

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – November 8, 2021**

7:00 p.m. - Chairman's Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chairman Perreault stated that this Open Meeting of the Board of Selectmen was being conducted remotely consistent with Governor Baker's Executive Order of June 16, 2021, an 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.

Chairman Perreault 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. He noted that in the interest of time to attend to a lengthy Executive Session following the open meeting, the public comments portion of the agenda will be passed over this evening. He indicated the various ways that the public may view this meeting as listed on the posted agenda.

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

Board of Selectmen

Jason Perreault, Chair
Leslie Rutan
T. Scott Rogers
Kristen Wixted

Others

John Coderre, Town Administrator
Rebecca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator
Jason Little, Finance Director
David Parenti, Fire Chief
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

Meeting Business Ground Rules

Chairman Perreault covered the ground rules for effective and clear conduct of the business. He asked members of the Board to mute their phone or computer when not speaking and to speak clearly and in a way that helps generate accurate meeting minutes. He will go through the items on the agenda. Following presentations, Board members will be offered an opportunity to speak, followed by staff members answering any questions, if necessary. Those responding will be asked to wait until the floor is yielded to them. Members were asked if they wish to respond to the comments of others, to do so through the Chair, taking care to identify themselves.

Any votes taken this evening will be done by roll call to ensure that the records of the vote are clear and accurate to the members attending the meeting remotely.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 18, 2021 MEETING

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the October 18, 2021 meeting minutes as submitted; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

7:00 p.m. - KRISTIN BLACK – HEALTH AGENT

- Update on Vaccination Clinics.
- Acceptance of State Department of Public Health COVID-19 Contact Tracing Grant Award.

Ms. Black provided a brief update on the following:

Booster Clinics for Adults

Ms. Black reported that on October 29th, the Town held a Moderna Booster Clinic at the Northborough Senior Center from 9am to 3:30pm and vaccinated 407 individuals including many seniors and teachers. The clinic was supported by the Northborough and Boylston Fire Departments, Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health's Salmon VNA nurses and many local volunteers, including Medical Reserve Corps.

She added that another Moderna Booster Clinic is tentatively planned for Friday, November 19th from 9am to 12pm. She is hoping to also vaccinate homebound individuals that same afternoon. Those who would like to be added to the Town's email list serve to learn about future booster clinics can sign up at: www.tinyurl.com/nborosignup

Pediatric Pfizer Clinics for Children Ages 5-11

Ms. Black reported that on November 5 & 6, the Town hosted two pediatric clinics at Melican Middle School. Appointments opened on Wednesday at midnight and within 48 hours all 900 appointments were booked. Families who missed this opportunity can schedule an appointment at a local pharmacy or their doctor's office.

Ms. Black also reviewed the recent case counts, which show a continued decline in cases during the last month. She reviewed COVID-19 recommendations for the Holidays. Residents can refer to the CDC's Safer Way to Celebrate the Holidays website:

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/daily-life-coping/holidays/celebrations.html>

Acceptance of State Department of Public Health COVID-19 Contact Tracing Grant Award

Ms. Black indicated that the Town has been awarded a COVID-19 Contact Tracing Grant by the State Department of Public Health in the amount of \$160,000 annually for FY2022 and FY2023 for the Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health. These funds will allow for additional qualified medical staff to help with contact tracing and other public health purposes in the event that all contact tracing duties have been met. The additional temporary two-year staffing will likely be hired through an extended contract with Salmon VNA.

Board members thanked Ms. Black for her continued efforts to keep the community safe.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 44, Section 53A, to accept funds from the Department of Public Health COVID-19 Contact Tracing Grant from the State of Massachusetts and to authorize the Health Agent to expend such funds on behalf of the Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

7:15 p.m. - ANDREW DOWD- TOWN CLERK

- Approval of Northborough's newly updated Voting Precinct Map.
- Update regarding new State Redistricting Maps.

Approval of Northborough's newly updated Voting Precinct Map

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 54, Section 6 requires that the Board of Selectmen vote to accept the 2020 re-precincting plan. He indicated that this process occurs every 10 years after the results of the US Census are released. The official 2020 US Census lists Northborough's current population at 15,741, a significant increase since the 2010 US Census, which was 14,155.

Mr. Dowd stated that to keep the 4 precincts of equivalent size, there will be some minor changes to the borders of each precinct that will go into effect on December 31, 2021. He noted that because all Northborough voting precincts are now located at the Melican Middle School, this change will have little impact on residents. Those voters that are impacted will be notified of their precinct number change.

Mr. Dowd noted that after obtaining the necessary approval from the Board of Selectmen, he will submit the plan, including maps, population information and a legal description of the boundaries to the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to accept the 2020 Re-Precincting Plan for the Town of Northborough as presented by the Town Clerk; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

Update regarding new State Redistricting Maps

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that in conjunction with the re-precincting, the State Legislature is required to develop a redistricting plan to equalize voting districts due to population changes. The proposed plan changes Northborough's current representation in the House and Senate effective December 31, 2021 as follows:

State Senate: All 4 Northborough precincts will now be in the same Senate District, represented by Senator Chandler. Previously the Senate District was split, 3 precincts in Senator Chandler's District, and 1 precinct in Senator Eldridge's District.

House of Representatives: Northborough residents in precinct 4 will remain in the 12th Worcester District, currently represented by Representative Kilcoyne. Northborough residents in precincts 1, 2, and 3 will now be represented in the newly created 19th Worcester District.

Mr. Dowd added that the changes in representation will take place following next year's election.

**7:30 p.m. - SCOTT CHARPENTIER, DPW DIRECTOR
FRED LITCHFIELD, TOWN ENGINEER**

To consider implementation of a Truck Exclusion on Ridge Road and Maple Street.

Mr. Litchfield informed the Board that the traffic data for the Bartlett Street area as obtained by the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) indicated the truck traffic on Ridge Road exceeded the minimum 5% required to request a Heavy Commercial Vehicle Exclusion (HCVE). The formal application to the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) for a 24-hour HCVE for the upper portion of Maple Street and Ridge Road was approved.

Mr. Litchfield indicated that at this time, it is appropriate for the Board of Selectmen to vote to amend the Town Code by adding to Part 9-108-140 (2.5 Ton Truck Exclusions) Section E: Ridge Road and amending the current HCVE on Maple Street to include a portion of Maple Street from Ridge Road to Bartlett Street. Once this action is taken, MassDOT has indicated they will issue the appropriate permit. The signs indicating the 24-hour Truck Exclusion is in effect can then be installed by the Public Works Department.

In response to questions from Board members, Mr. Charpentier stated that the advanced warning signs on Bartlett Street at Maple Street and on Ridge Road at Lyman Street will be replaced with truck exclusion signs. Mr. Litchfield added that the updated data will be provided to truck driver's GPS units through inquiries from GPS companies. With the updated GPS units and the signage, the goal is that the routes will be amended to avoid this entire area.

Mr. Coderre clarified that although the Board of Selectmen does have the authority to implement a truck exclusion, a traffic study must first indicate that truck traffic exceeds the minimum 5% criteria. It must then be approved by MassDOT before it can be approved by the Board of Selectmen. This multi-layered process is necessary in order for a truck exclusion to be legal and enforceable.

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to amend Northborough Town Code by adding to Part 9-108-140 – *Two and one-half (2.5) Ton Truck Exclusions*, Section E: "Ridge Road - from Maple Street to Lyman Street. The alternate route shall be Main Street (US Route 20), Bartlett Street and Lyman Street." and to replace the existing Maple Street truck exclusion with "Maple Street – from Main Street (US Route 20) to Bartlett Street. The alternate route shall be Main Street (US Route 20) and Bartlett Street"; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

REPORTS

Kristen Wixted

- Attended a recent meeting of the Youth Commission and noted that the Family & Youth Services Department is looking to fill a part-time administrative position.
- Noted that although the Jack O' Lantern Stroll hosted by the Community Affairs Committee (CAC) had to be cancelled due to weather, the pumpkin carving contest was a big success. On behalf of the CAC, she thanked those who were scheduled to perform during the Stroll and those who offered to donate food to the event. She also thanked the Department of Public Works for their help with building the shelves.
- Noted that the CAC will be holding their annual Tree Lighting Event on Blake Street on Saturday, December 4th. The CAC is working with the Diversity & Inclusion Committee to include the lighting of a Menorah as part of the event to represent residents who celebrate Hanukkah.
- Noted that Suzy Cieslica thanked all Town staff, School staff and the volunteers who were involved in the recent vaccination clinic for children.
- Noted that the Algonquin Regional School Committee (ARSC) announced that every grade at the high school is over the 80% vaccine threshold. The School's Medical Advisory Team is recommending that the high school staff and students continue to wear masks.
- Noted that the ARSC continues to consider the renaming of the High School mascot and hope to have a list of three mascot names to be considered sometime in November.

T. Scott Rogers

- Noted that the Open Space Committee has submitted four applications for Community Preservation Funds. One to replenish reserves for open space and the other three are for trail related projects.
- Participated in the recent Road Safety Audit walk and thanked everyone who organized it and attended.
- Attended the Hometown Heroes Rolling Rally where Veterans were led down Route 20 to view all the Hometown Heroes Banners followed by a meet and greet at Memorial Field. Thanked the Boroughs Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) for the banners and events that honor Veterans.
- Noted that the Interview Subcommittee met prior to tonight's meeting. There are at least 14 openings on the various Boards and Committees and encouraged interested residents to visit the Boards and Committees page on the Town website.
- Noted that Recreation Director Allie Lane is asking if Board members would be interested in volunteering their time to help out with the annual turkey trot road race on Thanksgiving morning. Sign ups for the race can be found at www.northboroughturkeytrot.org.

Leslie Rutan

- Announced that the Boy Scout's annual Scouting for Food Drive will be held Saturday, November 13th. Residents can leave their bags at the end of their driveway for pickup between 10am-2pm. Thanked the Scouts for their efforts to benefit the Northborough Food Pantry.
- Thanked the Fire Chief for his monthly report. In addition to mentioning some of the highlights from the month of October, including the receipt of a monetary donation from Kevin and Erla Mallett that funded a new rescue boat, she read aloud a thank you letter that was addressed to the Fire Department.
- Participated in the Road Safety Audit walk, noting that it was helpful to see everything firsthand.

- Announced that Boy Scout Troop 101 will be holding their annual wreath sale. Wreaths can be ordered on online.
- Watched the recent Hometown Heroes Rolling Rally. Thanked the Boroughs Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) for the banners and for this event that honored our Veterans.
- Attended a recent K-8 School Committee meeting where the Melican Middle School Principal presented her school improvement plan. Thanked the School Committee and Principal Karb for her efforts.
- Noted that the Interview Subcommittee met prior to tonight's meeting. Asked residents to consider serving on the various Boards and Committees.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked the Boroughs Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) for their efforts in planning the Hometown Heroes Rolling Rally. Extended his appreciation to the public for their support of our Veterans.
- Noted that Thursday, November 11th is Veterans Day. Asked the public to keep Veterans in their thoughts.

John Coderre

- Announced that the Board's meeting packets are available to the public on the Selectmen's page or on the calendar on the Homepage of the Town website as per Selectman Rutan's request at the Board's previous meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Chairman Perreault noted that in the interest of time to attend to a lengthy Executive Session following the open meeting, the public comments portion of the agenda will be passed over this evening.

DISCUSSION REGARDING SENATE BILL 499 –

AN ACT REGARDING AGRICULTURAL COMPOSTING PROGRAMS

Mr. Coderre provided a brief update on Senate Bill 499 – An Act Regarding Agricultural Composting Programs, which has been a long-standing legislative priority. He reminded the Board that Senator Harriett Chandler has twice before submitted similar legislation on behalf of the Town.

Mr. Coderre informed the Board that he received late notice of a hearing regarding S499 on November 3, 2021 by the State Legislature's Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. On behalf of the Town, he submitted a letter and testified at the hearing in support of the Bill. He stated that he also contacted the Massachusetts Municipal Association (MMA) requesting their support and was told that MMA Director Geoff Beckwith will be submitting testimony as well on behalf of all municipalities in the Commonwealth.

Mr. Coderre noted that the modification to the General Law is to insert the following as underlined: The Department of Agriculture and Resources (DAR) shall promulgate rules and regulations for the operation of state, local and demonstration agricultural composting programs, provided however, that any such rules and regulations shall require that all composting projects and facilities comply with local zoning, land use, conservation and health ordinances, bylaws and regulations, including but not limited to requirements regarding set back or separation distances, odors, dust and debris, types and quantities of materials, and source of materials - onsite and off-site, and all such projects and facilities shall comply with such local ordinances, bylaws and regulations.

This proposed legislation has made it through the House and Senate and is now before the Joint Committee on Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture. If passed, it will go to the full legislature and then the Governor for consideration.

Mr. Coderre indicated that anyone interested in providing written testimony in support of this legislation may do so by emailing it to: JointCommittee.Environment@malegislature.gov. He added that although there is no official deadline, it is generally recommended that written testimony be submitted within two weeks of the November 3rd hearing date.

Mr. Coderre noted that despite one of the composting sites in Northborough ceasing to operate on Green Street and the other on Whitney Street being subject to a settlement agreement following legal action by the Attorney General's Office, the root problem remains. Under existing regulations by the State Department of Agricultural Resources, any farm may engage in large-scale commercial composting operations in residential neighborhoods that are exempt from local zoning and land-use regulations.

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds 1133, 1134 & 1135; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business.

8:15 p.m. - EXECUTIVE SESSION

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (litigation) regarding pending land use litigation: The Gutierrez Company v. Northborough Planning Board, Land Court Case No. 21 MISC 000046; The Gutierrez Company v. Northborough Planning Board, Land Court Case No. 21 MISC 000380; Isomedix Operations, Inc. d/b/a Steris A.S.T. v. Northborough Planning Board, Land Court Case No. 21 MISC 000436; and Abu Construction, Inc. and Ka Realty, Inc. v. Town of Northborough and Northborough Planning Board, Worcester Superior Court Civil Action No. 1985CV00178, due to the Chair's determination that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the litigating position of the Planning Board and/or the Town; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:


Wixted	"aye"	Rutan	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Perreault announced that the Board will enter into Executive Session and the webinar hosting the open meeting will be ended.

The open meeting ended at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. November 8, 2021 Meeting Agenda
2. October 18, 2021 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – COVID Update
4. Information packet – Contact Tracing Grant
5. Information packet – Newly Updated Precinct Map
6. Information packet – New State Redistricting Maps
7. Information packet – Truck Exclusion on Ridge Road and Maple Street
8. Information packet – Senate Bill 499
9. Cemetery Deeds