

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES – February 25, 2019**

7:00 p.m. - Selectmen's Meeting Room, 63 Main Street, Northborough, MA

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Dawn Rand, Chairman  
Jason Perreault, Vice Chairman  
Leslie Rutan, Clerk  
Timothy Kaelin  
Julianne Hirsh

\*Pledge of Allegiance

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 11, 2019 REGULAR MEETING**

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to approve the meeting minutes of the February 11, 2019 regular meeting as submitted; Selectman Kaelin seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

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

To consider an application for a Special One-Day License as submitted by Lisa Hodge on behalf of the Algonquin Regional High School Boosters Club for a fundraising event to be held at C'est La Vie Bistro at 30 Main Street.

Lisa Hodge was present on behalf of the Algonquin Athletic Boosters Club to request a Special One-Day License for a fundraising event that will be held at C'est LaVie Bistro at 30 Main Street. The event will take place on Friday, March 22, 2019 from 7pm to 10pm and will benefit the High School Athletic Department.

The application has been reviewed by the Police, Fire, Building and Health Departments and all recommend approval.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to approve the application for a Special One-Day License as submitted by Lisa Hodge on behalf of the Algonquin Athletic Boosters Club for a fundraising event at C'est LaVie Bistro at 30 Main Street on Friday, March 22, 2019 between 7pm – 10pm. The license shall include the 24-hour period immediately before and after the event in order to allow for the proper delivery and disposal of all alcoholic beverages prior to and immediately following the event; and to further waive the license fee; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

**REPORTS**

Julianne Hirsch

- Thanked White Cliffs Committee Chair Kathleen Polanowicz for her written update on the efforts of the White Cliffs Committee.
- Noted that the Planning Board will discuss six proposed zoning bylaw changes at their meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup>.

Timothy Kaelin

- Attended a recent meeting of the Groundwater Advisory Committee.
- Attended a recent meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee.
- Noted again that he continues to receive calls from parents expressing their concerns with motorists passing school buses when they are stopped. He urged anyone who sees this happen to report the license plate of the driver to the Police Department immediately. Thanked the Police Department for their continued response regarding this issue.

Leslie Rutan, Clerk

- Thanked the Police and Fire Chiefs for their monthly reports.
- Urged residents to continue to contribute to the needs of the Northborough Food Pantry.
- Thanked DPW Director and staff for their efforts during the recent storms.

Jason Perreault, Vice Chair

- Announced that the Library will be hosting its 150<sup>th</sup> Jubilee on April 6<sup>th</sup> at the Haven Country Club in Boylston.
- Attended the recent meeting of the Master Plan Steering Committee.
- Thanked the public safety and DPW departments for their efforts during today's high winds.
- Noted that the Habitat for Humanity home dedication ceremony and welcoming event for the family at 37 Main Street is scheduled for Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 10AM.
- Noted the recent retirement of Finance Director June Hubbard-Ward. Thanked her for her years of service.
- Congratulated former Town Accountant Jason Little on his promotion to Finance Director.

Dawn Rand, Chair

- Noted the resignation of Amy Rogers from the Community Affairs Committee. Requested that a thank you letter be sent on the Board's behalf.
- Noted that the Board of Selectmen, Financial Planning Committee, Appropriations Committee and the Fire Station Building Committee will hold a joint meeting on Thursday, April 4, 2019 to provide an update on the Fire Station project's site selection, conceptual design and preliminary costs estimates.

John Coderre

- No report.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

White Cliffs Committee Chair Kathleen Polanowicz provided an update on the efforts of the White Cliffs Committee, including the following highlights:

- In January 2019, the Town executed a contract with DBVW Architects for the provision of architectural and engineering services at the White Cliffs property.
- DBVW and its consultants have been on site at the White Cliffs conducting laser and visual surveys of the interior and exterior of the property. The historic portion of the building is in much better condition than anticipated.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS – WHITE CLIFFS UPDATE CONT. . .**

- Work is being done to address the security of the White Cliffs property and building.
- DBVW believes that they have identified the architect of the building as Benjamin Hammett Seabury. The identity of an architect can be an important component in accessing historic designations and possible funding.
- The next meeting of the White Cliffs Committee will be held on April 2, 2019 at 10AM.
- The White Cliffs Committee link on the Town website is being updated to include as much information about White Cliffs as possible.

**REVIEW OF AMENDMENTS TO TOWN CODE, CHAPTER 9-12-010 & 9-12-011 APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS TO BOARDS & COMMITTEES**

Chairman Rand noted that at the February 11, 2019 meeting, the Board agreed to review a draft of an amended policy regarding appointments and reappointments to Boards and Committees. The draft amended policy presented this evening is based on the discussion that took place at the February 11, 2019 meeting.

Selectman Rutan requested that language be included that if an applicant submits an application for a Board, Committee or Commission (BCC) at the time that a vacancy does not exist, the application will remain on file in the Selectmen's Office for 6 months from the date of receipt and that applicants will have the opportunity to resubmit a new application following the 6-month expiration date. Following some discussion, Chairman Rand suggested that the language be added to the application itself, rather than to the policy. By consensus, the language will be added to the application.

Selectman Hirsh requested that the following language be added to the public notice of vacancies on BCCs: 1) the name of the BCC; 2) directions for how to apply; 3) a closing date for acceptance of applications; and 4) a contact telephone number. Mr. Coderre recommended that because the public notice will include rolling vacancies, that it not include a closing date, but rather state that applications will be accepted until filled. Chairman Rand suggested that the language be added as proposed by Selectman Hirsh to the policy, with the exception of a closing date for application acceptance. By consensus, the language will be incorporated into the policy.

Selectman Hirsh requested that the calendar dates for posting requirements listed under reappointments public notice also be included under the Public Notice of Vacancies and Term Expirations section of the policy. Selectman Perreault explained his thought process when drafting the policy, and his decision that it was only necessary to list the calendar dates for posting requirements relative to the beginning of the reappointment process under that portion of the policy.

Selectmen Hirsh requested that the following language be added under the Interview Subcommittee portion of the policy: *“Interviews shall be conducted and appointments shall be based on merit and qualifications, where possible the Board will seek variety in backgrounds, interests, ages, genders and geographic areas of residents so that Town boards and committees will reflect a true cross-section of the community”*. Members of the Board expressed their concerns with narrowing the criteria to such a degree that

**REVIEW OF AMENDMENTS TO TOWN CODE, CHAPTER 9-12-010 & 9-12-011 APPOINTMENTS AND REAPPOINTMENTS CONT . . .**

applicants would be turned away simply because of their age or gender or where they live. It was noted that the applicant pool to begin with is very low. The common consensus was that it is obvious that the interview process to appointment someone is based on merit, qualifications and suitability for the particular BCC they are applying for. Members of the Board also felt their discretion should not be overly limited by policy.

Selectman Hirsh requested that applicants not be allowed to serve on multiple boards or committees whenever possible. Chairman Rand responded that the Interview Subcommittee does not make a practice of recommending applicants to multiple committees, although there are instances where this may happen due to a lack of applicants. Again, the Board will use its discretion based on the circumstances surrounding a potential appointment.

Selectman Hirsh questioned if the policy should include how long the terms are for each BCC. It was generally discussed that most applicants are appointed to BCCs for 3 year terms with the opportunity to seek reappointment. Although in many cases, applicants are appointed for less than the full term when filling the remainder of the term of someone else's vacant seat. As the information varies and is readily available, it was deemed unnecessary to include it in the policy.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to approve the amended Town Code Chapters 9-12-010 and 9-12-011 – *Appointments and Reappointments to Boards and Committees* as presented; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

**UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2020 BUDGET**

Mr. Coderre referenced the following overall budget goals and objectives as discussed at the December 13, 2018 Financial Trend Monitoring Presentation:

1. To protect and improve the Town's overall Financial Condition
2. To develop a budget that is in conformance with the Town's comprehensive financial policies
3. To maintain Northborough as an affordable place to live and operate a business
4. To protect the Town's long-run solvency

Following a brief review of the FY2020 revenue assumptions, including State Aid, New Growth and Local Receipts, Mr. Coderre reviewed the following issues that will impact the key budgets.

The first issue is the status of the outstanding union contract negotiations as well as the ongoing Classification/Compensation Study. All five collective bargaining contracts expire June 30, 2019 and are currently under negotiation for FY2020. The Town is also in the process of conducting a comprehensive Classification/Compensation Study designed to update all position job descriptions and conduct a market survey to ensure the Town's compensation and benefits remain competitive. The results of the Study will be brought forward to Town Meeting for approval and will likely have financial impacts where market adjustments are warranted.

**UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2020 BUDGET CONT. . .**

The second issue relates to recent developments regarding the worldwide recycling market and the pending solid waste contract bid. The Town's solid waste collection contract will expire on June 30, 2019. The recycling industry is currently going through a tumultuous period adjusting to the recent changes in marketability of the recycling commodities worldwide. As a result, Town staff is evaluating the most cost effective and lowest risk means for the Town to manage this portion of the program, which means restructuring the contract and bidding it out. Depending upon the bid results, the tax subsidy to the Solid Waste Enterprise Fund may need to increase by approximately \$200,000.

The third issue is that increasing Northborough student enrollment at the Algonquin Regional High School (ARHS) will once again result in significant increases to the Town's FY2020 Assessment. While the overall ARHS Budget is only increasing 3%, Northborough's Assessment share will increase by 8.33%, or \$941,577, which will require significant use of the Town's excess levy capacity.

Mr. Coderre stated that in order to accommodate the increased ARHS Assessment, the budget model will require the Town to dip into its unused levy capacity by approximately \$900,000, resulting in an estimated tax impact to the average single family home of about \$361. Had the ARHS Assessment increase come in at 3.5%, we would only need to use \$353,000 in levy capacity (\$547,000 less), resulting in an estimated single family tax bill of \$278 (\$83 less). Mr. Coderre noted that the ARHS Assessment increase is not the result of any decision made by the School Administration and is mainly the result of increasing Northborough enrollment as it relates to the State's Chapter 70 formula for Minimum Local Contribution. He publicly thanked the School Superintendent and School Committees for their excellent collaboration in bringing the K-8 budget and overall Algonquin Regional High School budget at reasonable levels.

Mr. Coderre proudly announced that the Town has concluded its FY2020 Health Insurance negotiations with Fallon and successfully secured a 0% rate increase. This renewal drives home the fact that the collaborative approach between the Town and School Department to seek carrier consolidation under Fallon for FY2019 was the right move. Although there will still be an increase in the FY2020 Health Insurance budget due to increased enrollment and other factors, most active employees will not see any increase in their FY2020 payroll deducted premiums. The FY2020 Health Insurance budget is estimated to increase just 2%.

Lastly, Mr. Coderre reported that based upon revised assumptions, the target budgets for the key departments are estimated to increase as follows:

- Northborough K-8 Schools increase \$662,965 or 2.73% to \$24,928,558
- General Government (Town) increases \$757,193, or 3.5% to \$22,391,273

**UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2020 BUDGET CONT. . .**

- The overall Assabet Valley Vocational HS operating budget is increasing 4.25%. However, Northborough's Operating Assessment increases by \$82,416, or 13.46% to \$694,822 as enrollment increases from 41 to 45 students. Debt service associated with the completed renovation project decreases from \$145,316 to \$141,488 a 2.63% reduction.
  - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is \$836,310, an overall increase of \$78,588, or 10.37%
  
- The overall Algonquin Regional High School (ARHS) budget is increasing 3%. The ARHS Operating Assessment is increasing \$947,799, or 8.38% to \$12,252,513 based upon Northborough enrollment and related impacts to the State's foundation budget and minimum local contribution formula. The debt for ARHS increases by \$10,668 or 1.75% to \$621,442.
  - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is an overall increase of \$958,467, or 8%

Questions and comments were heard from members of the Board. The Board thanked Mr. Coderre, Town staff and the School Superintendent for their efforts.

**STATUS UPDATE ON FY2018 SNOW & ICE BUDGET**

DPW Director Scott Charpentier provided a status update on the Snow & Ice Account for FY2019. The original FY2019 Snow and Ice appropriation was \$427,000. As of February 21<sup>st</sup>, \$262,560 has been spent, leaving a remaining balance of \$164,440. He indicated that although Board approval is no longer needed to deficit spend the Snow & Ice account under Massachusetts General Law, he will keep the Board updated if deficit spending becomes necessary. He also noted that if needed, any shortfall will be covered within the overall year-end FY2019 budget, if possible.

**REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY TOWN MEETING WARRANT**

Mr. Coderre presented to the Board a draft summary of the warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. Following his review of the draft warrant articles, Mr. Coderre added that the Community Preservation Committee will be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss each of their warrant articles in more detail. The Board will vote to close the warrant at its March 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED 1071**

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1071; Selectman Kaelin seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**8:30 p.m. - EXECUTIVE SESSION**

Selectman Kaelin moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (litigation re: ADA Compliance Assabet Park and 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 Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call was as follows:

Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Kaelin	“aye	Rand	“aye”
Rutan	“aye”		

Chairman Rand announced that the Board would return from Executive Session only to adjourn.

**9:00 p.m. – RETURN TO OPEN MEETING****ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 9:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. February 25, 2019 Meeting Agenda
2. February 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – Special One-Day License
4. Memo regarding White Cliffs Committee update by Kathleen Polanowicz.
5. Information packet – Amended Town Code for Appointments and Reappointments
6. Preliminary FY2020 Budget Memo
7. Snow & Ice Budget Memo
8. Preliminary Town Meeting Warrant Summary
9. Cemetery Deed