

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES – February 14, 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. 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
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.

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 – JANUARY 24, 2022 MEETING

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the January 24, 2022 meeting minutes; Selectman Rogers 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. - CHANGE OF MANAGER

To consider an application from Indoor Sports Management Inc.
d/b/a Replays to change the manager of their Wine & Malt Beverages
License for premises located at 185 Otis Street.

David Scichilone was remotely present and introduced himself as the League Operations Director at Teamworks located at 185 Otis Street. He will also serve as the Manager of Record for the Wine & Malt Beverages License for Replays within the same building. Mr. Scichilone is experienced in the restaurant industry and is TIPS certified.

Chief Lyver indicated that Mr. Scichilone's personal information has been reviewed by Lieutenant Griffin, who has indicated that he has no concerns to report.

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to approve the application for a Change of Manager for the Wine & Malt Beverages License for Indoor Sports Management, Inc. d/b/a Replays for premises located at 185 Otis Street; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call was taken as follows:

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

REPORTS**Kristen Wixted**

- Announced that the Algonquin Regional High School mascot will now be known as the Titans.
- Noted that both Kindness Week and the Kindness on the Common event sponsored by the Community Affairs Committee were a success.
- Reported on a recent meeting of the Youth Commission.
- Requested that the Board discuss the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) report at an upcoming meeting.

Julianne Hirsh

- Thanked the Community Affairs Committee for organizing Kindness Week.
- Requested that the Board discuss the CMRPC report at an upcoming meeting.
- Noted that the Northborough Garden Club has plans to replant Watson Park garden with native plants.
- Requested that the Board further discuss the use of ARPA funds at an upcoming meeting.
- Asked if Board meetings will continue to be held remotely, in-person or through a hybrid platform? Mr. Coderre responded that for now the Board will continue with remote meetings until modifications can be made to the Selectmen's Meeting Room.
- Asked when the Board will discuss legislative priorities and if the State Legislators will be invited to a March Board meeting? Mr. Coderre responded that if the Chair would like, legislative priorities can be discussed at the next Board meeting and the State Legislators can be invited to one of the March meetings.
- Requested that when Town staff responds to resident emails that the Board be copied.

- Asked how a Committee should go about submitting a request for funding? Mr. Coderre responded that if a Committee is seeking funds, they should do so now by contacting him.

T. Scott Rogers

- Thanked Mr. Coderre for his recent presentation regarding ARPA funds.
- Reported on a recent meeting of the Parks & Recreation Commission.
- Reported on a recent meeting of the Board of Library Trustees.
- Noted that Joan Scott will not be seeking reappointment to the Board of Library Trustees and thanked her for her years of service.
- Reported on a recent meeting of the Open Space Committee.
- Thanked the Police Chief for his monthly report. Chief Lyver expressed his excitement with potentially hiring the department's first female patrol officer in over 22 years.

Leslie Rutan

- Thanked Chief Lyver for the opportunity to sit in on the recent interviews for a full-time patrol officer. She is also excited about the potential hiring of a female patrol officer.
- Thanked the DPW Department for installing the Purple Heart community signs.
- Thanked the DPW Department their clean-up efforts following the recent winter storms.
- Stressed the importance of continuing with remote meetings until the proper technology is in place to offer hybrid meetings.
- Noted that the School Superintendent finalized the K-8 Schools FY2023 Budget at 3.46%.
- Requested an update on the status of the Fire Station project. Mr. Coderre responded that final groundwater testing is expected to take place in June or July, at which time the Town can take possession of the property. The next steps would be to establish a formal Building Committee and issue an RFQ for a project manager.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked the DPW Department for their activities during the recent winter storms.
- Acknowledged the efforts of the Community Affairs Committee in planning the recent Kindness Week.

John Coderre

- Announced the appointment of Laurie Connors to the position of Town Planner effective March 7th. Ms. Connors served as Director of Land Use and Planning for the Town of Millbury since 2004 and has extensive experience with downtown revitalization projects, the State's Green Communities grant program and the Complete Streets program.

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.

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street asked questions about the establishment of a permanent Diversity & Inclusion Committee and the Town-Wide wellness initiative. Chairman Perreault indicated that

more information and detail will be provided on both topics this evening. She asked if it would be appropriate for the Design Review Committee to have its own Facebook page? Lastly, in response to her question about a Traffic & Safety Committee, Chairman Perreault responded that the Board has discussed a Traffic & Safety Committee a number of times over the last couple of years and it has not been the position of the Board to proceed with establishing such a Committee.

SNOW & ICE BUDGET UPDATE

DPW Director Scott Charpentier provided a status update on the Snow & Ice Account for FY2022. The original FY2022 Snow and Ice appropriation was \$437,000. As of February 10th, approximately \$377,053, or 86% has been spent, leaving a remaining balance of \$59,947. Also, as of February 10th, total snowfall inches was approximately 33.7 with 12 salt-only events.

Mr. Charpentier added that an additional 7.5 inches of snow fell during this past weekend's storm. The remaining balance in the Snow & Ice Account is now just \$12,000.

ACCEPTANCE OF GRANT FROM METROWEST HEALTH FOUNDATION

Health Agent Kristin Black reported that Northborough, Southborough and Westborough were each awarded a grant in the amount of \$50,000 from the MetroWest Health Foundation. This grant will allow for the purchase of at-home test kits, disposable masks, hand sanitizer and other health related items. A temporary part-time Outreach Coordinator will be hired through this grant to help distribute these items as care packages to families, food banks, community meals, the senior center and schools. This will also tie in nicely with the *BeWellNorthborough* initiative.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote, pursuant to Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 44, Section 53A, to accept funds from the MetroWest Health Foundation and to authorize the Town Administrator to expend such funds; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

NEW TOWN-WIDE WELLNESS INITIATIVE - *BeWellNorthborough*

Mr. Coderre reported that as a result of regularly scheduled meetings with the Covid Task Force, it was determined that Town staff felt comfortable that they have the resources to meet the needs of the at risk populations in the community. A discussion then took place about the general level of anxiety and sense of isolation experienced by many throughout the pandemic. It was determined that the community would benefit from a wellness initiative that would help residents feel connected to their community.

Library Director Jenn Bruneau presented the new Town-wide wellness initiative *BeWellNorthborough*. To combat the negative impacts of isolation caused by COVID-19, this is a collaborative effort among Town departments to connect people in a proactive way to address mental health wellness concerns in the community. The *BeWellNorthborough* Task Force includes the Assistant Town Administrator, Health Agent, Recreation Director, Interim Senior Center Director, Library Director, Family & Youth Services Director, MIS Director, Police Lieutenant, Northborough Public Schools Director of Wellness and the Diversity & Inclusion Committee.

The goals of this new initiative are to:

- Connect Northborough residents by creating a community calendar and web page that centrally organizes existing programs, services and outreach activities for anyone who lives or works in Northborough.
- Aid Northborough residents and employees in coping with the social, emotional and physical effects of the COVID-19 pandemic by developing new programs and services that address specific health and wellness needs.
- Construct framework that will allow *BeWellNorthborough* to be a resource for people to access reliable information about health and wellness topics beyond the pandemic.

Ms. Bruneau stated that the Task Force will work with various Boards and Committees to assess needs and gather feedback and suggestions. The Task Force will maintain a master list of organizations that can be engaged for feedback and dissemination of information. She added that anyone who would like to submit ideas, requests or suggestions may do so at www.tinyurl.com/bewellinput.

Ms. Bruneau indicated that the Task Force can work with many community organizations, including but not limited to: Cultural Council, Community Meals, Interfaith Clergy Network, Boroughs Family Branch YMCA, Rotary Club, Food Pantry, Regional School Coalition for Equity, Assabet Valley Regional High School, Vincent F. Picard Post 234 – American Legion, Northborough Junior Woman's Club, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, Friends of the Senior Center, Friends of the Public Library, Northborough Ed Foundation, 495/MetroWest Partnership, Bay Path Elder Services, Central Massachusetts Regional Veterans' District, Community Affairs Committee, Corridor 9/495 Regional Chamber of Commerce, Helping Hands and Parent Teacher Organizations.

Mr. Coderre added that *BeWellNorthborough* will have its own webpage that will include the community calendar and a host of other information.

Following the presentation, members of the Board expressed their excitement and support of this new wellness initiative. Selectman Hirsh asked that the Task Force consider making their meetings open to the public. Mr. Coderre stated that the intent of the Task Force is that they work with and through all the existing Boards and Committees without having to create a new Committee.

Chairman Perreault thanked Ms. Black and Ms. Bruneau for tonight's presentation and the entire Task Force for their efforts with this initiative.

CONSIDER ESTABLISHING A NEW ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND BELONGING

At the Board's January 24th meeting, the Diversity & Inclusion Committee (D&I Committee) recommended that the Board consider establishing a permanent advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen that will continue the work of the now expired and disbanded D&I Committee.

Ms. Meekins stated that if the Board votes to establish a permanent Northborough Committee for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging" (NDEIB Committee) this evening, she will move forward with advertising for Committee members.

Chairman Perreault noted that the Board members received the purpose, composition, duties and procedures of this Committee in their meeting packets. He stated that the composition would consist of nine (9) voting members, to include the Town Administrator or his/her designee, a representative from the School Department's Coalition for Equity, a representative from the Council on Aging or their designee and six (6) at-large citizen members.

Members of the Board agreed that this is the next logical step.

In response to a question from Selectman Wixted about the representative from the Council on Aging or their designee, Ms. Meekins explained that the D&I Committee agreed that a representative from the Council on Aging or their designee would benefit the permanent Committee as they are the policy making board for the Senior Center and are involved with the Senior Center programs. The Council on Aging also has additional connections to resources for the aging population. Having that connection to what's happening at the Senior Center is important for all seniors in the community. She added that nothing would prevent the Council on Aging to appoint a designee to serve on its behalf or the Board of Selectmen to appoint a senior to one of the six (6) at-large seats.

Chairman Perreault confirmed that establishing the NDEIB Committee this evening is just one of the several recommendations made by the D&I Committee. He added that he expects that the Board will discuss each of the recommendations over a succession of Board meetings. He thanked the D&I Committee for all their work.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to establish a permanent advisory committee to the Board of Selectmen to be known as the Northborough Committee for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging. The purpose of the Committee is to promote, embrace and support the cultural enrichment of Northborough's diverse population as a core value of the community. The Committee shall consist of nine (9) voting members. The voting membership shall include the Town Administrator or his/her designee, a representative from the School Department's Coalition for Equity, a representative from the Council on Aging or their designee and six (6) at-large citizen members. The Coalition for Equity member must be a Northborough resident; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE COMMUNITY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

The Interview Subcommittee minutes, which include the recommendation being made this evening, were included in the meeting packet for review by Board members.

Selectman Rutan thanked everyone who applied and interviewed for the Community Affairs Committee (CAC) and encouraged those who were not appointed to still get involved in the efforts of the CAC. Selectman Rogers advertised those Boards and Committees in Town that currently have vacancies and encouraged residents to get involved.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to appoint Shehla Eledroos to the Community Affairs Committee for a partial two-year term to expire on April 30, 2023 as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1140; 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.

8:45 p.m. - EXECUTIVE SESSION

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to enter into Executive Session - pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (Collective Bargaining Strategy Planning) due to the Chair's determination that a discussion regarding this matter in an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the position of the Board; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Wixted	“aye”	Rutan	“aye”
Hirsh	“aye”	Perreault	“aye”
Rogers	“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 8:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. February 14, 2022 Meeting Agenda

2. January 24, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – Change of Manager - Replays
4. Memorandum – Snow & Ice Budget Update
5. MetroWest Health Foundation Grant
6. Information packet – BeWellNorthborough Initiative
7. Information packet – Committee for Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging
8. Draft Interview Committee Meeting Minutes
9. Cemetery Deed