



TOWN OF NORTON
SELECT BOARD
MUNICIPAL CENTER
70 EAST MAIN STREET
NORTON, MA 02766

Telephone (508) 285-0210; Facsimile (508) 285-0297

RECEIVED
NORTON TOWN CLERK
2021 JAN -5 A 10:39

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
November 12, 2020

I. Call to Order by Chair

The November 12, 2020 meeting of the Norton Select Board was held remotely (Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6391519600>; Phone: 646-558 8656; Meeting ID: 639 151 9600, and was called to order at 6:34 P.M., by Mr. John Conway, Chair. Member(s) present: Ms. Renee Deley, Mr. Michael Toole, Mr. Bradford K. Bramwell, and Ms. Megan Artz. Also in attendance: Mr. Michael D. Yunits, Town Manager.

II. Appointments/Resignations/Retirements

1. Appointment of Assistant Water & Sewer Superintendent.

Mr. Yunits gave a background on Mr. John H. Harrop. Mr. Francis Fournier, III, Water/Sewer Superintendent, acknowledged Mr. Harrop's hard-work and dedication to obtaining the certifications and licenses required of the position and in such a short period of time. Mr. Fournier commented that Mr. Harrop also has a vast knowledge of the computer system.

Mr. Toole clarified that this position has been budgeted for and this isn't a new position, but rather a position that has been vacant and Mr. Yunits stated that this was correct. Mr. Bramwell expressed that Mr. Harrop seemed like a great candidate and employee for the position.

MOTION was made by Mr. Toole to approve the appointment of John Harrop as the Assistant Water & Sewer Superintendent. Seconded by Ms. Deley. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

2. Appointment to the Conservation Commission.

Attorney Kerry Malloy Snyder said she is very interested in serving on the Conservation Commission. She informed the Select Board that she is an attorney and most of her career has been spent on public policy (currently health and environment fields). Attorney Snyder explained that as part of her job, she advocates for responsible development and works with municipal staff on state and federal permits. She continued listing her qualifications and experience to the Board and explained that when she isn't working with the developers, she is advocating by attending Planning Board meetings and Conservation Commission meetings. She emphasized that she wants to make sure that as the Town grows that they also protect the Town's natural resources and stay resilient against climate change. Attorney Snyder has worked with residents, volunteers, and elected officials, so she understands the tensions that can arise with development and protecting the environment.

Ms. Deley asked Attorney Snyder if there would be any situations where she would have to recuse herself because of her job. Attorney Snyder said she would not because the company she works for does not work within this district.

Mr. Matthew Harkins advised that he just moved to the Town in late January. He informed the Board that he is 30 years old and been in the military for 12 years. Mr. Harkins said he is currently working as an intelligence analyst for the military down the Cape and is working towards his Masters in Public Administration. He explained that he is working to learn more about the environmental side of things. Mr. Harkins lastly stated that he also served as a Sheriff for Fish and Game and was on the Board of Directors for Fish and Game.

Mr. Toole asked both candidates if they would be willing to serve as an alternate on the Conservation Commission since there is only one opening and they both said that they would.

Mr. Toole read Ms. Tamah Vest's letter of interest since she was not in attendance. The letter explained that she the Product Stewardship Manager at a local nonwovens manufacturer. Her job includes review of chemical and environmental regulations across the globe to ensure that their products meet all standards when used in important end applications, such as medical face masks and air filters. Mr. Toole advised that she also participates in the Land Preservation Society of Norton.

Mr. Toole explained that he has worked with Attorney Snyder on projects within the Town and she is great. Ms. Deley mentioned that there was a recommendation from the Conservation Commission. Mr. Yunits confirmed that the Conservation Commission met on Monday and gave their opinion on who they would like to fill the position. Mr. Conway read the e-mail stating that the Commission felt the person with most experience was Attorney Snyder.

Mr. Toole suggested to the Conservation Commission to have an alternate position if it doesn't violate the Charter or bylaws. Ms. Deley said Attorney Snyder has a lot of experience and is well versed in the area and can hit the ground running as the Conservation Agent said. The Board encouraged Mr. Harkins to volunteer on another board/committee/commission and he agreed.

MOTION was made by Ms. Deley to appoint Kerry Malloy Snyder to the Conservation Commission. Seconded by Mr. Bramwell. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

III. Licenses and Permits

There were no licenses or permits to approve.

IV. Announcements

1. Norton Parks & Recreation - Holiday Veterans' Gift Card Collection.

There will be a gift card collection until December 16, 2020 to help Norton veterans this holiday season. Gift cards to grocery stores, pharmacies, department stores, clothing stores, and gas stations of any denomination are most welcome. Mail gift cards to Norton Parks &

Recreation, 70 East Main Street, Norton. E-mail rices@nortonmaus.com for more information.

2. There will be a virtual jazz concert this Friday (November 20th) at 1:00 P.M. held by the Council on Aging.

3. Mr. Toole recognized the Council on Aging for receiving the grant for gas and fuel assistance grant. Mr. Yunits said if anyone is in need of fuel assistance to please contact the Council on Aging.

4. If people are in need of help for Thanksgiving, the Council on Aging is collecting names for Thanksgiving dinners. Also, it is Medicaid enrollment time, so anyone that wants to review their plan can contact the Council on Aging at 508-285-0235.

V. **Business**

A. **New Business**

1. 6:45 P.M. – Tax Classification Hearing.

MOTION was made by Mr. Bramwell to open the hearing at 7:00 P.M. Seconded by Ms. Artz. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Yunits stated that the Director of Assessing, Denise Ellis, wanted to continue the hearing to next week. Ms. Ellis explained that the software company that does their numbers is behind due to COVID-19 along with the State and asked for a continuance from the Board.

Ms. Deley asked what impact this would have on their timeline because she recalled from last year it was held around November 21st and things were tight as far as meeting deadlines. Ms. Ellis said it shouldn't as long as they get their numbers in.

MOTION was made by Ms. Deley to continue the tax classification public hearing until 7:00 P.M. on Thursday, November 19, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Bramwell. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Yunits clarified that their meeting next week is at 7:00 P.M. so the hearing will probably be at 7:15 P.M.

2. Discussion on Removal of Building at Reed & Barton.

Mr. Conway said he was contacted by Cheryl Guinan, who is a resident in the area of Reed & Barton and wanted to discuss with the Board if there were possibilities of removing the building. He advised that a neighborhood group has been formed to discuss this.

Ms. Guinan stated that she has lived in this area for 25 years. She advised that there are about 30 people on this coalition and more are contacting her. She reported that they have two goals: 1) a guarantee from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) saying their water source is

safe because they have had issues with that. She claimed that the Building Inspector told them to not use or drink their water; and 2) figure out the funding for the final and complete demolition of the building and cleaning up the site. Ms. Guinan also mentioned that the Building Inspector told her that the funds were gone and the EPA is out there and the building was just going to sit there for years. She further reported that one of the people on the coalition is an appraiser and that their property values have decreased by 20% and reiterated that they were told the water isn't safe and that the site is overall an eyesore and dangerous. She emphasized that they need to know what the process is to get the funding.

Mr. Toole replied that this was news to him and asked what the extent of the water issues was. Ms. Guinan said the EPA came in with hazmat suits 2 years ago saying their water wasn't safe. She explained that someone in this field says it's the downflow of the water; so, CVS, Bog Iron, and Town Hall are in the runoff source of this and their water could be affected. She lastly informed the Board that there are 3 Stage 4 cancers in their neighborhood.

Mr. Yunits referred to Ms. Guinan's comments about EPA knocking on her door and said all he could imagine was that was in the first year when the EPA was out there and had a break in the barrier that they had holding back the soil as a precaution. He said the EPA probably went down to those houses along the river at that time to caution them about that. The Town Manager then commented on Ms. Guinan's statements about the wells and said he has not heard anything yet about the two wells that the EPA tested on Talbot Drive. Mr. Yunits stated that all the wells tested on Elm Street are ok. He advised that they are still waiting on the site assessment report from the engineers with the \$100,000 grant the Town got. Mr. Yunits continued explaining that they have put a series of wells being monitored around the area and did tests so they are waiting to hear on the final results.

Mr. Bramwell questioned if he was recalling correctly that the Town was also looking to apply for a grant for \$800,000 to take down the building and that the Town didn't take the property because the Town would have inherited the problem and the expenses for cleaning up the site, which the Board and Mr. Yunits confirmed. Mr. Yunits added that the building on the corner of Cross Street was taken down because it was an imminent threat and the other buildings were taken down by the EPA. Mr. Bramwell said the Town hasn't given up on it, but rather is looking for funding sources to cleanup the site. Mr. Yunits commented that the EPA is up to expending \$3 million for cleaning up the site.

Ms. Guinan said that the Director of Planning and Economic Development, Mr. Paul DiGiuseppe, said that they are going to need the help of the coalition and that the cost to cleanup that site is going to be more than the \$800,000. She further stated that there needs to be a redevelopment plan. Mr. Paul Durkin of 7 Talbot Drive said he works in the environmental cleanup field and until you take down that building, you don't know what you have in there. Mr. Durkin's said his understanding is that the discharges were into a lagoon. He said there was TCE, PCE and asbestos in the building that is getting into the air they are breathing. Mr. DiGiuseppe said that they have a number of reports and initial assessment work that can be made available to the public. Mr. DiGiuseppe said he did speak to the Town's environmental consultant today and should have a report done by the end of the year.

Mr. Conway commented that the estimate they got (about a year ago) to take down the buildings remaining on the site/cleaning the property was \$1.4 million. Mr. Yunits said that was correct and that the new Building Commissioner is getting an updated figure. Mr.

DiGiuseppe said that the EPA is still removing oil from the site and is working to get funding to remove two silos and dig out. Mr. DiGiuseppe said they are expecting to be done with their work by the end of the year and advised that they applied for another grant for \$100,000 for further assessment.

Mr. Conway referred to Ms. Guinan's comments that the prior Building Commissioner said that it was unsafe to drink their water and told her it was the first he was hearing of this. Mr. Conway said he wants to get documentation as evidence. Mr. Toole said that the Water/Sewer Commission continues to ignore addressing the problem of water throughout the Town and they are just ignoring them as shown by the removal of the water machine outside of Town Hall and Ms. Deley agreed. Ms. Deley asked to have town counsel come in not next meeting, but the one after that for an executive session to discuss this again. Mr. Conway asked Mr. Yunits to find out if the water in that area is safe to use and/or drink.

3. Marijuana Retailer Presentations and Host Community Agreements.

Mr. Conway commented that they are not ready to proceed with this. Ms. Deley said that they are not done with their process of negotiating with the applicants, but advised that they should get through this tomorrow. She stated that the Select Board could meet at either 6:30 P.M. or 7:00 P.M. on Tuesday, November 17th or Thursday, November 19th but it would have to be early because town counsel already has a hearing that she is attending that night at 7:00 P.M. The Board agreed to meet on Thursday, November 19th at 5:30 P.M.

B. Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

C. Town Manager's Report

1. Update on CARES Act Coronavirus Relief Fund.

Mr. Yunits reported to the Board that right now the Town has spent/put in for \$1,043,000 out of \$1.7 million from the CARES Act funding; a majority of which is for distance learning and working from home and then it was PPE and things for disinfecting and barriers. He said that some of these funds were spent on filters for the air system at the schools to improve air quality. Mr. Yunits stated that they still have some money that the Town can use and have until December 30th to expend that money.

Mr. Conway said any future funds that come from this is for reimbursements so the Town would have to outlay the requests, which Mr. Yunits confirmed. Mr. Yunits added that any money spent is on items clearly approved for the funding. Mr. Conway said it would be interesting to see how Norton compares to its neighboring communities to see if they can get ideas on where they could be spending their money.

Mr. Toole said he expressed a concern for the Council on Aging and Parks & Recreation, as far as needing space for events and Mr. Yunits said he would look into it. Mr. Conway asked for clarification. Mr. Toole began explaining a short-term leasing/license fee to rent space to be able to carry out their programs to get through the winter months.

2. Mr. Yunits advised that the schools are tied into the new sewer system, specifically the Henri A. Yelle Elementary School and the High School, and the work being done now is work preparing for the winter (saw-cutting along the trunk line of the sewer and the laterals for the property). The Town Manager explained that they have to dig down 7 inches and fill in with asphalt for the winter and that in the spring they will mill and repave the whole roadway. Ms. Deley asked when they are going to finish. Mr. Yunits said probably the first week of December. Mr. Conway said he thought they had to be done by Thanksgiving according to the State. Mr. Yunits said they probably didn't want excavating going on past Thanksgiving and presumed that the State probably wants the road in better condition for the winter. Mr. Fournier stated that the contract said the deadline for excavating is November 15th, but that doesn't stop them from cleaning up the curbs and the work Mr. Yunits mentioned.

3. Setting a Date for Town Election.

Mr. Yunits said he was talking with the Town Clerk about setting a date for the town election and advised that the Board has to set the date by January 1st. He said that at a future meeting the Board can set the date and mentioned that there is Easter, Passover, and Patriots Day in April.

Ms. Longhurst said it looks like all the really have as an option is April 10th with all the holidays and April vacation (if the School Department doesn't cancel it). Ms. Deley asked when the election would be (9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.). Ms. Longhurst said that would work and could even start earlier, but she wouldn't go any later than 3:00 P.M. Ms. Deley asked if they start earlier if that would be 7:00 A.M. or 8:00 A.M. and Ms. Longhurst said probably 8:00 A.M.

MOTION was made by Ms. Deley for the Board to set the date for the 2021 Town Election to Saturday, April 10th from the hours of 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. and those hours may be adjusted as they get closer to the date. Seconded by Mr. Toole. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

VI. Select Board's Report and Mail

Mr. Toole acknowledged Horizon Beverages for the work they did today sponsoring the Grab-and-Go event for the Veterans' Appreciation Day.

VII. Meeting Minutes

MOTION was made by Ms. Deley to approve the minutes of September 17, 2020 (Open Session); September 17, 2020 (Executive Session); September 22, 2020 (Executive Session); October 1, 2020 (Open Session); October 1, 2020 (Executive Session); October 6, 2020 (Open Session); October 6, 2020 (Executive Session); October 15, 2020 (Open Session); October 15, 2020 (Joint Meeting); and October 29, 2020. Seconded by Mr. Bramwell. Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

VIII. **Warrants**

Report of Chair, John Conway, on the following Payroll and Invoice Warrants:

A. Payroll Warrant PR21-10 for the week ended October 31, 2020, Warrant dated November 5, 2020, in the amount of \$1,555,336.58.

B. Invoice Warrant AP21-19 dated November 5, 2020, in the amount of \$1,140,944.33.

C. Invoice Warrant AP21-20 dated November 12, 2020, in the amount of \$613,398.76.

IX. **Other Business**

There was no other business to discuss.

X. **Next Meeting's Agenda** – November 19, 2020 at 5:30 P.M. – Tax Classification Hearing (contd.)

XI. **Executive Session**

There was no need for an executive session.

XII. **Adjournment**

MOTION was made by Mr. Bramwell to adjourn at 8:09 P.M. Seconded by Ms. Artz.

Vote: Ms. Artz – Yes; Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Bramwell – Yes; Ms. Deley – Yes; and Mr. Conway – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.

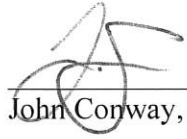
URL Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VpE9ZBVi9w>

Respectfully Submitted by:



Jennifer Reid, Office Administrator

**SELECT BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 12, 2020**



John Conway, Chair



Renee Deley, Vice Chair

Michael Toole, Clerk

Bradford K. Bramwell



Megan Artz

Minutes Approved by Board on: December 17, 2020