tree lighting event, but will not be lit until sometime during the Holiday of Hanukkah.
- Noted that the Northborough public schools will be closed on Election Day.

#### Jason Perreault

- Thanked the members of the Boros Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) for organizing the Veterans Rolling Rally. Thanked the Police Department for providing the escort and thanked the Public Works Department for installing the Hometown Heroes banners.
- Acknowledged his appreciation to all Veterans for their service.

#### Mitch Cohen

- Announced that the annual scouting for food pickup event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup>.

### **DISCUSSION AND VOTE TO RELEASE ARPA FUNDS FOR THE COMMUNITY MEALS PROGRAM**

A copy of a June 21, 2022 memo from the Community Meals Program requesting ARPA funding was included in the meeting packet.

Martha Michalewich informed the Board that for the last 25 years the Community Meals program has been fully funded with grants and the generosity of local businesses and community members. Although they recently received a grant for \$10,000 that will take them through January of 2023, there is concern that additional funding may not be forthcoming. Since June of 2020, each week between 120 and 130 curbside meals are served curbside at Trinity Church at an average cost of \$600-\$720 per week. Although volunteers continue to solicit donations and apply for grants, she is requesting ARPA funding from the Town to finance the program through the winter months depending on meal price escalation.

Mr. Coderre suggested that the Board consider releasing ARPA funds in the amount of \$10,000 - \$15,000 to keep this food security program operational through May of 2023. The program service delivery model can be reevaluated at that time to determine how best to move forward. For the long-term sustainability of the program, it was suggested that they connect with other organizations who may be able to offer additional resources as well.

Ms. Michalewicz noted that in the event that meals are offered in person again, it is her hope that curbside delivery would still be an option for those that would prefer it. Members of the Board expressed their support of this program, acknowledging that the urgency of their request for the release of ARPA funds in this case is well justified.

Selectman Perreault stated that he would be comfortable releasing \$15,000 in ARPA funds for the Community Meals Program.

Public Comment: Fran Bakstran of 76 Cedar Hill Road stated that she is the Grant Planner that recommended the authorization of \$10,000 to the Helping Hands organization for community meals. She added that this grant funding is restricted to the over sixty population. She strongly encouraged the Board to consider releasing ARPA funds to help with food insecurity for all ages.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to authorize the release of \$15,000 in ARPA Funds for the Community Meals program; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

#### **APPROVAL OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S APPOINTMENT OF THOMAS REARDON TO THE FIRE STATION BUILDING COMMITTEE**

Mr. Coderre noted that the Town closed on the new fire station building site located at 61-65 West Main Street on September 20, 2022, and has a tentative closing scheduled for November 10, 2022 on the adjacent property located at 10 Monroe Street.

At its September 12, 2022 meeting, the Board voted to approve his appointments to the Fire Station Building Committee, which included Dawn Rand and Diana Nicklaus to two of the three citizen seats. He asked the Board to approve his last citizen appointment of Tom Reardon to the Fire Station Building Committee.

#### **Fire Station Building Committee Membership**

Mitch Cohen – Board of Selectmen

John Rapa – Financial Planning Committee

Fire Chief David Parenti

Fire Captain Dan Brillhart

Citizen—Dawn Rand (former Chair, Fire Station Feasibility Study Committee)

Citizen—Diana Nicklaus (architect / former Design Review Committee Member)

Citizen—Tom Reardon (architect / former Design Review Committee Member)

In response to a question by Selectman Hirsh, Mr. Coderre responded that 12-14 applications were received. Most of them were from firefighter family members or retired firefighters. He added that there is already a good representation of firefighters from the Fire Department.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the Town Administrator's appointment of Tom Reardon to the Fire Station Building Committee; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

**CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF JEFFREY GRIBOUSKI TO SERVE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER ON THE ZONING BOARD OF APEALS**

As part of the 2022 reappointment process this past April, one application was received for the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Interviews were conducted with the new applicant Kevin

Wyrsh and the incumbent Dick Rand on March 29, 2022. Due to a split vote on the recommended appointment at the April 11, 2022 Selectmen's Meeting, Board members agreed it was best to restart the process. The ZBA vacancy was advertised for 30 days and the two original applicants were invited to reapply if still interested.

The Interview Subcommittee conducted interviews on June 28, 2022 with ZBA Incumbent Dick Rand, ZBA Alternate Suzy Cieslica, Kevin Wyrsh and Tim Kaelin. On August 15, 2022, the Board of Selectmen appointed Suzy Cieslica as a ZBA voting member by a 3-2 vote, as recommended by the Interview Subcommittee. In response to a question by Selectman Rogers at the September 12, 2022 Board meeting, Chair Cohen indicated that the ZBA Alternate vacancy should be advertised seeking additional applications.

No additional applications were received by the October 17, 2022 deadline. Executive Assistant Ms. Wackell reached out to those that were interviewed on June 28th. Dick Rand, Kevin Wyrsh and Tim Kaelin are no longer interested in serving on the ZBA. As Jeffrey Gribouski is the sole remaining applicant, Selectmen Hirsh and Wixted recommended that he be appointed to the vacant ZBA Alternate Position. Minutes from the June 28, 2022 interviews and a copy of Mr. Gribouski's application were included in the meeting packet.

**Motion**

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Jeffrey Gribouski to serve as an alternate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a partial two-year term as recommended by the Interview Subcommittee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion.

**Discussion**

Selectman Perreault questioned the motion, indicating that the Interview Subcommittee did not deliberate and vote to officially recommend Mr. Gribouski during an open meeting of the Interview Subcommittee prior to tonight.

Chair Cohen noted that the Interview Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on November 15<sup>th</sup> to interview candidates for a different Committee. He suggested that the Board continue with the appointment of Mr. Gribouski this evening and that the recommendation be formalized by a vote of the Interview Subcommittee at the November 15<sup>th</sup> Interview Subcommittee meeting.

Amended motion

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Jeffrey Gribouski to serve as an alternate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a partial two-year term contingent upon a subsequent confirmation of tonight's action at the November 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Interview Subcommittee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"abstain"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

**ACCEPTANCE AND EXECUTION OF PROPERTY DEED FOR 10 MONROE STREET**

Mr. Coderre informed the Board that when a town acquires property there is an "acceptance" recorded with the deed, signed by the Board or Commission having custody of the property. In this case it is the Board of Selectmen. Town Counsel will hold the signed Acceptance in anticipation of the closing, which is tentatively scheduled for November 10th.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to accept and execute the Property Deed for 10 Monroe Street; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

**EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS 1157 & 1158**

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds 1157 & 1158; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

**OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Coderre noted publicly that during tonight's Executive Session, the Board approved the contract settlement with the Dispatchers Union, which includes general wage increases of 2% in FY2023, 2% in FY2024 and 2% in FY2025. The Memorandum of Understanding will be posted on the Town website under "Town Administrator Contract Settlements".

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Chair Cohen invited comments from the public. There were none.

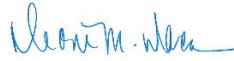
**ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

Perreault	"aye"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. November 7, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. October 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Information Packet – Aspen Aerogels
4. Northborough Historic Preservation Plan
5. Information Packet – ARPA Request
6. Information Packet – Fire Station Building Committee Appointment
7. Information Packet – Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment
8. Information Packet – Property Deed Acceptance for 10 Monroe Street
9. Cemetery Deeds