



BOARD OF SELECTMEN

MEETING AGENDA

Monday, December 5, 2022

7:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, An Act Relative to the Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on July 16, 2022, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation. No in person attendance by members of the public will be permitted.

To view or listen

- Live Stream link YouTube:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRdBrw3HeEAMB_KFKasrgXA
- Zoom webinar link: <https://town-northborough-ma-us.zoom.us/j/85641827491>
When prompted, enter Password 802470
- CATV Government Channels: Verizon Channel 30, Charter Channel 192
- Call 1-646-876-9923
When prompted, enter Meeting ID 856 4182 7491 and Password 802470

For Public Comment

Public Comment is allowed and encouraged during any agenda item. To offer comments at any time, please use the “raise hand” button in Zoom, or raise your hand if in person. The Chair will recognize you before any vote or before the agenda item is otherwise concluded.

*** Public comment will be limited to 3 minutes per person ***



BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING AGENDA CONTINUED
Monday, December 5, 2022
7:00 p.m.

1. Public Comment.
2. Approval Meeting Minutes.
 - [November 7, 2022](#)
 - [November 21, 2022](#)
3. [Town Planner Laurie Connors and DPW Director Scott Charpentier: Discussion and Vote Regarding Dog Park Site Selection.](#)
4. Reports.
5. [Interview Subcommittee: Recommendation for appointment of Jennifer Scalise to the Temporary Traffic Safety Committee.](#)
6. [Presentation of Preliminary FY2024 Free Cash Plan.](#)
7. [Review of Town Meeting and FY2024 Budget Schedule.](#)
8. [Set Meeting Schedule for January – April 2023.](#)
9. [Consider closing Town Offices, DPW and Senior Center on December 23rd.](#)
10. [Execution of Cemetery Deeds 1159, 1160 & 1161.](#)
11. Any other business to come before the Board.
12. Public Comment.

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – November 7, 2022**

6:00 p.m. - Chair’s Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chair 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.

Chair 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. Chair 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.

Chair 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
Becca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator
David Parenti, Fire Chief
Brian Griffin, Police Lieutenant
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director
Jason Little, Finance Director

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

Chair Cohen announced that the Board will enter into Executive Session and will return to the open meeting at 7:00 p.m.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to enter into executive session pursuant to M.G.L., Chapter 30A, Section 21, Subsection 3 (Collective Bargaining – update on negotiations with the Dispatchers Union) (Litigation – update on 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 Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

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

7:00 p.m. – OPEN MEETING

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – OCTOBER 17, 2022 MEETING

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the October 17, 2022 meeting minutes; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

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.

Mr. Coderre indicated that the Planning Board approved an application by Aspen Aerogels for a Modification of Special Permit of Use and Special Permit per the Groundwater Protection Overlay District Bylaw. It is his understanding that all Planning Board questions, comments and concerns that were expressed during the original Public Hearing held on September 27, 2022 have been addressed.

David Bielunis, George Gould and Rachael Weiskind were present to answer any questions. There were no questions from members of the Board and no comments from the public.—In response to a question by Selectman Hirsh, Mr. Coderre confirmed that the license would stay with the property in the event that the property is sold. There were no comments from the public.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to close the public hearing; Selectman Perreault 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 approve the application of 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 liquids from 880 gallons to 2,000 gallons; combustible liquids from 380 gallons to 500 gallons; flammable gases from 390 cubic feet to 2,000 cubic feet with the addition of 11 lbs. of flammable solids all to be stored in specified storage rooms and other approved storage containers; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION CHAIR NORM CORBIN

Presentation on the Northborough Historic Preservation Plan.

Mr. Corbin indicated that the Historic District Commission has completed its Historic Preservation Plan. He reviewed the highlights of the plan and the Town's top preservation priorities. He noted that the plan can be found on the Historic District Commission page on the Town website. Hard copies will also be available at the Town Hall, Library and Senior Center. Board members thanked Mr. Corbin and the Historic District Commission for creating such an important and informative document.

Mr. Corbin responded to a public comment from Laura Ziton of 17 Franklin Circle that the Historic Preservation Plan details future projects, but does not detail any particular source of funding. Although typically the Historic District Commission seeks funding for specific projects through the Community Preservation Committee.

REPORTS

Julianne Hirsh

- Noted that Veterans Day is on November 11th. Thanked all veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice.
- Noted that the Community Preservation Committee (CPC) recently met and will be scheduling public hearings as they review applications for CPC funding. She asked if the Board could communicate with the CPC to see if any of the projects before them would be better funded through ARPA funds.
- Participated in the walkthrough of the White Cliffs. Thanked Facilities Manager Shawn Thompson for his upkeep of the property. Asked if Mr. Thompson can report on the condition of Town owned properties to see if any projects can be funded through the use of ARPA funds. Mr. Coderre responded that the assessment of Town owned properties can be found in the existing 6-year Capital Improvement Plan. He noted that any projects that Mr. Thompson and DPW Director Scott Charpentier feel are necessary are included in either the operating budget for maintenance of municipal buildings or the Capital Improvement Plan. He will make a request to the Board if the need for ARPA funding arises. Mr. Charpentier added that a grant application has been submitted to the State to fund a self-evaluation in accordance with ADA requirements, which will include a professional assessment of all of the municipal building facilities.

T. Scott Rogers

- Thanked the members of the Boros Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) and all others who helped coordinate the participants and spectators for the Veterans Rolling Rally down Main Street this past Sunday.
- Looking forward to the Veterans Luncheon that will be held at the Senior Center on November 9th.
- Asked that residents keep leaves and grass separate from brush when dropping them off at the Highway Garage.
- Noted that the Planning Board has initiated a discussion to dissolve the Groundwater Advisory Committee. He will continue to monitor these conversations and hopes that the Planning Board understands the importance of having a Groundwater Advisory Committee.

- Noted that November 8th is Election Day. Residents can vote in-person at the Melican Middle School. Mail-in-ballots should be returned by using any of the drop boxes located at Town Hall.

Kristen Wixted

- Thanked the Public Works and Engineering Departments for organizing this year's annual Hazardous Waste Removal Day on October 29th.
- Noted that the Community Affairs Committee held their annual Jack-O-Lantern Stroll at the Town Common. Thanked them for planning this event and thanked all who participated.
- Noted that the Community Affairs Committee has scheduled this year's tree lighting event for December 3rd at 4:30pm. Chair Cohen added that Hanukkah will not overlap with the tree lighting as it did last year. The Menorah will be on display during the tree lighting event, but will not be lit until sometime during the Holiday of Hanukkah.
- Noted that the Northborough public schools will be closed on Election Day.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked the members of the Boros Cares 4 Troops (BC4T) for organizing the Veterans Rolling Rally. Thanked the Police Department for providing the escort and thanked the Public Works Department for installing the Hometown Heroes banners.
- Acknowledged his appreciation to all Veterans for their service.

Mitch Cohen

- Announced that the annual scouting for food pickup event is scheduled to take place on Saturday, November 12th.

DISCUSSION AND VOTE TO RELEASE ARPA FUNDS FOR THE COMMUNITY MEALS PROGRAM

A copy of a June 21, 2022 memo from the Community Meals Program requesting ARPA funding was included in the meeting packet.

Martha Michalewicz informed the Board that for the last 25 years the Community Meals program has been fully funded with grants and the generosity of local businesses and community members. Although they recently received a grant for \$10,000 that will take them through January of 2023, there is concern that additional funding may not be forthcoming. Since June of 2020, each week between 120 and 130 curbside meals are served curbside at Trinity Church at an average cost of \$600-\$720 per week. Although volunteers continue to solicit donations and apply for grants, she is requesting ARPA funding from the Town to finance the program through the winter months depending on meal price escalation.

Mr. Coderre suggested that the Board consider releasing ARPA funds in the amount of \$10,000 - \$15,000 to keep this food security program operational through May of 2023. The program service delivery model can be reevaluated at that time to determine how best to move forward. For the long-term sustainability of the program, it was suggested that they connect with other organizations who may be able to offer additional resources as well.

Ms. Michalewicz noted that in the event that meals are offered in person again, it is her hope that curbside delivery would still be an option for those that would prefer it. Members of the Board expressed their support of this program, acknowledging that the urgency of their request for the release of ARPA funds in this case is well justified.

Selectman Perreault stated that he would be comfortable releasing \$15,000 in ARPA funds for the Community Meals Program.

Public Comment: Fran Bakstran of 76 Cedar Hill Road stated that she is the Grant Planner that recommended the authorization of \$10,000 to the Helping Hands organization for community meals. She added that this grant funding is restricted to the over sixty population. She strongly encouraged the Board to consider releasing ARPA funds to help with food insecurity for all ages.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to authorize the release of \$15,000 in ARPA Funds for the Community Meals program; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

APPROVAL OF TOWN ADMINISTRATOR’S APPOINTMENT OF THOMAS REARDON TO THE FIRE STATION BUILDING COMMITTEE

Mr. Coderre noted that the Town closed on the new fire station building site located at 61-65 West Main Street on September 20, 2022, and has a tentative closing scheduled for November 10, 2022 on the adjacent property located at 10 Monroe Street.

At its September 12, 2022 meeting, the Board voted to approve his appointments to the Fire Station Building Committee, which included Dawn Rand and Diana Nicklaus to two of the three citizen seats. He asked the Board to approve his last citizen appointment of Tom Reardon to the Fire Station Building Committee.

Fire Station Building Committee Membership

Mitch Cohen – Board of Selectmen

John Rapa – Financial Planning Committee

Fire Chief David Parenti

Fire Captain Dan Brillhart

Citizen—Dawn Rand (former Chair, Fire Station Feasibility Study Committee)

Citizen—Diana Nicklaus (architect / former Design Review Committee Member)

Citizen—Tom Reardon (architect / former Design Review Committee Member)

In response to a question by Selectman Hirsh, Mr. Coderre responded that 12-14 applications were received. Most of them were from firefighter family members or retired firefighters. He added that there is already a good representation of firefighters from the Fire Department.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the Town Administrator's appointment of Tom Reardon to the Fire Station Building Committee; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

| | | | |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|
| Perreault | "aye" | Hirsh | "aye" |
| Rogers | "aye" | Cohen | "aye" |
| Wixted | "aye" | | |

CONSIDER THE APPOINTMENT OF JEFFREY GRIBOUSKI TO SERVE AS AN ALTERNATE MEMBER ON THE ZONING BOARD OF APEALS

As part of the 2022 reappointment process this past April, one application was received for the Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA). Interviews were conducted with the new applicant Kevin

Wyrsh and the incumbent Dick Rand 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 Subcommittee conducted interviews on June 28, 2022 with ZBA Incumbent Dick Rand, ZBA Alternate Suzy Cieslica, Kevin Wyrsh and Tim Kaelin. On August 15, 2022, the Board of Selectmen appointed Suzy Cieslica as a ZBA voting member by a 3-2 vote, as recommended by the Interview Subcommittee. In response to a question by Selectman Rogers at the September 12, 2022 Board meeting, Chair Cohen indicated that the ZBA Alternate vacancy should be advertised seeking additional applications.

No additional applications were received by the October 17, 2022 deadline. Executive Assistant Ms. Wackell reached out to those that were interviewed on June 28th. Dick Rand, Kevin Wyrsh and Tim Kaelin are no longer interested in serving on the ZBA. As Jeffrey Gribouski is the sole remaining applicant, Selectmen Hirsh and Wixted recommended that he be appointed to the vacant ZBA Alternate Position. Minutes from the June 28, 2022 interviews and a copy of Mr. Gribouski's application were included in the meeting packet.

Motion

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Jeffrey Gribouski to serve as an alternate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a partial two-year term as recommended by the Interview Subcommittee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion.

Discussion

Selectman Perreault questioned the motion, indicating that the Interview Subcommittee did not deliberate and vote to officially recommend Mr. Gribouski during an open meeting of the Interview Subcommittee prior to tonight.

Chair Cohen noted that the Interview Subcommittee is scheduled to meet on November 15th to interview candidates for a different Committee. He suggested that the Board continue with the appointment of Mr. Gribouski this evening and that the recommendation be formalized by a vote of the Interview Subcommittee at the November 15th Interview Subcommittee meeting.

Amended motion

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to appoint Jeffrey Gribouski to serve as an alternate member on the Zoning Board of Appeals for a partial two-year term contingent upon a subsequent confirmation of tonight’s action at the November 15th meeting of the Interview Subcommittee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

| | | | |
|-----------|-----------|-------|-------|
| Perreault | “aye” | Hirsh | “aye” |
| Rogers | “abstain” | Cohen | “aye” |
| Wixted | “aye” | | |

ACCEPTANCE AND EXECUTION OF PROPERTY DEED FOR 10 MONROE STREET

Mr. Coderre informed the Board that when a town acquires property there is an “acceptance” recorded with the deed, signed by the Board or Commission having custody of the property. In this case it is the Board of Selectmen. Town Counsel will hold the signed Acceptance in anticipation of the closing, which is tentatively scheduled for November 10th.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to accept and execute the Property Deed for 10 Monroe Street; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

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

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS 1157 & 1158

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds 1157 & 1158; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Coderre noted publicly that during tonight’s Executive Session, the Board approved the contract settlement with the Dispatchers Union, which includes general wage increases of 2% in FY2023, 2% in FY2024 and 2% in FY2025. The Memorandum of Understanding will be posted on the Town website under “Town Administrator Contract Settlements”.

PUBLIC COMMENT

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

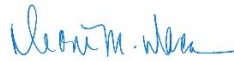
ADJOURNMENT

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was as follows:

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

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. November 7, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. October 17, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Information Packet – Aspen Aerogels
4. Northborough Historic Preservation Plan
5. Information Packet – ARPA Request
6. Information Packet – Fire Station Building Committee Appointment
7. Information Packet – Zoning Board of Appeals Appointment
8. Information Packet – Property Deed Acceptance for 10 Monroe Street
9. Cemetery Deeds

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – November 21, 2022**

7:00 p.m. - Chair’s Introduction to Remote Meeting

Chair 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.

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Chair 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
Becca Meekins, Assistant Town Administrator
David Parenti, Fire Chief
William Lyver, Police Chief
Scott Charpentier, DPW Director
Jason Little, Finance Director

Any votes taken this evening will be by roll call.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street expressed concern with a letter to the editor dated November 11, 2022 from Tim Kaelin regarding the use of ARPA funding for capital projects. Her concern was that Mr. Kaelin misrepresented himself by speaking on behalf of the Appropriations Committee without a meeting of the Appropriations Committee to discuss the contents of the letter taking place. She suggested that Mr. Kaelin be removed from the Appropriations Committee. Chair Cohen suggested that she bring her concern to the attention of the Town Moderator as he is the appointing authority for the Appropriations Committee.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 7, 2022 MEETING

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the November 7, 2022 meeting minutes; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion.

Selectman Hirsh requested that specific details be included regarding her question during the continued public hearing for Aspen Aerogels about the license staying with the property in the event that the company is sold. She asked that her question about how many applications were submitted for the Fire Station Building Committee and Mr. Coderre’s response be included as well. Chair Cohen suggested Selectman Hirsh submit the additional details to Ms. Wackell for inclusion in the November 7, 2022 meeting minutes for the Board’s review and acceptance at the next Board meeting.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to withdraw the previous motion to approve the November 7, 2022 meeting minutes and to postpone the approval until the Board's next meeting; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

FIRE DEPARTMENT COLLECTION FOR TOYS FOR TOTS

Fire Chief Parenti announced that the Northborough Fire Department is again an official drop off site for the USMC Reserve Toys for Tots collection program. The Fire Department will be collecting toys November 19th through December 11th from 9:00am – 6:00pm. Only new toys will be accepted and must be in the original packaging. Bins will be located outside the front entrance of the Fire Station at 11 Pierce Street.

Chief Parenti added that in lieu of purchasing a new toy, donations can be made at <https://toysfortotsusa.org>.

TREE LIGHTING EVENT, REQUEST TO CLOSE BLAKE STREET AND APPROVAL OF A MENORAH DISPLAY

Community Affairs Committee (CAC) Chair Suzy Cieslica was remotely present to announce the details of the annual tree lighting event that will be held on Saturday, December 3rd at 4:30pm at the Neil Ellsworth tree on Blake Street. She thanked DPW Director Scott Charpentier and his staff for their help with all of the CAC sponsored events. She also thanked her Committee members for their collaborative efforts in planning these events. She noted that there is interest in moving the tree lighting event to the Town Common and that this is something that she would like to see considered for the future. Details about this event can be found on the CAC Facebook Page or at www.northboroughcac.weebly.com.

Ms. Cieslica noted that the Trolley service will not be offered this year and asked local businesses to contact the CAC if they plan to have an open house or a special event on December 3rd and she will organize a list for the public.

Chair Cohen added that Hanukkah will not overlap with the tree lighting as it did last year. The Menorah will be on display and lit up simultaneously with the tree lighting. It will then be put back into storage until December 18th, which is the first day of the Hanukkah holiday. It will be lit on December 18th, with a more formal celebratory lighting on December 25th, which is the 8th day of Hanukkah.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to close Blake Street on Saturday, December 3, 2022 from 3:30pm to 6:30pm for the tree lighting ceremony; Selectman Rogers seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to approve the placement of a Menorah near the Neil Ellsworth tree on Blake Street; 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 WITH BOARD OF ASSESSORS

For the purpose of discussing the valuation of each class of property; the minimum residential factor and the allocation of the tax burden among the four classes of real property: residential, open space, commercial and industrial, and of personal property.

Finance Director Jason Little and Board of Assessors members Paul Cibelli and Christopher Reidy were remotely present.

Mr. Coderre made the presentation along-side a power point presentation, which included information and options for the Board of Selectmen to determine whether there shall be a single or split tax rate for the various classes of property for FY2023.

In summary, following a review of the market activity by the Department of Revenue, the total taxable value for the Town has increased from \$3.38 billion to approximately \$3.89 billion, or 15%. This analysis was based on valid sales activity during calendar year 2021 for single family homes and condominiums. Market adjustments resulted in overall single-family home values increasing by 17%, while condominiums increased by 14%. Commercial properties increased by 10%, industrial properties increased by 15% and Personal Property values increased by 4%.

Mr. Cibelli presented the various tax rate scenarios. Should the Board of Selectmen decide to continue with a single tax rate, the tax rate would decrease from \$16.49 in FY2022 to \$14.79 for FY2023. The levy amount to be raised by taxation would be \$57,507,128, an increase of \$1,777,912, or 3.2%. This year the Town certified \$54.3 million in “new growth” value, which results in approximately \$894,816 in new tax dollars. The average single-family tax bill would increase by \$380 from \$8,195 for FY2022 to \$8,575 for FY2023.

Following the presentation, Mr. Reidy informed the Board that the Board of Assessors unanimously recommended that the Board of Selectmen continue with the single tax rate.

Public Comments

Corridor 9/495 Regional Chamber of Commerce President Karen Chapman strongly advocated for the continuation of a single tax classification. As the business community continues to navigate the Covid-19 pandemic and deal with inflation, workforce challenges, and supply chain difficulties, the last thing a business needs is an increase in expenses.

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street appreciates the support for the businesses, but asked who is speaking up for the residents, especially the senior population. She asked that the Board consider a split tax rate.

Chair Cohen asked a question regarding the Tax Deferral Clause 41A program that allows taxpayers over age 65 to defer property tax payments. Mr. Cibelli responded that the Board of Assessors will be reviewing the exemptions under this program to see if any of the income thresholds can be raised and updated. Mr. Coderre added that any updates to Clause 41A would require Town Meeting action.

Selectman Hirsh moved the Board vote to close the Public Hearing; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

In response to a question by Selectman Hirsh, Chair Cohen explained that under this tax deferral program, the Town charges an interest rate on the amount that is deferred. He added that the Town has the option to both raise the income thresholds and reduce the interest rate.

Board members expressed their support of maintaining a single tax rate.

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to maintain a uniform tax rate for all classes of property at a factor of one; to oppose the implementation of a residential exemption; and to oppose the implementation of a small commercial exemption; Selectman Perreault seconded the motion; the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

REPORTS

Kristen Wixted

- Congratulated the cast and crew of the Algonquin “Guys and Dolls” musical.
- Congratulated the Algonquin Girls Soccer team for making it to the finals.
- Noted that the Northborough Scouting for Food Day received over 14,000 donated items that will benefit the Food Pantry. Thanked the Boy and Girl Scout troops who participated.
- Asked Becca Meekins for an update on the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Committee. Ms. Meekins noted that Diedra Wrighting will serve as the School Department’s Coalition for Equity representative. Now that the Committee is at full membership she will be scheduling the first meeting soon.
- Noted that she has been asked if electronic voting devices for Town Meeting can be purchased with ARPA funds. Mr. Coderre responded that the first step would be to have a conversation with the Town Moderator. Chair Cohen suggested inviting the Town Moderator to a future Board meeting.
- Requested that a discussion item be added to the ARPA list regarding financial resources needed for the Police Department to provide more police presence in an effort to keep the roads safe.
- Asked that the renaming of the Board of Selectmen to Select Board be high on the priority list for the next Annual Town Meeting.

- Noted that the Troop 101 Wreath Sale is ongoing. Wreaths are \$15 each and can be ordered online. They are then delivered to your door.
- With Thanksgiving approaching and in this time of gratitude, she thanked the volunteers, PTO parents, school library volunteers and sports coaches for their service. Also thanked all Board, Committee and Commission members and extended a special thank you to her fellow members of the Board of Selectmen.

Jason Perreault

- Thanked Town Clerk Andy Dowd, Assistant Town Clerk Karen Wilber and the election workers for conducting the November 8th State Election efficiently and safely.
- Wished all residents a happy and safe Thanksgiving.

Julianne Hirsh

- Reported on the recent meeting of the Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC).
- Noted that the last chance to participate in the Downtown Revitalization survey is November 30th.
- Noted that the MPIC consultants are interviewing businesses in the downtown area and she is hoping that this information can be used when the Board discusses the release of ARPA funds to support local businesses.
- Reported on the recent meeting of the Historic District Commission.
- Wished everyone a happy Thanksgiving.

T. Scott Rogers

- Reported on the recent meeting of the Board of Health.
- Noted that a community resource guide has been mailed to all residents. It is also available on the Town website and hardcopies can be found at the Town Hall, Library and Senior Center.
- Noted that the Planning Board is continuing to discuss dissolving the Groundwater Advisory Committee. He reached out to the Groundwater Advisory Committee, as well as all the affected Boards, Committees and Commissions advising them of these conversations in case they want to add this item to a future meeting agenda for discussion. He requested that this item be discussed at the December 19th Selectmen's meeting. The Groundwater Advisory Committee will discuss this item at their next meeting.
- Requested that the Board consider closing Town Hall Offices, the Library and the Senior Center at noon on Wednesday, November 23rd to allow employees additional time to spend with their families for Thanksgiving. See below for motion.

Mitch Cohen

- Thanked everyone involved for their efforts with the November 8th State Election. Congratulated State Senator Elect Robin Kennedy, State Representative Elect Kate Donahue and State Representative Meghan Kilcoyne.
- Noted that the Community Resource Guide can be found by clicking on the Be Well tab on the Town website.
- Formally requested that a Town Meeting article be included to change the name of the Board of Selectmen to Select Board.
- Noted that the Downtown Revitalization survey can be found on the front page of the Town website.

MOTION TO CLOSE TOWN HALL OFFICES, THE LIBRARY AND SENIOR CENTER AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD

Selectman Rogers moved the Board vote to approve the early closing of Town Hall Offices, the Library and the Senior Center at 12 Noon on Wednesday, November 23rd; Selectman Wixted seconded the motion; the roll call was taken as follows:

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

RECOMMENDATION FOR APPOINTMENTS TO THE TEMPORARY TRAFFIC SAFETY COMMITTEE

Selectman Wixted moved the Board vote to recommend Laura Zitton, Janeen Callaghan, Mark McMenemy and Christopher Deacetic for appointment to the Temporary Traffic Safety Committee as recommended by the Interview Subcommittee; Selectman Hirsh seconded the motion.

Discussion

Chairman Cohen noted that five applications were received for the 5 citizen-at-large vacancies. The above mentioned applicants were interviewed on November 15th. An interview will be scheduled for the remaining applicant soon.

Selectman Rogers asked that the Board use the same logic that was used when considering appointments to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Committee. In that case, the Interview Subcommittee had interviewed candidates and instead of recommending them for appointment, they asked that the Board re-advertise the openings in hopes of getting more diverse interest. In this case, only five applications were received for the five citizen-at-large vacancies. He added that in his opinion some are good, qualified candidates and some are not. If the Board were to use the same logic as the DEIB Committee appointments, the Board should re-advertise the openings in hopes of getting more qualified candidates.

Selectman Perreault shared the concern that there were so few applicants relative to the number of open seats. He also noted that three of the applicants are known to have previously advocated for the creation of a Traffic Safety Committee. He would like to see the Board extend the application period to see if additional applicants come forward that can provide a better balance considering that part of the work of this temporary committee is to see whether or not a permanent committee should be created. He is concerned that some of the applicants will not be able to be fully objective in making the determination as to whether a permanent committee is needed considering the past representations they have made.

Chairman Cohen noted that he was excited to see that four of the five applicants are new to volunteering in local government in a formal sense. It's exciting to get new people who have not served on Boards before to get involved. He does not share the concern that some of applicants have previously advocated for a Traffic Safety Committee. He is happy that applicants came forward that are truly interested in the charge of this committee. The process was open to everyone and he is satisfied with the process.

Selectman Wixted stated that the applicants come from diverse neighborhoods. Chair Cohen agreed that they will represent a diverse group.

Selectman Rogers expressed his frustration that while the temporary committee is taking up to six months to determine if a permanent committee is needed, the current traffic safety issues are not being addressed. He added that there is already an established process in place to report concerns and ask questions regarding traffic safety and other traffic related matters. Chair Cohen responded that while the temporary committee does its work, he trusts that Town staff will continue to address traffic safety issues as they arise.

Selectman Hirsh noted that the applicants were made aware that their first order of business is to review what is already in place and whether a Traffic Safety Committee can help with the current traffic safety issues. She added that the four applicants that were interviewed have different backgrounds and will bring different perspectives to the committee.

Following no further discussion, the roll call vote was taken as follows:

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

Selectman Perreault noted that he would have voted differently if the applicants were considered separately.

APPROVAL/EXECUTION OF PLOWING AND TREATMENT AGREEMENTS FOR PRIVATE WAYS FOR THE 2022/2023 WINTER SEASON

Mr. Coderre stated that this is the last step in the annual process to prepare for plowing and treatment of private ways.

Selectman Perreault moved the Board vote to approve and execute the plowing and treatment agreements for the 2022/2023 Winter Season for Harris Avenue and Maple Lane; Selectman Rogers 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

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street thanked the Board for addressing traffic concerns.

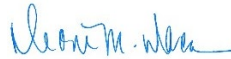
ADJOURNMENT

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

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

The meeting adjourned at 9:25 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. November 21, 2022 Meeting Agenda
2. November 7, 2022 Meeting Minutes
3. Toys for Tots Flyer
4. Tree Lighting Event Flyer
5. Information Packet – Tax Classification Hearing
6. Information Packet – Temporary Traffic Safety Committee Appointments
7. Plowing and Treatment Agreements



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Town Hall Offices • 63 Main Street • Northborough, MA 01532 • 508-393-5040 x7 • 508-393-6996 Fax

December 1, 2022

John Coderre, Town Administrator
Town Hall Offices
63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532

Dear Mr. Coderre,

At the Board of Selectmen meeting scheduled for December 5, 2022, DPW Director Scott Charpentier and I will give a presentation updating the Board of Selectmen on the results of the Dog Park Feasibility Study conducted by our consultant, Weston & Sampson Engineers, and the results of community meeting #1, which was held on October 11, 2022 via ZOOM video conferencing. The following constitutes a status update of our efforts to date on the Northborough Dog Park:

Completed

1. Planning for a municipal dog park has been underway for 18 years. Respondents to a 2020 Master Plan Survey identified construction of a Town Dog Park as a top open space & recreation priority. It is therefore a recommendation in both the 2020 Master Plan and 2020 Open Space & Recreation Plan.
2. In April 2022, the Town secured \$35,500 in FY23 CPA funds for the initial assessment and site evaluation of up to five potential locations that could be used for a dog park, and then the development of a preliminary design for the selected site.
3. In July 2022 funds became available and the Town executed a contract with Weston & Sampson Engineers to perform this work. Project kickoff was in September 2022.
4. A public information and input session took place via ZOOM video conferencing on October 11, 2022. Weston & Sampson presented their analysis of 4 potential sites and requested public feedback on those locations and potential amenities. Twenty-nine individuals attended the public session, which was taped and available for viewing at a later date via youtube. Oral feedback was received during the meeting and written feedback was received via email in the days following the public information and input session. The 32-acre wooded parcel on Boundary Street received the highest number of votes. A 3.5-acre parcel of recreation land on Bearfoot Road, which is adjacent to the Senior Center, received a couple of votes but also strong opposition from several senior citizens and members of the Council on Aging. The remaining two sites received no votes.

Underway

5. Planning and DPW staff will present the Weston & Sampson analysis and results of the October public information and input session at the December 5th Board of Selectmen meeting. Staff will ask the Board of Selectmen to affirm the Boundary Street site as the location of the future Northborough Dog Park so that we can advance to design of the facility.

6. A funding request will be presented to CPC for consideration and possible inclusion in the 2024 ATM warrant.
7. Once the Board of Selectmen authorizes the site for the dog park, Public Works, Planning and Recreation staff will work with our consultant to develop a design concept and cost estimate for the selected site. In January, the design team will hold Community Meeting #2 to obtain feedback on the design concept.
8. After Community Meeting #2, staff will work with Weston & Sampson Engineers to refine the design and cost estimate based on the feedback received.
9. Staff will file an application with the Stanton Foundation in the amount of \$22,500 to finalize the design, obtain required permits and prepare construction-ready bid documents. This money will be supplemented with \$11,500 in municipal funding.

Next Step

10. If the Town's request for FY24 CPC funds is successful, staff will prepare and submit a grant application to the Stanton Foundation for \$225,000 in construction funding (the maximum grant award). The minimum required municipal match is 10% of the total cost of construction.
11. Once construction funds are fully secured, the Town will procure a construction contractor. Construction of the project is expected to take approximately 9 months to complete, weather permitting.

I look forward to continuing the conversation about the Northborough Dog Park on Monday evening and beyond. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

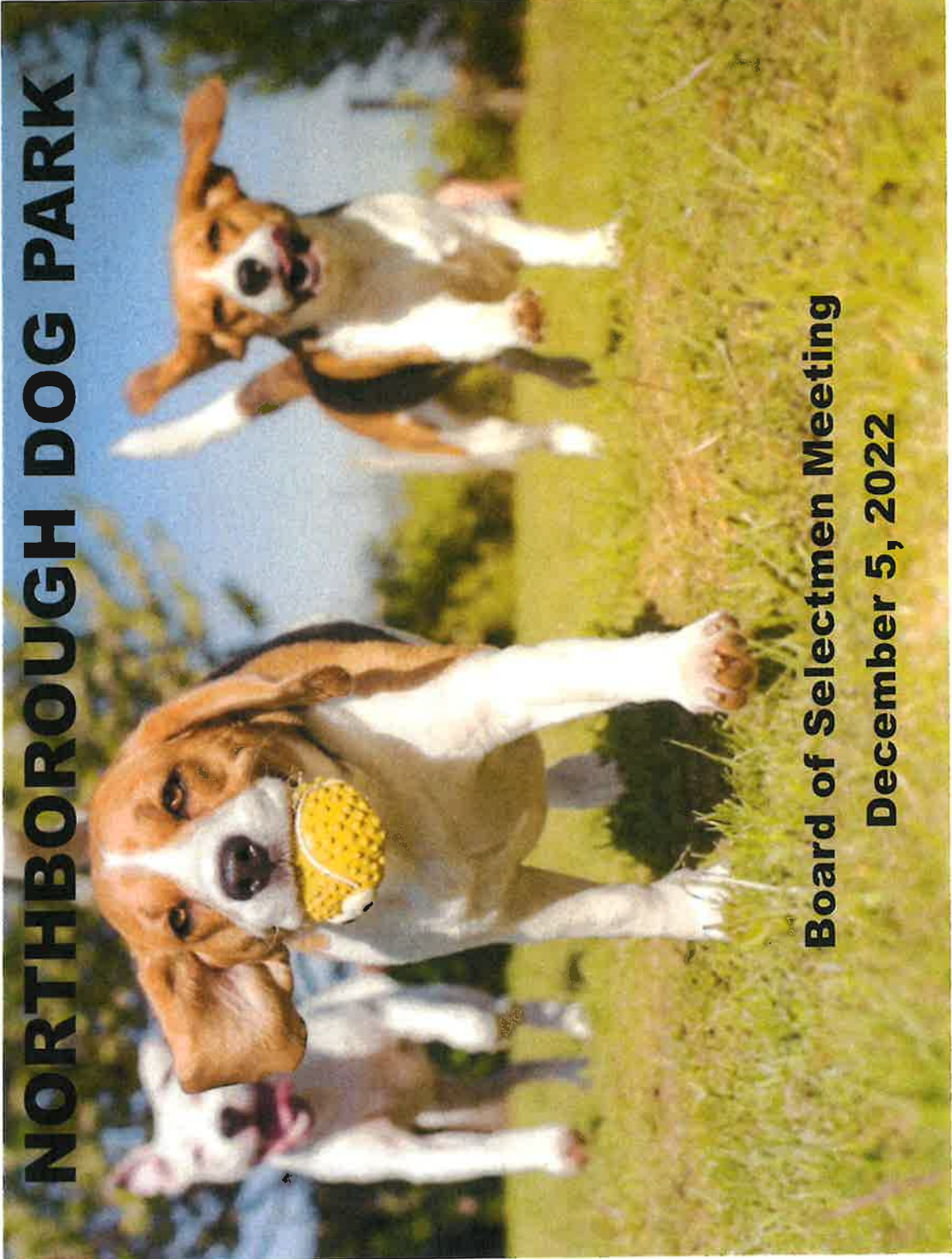


Laurie Connors
Planning Director

Enclosure

CC: Scott Charpentier, DPW Director

NORTHBOROUGH DOG PARK



**Board of Selectmen Meeting
December 5, 2022**

AGENDA

- **PROJECT TEAM**
- **PROJECT SCHEDULE**
- **PROJECT GOALS**
- **LOCATION OPTIONS**
 - **LOCATION GOALS**
 - **LOCATION ANALYSIS**
- **DISCUSSION**

PROJECT TEAM

Public Works & Recreation
Northborough, MA

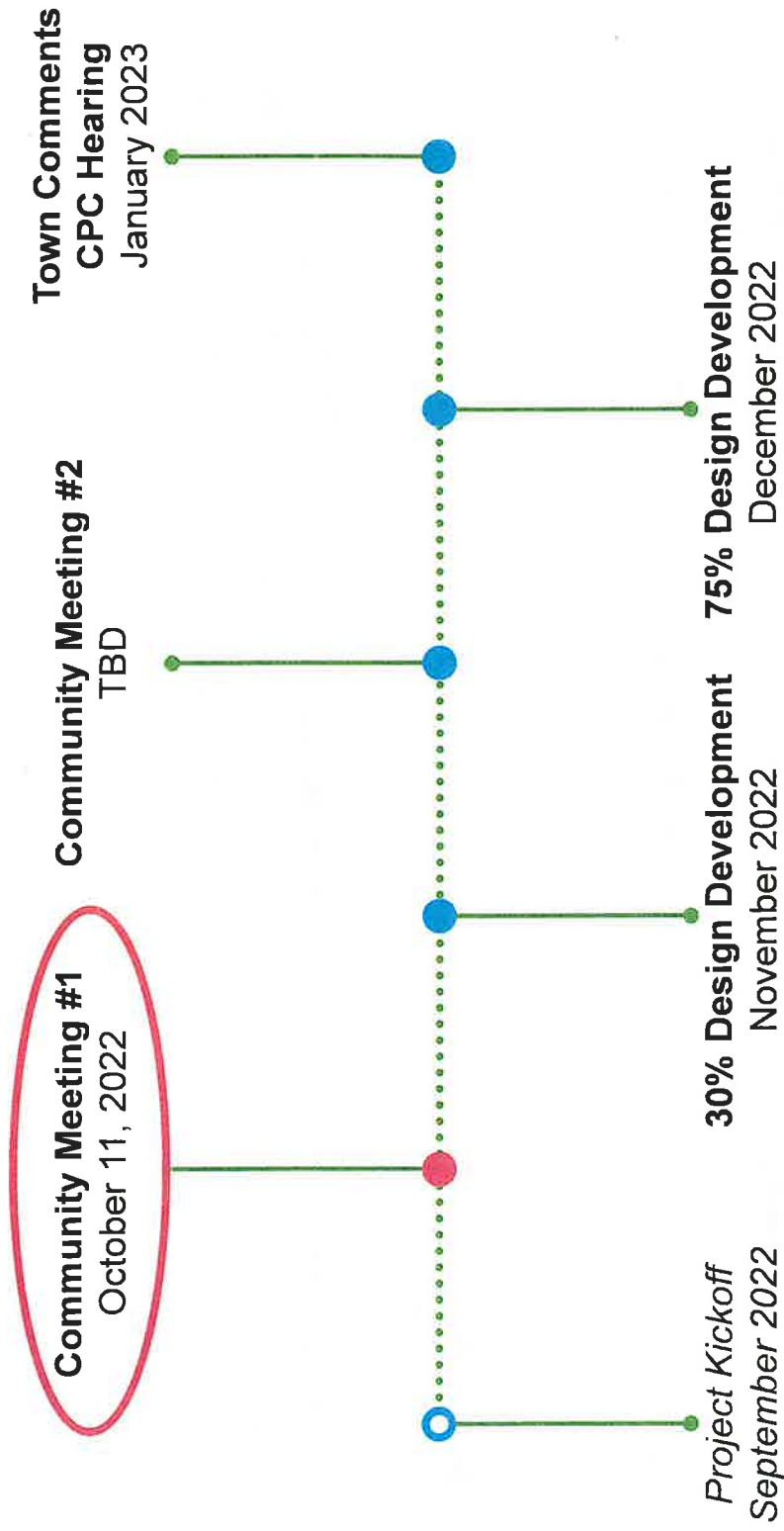
- **Scott Charpentier**
DPW Director
Northborough MA
- **Allie Lane**
Recreation Director
Northborough MA
- **Laurie Connors**
Planning Director
Northborough MA

Weston & Sampson
Landscape Architecture Team

- **Mike Easler**
Project Manager
Weston & Sampson
- **Jeanette Cantu**
Landscape Designer
Weston & Sampson
- **Tongyi Zhang**
Landscape Designer
Weston & Sampson



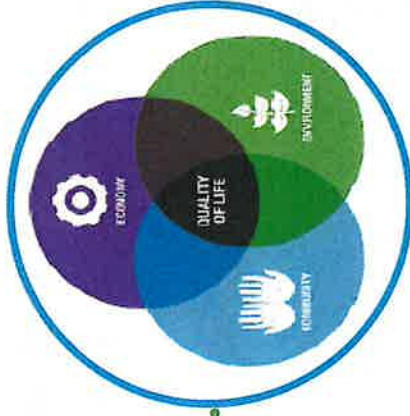
PROJECT SCHEDULE



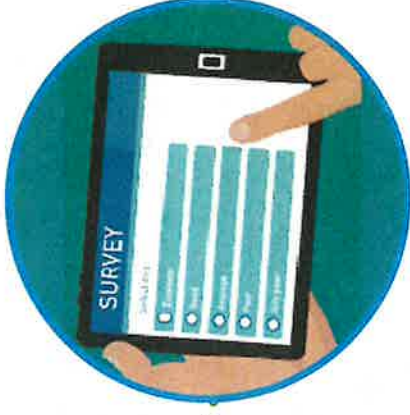
PROJECT GOALS



An off-leash facility for people and dogs



Increase the value and quality of life in the community



Community outreach has shown strong support for a dog park



AMENITIES



LAWN & PLANTING



STONE DUST TRAILS



SYNTHETIC TURF AREAS



SHADE SHELTERS



FENCING AND SIGNAGE



PAVED SEATING AREAS



AGILITY PLAY EQUIPMENT



WOOD CHIPS & MULCH AREAS



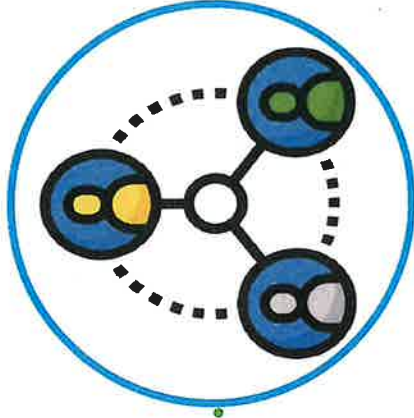
WATER PLAY / SPRINKLERS



LOCATION GOALS



The Town has identified 4 potential locations for the dog park



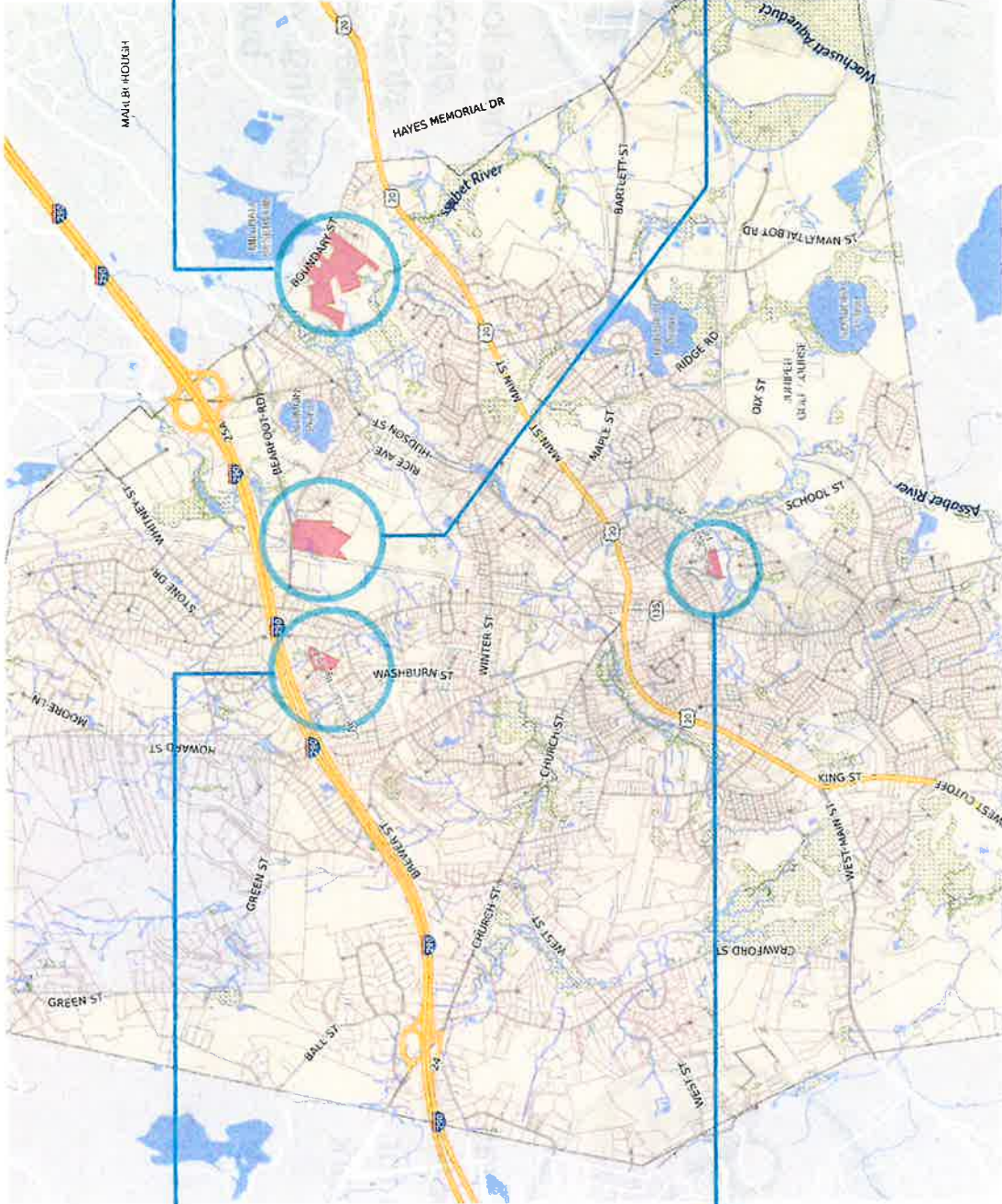
These locations would provide town wide access



These locations provide opportunities for strategic dog park elements, such as parking, water, shade and buffer space



POSSIBLE LOCATIONS



CARRIAGE HILL RD
5 ACRES
(2.2 ACRES AVAILABLE)



BUENA VISTA RD
3.7 ACRES
(1 ACRE AVAILABLE)



BOUNDARY STREET
30 ACRES
(8.6 ACRES AVAILABLE)

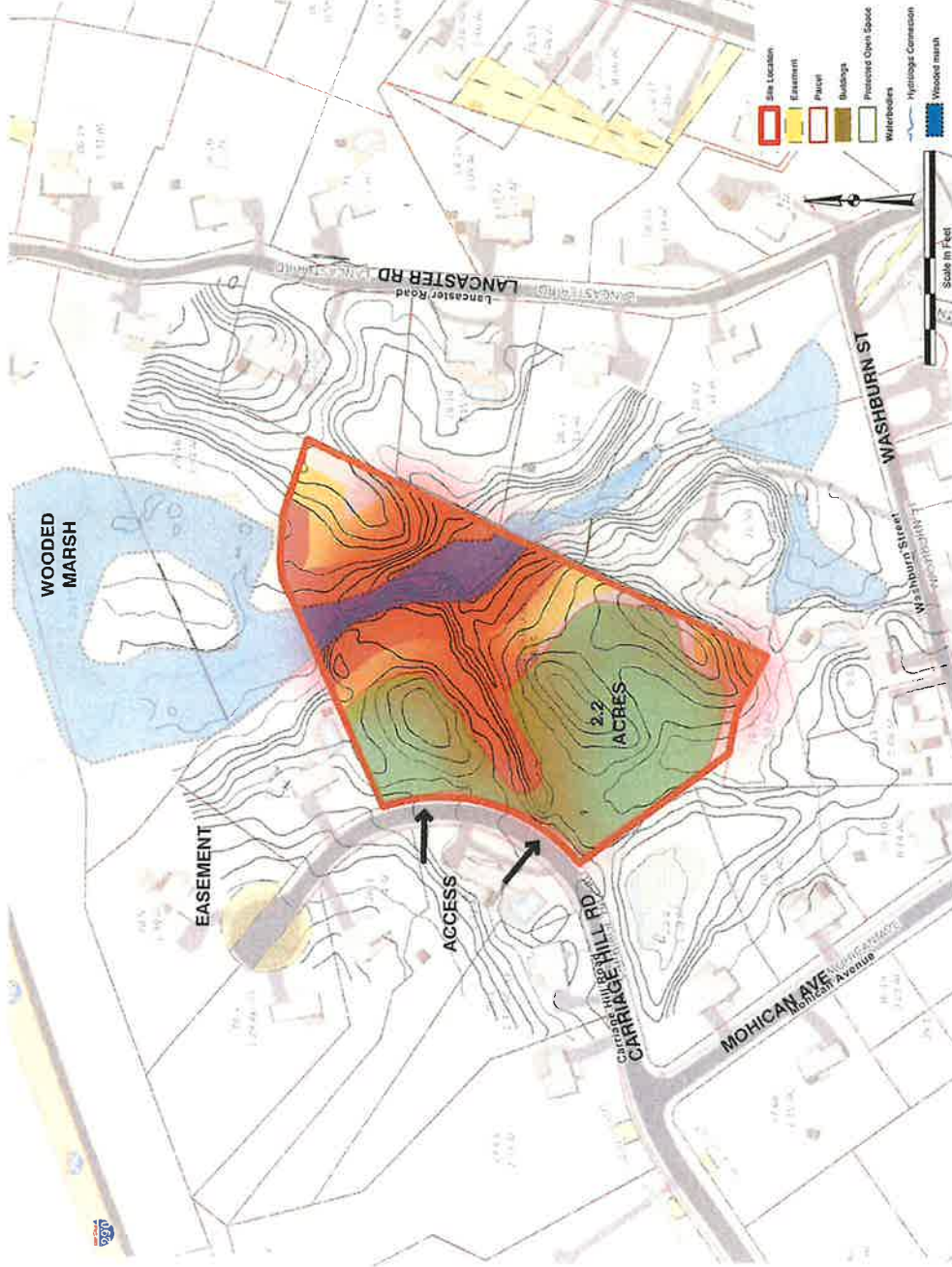


BEARFOOT RD
17 ACRES
(2 ACRES AVAILABLE)



CARRIAGE HILL RD

5 ACRES
(2.2 ACRES AVAILABLE)



PROS

- SHADE: FULLY FORESTED
- UTILITY CONNECTIONS POSSIBLE FROM STREET

CONS

- RESIDENTIAL ABUTTERS
- LIMITED VEHICULAR ACCESS
- WETLANDS RESOURCES AND BUFFERS LIMIT CONSTRUCTION IN SOME AREAS
- STEEP SLOPES LIMIT SOME DEVELOPMENT
- RESIDENTIAL ACCESS ROAD



BUENA VISTA RD

3.7 ACRES
(1 ACRE AVAILABLE)

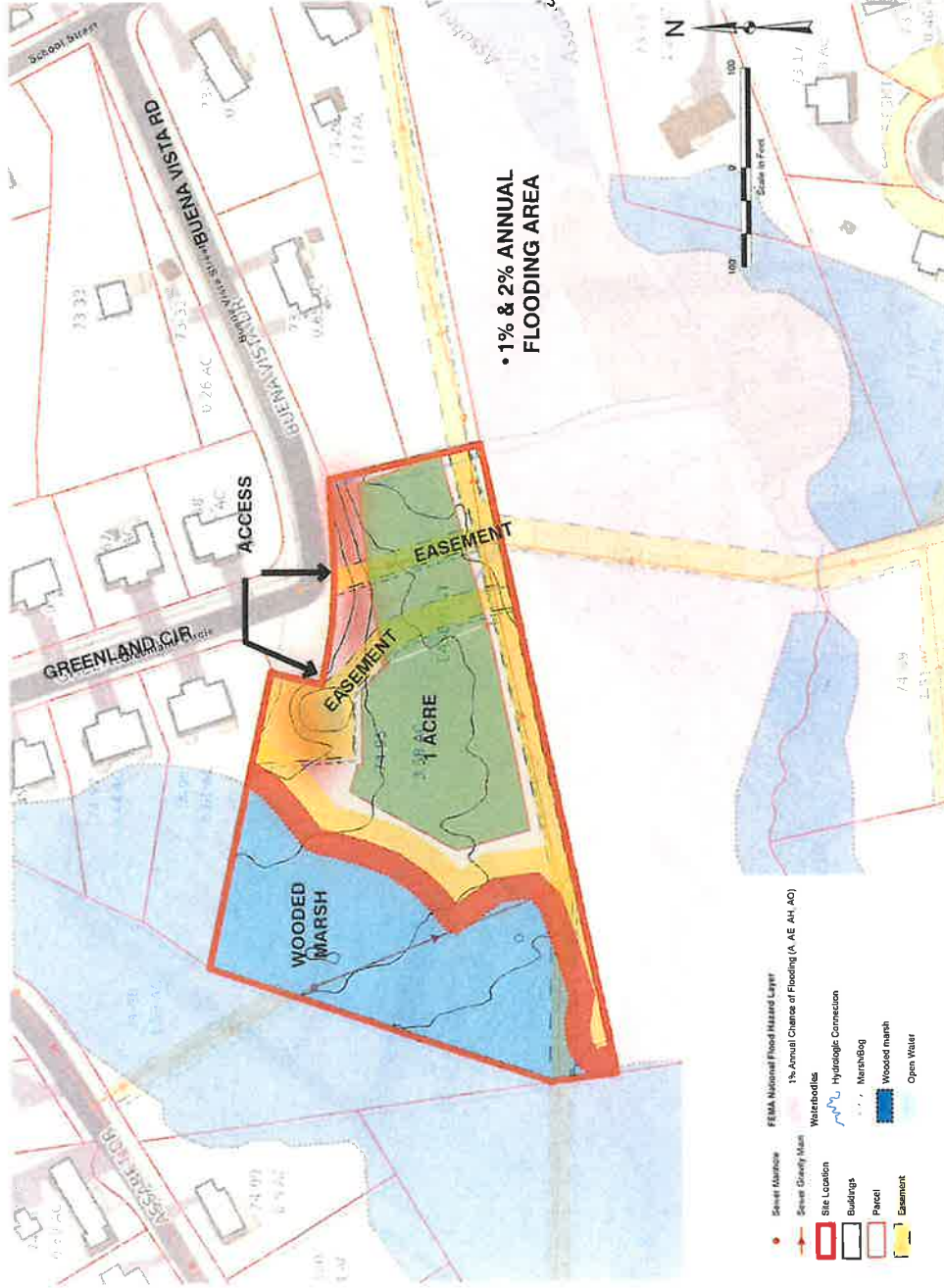


PROS

- SHADE: FULLY FORESTED
- MOSTLY FLAT AREAS
- UTILITY CONNECTIONS POSSIBLE FROM STREET

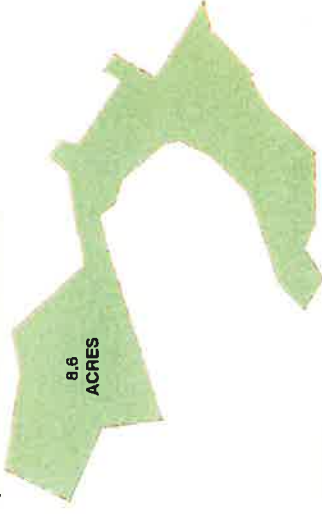
CONS

- LIMITED SIZE
- RESIDENTIAL ABUTTERS
- LIMITED VEHICULAR AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS
- WETLANDS RESOURCES AND BUFFERS LIMIT CONSTRUCTION IN SOME AREAS
- EASEMENTS LIMIT CONSTRUCTION OPTIONS
- WET SOILS
- ACCESS ROAD IS RESIDENTIAL



BOUNDARY STREET

30 ACRES
(8.6 ACRES AVAILABLE)

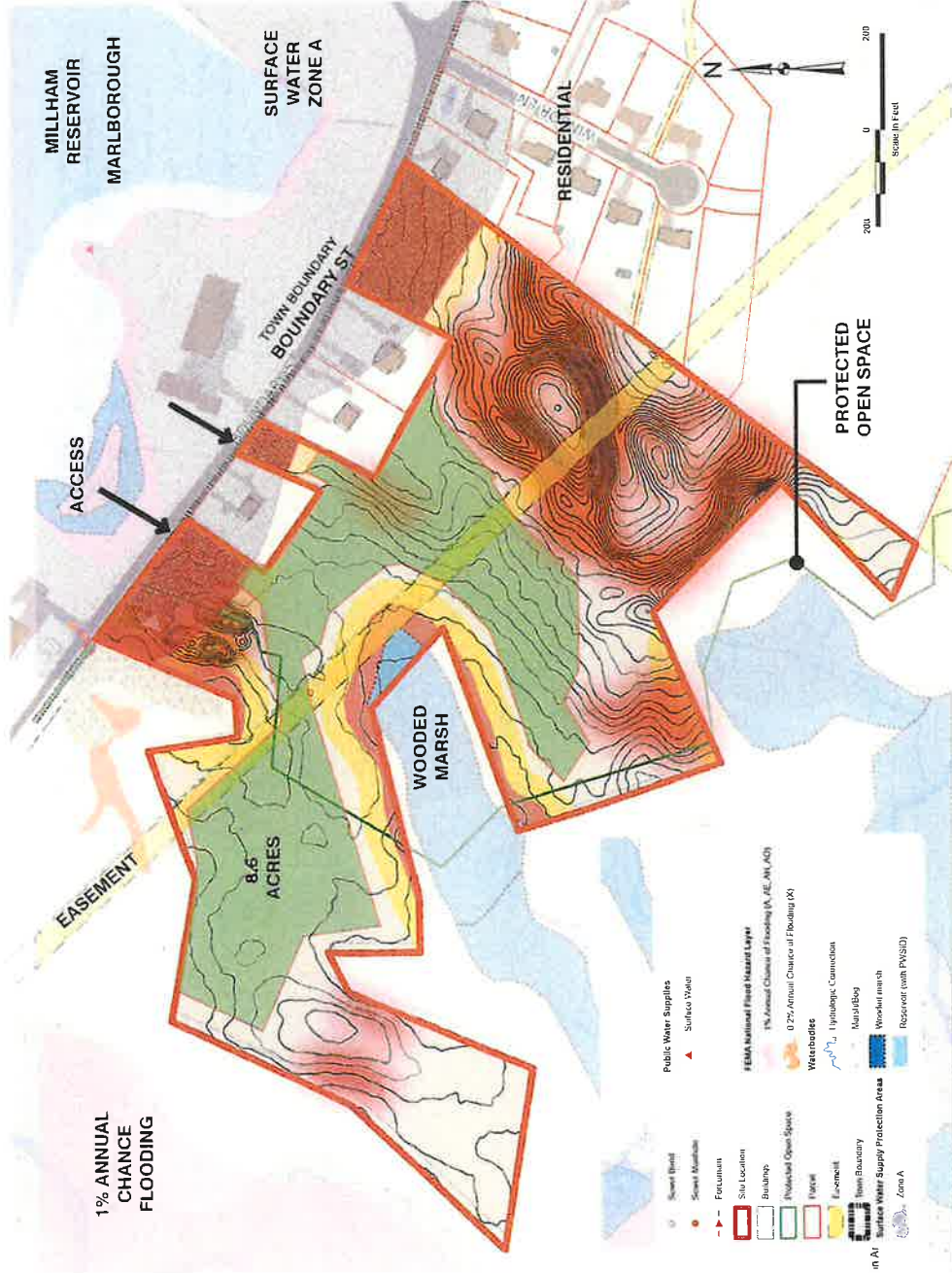


PROS

- SHADE: FULLY FORESTED
- PROTECTED OPEN SPACE
- UTILITY CONNECTIONS POSSIBLE FROM STREET
- SLOPES PROVIDE RESIDENTIAL BUFFER
- ABOVE FLOOD ZONES
- OFF LEASH HIKING TRAIL OPPORTUNITIES

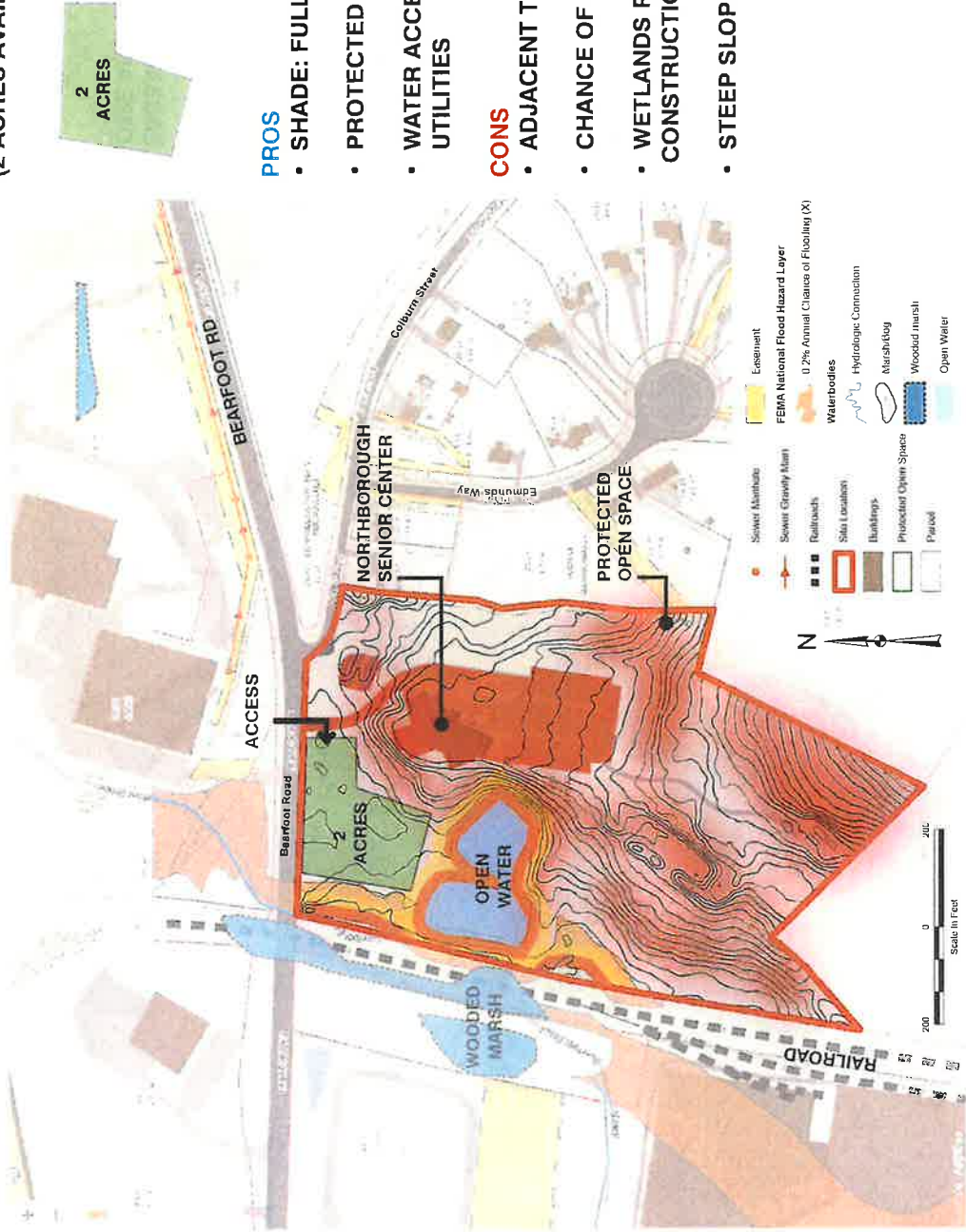
CONS

- STEEP SLOPES TO THE EAST
- WETLANDS RESOURCES AND BUFFERS LIMIT CONSTRUCTION IN SOME AREAS
- EASEMENT LIMITS CONSTRUCTION OPTIONS IN SOME AREAS



BEARFOOT RD/SENIOR CENTER

17 ACRES
(2 ACRES AVAILABLE)



PROS

- SHADE: FULLY FORESTED
- PROTECTED OPEN SPACE
- WATER ACCESS: STREET AND BUILDING UTILITIES

CONS

- ADJACENT TO NORTHBOROUGH SENIOR CENTER
- CHANGE OF FLOODING ALONG EAST PERIMETER
- WETLANDS RESOURCES AND BUFFERS LIMIT CONSTRUCTION IN SOME AREAS
- STEEP SLOPES THROUGHOUT THE SITE



THANK YOU!

We will be scheduling a second virtual community meeting
in the following weeks

Please make sure to leave your contact information to receive
upcoming meeting invitations and project information

For questions please contact:

Scott Charpentier
DPW Director
Northborough MA
scharpentier@town.northborough.ma.us
508-393-5030

Allie Lane
Recreation Director
Northborough MA
alane@town.northborough.ma.us
508-393-5034

Laurie Connors
Planning Director
Northborough MA
lconnors@town.northborough.ma.us
508-393-5019





**TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH
63 MAIN STREET
NORTHBOROUGH, MA 01532**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
INTERVIEW SUB-COMMITTEE**

MEETING AGENDA

November 30, 2022

3:00 p.m.

Pursuant to Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, An Act Relative to the Extending Certain COVID-19 Measures Adopted During the State of Emergency, signed into law on July 16, 2022, this meeting will be conducted via remote participation. No in person attendance by members of the public will be permitted.

This meeting will be live streamed, but will have no option for public participation

To view or listen

Go to "Northborough Remote Meetings on YouTube or click on the link below
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCRdBrw3HeEAMB_KFKasrgXA

INTERVIEWS FOR BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

Temporary Traffic Safety Committee – 1 opening

3:00 p.m. – Jennifer Scalise

**** All times are approximate ****



Northborough

63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532
Phone: 508-393-5040

Citizen Activity Form

Good Government Starts with You

Date Submitted: October 12, 2022

Name: Jennifer Scalise

Home Address: 206 South St.
Northborough

Mailing Address: 206 South St.
Northborough

Phone Number(s): (508)-868-1583 - Cell

Email Address: scalise.jen@gmail.com

Current Occupation/Employer: Home manager

Narrative: I believe that I have the time available to help this committee do the research it needs to be a helpful addition to this town. This committee would benefit from my interpersonal skills in dealing with both the public and the town officials. I currently run a diversity facebook group and am also a Girl Scout Leader in town. My priorities are to lend my time to research concerns about safety throughout the town and create a healthy working relationships to accomplish this goal.

Board(s) / Committee(s): TEMPORARY TRAFFIC & SAFETY COMMITTEE



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

63 Main Street
Northborough, MA 01532-1994
(508) 393-5040 Phone
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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen
Appropriations Committee
Financial Planning Committee

FROM: John W. Coderre, Town Administrator

SUBJECT: Preliminary FY2024 Free Cash Plan

DATE: December 2, 2022

CC: Greg Martineau, School Superintendent
Financial Team
Department Heads/Agency Directors

As you know, the Town of Northborough adopted its very first set of Comprehensive Financial Policies in 2009, followed by the successful adoption of our Free Cash Policy in November 2010. These policies were all formally approved by the Board of Selectmen with the unanimous support of the Appropriations Committee and the Financial Planning Committee.

In accordance with our adopted Free Cash Policy, I have developed a Preliminary FY2024 Free Cash Plan for consideration and use during the upcoming budget process. As you will note, our FY2022 year-end Free Cash was certified at approximately \$2.44 million, which is significantly less than the \$3.39 million from FY2021. Following the dramatic reopening of the economy and subsequent recovery from the pandemic, Free Cash levels are likely to remain at lower historic levels for the foreseeable future. In its most basic form Free Cash is a result of unspent Free Cash from the prior year, plus positive actual performance in both appropriations not spent, as well as revenues realized in excess of the budget.

- Unspent Free Cash from FY2021 was \$500,259 which means the Town “generated” \$1,939,814 during FY2022 for a total FY2022 Free Cash of \$2,440,073.¹

¹ It is important to note that although revenues exceeded the budget by \$767,712 and unexpended appropriations returned \$1,144,386, the combined total of “generated” Free Cash is adjusted up by \$27,716 to account for a reduced need for potential tax abatements/exemptions (overlay account).



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- Revenues exceeded the FY2022 budget by \$765,712 or 1.16% with local receipts such as motor vehicle excise taxes and building permits performing better than anticipated due to the improving economy. Lastly there were several one-time revenues associated with various grants and Medicaid reimbursements.
- Expenditures returned were \$1,144,386 or 1.67% of the FY2022 budget. The return included positive results in the Employee Benefit lines due to favorable health insurance experience. Staff turnover in public safety also resulted in returned appropriations as new hires were brought on at a lower salary cost.

As you can see, our goal of keeping year-end revenues and appropriations to within 1-3% of the operating budget was once again achieved. At this level, I am pleased to report that the Town will be able to maintain an appropriation to the Reserve Account, continue to contribute the policy-targeted amount into the FY2024 Operating Budget, and once again pay cash for a significant portion of our upcoming capital needs.

In addition, the preliminary Free Cash Plan maintains the Town's financial reserves within the policy limits of 5-10% of the operating budget. Prior to the close of FY2022, the Town's reserves were at 8.2%, or \$5.9 million. After the close of FY2022 our July 1, 2022 reserves increased to approximately 10.7%. The preliminary Free Cash Plan below provides an initial proposal on how these one-time funds can be used in the upcoming budget cycle. While there will be more discussion regarding the exact amounts to be used in the various categories, the plan as proposed would provide for the maintenance of financial reserves at approximately 8%, well within our policy target area.

| PRELIMINARY FY2024 FREE CASH PLAN | | |
|--|------------|-------|
| Free Cash Certification as of 7/1/2022 | 2,440,073 | 100% |
| FY2024 Appropriated Reserve | -175,000 | 7.2% |
| FY2024 Operating Budget | -500,000 | 20.5% |
| FY2024 Stabilization Fund | -200,000 | 8.2% |
| FY2024 Capital Projects | -1,065,073 | 43.6% |
| Available Free Cash after FY2024 Plan | 500,000 | 20.5% |

The preliminary Free Cash plan contains the annual appropriation to the Reserve Account in the amount of \$175,000, which is the same as in FY2023. Also included in the plan is a contribution of \$500,000 to the FY2024 Operating Budget, which is the goal specified



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in our policy. Finally, the Town has the option to contribute additional funds to the Stabilization Fund and/or use the funds to pay for capital projects, thereby forgoing any debt costs. As currently drafted, the plan calls for contributing \$200,000 to the Stabilization Fund in an effort to maintain current reserve levels, as well as using up to \$1,065,073 to pay for various capital projects which will be developed during the annual capital planning process with the Financial Planning Committee.

Lastly, the plan contemplates leaving approximately \$500,000 in unappropriated Free Cash, which would remain available if needed. This is a financially conservative approach, since it ensures that the Town will have at least the same level of Free Cash for use in the subsequent operating budget. The Town opted for a similar approach in each of the past nine fiscal years, leaving at least \$500,000 remaining in uncommitted Free Cash following the approval of all operating and capital appropriations.

It is important to note that the Town's bond rating, which was upgraded to Aa1 during FY2016, increased partially due to the Town's healthy financial reserves and disciplined implementation of the Free Cash Policy. Maintenance of reserves will be critical as we contemplate moving forward with significant capital projects such as the new fire station.

As with most aspects of our capital and operating budgets, the final use of Free Cash remains subject to Town Meeting approval and appropriation. The point of this exercise is to generate a planning tool based upon available resources and the Town's policy guidelines. The Financial Planning Committee and Appropriations Committee will now begin meeting to discuss the various projects and funding plans for recommendation at Town Meeting.

For your reference, I have attached to this memo an updated version of the previously distributed "Introduction to the Free Cash Policy" document, which is presented in the format of frequently asked questions. In addition, a copy of the appropriate section of the Financial Policies contained in Appendix A of the Annual Budget document is included for your information.

I look forward to discussing this information in more detail at your December 5th meeting.

John W. Coderre
Town Administrator



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

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Introduction to Northborough's Free Cash Policy

1. What is Free Cash?

In its most basic definition, Free Cash is the fiscal year-end combination of revenues that come in higher than estimated and expenditures that come in lower than budgeted. Free Cash is an available fund that is composed of the remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year including unexpended free cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates and unspent amounts in appropriated budget line-items. After the June 30th close of the fiscal year, the Town's Free Cash is certified by the State Department of Revenue and only then is it available for appropriation.

2. Why is Free Cash identified as “one-time” revenue and what are the budgetary considerations associated with this type of revenue source?

In the past, the Town of Northborough relied upon significant amounts of Free Cash to balance the operating budget and we continued this practice for many years. However, the dependency upon “one-time” available funds to supply a portion of the foundation for the operating budget essentially created a rolling “Structural Deficit”. Further, while we realize that a significant portion of the operating budget has traditionally been based on this financing source, it proved impossible during a previous economic downturn to continue using the same level of Free Cash to fund the operating budget. By necessity, use of Free Cash in the operating budget was systematically phased down over the years from \$700,000 in FY2010, to \$600,000 in FY2011, and ultimately, \$500,000 in FY2012. The Free Cash Policy target of \$500,000 was maintained from FY2012 to FY2020.

During FY2021 the economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic required \$878,000 in one-time revenues to balance the operating budget. The use of additional one-time funds was done in accordance with the Free Cash Policy “to allow for fiscal flexibility” during the declared state of emergency. During FY2022 the use of Free Cash returned to the policy target of \$500,00 where it is anticipated to remain in FY2024.

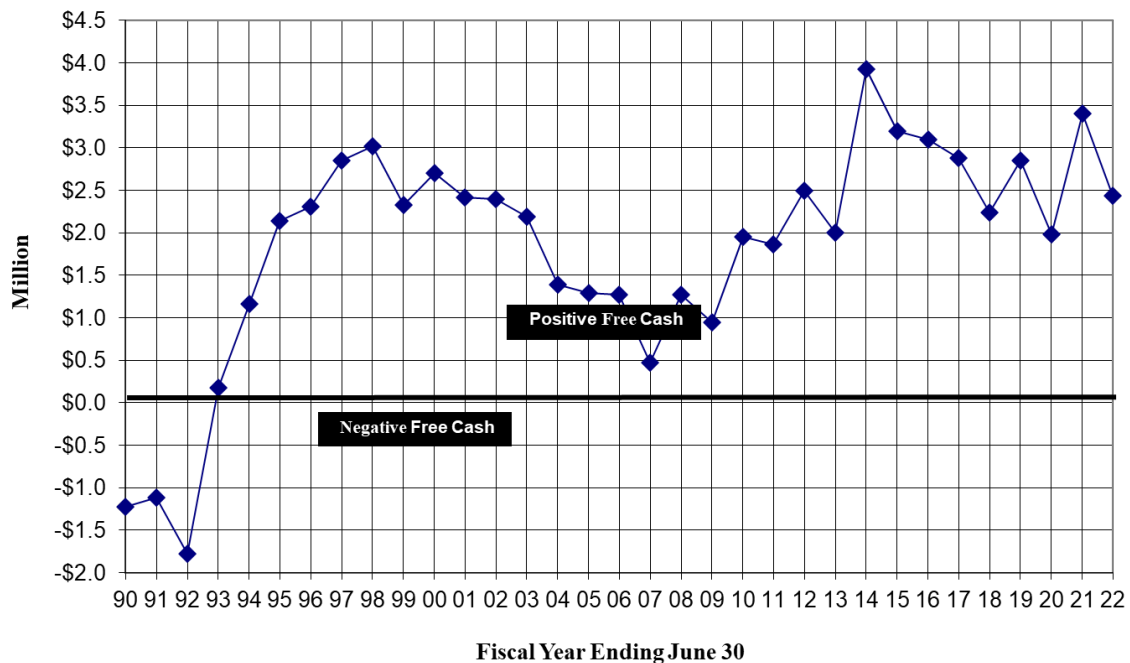


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Throughout the most recent budgets cycles a combination of positive economic activity and conservative financial management has kept the Town of Northborough in a good financial position. Certified Free Cash has varied over the last 33 years from negative \$1.78 million to \$3.93 million in the positive, as Free Cash levels tend to loosely mirror the general economic cycles. However, certified Free Cash over the last ten years has averaged \$2.81 million.

Certified Free Cash FY1990-2022



*Source: Massachusetts Department of Revenue

The chart above illustrates the unpredictability of Free Cash as a budgeted revenue source since it is heavily influenced by economic activity and political decision-making in the State Legislature. Any level of Free Cash used in the operating budget must be reasonably expected to recur in subsequent years. If the Town fails to generate sufficient Free Cash to replenish what was used, a structural deficit will materialize that could result in significant service reductions. More importantly, that structural shortfall would carry forward into subsequent fiscal years.



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3. What is the difference between a Free Cash Policy and a Free Cash Plan?

The Free Cash Policy represents the Town's agreed upon and principled approach to how this unpredictable revenue source will be used. The policy guides our decision-making process based upon sound financial planning practices and sets realistic and sustainable goals. The Free Cash Plan is the annual implementation of how actual Free Cash will be used during the budget process in the context of our policy guidelines. Any use of Free Cash is subject to Town Meeting approval and appropriation.

4. What are the acceptable uses of Free Cash under the policy?

The Free Cash Policy attempts to line up one-time revenues with appropriate one-time expenditures. A goal of the policy is to minimize the level at which recurring expenses, such as personnel, are dependent upon this revenue source. To that end, the following are explicitly authorized uses of Free Cash under the adopted policy:

- **Appropriation Committee's Reserve Fund** – Authorized by state statute, the Reserve Fund provides the Town operations with an option for the funding of extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures during the year, such as snow and ice overdrafts. Transfers from this account require the approval of the Appropriations Committee. Historically, the fund has contained approximately \$118,500 at the start of the budget year. During the last recessionary period the fund was significantly less due to financial constraints and in FY2011 the Reserve Fund was budgeted at only \$80,000. Under the 2010 Free Cash Policy this fund was raised to \$150,000 in FY2012 and later increased to \$175,000 in FY2016 where it remained. During FY2021 the Reserve Fund was increased to \$375,000 due to the uncertainty of potential COVID-19 impacts. However, in FY2022 the Reserve Account returned to \$175,000 where it is anticipated to remain in FY2024. Any unused amount of the Reserve Fund returns to Free Cash at year-end. The Reserve Fund is designed to deal with one-time extraordinary expenditures and is therefore an appropriate use of Free Cash.
- **Limited Subsidy of the Operating Budget** – Over recent years the Town pursued a gradual transition away from using Free Cash to fund recurring operational expenses. This was accomplished by annually reducing the appropriation by \$100,000 until such time as the appropriation from Free Cash into the operating budget was lowered to \$500,000. This goal was fully realized in FY2012. Based upon trend analysis and historical data, it is anticipated that \$500,000, or approximately 1% of the operating budget, is a sustainable level.



TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

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Given the need for conservative revenue estimates, the Town strives to generate 2-3% more in revenues than budgeted. Given the necessity of the practice, it is reasonable to return a portion of the Free Cash generated from conservative estimates back into subsequent budgets. The key is to use an amount that will realistically be available in subsequent years. It is anticipated that the level of Free Cash used in the FY2024 operating Budget will be at the target amount of \$500,000.

- **Capitalize the Stabilization Fund** – The Stabilization Fund can be thought of as the Town’s emergency savings account. It is designed to accumulate amounts for unforeseen circumstances, capital and other future spending purposes, although it may be appropriated for any lawful purpose in accordance with MGL Ch. 40 §5B. Communities may establish one or more stabilization funds for different purposes and may appropriate into them in any year an amount not to exceed ten percent of the prior year’s tax levy. The total of all stabilization fund balances shall not exceed ten percent of the community’s equalized value, and any interest shall be added to and become a part of the funds. A two-thirds vote of Town Meeting is required to establish, amend the purpose of, or appropriate money from the Stabilization Fund. However, it only requires a simple majority to appropriate money into one.

Historically, the budget provided for an annual appropriation of \$100,000 to be added to the Stabilization Fund. However, from FY2008 through FY2015 no appropriations were possible due to financial constraints. In any given year ending with healthy Free Cash levels, an appropriation to the Stabilization Fund would be among the appropriate uses for the funds and a practice that would add to the Town’s overall financial stability. Such an appropriation in the amount of \$200,000 was made in FY2020 but deferred in FY2021 and FY2022 due to the pandemic. During FY2023 the \$200,000 appropriation was returned to the Stabilization Fund. To maintain reserve ratios, it is again recommended that \$200,000 be appropriated into the Stabilization Fund in FY2024.

- **Capital Improvement Program** – Another good use of Free Cash is to fund capital projects that would otherwise incur borrowing costs associated with the issuance of debt. The financing of small capital projects or equipment is not considered a best practice for a community our size. Although perfectly legal, the Town has moved away from incurring debt for vehicles and other small equipment purchases. Bond rating agencies prefer to see Towns using a pay-as-you-go approach for smaller capital projects. The one-time nature of Free Cash makes it an excellent match for one-time capital expenditures. If for some reason



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sufficient Free Cash does not materialize in a given year, the Town can make the decision to borrow for capital projects, or delay them, without causing immediate impact to the operating budget and related services. Most recently, the Town chose to exercise the option of postponing some capital projects in FY2021 in order to temporarily free up financial resources during the pandemic emergency.

- **Extraordinary Deficits & Emergency Appropriations** – Lastly, Free Cash could be used to fund any potential deficits that would otherwise be carried over to the following fiscal year, such as snow and ice deficits, or emergency appropriations.

5. Why did the Town adopt a Free Cash Policy?

During the “Great Recession,” the Town was forced to deal with the operational impacts of reduced Free Cash for several budget cycles. To manage the decline of Free Cash and the impact on the operating budget, all departments had to constrain spending. When the economy improved, the Town did not want to simply return to undisciplined past practices that would leave finances vulnerable again. A goal of the Free Cash Policy is to hold the use of Free Cash in the operating budget to a sustainable level (less than 1%) and use it in a manner that adds to our long-term financial stability, such as funding capital projects.

6. What are the key benefits of the adopted Free Cash Policy and related Free Cash Plan?

- Creates a principle-based decision-making process that establishes clear, agreed upon priorities and expectations regarding the use of Free Cash.
- Provides for a planned, sustainable level of Free Cash to be used in the operating budget; thereby, preventing wild swings in available revenues.
- Links one-time revenues to one-time expenses and provides an appropriate funding source for capital projects, especially small pay-as-you-go equipment purchases.
- It strengthens the Town’s overall financial position by lowering our reliance on one-time revenues in the operating budget, provides for adequate financial



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reserves, eliminates financing costs for small projects, and increases flexibility and lead time to address significant changes in economic conditions.

- Lastly, it strengthens our bond rating; thereby lowering interest costs on future debt.



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**Excerpted from Town of Northborough's Adopted Financial Management Policies
contained in Appendix A of the FY2022 Budget document**

TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT POLICIES

III GENERAL FUND

- D. Reserves reflect a community's ability to react to unforeseen circumstances and to minimize or avoid borrowing for capital expenditures. Reserves should normally range between 5% and 10% of the Town's General Fund (operating budget) Expenditures. The Town will endeavor to continue its policy of maintaining reserves at 10% of General Fund Expenditures. Reserves are defined to include the Town's Stabilization Fund and Free Cash.

The Stabilization Fund is the Town's main reserve fund designed to provide financial stability for the Town while improving the Town's credit worthiness and flexibility. The provisions of this fund are dictated by Massachusetts General Law, Chapter 40, Section 5B. The Stabilization Fund may be appropriated for any lawful purpose. However, at no time can an appropriation placed into the fund exceed 10% of the previous year's real property tax levy, nor can the fund itself exceed 10% of the equalized value of the Town.

Free Cash reserves are the remaining, unrestricted funds from operations of the previous fiscal year; these include unexpended Free Cash from the previous year, actual receipts in excess of revenue estimates and unspent amounts in budget line-items. Once certified, monies held in this reserve may be appropriated during the current budget year and may also be used as a source of revenues for the ensuing budget year.

The Town has historically used some portion of its Free Cash to subsidize the ensuing year's annual operating budget. However, it is the Town's goal to limit the amount of Free Cash used in the operating budget to a sustainable level and to use these available funds for non-recurring one-time expenses, such as capital items.



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For purposes of this policy, the following are deemed to be appropriate uses of Free Cash:

- Appropriated Reserve – an amount to provide for extraordinary or unforeseen expenditures as authorized by MGL Chapter 40, Section 6.
- Operating Budget – in order to pursue a gradual transition from using Free Cash to fund recurring operational expenses, the Town will reduce its annual appropriation by \$100,000 each year until such time as the annual appropriation from Free Cash for the operating budget is lowered to \$500,000.
- Stabilization Fund – to fund or replenish the Stabilization Fund.
- Capital Improvement Program – to fund capital projects that would otherwise incur borrowing costs associated with the issuance of debt.
- Special Use – to augment the trust funds related to fringe benefits and unfunded liabilities related to employee fringe benefits.
- Extraordinary Deficits – to fund any potential deficits that would otherwise be carried over to the following fiscal year.
- Emergency Appropriations – to allow for fiscal flexibility.

The overall level of Financial Reserves is critical to maintaining the Town's Bond Rating and ensuring sufficient funds to manage unanticipated needs. Funds shall be allocated from Reserves only after an analysis has been prepared by the Town Administrator and presented to the Board of Selectmen. The analysis shall provide sufficient evidence to establish that the remaining balance is adequate to offset potential downturns in revenue sources and provide sufficient cash balance for daily financial needs.

[RETURN TO AGENDA](#)



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: Town Administrator

SUBJECT: FY2024 Budget and Town Meeting Calendar

DATE: December 1, 2022

Attached please find another copy of the FY2024 Budget and Town Meeting Calendar, which was previously distributed as part of the FY2024 Budget Manual. The only update is the addition of the December 15th Annual Financial Trend Monitoring & Fiscal Forecast Presentation meeting.

John W. Coderre

FY2024 BUDGET & TOWN MEETING CALENDAR

November 15, 2022

FY2023 Budget Manual and instructions distributed.

December 6, 2022

Operational Budget requests due to Town Administrator.

December 15, 2022

Annual Financial Trend Monitoring and Fiscal Forecast Presentation meeting with Board of Selectmen, Appropriations Committee, Financial Planning Committee and K-8 School Committee.

November 2022 through January 2023

Operational Budget reviews with Town Administrator.

Weekly evenings January through early March 2023

Appropriations Committee meetings held to review departmental budget requests. Schedule with dates will be provided.

February 3, 2023

Warrant Articles submitted to Town Administrator.

February 27, 2023

Selectmen review warrant (Code 9-08-010).

March 13, 2023

Selectmen close warrant (Code 9-08-010) & submit warrant to Town Counsel for review (Code 9-08-010).

Week of March 13, 2023

Appropriations Committee votes their recommendations on all financial warrant articles.

March 27, 2023

Joint Meeting: Selectmen and Appropriations – Final Budget Hearing (Charter 6-5).

April 10, 2023 (2 weeks before ATM)

Post warrant (Code 1-80-030) & make available in Town Clerk's Office (Code 1-80-300).

April 24, 2023

Annual Town Meeting

May 9, 2023

Annual Town Election



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen

FROM: Town Administrator

SUBJECT: January through April 2023 Selectmen's Meetings

DATE: November 22, 2022

Below, please see the regular meeting schedule for January through April. As there are no holiday conflicts, we will hold to the second and fourth Mondays of each month.

Regularly Scheduled Meetings

January 9

January 23

February 13

February 27

March 13

March 27

April 10

April 24 – Town Meeting

John W. Coderre

[RETURN TO AGENDA](#)



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Board of Selectmen
FROM: Town Administrator
SUBJECT: Christmas Eve
DATE: December 2, 2022

At your December 5th Board Meeting, I would like to raise for your consideration the possibility of closing Town Hall offices, DPW and the Senior Center on Friday, December 23rd to allow non-essential employees additional time with their families this holiday season. Employees not scheduled to work on this day shall receive their regular rate of pay. In the event that essential employees are called in to work, they shall receive their normal rate of compensation.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this request.

John W. Coderre

[RETURN TO AGENDA](#)

Know All Men By These Presents
That the
Town of Northborough

A body corporate and politic situated in the County of Worcester and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for and in consideration of Five Hundred _____ Dollars for burial plot and Seven Hundred _____ Dollars for perpetual care, a total of Twelve Hundred _____ Dollars to be paid by Patricia & Richard McDonald Sr. _____ of 367 Brigham Street _____, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby sell and convey unto the said Patricia & Richard McDonald Sr. _____ and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns (subject to all limitations upon succession and transfer prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth and regulations of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the Town of Northborough as now or hereafter in force), the sole and exclusive right of burial in the lots in the **Northborough Cemetery**, in said Town of Northborough, shown and numbered as Grave(s) 1016 & 1017, Section 5N upon a plan on file in the office of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners, together with the right of erecting a tomb, cenotaph, monument or other structure upon such lot, subject to the following restrictions:

Upright Marker

However the aforementioned right shall be held and exercised in all instances in accordance with the subject to the regulations of said Cemetery Commissioners as now or hereafter in force, to which said regulations the attention of the grantee is hereby specifically directed.

To Have and to Hold, the above granted premises unto the said Grantee and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever; subject, however, to the limitations and conditions hereinbefore stated.

In Witness Whereof the said Town of Northborough has caused these presents to be signed in the corporate name of said Town by the Board of Selectmen, and the corporate seal of the Town to be affixed thereto, this 5th day of December, 2022.



INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

Northborough Board of Selectmen

Mitch Cohen

Julianne Hirsh

Kristen Wixted

Jason Perreault

T. Scott Rogers

Recorded: _____

Town Clerk

DEED

Town of Northborough

to:

Patricia & Richard McDonald Sr.

367 Brigham Street

Lot No.

Grave(s) 1016 & 1017

Section No.

5N

Date

December 5, 2022

Northborough Cemetery



Know All Men By These Presents
That the
Town of Northborough

A body corporate and politic situated in the County of Worcester and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for and in consideration of Five Hundred Dollars for burial plot and Seven Hundred Dollars for perpetual care, a total of Twelve Hundred Dollars to be paid by Christine & Richard McDonald Jr. of 367 Brigham Street, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby sell and convey unto the said Christine & Richard McDonald Jr. and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns (subject to all limitations upon succession and transfer prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth and regulations of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the Town of Northborough as now or hereafter in force), the sole and exclusive right of burial in the lots in the **Northborough Cemetery**, in said Town of Northborough, shown and numbered as Grave(s) 1018 & 1019, Section 5N upon a plan on file in the office of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners, together with the right of erecting a tomb, cenotaph, monument or other structure upon such lot, subject to the following restrictions:

Upright Marker

However the aforementioned right shall be held and exercised in all instances in accordance with the subject to the regulations of said Cemetery Commissioners as now or hereafter in force, to which said regulations the attention of the grantee is hereby specifically directed.

To Have and to Hold, the above granted premises unto the said Grantee and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever; subject, however, to the limitations and conditions hereinbefore stated.

In Witness Whereof the said Town of Northborough has caused these presents to be signed in the corporate name of said Town by the Board of Selectmen, and the corporate seal of the Town to be affixed thereto, this 5th day of December, 2022.



INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

Northborough Board of Selectmen

Mitch Cohen

Julianne Hirsh

Kristen Wixted

Jason Perreault

J. Scott Rogers

Recorded: _____

Town Clerk

DEED

Town of Northborough

to:

Christine & Richard McDonald Jr.

367 Brigham Street

Lot No.

Grave(s) 1018 & 1019

Section No.

5N

Date

December 5, 2022

Northborough Cemetery



Know All Men By These Presents
That the
Town of Northborough

A body corporate and politic situated in the County of Worcester and Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for and in consideration of Five Hundred Dollars for burial plot and Seven Hundred Dollars for perpetual care, a total of Twelve Hundred Dollars to be paid by Thomas F. Jr. & Mary E. Sullivan of 232 Crawford Street, the receipt whereof is hereby acknowledged, does hereby sell and convey unto the said Thomas F. Jr. & Mary E. Sullivan and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns (subject to all limitations upon succession and transfer prescribed by the laws of the Commonwealth and regulations of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners of the Town of Northborough as now or hereafter in force), the sole and exclusive right of burial in the lots in the Northborough Cemetery, in said Town of Northborough, shown and numbered as Grave(s) 1039 & 1040, Section 5N upon a plan on file in the office of the Board of Cemetery Commissioners, together with the right of erecting a tomb, cenotaph, monument or other structure upon such lot, subject to the following restrictions:

Upright Marker

However the aforementioned right shall be held and exercised in all instances in accordance with the subject to the regulations of said Cemetery Commissioners as now or hereafter in force, to which said regulations the attention of the grantee is hereby specifically directed.

To Have and to Hold, the above granted premises unto the said Grantee and/or his/her heirs, executors, administrators and assigns forever; subject, however, to the limitations and conditions hereinbefore stated.

In Witness Whereof the said Town of Northborough has caused these presents to be signed in the corporate name of said Town by the Board of Selectmen, and the corporate seal of the Town to be affixed thereto, this 5th day of December, 2022.



INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF NORTHBOROUGH

Northborough Board of Selectmen

- Mitch Cohen
- Julianne Hirsh
- Kristen Wixted
- Jason Perreault
- J. Scott Rogers

Recorded: _____

Town Clerk

DEED

Town of Northborough

to:

Thomas F. Jr. & Mary E. Sullivan

232 Crawford Street

Lot No.

Grave(s) 1039 & 1040

Section No.

5N

Date

December 5, 2022

Northborough Cemetery

