

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES – February 24, 2020**

7:00 p.m. - Selectmen's Meeting Room, 63 Main Street, Northborough, MA

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Jason Perreault, Chairman  
Dawn Rand, Vice Chairman  
Timothy Kaelin, Clerk  
Leslie Rutan  
Julianne Hirsh

\*Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Perreault recognized Webelo Den Scouts and their Den Leader from Pack 55 who were attending the meeting as part of their merit badge – *Building a Better World Adventure*.

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 10, 2020 REGULAR MEETING**

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the minutes of the February 10, 2020 meeting as submitted; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion. Vote 4-0-1 (Chairman Perreault was absent from the meeting and therefore abstained).

**7:00 p.m. - SARAH-JANE BELINSKAS DBA BEYOND NUTRITION**

To consider an application for a Common Victualler License as submitted by Sarah-Jane Belinskas d/b/a Beyond Nutrition, LLC for premises located at 269 West Main Street, Unit 2A.

Sarah-Jane Belinskas was present to request the Board's approval of her application for a Common Victualler license for premises located at 269 West Main Street – Unit 2A. Ms. Belinskas is planning to open a nutrition club called Beyond Nutrition. The club will serve nutritional shakes and teas.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to grant a common victualler license to Sarah-Jane Belinskas of Beyond Nutrition LLC for premises located at 269 West Main Street, Unit 2A with the condition that the licensee receive satisfactory inspections by the Building, Fire and Health Departments; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

**REPORTS**

Julianne Hirsh

- Welcomed the Scouts to the meeting.
- Thanked the fifth-grade classes at the Peaslee Elementary School for the handwritten Valentine's card. Encouraged the students to continue to communicate with the Board.

Julianne Hirsh Cont. . .

- Attended the recent meeting of the Cultural Council. Noted that the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Cultural Council Grantee Reception will be held on February 27<sup>th</sup> from 6:30pm – 8:00pm at the Library.
- Attended the recent Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Listening Session regarding options on how to advance climate resilience in Town. Noted that additional information can be found on the Town website.
- Announced that the Northborough Historical Society will be conducting their calendar raffle fundraiser during the month of March.
- Asked Lieutenant Galvin to speak about the Civilian Police Academy. Lieutenant Galvin announced that the Police Department will host the first Boroughs Civilian Police Academy along with the Westborough and Southborough Police Departments. The academy begins on April 1<sup>st</sup> and runs for eight consecutive Wednesday evenings. Applications are available at the Police Department.

Leslie Rutan

- Noted how pleased she is to see the Town Hall façade project coming along.
- Noted that early voting is available at the Town Hall February 23 – 28.
- Reminded the public that the hands-free driving law is now in effect.
- Attended the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Listening Session. Thanked Town staff for their efforts in this regard.
- Congratulations to the Algonquin Girls Gymnastic Team for their wins at the Mid-Wach Championships.

Tim Kaelin, Clerk

- Reminded drivers to pay attention to school buses now that the kids are back to school after their February vacation.
- Attended the recent meeting of the Council on Aging where questions were asked about the status of the hiring of a Facilities Manager. Mr. Coderre stated that he is hopeful that a Senior Center Director will be hired soon, followed by an Assistant Town Administrator and a Facilities Manager soon after.

Dawn Rand, Vice Chair

- No report.

Jason Perreault, Chair

- Extended his appreciation to Selectman Rand for conducting the last Selectmen's meeting in his absence.
- Thanked the fifth graders from the Peaslee Elementary School for their homemade Valentine's card. Encouraged the students to continue the dialogue.
- Noted that the Planning Board's process of reviewing the Master Plan continues to be ongoing and that he will continue to provide updates.
- Attended the Memorial Hockey Game at the North Star Arena in honor of Army Specialist Brian Arsenault. Proceeds from this event will benefit the Brian Arsenault Memorial Scholarship Fund.
- Noted the hours for early voting at the Town Hall between February 23 – 28. Reminded residents that the Presidential Primary will be held at the Melican Middle School on Tuesday, March 3<sup>rd</sup>.

John Coderre

- Announced that Senators Harriette Chandler and James Eldridge, as well as Representatives Harold Naughton and Daniel Gregoire will be present at the March 9<sup>th</sup> Board meeting to discuss the Towns' legislative priorities.

**PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Lisa Maselli of 13 Maple Street was present to follow up on her public comments made at the Board's last meeting regarding LED speed limit signs on Davis Street and her inquiry about the process of installing similar signs on other streets in Town.

DPW Director Scott Charpentier reviewed the safety measures taken in response to the number of motor vehicle accidents on the short end of Davis Street. He stated that in addition to a truck exclusion and additional signage, new LED speed limit signs were installed at each portal to Davis Street. He indicated that this is a pilot program to see if the signs are effective in reducing motor vehicle accidents and enforcement issues. As this is a costly endeavor, the plan is to evaluate the effectiveness of these signs over an appropriate period of time.

Chairman Perreault reiterated that these signs were installed as part of a pilot program and that further installations of LED signs will not be entertained until it is understood whether or not these signs are effective and worthwhile.

Ms. Maselli inquired about the process of obtaining additional signage for the existing truck exclusion on Maple Street. Mr. Coderre suggested that Ms. Maselli speak with DPW Director Scott Charpentier regarding her questions about sign management.

**UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2021 BUDGET**

Mr. Coderre referenced the following overall budget goals and objectives as discussed at the December 12, 2019 Financial Trend Monitoring Presentation:

1. To protect and improve the Town's overall Financial Condition
2. To develop a budget that is in conformance with the Town's comprehensive financial policies
3. To maintain Northborough as an affordable place to live and operate a business
4. To protect the Town's long-run solvency

Following a brief review of the FY2021 revenue assumptions, including State Aid, New Growth and Local Receipts, Mr. Coderre reviewed the following issues that will impact the key budgets.

Mr. Coderre reviewed the factors that will most impact the key budgets. He reported that the single biggest issue with the FY2021 budget is the ARHS Assessment, which was projected to increase at 7-8% due to shifting enrollments. This is not the result of any decision made by the School Administration and is mainly the result of increasing Northborough enrollment as it relates to the State's Chapter 70 formula for minimum local contribution.

**UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2021 BUDGET CONT. . .**

The overall tax impact is estimated to be approximately \$65 lower than the \$390 preliminary estimates discussed at the Financial Trend Monitoring presentation in December. Also, the required use of excess levy capacity will be significantly reduced.

Lastly, Mr. Coderre reported that based upon revised assumptions, the target budgets for the key departments are proposed to increase as follows:

- Northborough K-8 Schools increase \$785,859 or 3.15% to \$25,714,417
- General Government (Town) increases \$783,694, or 3.5% to \$23,174,967
- The overall Assabet Valley Vocational HS operating budget is increasing 4.15%. However, Northborough's Operating Assessment increases by \$170,364, or 24.52% to \$865,186 as enrollment increases from 45 to 53 students. Debt service associated with the completed renovation project decreases from \$141,488 to \$137,660, a 2.71% reduction.
  - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is \$1,002,846, an overall increase of \$166,536, or 19.91%
- The overall Algonquin Regional High School (ARHS) budget is increasing 3.31%. The ARHS Operating Assessment is increasing \$533,979, or 4.36% to \$12,786,493 based upon Northborough enrollment and related impacts to the State's foundation budget and minimum local contribution formula. The debt for ARHS increases by \$10,787 or 1.74% to \$632,229.
  - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is an overall increase of \$544,766, or 4.23%

Mr. Coderre noted that the various departments, including the Schools will present their budget proposals to the Appropriations Committee over the next few weeks.

The Board thanked Mr. Coderre, Town staff, the School Superintendent and the School Committees for their collaborative efforts in preparing the FY2021 Budgets.

**STATUS UPDATE ON FY2020 SNOW & ICE BUDGET**

DPW Director Scott Charpentier provided a status update on the Snow & Ice Account for FY2020. The original FY2020 Snow and Ice appropriation was \$437,000. As of February 20<sup>th</sup>, approximately \$265,842, or 60.8% has been spent, leaving a remaining balance of \$171,158.

**REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY TOWN MEETING WARRANT**

Mr. Coderre presented to the Board a draft summary of the warrant articles for the 2020 Annual Town Meeting as follows:

Article 1

Appointment of Deputy Moderator

Articles 2 – 11

Relate to the Operating Budgets

Articles 12 – 24

Relate to Capital Budget requests for various equipment and building projects

Article 26

Relates to the Old Fire Station to surplus the building and place certain constraints on any redevelopment

Article 27

Relates to the expired Cell Tower Lease on Bearfoot Road. The Town owns the property and is seeking Town Meeting approval to engage in a bid process for new leases in excess of 3 years.

Article 28

Relates to the change in Town Meeting Start/End time from 7pm – 11pm to 6pm – 10pm

Article 29

Relates to the School Bus Transportation Contract

Articles 30 – 37

Relate to CPC articles

Articles 38 – 45

Relate to Zoning Bylaw articles

Following his review of the draft warrant articles, Mr. Coderre added that the Community Preservation Committee and the Town Planner will be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss each of their warrant articles in more detail. A separate presentation to the Board will review the Financial Planning Committee's recommended Capital Budgets for Town Meeting. The Board will vote to close the warrant at its March 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**DISCUSSION OF TOWN MEETING REMINDER ON TAX BILL ENVELOPE**

Chairman Perreault noted that at a previous meeting, Selectman Hirsh asked if a Town Meeting reminder could be printed on the outside envelope of the next tax bill. At the January 27<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, Mr. Coderre indicated that the estimate to do so would cost approximately \$500.

Selectman Hirsh stated that in addition to the advertising methods already in place for the date and time of the Annual Town Meeting, she feels that \$500 is a worthwhile expense to further encourage residents to attend Town Meeting. She added that this would also be beneficial given the change of the start time of Town Meeting from 7:30pm to 7pm.

**DISCUSSION OF TOWN MEETING REMINDER ON TAX BILL ENVELOPE**

Chairman Perreault, Selectmen Rand, Rutan and Kaelin were not in support of the additional expense of \$500 to try to encourage people to attend Town Meeting, in light of all the other methods of advertising currently employed by the Town. The consensus was that it's not that residents don't know about Town Meeting, but rather not all are interested in participating.

**EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED 1093**

Selectman Kaelin moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1093; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell  
Executive Assistant to the  
Board of Selectmen

**Documents used during meeting:**

1. February 24, 2020 Meeting Agenda
2. February 10, 2020 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – Common Victualer License
4. Memorandum – Preliminary FY2021 Budget Update
5. Memorandum – Snow & Ice Budget Update
6. Preliminary Town Meeting Warrant Summary
7. Memorandum – Town Meeting Reminder on Tax Bill Envelope
8. Cemetery Deed 1093