

## BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES – January 10, 2022

### 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. Chairman Perreault noted that this meeting will allow for Public Comment under the Discussion and Adoption of the Complete Streets Policy and under the Public Comment portion of the agenda. He indicated the various ways that the public may view or participate in 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, Vice Chair  
T. Scott Rogers, Clerk  
Julianne Hirsh  
Kristen Wixted

#### Others

John Coderre, Town Administrator  
Rebecca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator  
David Parenti, Fire Chief  
William Lyver, Police 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 – DECEMBER 14, 2021 MEETING

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the December 14, 2021 meeting minutes; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	"abstain"	Rutan	"aye"
Hirsh	"aye"	Perreault	"aye"
Rogers	"aye"		

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – DECEMBER 20, 2021 MEETING**

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the December 20, 2021 meeting minutes; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	“aye”	Rutan	“aye”
Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”		

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – DECEMBER 20, 2021 JOINT MEETING**

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the December 20, 2021 joint meeting minutes; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	“aye”	Rutan	“aye”
Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”		

**7:00 p.m. - THE STEAKLOFT BAR & GRILLE**

DBA Name Change for the All Alcoholic Beverages Restaurant License located at 369 West Main Street – The Steakloft Bar & Grille to The Cellar Bar & Grille.

Evis Agora from the Steakloft Bar & Grille was remotely present to speak to the application for a DBA Name Change for the All Alcoholic Beverages Restaurant License for premises located at 369 West Main Street.

Ms. Agora is requesting that the name of the restaurant be changed from The Steakloft Bar & Grille to The Cellar Bar & Grille. Their plan is to change the name and make some cosmetic changes to the restaurant in an effort to rebrand the business.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to approve the application to the change the DBA name for the All Alcoholic Beverages Restaurant License for premises located at 369 West Main Street from The Steakloft Bar & Grille to The Cellar Bar & Grille; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	“aye”	Rutan	“aye”
Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”		

**7:10 p.m. - KRISTIN BLACK, HEALTH AGENT**  
Covid-19 Update.

Health Agent Kristin Black provided a Covid-19 update that included the following:

**Northborough Case Counts**

Ms. Black noted that in the last month there were 787 positive Covid-19 cases in Town, in comparison to 238 the prior 30-day period. She added that case counts are elevated compared to this time last year when there were 316 positive cases.

### Town-Wide Mask Mandate in Public Places per Order of Board of Health

On January 6<sup>th</sup>, the Northborough Board of Health voted on a Town-wide mask mandate due to the rising Covid-19 caseload. The Board of Health will review the continued need for the mandate at their next meeting on Tuesday, February 8<sup>th</sup>.

### Covid-19 Testing

- Local Stop-the-Spread Sites

New England Sports Center, Marlborough: Monday – Friday from 8am-12pm

Ashland MBTA Station: by appointment

Project Beacon, Framingham: by appointment

- At-home COVID-19 Antigen Tests

Antigen tests are not always effective at detecting early infections.

The Town did not receive free at-home kits for distribution, but is researching purchasing options.

For more information visit [www.tinyurl.com/nborotesting](http://www.tinyurl.com/nborotesting)

### Upcoming Covid-19 Vaccination Clinics

The Northborough Health Department just released appointments for students, residents, and employees in the Towns of Boylston, Northborough and Southborough at the Northborough Senior Center on the following dates: Tuesdays, January 11th, 18th and 25th from 5pm-8pm and Friday, January 14th from 9:30am-12pm.

For more information visit: [www.tinyurl.com/nborovaxclinics](http://www.tinyurl.com/nborovaxclinics)

### Contact Tracing of Covid-19 Cases

The Greater Boroughs Partnership for Health received a Case Investigation and Contact Tracing Grant from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health and hired a 19-hour/week Epidemiologist to support the region. Salmon VNA was also contracted to hire two additional 24-hour/week nurses. The scope of the grant is to focus disease investigation and contact tracing in high priority settings like K-12 schools, daycares, and long-term care facilities.

Following her presentation, Ms. Black briefly answered questions from Board members regarding home testing, vaccination cards and where the public can find all Covid-19 information. Mr. Coderre stated that although all municipal buildings are open to the public, visitors are encouraged to conduct necessary business online if at all possible. Also, the Covid-19 Task Force has started to meet regularly. He added that Boards and Committees continue to meet remotely and the Senior Center and Library are holding most of their programs remotely.

### **7:45 p.m. - SCOTT CHARPENTIER, DPW DIRECTOR**

Discussion and Adoption of the Town of Northborough Complete Streets Policy. Public Comment will be allowed.

Chairman Perreault noted that following Mr. Charpentier's presentation, public comment will be allowed. Mr. Charpentier indicated that the goal of the Complete Streets Funding Program is to support safe and accessible options for all modes of travel, including walking, biking and vehicular. He summarized the Complete Streets Funding Program as follows:

1. The Town needs to have an accepted Complete Streets Policy which has been approved by MassDOT after adoption by the Board of Selectmen.
2. The Town will then prepare through a public input process a Complete Streets Prioritization Plan for MassDOT acceptance. This plan will identify needs, gaps, possible funding sources, and implementation schedules for sidewalk, bicycle, and accessible transportation connectivity improvements. A MassDOT technical assistance competitive grant of up to \$38,000 is available to assist in funding the development of this plan.
3. Communities with a locally adopted Policy and a MassDOT approved Prioritization Plan must then apply the Policy and implement the Plan in conjunction with future roadway projects. The Town is then eligible to seek construction funding grants for up to \$400,000 to aid in plan implementation. The schedule for the Prioritization Plan goes along well with the Sidewalk Management Plan, which is scheduled to be completed in the next few months.

Mr. Charpentier is requesting that the Board of Selectmen adopt the Complete Street Policy as presented in their meeting packet. He added that this policy has been developed in conjunction with the Town's engineering consultant and follows closely that of other similar sized communities whose policies have previously been approved by MassDOT.

Mr. Coderre stated that the Complete Streets Program is an outgrowth of the Master Plan, adding that the Master Plan Implementation Committee's (MPIC) focus is on walkability and multimodal avenues of transportation. He stated that moving forward, this process must look at the needs of the community in a wholistic manner and not just focus on one particular neighborhood, project or issue. He added that in addition to the \$400,000 that will be available in grant funding, a funding plan will need to be developed through the Capital Improvement Plan for a recurring revenue source for the continued implementation of the Prioritization Plan.

Following the presentation, questions and comments were heard from members of the Board, which resulted in further discussion surrounding the need for a recurring funding plan, the possible use of Federal and State funding opportunities and an explanation of who would be considered stakeholders when developing prioritizations. Mr. Charpentier explained that the Engineering Consultant will work with Town staff to engage the stakeholders, which will include the MIPC, Planning Board, School Department, Recreation Department, Senior Center and various neighborhoods.

Mr. Charpentier added that the Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan will provide backup and justification as to the reasoning for making certain improvements over others. Mr. Coderre summed up the comprehensive process stating that it starts with the direction from the Board of Selectmen based on the goals of the Master Plan and the recommendations of the MIPC followed by the development of the Prioritization Plan and the funding mechanism before improvements can be considered at Town Meeting.

Mr. Charpentier confirmed that the Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan can both be revisited and amended when needed.

Chairman Perreault invited comments from the public. He asked those who wish to speak to provide their full name and address for the record. Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person.

Mitch Cohen of 12 Whitney Street shared his support for the Prioritization Plan and the efforts to improve sidewalks and connecting some of the disconnected areas. He asked if the draft plan will be reviewed by the Board of Selectmen and when residents will be made aware of it for its review prior to any public participation. Mr. Charpentier responded that the goal and objective of public participation is to engage a variety of Boards, Committees and residents. He anticipates that the MIPC and the Planning Board will have an opportunity to review the draft Prioritization Plan and the results of a public survey prior to its review by Town staff. Mr. Coderre added that the Financial Planning Committee and the Appropriations Committee will also review the draft plan as they are the Committees that lay out and recommend the financing structure for all capital improvement projects that go before Town Meeting.

William Pierce of 367 Whitney Street extended his appreciation to Mr. Charpentier and his team for starting this process. He asked what projects will be prioritized for the community and what the timeframe is for the Sidewalk Management Plan? Mr. Charpentier responded that he expects that the Sidewalk Management Plan and the Prioritization Plan will come together in time for funding consideration at the next Town Meeting just before the next construction season. He added that prioritized projects will include bicycle and pedestrian improvements.

Rick Leif of 30 Wiles Farm Road stated that he is the Vice Chair of the MPIC. Speaking for himself, he stated that a collaborative working relationship has developed between the MIPC, the DPW Director and the Town Administrator. He noted that the MIPC's December meeting focused on a number of goals in the Master Plan relating to pedestrian safety, walkability and bicycle lanes, including recommendations as to what residents want to see for improvements. He added that the proposal for the Complete Streets Policy and Prioritization Plan will pull together the various stakeholders that will work together to ensure that the transportation goals and objectives of the Master Plan become a reality. He congratulated Mr. Charpentier for his efforts.

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street asked how this will affect the commercial building applications that come before the Design Review Committee (DRC) that require connective sidewalks in the areas of Main, West Main and East Main Streets? She asked if the timeframe for new sidewalks under the Capital Improvement Plan can be changed based on priorities. Mr. Charpentier responded that all construction projects that are before the Planning Board, Zoning Board of Appeals and the DRC must comply with the Complete Streets Policy. He added that new sidewalk construction is extremely challenging due to curbing, drainage, catch basins, easements and changes to the topography. For example, FY2023 could accommodate funding for the design and easement for a new sidewalk; FY2024 could accommodate funding for the final design, along with any grant funding submissions. The new sidewalk construction could then take place in FY2025. He stated that the Capital Improvement Plan is a living document and can be changed based on changing needs and priorities. Ms. Maselli asked if the Complete Streets Policy would overrule a Town bylaw and how would the DRC implement the policy when carrying out direction to the applicant? Mr. Charpentier stated that this policy would not overrule a Town bylaw in any instance, although he would encourage the land use Boards to abide by the policy as a guiding document. He further explained that the policy provides for accommodations for multimodal

transportation for bicycles, pedestrians and accessible ramps. The policy does not provide guidance for actual sidewalk construction, depth of gravel or surface material.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to adopt the Complete Streets Policy as presented by DPW Director Scott Charpentier; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	“aye”	Rutan	“aye”
Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Rogers	“aye”		

## **REPORTS**

### **Kristen Wixted**

- Thanked Mr. Charpentier for providing an update in response to an email regarding the pickle ball courts.
- Noted that Troop 101 picked up 450 Christmas trees. Thanked the DPW Department for their help and all who participated.

### **Julianne Hirsh**

- Noted her appreciation that the meeting packets are now available on the Town Website prior to a Board meeting providing the public with the opportunity to review the information before participating in public comment.
- Noted that the MPIC is now meeting monthly. At the last meeting, the Cultural Council made a presentation on their temporary public art project, which supports the Master Plan goals for land use and economic development. The MPIC also heard a presentation by Dario DiMare on characteristics that can make a Downtown more inviting to foot traffic. The Complete Streets program has come at an opportune time as the MPIC is identifying projects that will likely align nicely with the goals of this program.
- Noted that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) met on January 6<sup>th</sup> to review CPC applications. They will meet again in a few weeks.
- Thanked the Community Affairs Committee for another successful Tree Lighting event.
- While being mindful of the burden placed on Town staff due to Covid-19, she asked that the Board start discussing the use of ARPA and other Federal and State funds. She added that the final rules from the Department of Revenue Division of Local Services (DLS) provide a good summary of the guidelines for these funds. See further discussion following end of reports.

### **T. Scott Rogers**

- Noted that School and Town staff are actively working on their budgets and the budget process of the financial committees will begin soon.
- Noted that he has watched the various meetings that have taken place since the last Selectmen's meeting, adding that everyone is working on what ultimately will become warrant articles for the next Town Meeting.
- Confirmed that the Diversity and Inclusion Committee will present their recommendations to the Board at its January 24<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- Thanked Chief Parenti for his monthly report.
- Congratulated Town Planner Kathy Joubert on her retirement after her long-standing service to the Town.

- Congratulated Conservation Agent Mia McDonald as she starts her work with the Department of Environmental Protection, adding that she and Ms. Joubert will be sorely missed.

#### Leslie Rutan

- Thanked the Police and Fire Chiefs for their monthly reports and all of the things they do behind the scenes to keep our community safe.
- Thanked the DPW Department for their efforts during the recent winter storm. In answer to her question, Mr. Charpentier stated the biggest challenge is always with the first snowstorm.
- Asked residents to consider donating to the Northborough Food Pantry and the American Legion Veterans Food Pantry. Visit [www.bc4t.org](http://www.bc4t.org) for more information. Thanked the Boroughs Cares for Troops (BC4T) for all their work.
- Attended the recent Northborough School Committee meeting. Their largest capital item to replace the roof at the Proctor Elementary School is being deferred to FY2024 to allow time to apply for MSBA funding.
- Thanked Republic Services for their timely trash removal throughout Town despite the challenges with staffing shortages due to Covid. Mr. Coderre agreed that they provide excellent and professional service. He will pass along her appreciation.

#### Jason Perreault

- Thanked Mr. Coderre, School Superintendent Greg Martineau and especially Finance Director Jason Little for their work that went into the Financial Trend Monitoring System presentation on December 20<sup>th</sup>.
- Congratulated Town Planner Kathy Planner on her retirement and thanked her for her 35 years of service. Reminisced about her professionalism and sense of humor despite her large workload.

#### John Coderre

- Echoed what Chairman Perreault shared about Kathy Joubert and wished her the best in her retirement. He added that she was a big component of the Town's management team, which he praised for all working so well together.

### **MOTION TO ADD ARPA AND OTHER COVID RELIEF FUNDS TO AN AGENDA**

Under her report, Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote that ARPA Funds and any other Covid relief available to Northborough be included on an agenda as soon as possible. This will include topics such as amounts available, amounts used, revenue shortfall, public input, forming a committee to prioritize funds, hiring a consultant and any other topic pertinent to using these funds; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion.

Chairman Perreault stated that it is not appropriate for a motion such as this to be made under Reports. He mentioned that the final rules on the use of ARPA funds were received just recently. He stated that Town staff is working through this information and will be prepared to provide guidance on the use of these funds in the near future. He stressed the importance of fully understanding the eligibility of what items can and cannot be undertaken, adding that another community was recently in the news for having to return Federal Aid because it was spent on ineligible expenses.

Mr. Coderre stated that he is happy to provide an update to the Board at its upcoming meeting. Echoing Chairman Perreault, he stated that it is important to note that the final rules from DLS

where just received on January 6<sup>th</sup>. Discussions are already taking place with the various Boards and Committees, School administration, Town staff and community groups. He added that the process to determine the best use of these funds is already in place through the 6-year Capital Improvement Plan and the work of the MPIC. These long range financial plans will drive how these funds should be spent. He stated that the Board relies on the Financial Planning Committee, Appropriations Committee and Town staff to provide a framework and context for what is recommended. Lastly, he noted that this budget process is running behind due to multiple reasons, including the complexity and compliance issues related to Federal Aid.

Selectman Hirsh stated that since Mr. Coderre will provide an update on these funds at the Board's next meeting, she will retract her motion.

### **PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Chairman Perreault stated that the Public Comment portion of the agenda allows for the public to provide input, comments, questions, or concerns. The Board will not engage or deliberate in any detailed discussion, nor will it take action or make any commitments in real time in response to any public comment. If they are able, present Town staff may respond to any questions that can easily be answered. Those who wish to speak under Public Comment will be admitted to the meeting as an attendee and will be asked to provide their full name and address for the record. Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person.

Michael Hirsh of 19 Smith Road thanked Police Chief Lyver for his support and participation in the 20<sup>th</sup> annual gun buyback program. Northborough received the 2<sup>nd</sup> highest buyback of the nine communities who participated.

### **EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED**

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1137; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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



The meeting adjourned at 9:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. January 10, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. December 14, 2021 Meeting Minutes
3. December 20, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. December 20, 2021 Joint Meeting Minutes
5. Information packet – DBA Name Change
6. Presentation – Covid-19 Update
7. Information packet – Complete Streets Funding Program and Policy
8. Cemetery Deed