

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – August 15, 2022**

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

Chairman 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.

Chairman 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. Chairman 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.

Chairman 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
David Parenti, Fire Chief
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director
Brian Griffin, Police Lieutenant

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – JULY 18, 2022 MEETING

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to approve the July 18, 2022 meeting minutes as presented; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

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.

Chairman Cohen indicated that the applicant has requested continuance of this public hearing to the Board's September 12, 2022 meeting.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to continue the public hearing for the application of G&I IX FORBES WHITNEY LLC to amend the existing aboveground flammables and combustible storage license for premises located at 30 Forbes Road to the September 12, 2022 meeting of the Board of Selectmen at 7:00pm; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

7:05 p.m. - PUBLIC HEARING

To consider Pole Petition 23122239 from Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England for new pole locations on Brigham Street.

Chairman Cohen opened the public hearing.

DPW Director Scott Charpentier indicated that National Grid is requesting approval to install three (3) new poles along the northerly side of Brigham Street. This work is being proposed to eliminate three (3) existing guy wires which are attached to trees. The installation of these proposed poles will provide improved support for existing poles.

There were no comments from the public.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to close the public hearing; Selectman Hirsh 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 to approve Pole Petition 23122239 as submitted by Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

7:05 p.m. - PUBLIC HEARING

To consider Pole Petition 30579396 from Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England for a new pole location on Pinehaven Drive.

Chairman Cohen opened the public hearing.

DPW Director Scott Charpentier indicated that National Grid is requesting approval to relocate Pole #10 on Pinehaven Drive approximately nine feet north from its current location, to remove the existing tree guy and install a new anchor/guy. The relocation of Pole #10 and the installation of a new anchor/guy will provide improved support for this pole.

Michelle Mendelson of 48 Pinehaven Drive noted that the Town Engineer, a National Grid Engineer and herself agreed with the proposed pole location, with the option that this location be revisited if it interferes with her access to the adjacent parking space. Mr. Charpentier confirmed that the agreement was as Ms. Mendelson described. He added that both the parking space and the proposed location of the guy wire are within the public way. If the guy wire has to be pushed further back to accommodate the parking space, it will likely result in it now being on private property that would require an easement from the property owner. Ms. Mendelson indicated that if the location is changed she would like to be part of that discussion.

Michael Parent from National Grid, who was not present at the site meeting, joined the meeting. He agreed that with the proposed location of the guy wire a regular size vehicle would have room to park in that space, but cautioned that it can't be guaranteed that a vehicle the size of a truck would fit. Mr. Charpentier stated that moving the pole nine feet North is just about at the limit of the paved area of the parking space.

In response to a question by Ms. Mendelson, Mr. Parent indicated that National Grid's preference would be not to install a sidewalk anchor as an alternative as they do not have the same holding strength. Mr. Parent noted that the pole cannot be extended any further than the proposed nine feet North.

Following further discussion, it was agreed by all parties to continue the public hearing to allow additional time to determine the best option to ensure continued access to the parking space.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to continue the public hearing to September 12, 2022 at 7:05pm; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF RYAN CLARK AS POLICE OFFICER

Police Lieutenant Brian Griffin indicated that Ryan Clark is a fully trained and certified Police Officer currently working full-time for the Nantucket Police Department. He attended Bridgewater State University graduating with a BS in criminal Justice with a minor in Psychology. He was a John and Abigail Adams scholarship recipient and was the 2016 Massachusetts State Collegiate Athletic Conference champion. Sergeant Griffin requested that Mr. Clark's appointment be effective September 6, 2022. Mr. Clark was not able to be present this evening due his current work schedule.

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Ryan Clark as a Police Officer effective September 6, 2022; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

APPOINTMENT OF BRUCE TAIT AS SPECIAL POLICE OFFICER

Police Lieutenant Brian Griffin introduced Bruce Tait as a retired Quincy Massachusetts Police Officer who currently works as a Police Officer at Boston University. He requested that Mr. Tait be appointed as a Special Police Officer to assist with traffic details and other authorized activities as specified in the Police Department's policy and procedures. Mr. Tait is a Northborough resident and a U.S Army Veteran and is fully trained and certified. Sergeant Griffin requested that Mr. Tait's appointment be effective August 16, 2022. Mr. Tait was present and thanked the Board for this opportunity.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to appoint Bruce Tait as a Special Police Officer effective August 16, 2022; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

ANNUAL APPOINTMENT OF ELECTION WORKERS

Town Clerk Andrew Dowd indicated that pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 54, Section 12, the Board of Selectman shall annually appoint election officers. The participation of Election Officers is based on Town needs and their availability.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to appoint those individuals who appear on the 2022/2023 Election Officer List for a term beginning on September 1, 2022 and ending on August 21, 2023 as submitted by Town Clerk Andrew Dowd; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

ASSIGNMENT OF POLICE OFFICERS TO POLLING PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 STATE PRIMARY ELECTION

Mr. Dowd informed the Board that recent changes to the Election Laws now charges the Board of Selectmen with detailing a sufficient number of police officers for each polling location.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve a sufficient number of police officers, but not less than one, at the polling location at the Melican Middle School, 145 Lincoln Street at every election therein and to designate the Police Chief as the authority to assign police officers according to scheduling and availability; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

EXECUTE SEPTEMBER 6, 2022 STATE PRIMARY ELECTION WARRANT

Town Clerk Andrew Dowd noted that the Election Warrant will be posted on the Town website, at the polling place (Melican Middle School), Town Hall, Library and the Post Office. He will post a copy of the Election Warrant at the High School and the Senior Center. Mr. Dowd added that he plans to conduct a student voter registration drive at the High School in October, just prior to the November election.

Mr. Coderre confirmed that as long as the DPW Electronic Sign isn't needed to announce a DPW project, it can be used to advertise the primary election about a week or so ahead of the election.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to approve and execute the September 6, 2022 State Primary Election Warrant as presented by Town Clerk Andrew Dowd; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Mr. Dowd provided a brief update on the upcoming elections, including information on the various ways that residents can vote. It was noted that this information is available on the Town website.

REPORTS**Julianne Hirsh**

- Noted that the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission approved \$10,000 for a net zero planning project. She suggested that Northborough consider creating a Sustainability Committee.
- Reported on the recent White Cliffs Committee meeting.
- Noted that the Master Plan Implementation Committee is meeting on August 18th.
- Noted that the Water & Sewer Commission will be holding a public hearing on August 16th to consider water and sewer rates.

T. Scott Rogers

- Reported on recent meetings of the Board of Health.
- Reported on recent meetings of the Conservation Commission.
- Thanked the Fire Chief and Police Chief for their monthly reports.
- Asked the Fire Chief to offer guidance and advice to residents regarding the current drought conditions.
- Congratulated Assistant Town Administrator Becca Meekins on the recent arrival of her son Casey.

Kristen Wixted

- Requested that the Board consider revising the volunteer application for Boards and Committees, to update the descriptions of each Board and Committee and to determine which Boards and Committees are no longer needed.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked the Northborough Fire Department, as well as the surrounding communities who responded to the house fire on Whitney Street. Extended his thoughts and prayers to the Marshall family as they deal with the aftermath of this fire.
- Noted that the son of Mike Serapiglias, a Call Firefighter with the Northborough Fire Department, is in search of a kidney. The notice with more information can be found on the front page of the Town website by clicking on the social media tab for the Fire Department. He encouraged anyone who may be willing to go through the kidney donor testing process to please do so.
- Congratulated Ms. Meekins on the birth of her son Casey.

Mitch Cohen

- Requested information about the complete streets survey. Mr. Charpentier responded that the survey can be found on the DPW and Planning Board pages of the Town website and will be sent out to those who have subscribed to Town News. At the Board's request, he will also make paper copies of the survey available at the Town Hall, Library and Senior Center. He noted that the results of the survey will be analyzed by the Town's consultant and will be presented to the Board of Selectmen before the first public input session is held.
- Noted that he talked to Mr. Coderre about arranging a walk-thru of the White Cliffs building by both the Board of Selectmen and members of the White Cliffs Committee.

John Coderre

- Announced that the Town has contracted with Brett Pelletier of Kirk & Company as the consultant for the White Cliffs property. Mr. Pelletier will be meeting with various Boards and Committees to solicit input and discussions about their priorities for this property. Mr. Pelletier is scheduled to meet with the Board of Selectmen at their September 12th meeting. The priorities of the Town will then be compiled as part of the Request for Proposals process.
- Noted that the final State Aid budget resulted in a net increase of \$123,924, which will effectively lower the tax impact by approximately \$16 on an average single family home value of \$546,657.
- Provided an update on the Fire Station Building Committee, which will consist of a member of the Board of Selectmen, the Financial Planning Committee, the Fire chief, a designee from the Fire Department and three citizens-at-large. He added that the closing on the new Fire Station property located at 61 & 54 West Main Street and the adjacent property at 10 Monroe Street should be taking place in the next few weeks.

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION & BELONGING COMMITTEE (DEIB)

Prior to making any appointments to the DEIB Committee, a discussion ensued regarding the interview process for this Committee. Selectman Rogers expressed concern with the Interview Committee disqualifying a candidate based on whether or not that candidate currently serves on what the Interview Committee perceives to be an important or special committee. Chairman Cohen stated that it would be worthwhile for the Board to have a discussion on updating the volunteer application, as well as the interview and appointment process.

Board members discussed their opinions about individual Board members recruiting candidates for Boards and Committees. More specifically, Selectman Rogers expressed concern with a Board member personally recruiting a candidate of a certain characteristic that is known to them, to interview that candidate and to then make a recommendation on that candidate's appointment. Chairman Cohen's opinion was that recruiting candidates to Boards and Committees is an important role of the Board of Selectmen. Selectman Perreault spoke to Selectman Rogers' point, stating that in this case it appears that the additional recruitment efforts was a reaction to dissatisfaction with the initial pool of candidates based on criteria that the Interview Committee members chose to apply. Selectman Rogers cautioned Board members to be careful with the language that is used when discussing criteria for candidates of a certain characteristic as it is inappropriate and possibly illegal.

In the continued discussion regarding the process of recruiting candidates for Boards and Committees, Selectman Wixted stated that the direct charge of the DEIB Committee is that the members of the Committee shall be diverse and drawn from under-represented groups to the greatest extent possible. She noted that the first pool of applicants did not all represent under-represented groups, adding that she is proud and comfortable with the interview process for this Committee. Selectman Hirsh added that all of the candidates were excellent. She acknowledged that the DEIB Committee charge was very helpful in guiding this particular interview process.

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Seira Shalton to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial three-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Melissa Diglio to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial three-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Mariam Ibrahimi to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial two-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Cynthia Moore to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial two-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Yong Tan to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial one-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Ashish Verma to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging Committee for a partial one-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	“aye”	Hirsh	“aye”
Rogers	“no”	Cohen	“aye”
Wixted	“aye”		

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENT TO THE ZONING BOARD OF APPEALS

For the record, as part of the 2022 reappointment process, one application was received for the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Interviews were conducted with the new applicant and the incumbent 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 Committee conducted interviews on June 28, 2022.

Meeting minutes from the March 29th and June 28th interviews, as well as copies of the applications were included in the Board’s meeting packets.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to appoint Suzanne Cieslica to the Zoning Board of Appeals for a partial three-year term as recommended by the Interview Committee; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion.

Discussion

Prior to the vote, a discussion ensued about the interview and appointment process for those Boards and Committees that have alternate positions. Selectman Rogers requested that the volunteer application include a question directed to those applicants who already serve on a

Board or Committee asking them about their level of commitment and interaction and whether in some cases the candidate may consider stepping down from the other Board or Committee in preference to the one they are applying for. Chairman Cohen added that in the case of an alternate member applying for a voting seat, if there are enough applicants, both the interviews and appointments should be done simultaneously.

Selectman Perreault expressed concern with promoting Ms. Cieslica to a voting seat with what he sees as her lack of commitment and ability to constructively participate in ZBA meetings while she serves on the Board as an alternate member due to conflicting demands that cause her to be late or otherwise distracted. Rather than promoting her to a voting seat at this time, he is more inclined to allow her more time to serve as an alternate member to demonstrate her ability to make the commitment that this Board requires. He added that in comparison Mr. Rand was on time and fully present and engaged in all ZBA meetings without distraction.

Selectman Wixted applauded those mothers that are able to manage and juggle the responsibilities of raising a family while serving on a Board or Committee at the same time. She expects that as a voting member, Ms. Cieslica would be able to make the ZBA meetings a priority. Selectman Perreault responded that he is not criticizing the applicant for whatever demands are placed upon them. He clarified his point that the Board of Selectmen has the responsibility as the appointing authority to ensure that all members that are appointed to the ZBA demonstrate a sufficient level of commitment and the ability to fully engage in meetings.

Chairman Cohen stated that although there is some expectation on how a Board or Committee member should conduct themselves during a meeting, he does not agree that this is a valid reason for disqualification. He suggested that when the Board revisits the volunteer application and the interview process, some language should be added regarding the expectation as to how Board members should conduct themselves during remote meetings. Selectman Hirsh stated that she takes issue with commenting on someone's level of attention during a meeting as there are those that are able to multitask well. She added that in this case, there is another alternate member that can vote if needed. Selectman Perreault disagreed adding that Board members and applicants should have confidence that everyone present is fully engaged.

Just prior to the vote, Chairman Cohen added that he has seen this applicant ask a number of questions and be extremely engaged during the meetings. Selectman Perreault asserted that Mr. Rand has demonstrated the greater balance of experience, understanding, knowledge and reliability in his participation of ZBA meetings.

The roll call vote was taken as follows:

Perreault	"no"	Hirsh	"aye"
Rogers	"no"	Cohen	"aye"
Wixted	"aye"		

SET MEETING SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to set the meeting schedule for September through December as follows:

September 12 & 26

October 3 & 17

November 7 & 21

December 5 & 19

December 15 (Financial Trend Monitoring Report Presentation)

Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS 1152 & 1153

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds 1152 & 1153; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

9:25 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 (Litigation – SA Farms and Marlborough Wastewater Treatment Plant) & (Collective Bargaining Strategy Planning) 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 Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call was taken as follows:

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

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Cohen announced that the Board will enter into Executive Session and will not return to the open meeting.

The open meeting ended at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. August 15, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. July 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Aboveground Storage Public Hearing continued to November 7, 2022 Meeting
4. Information Packet – Pole Petition 23122239
5. Information Packet – Pole Petition 30579396
6. Memorandum – Police Officer and Special Police Officer Appointments
7. Memorandum – Annual Appointment of Election Workers
8. Memorandum – Assignment of Police Officers to Polling Place
9. September 6, 2022 State Primary Election Warrant
10. Information Packet – Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee Appointments
11. Information Packet – Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment
12. Memorandum – September to December Meeting Schedule
13. Cemetery Deeds