



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

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**Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
December 13, 2022**

**I. Call to Order by Chair**

The December 13, 2022 meeting of the Norton Select Board was held remotely (Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/6389291060>; Phone: 646-558 8656; Meeting ID: 638 929 1060), and was called to order at 7:02 P.M., by Ms. Megan Artz, Chair. Member(s) present: Mr. Kevin Snyder and Mr. Michael Toole. Mr. Steven Hornsby arrived later in the meeting after roll call. Also in attendance: Mr. Michael D. Yunits, Town Manager.

Mr. Daniel Sheedy, Chair of the School Committee, called the meeting of the Norton School Committee to order at 7:03 P.M. Members Present: Ms. Sheri Cohen, Ms. Carolyn Gallagher, and Mr. Deniz Savas.

**II. Joint Meeting with the School Committee – Interview Candidate(s) and/or Vote to Appoint Member to the Permanent Building Committee.**

Ms. Artz explained that the meaning of the meeting this evening would be to interview a candidate for appointment to the Permanent Building Committee (PBC), which is a joint appointment by the Select Board and the School Committee. Ms. Artz gave an overview of Mr. Kevin O'Neil, the candidate looking to be appointed to the PBC as follows:

- BS in Engineering
- MBA and MS in Operations and Project Management
- Permanent Building Committee (2 years), Planning Board (4 years), School Committee (6 years), High School Building Committee (4 years), Capital Improvement.

Mr. O'Neil thanked the Board and Committee for scheduling this meeting so promptly and explained that the PBC has a meeting on Monday to review the Senior/Community Support Center bid results, which he stated he would like to be a part of that discussion. He informed the Board and Committee that the reason he left the PBC after a couple of years was because he was running for the Select Board. He mentioned that he was also on the Planning Board until last April and since then, there was a resignation from the PBC; so, given his experience already serving on the PBC and High School Building Committee, which was a similar process to the current projects, he is very familiar with the process. Mr. O'Neil stated that the PBC is currently working on the final bid package and hopefully very soon the beginning of construction. Mr. O'Neil acknowledged that the Town has two big projects going on right now, but when he was previously on the PBC, the School Department was doing the windows and doors projects with the State Reimbursement Program and he remembered advising moving forward on the project even though it would be a \$4 million impact to the Town because the State was kicking in the other \$4 million. He mentioned that he also stuck his neck out a bit when it came to the Elm Street property being a potential site for the new Town Hall due to the fact that the site wasn't properly cleaned up and based off of the reports from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). He further advised that he had served on the Capital Improvements Committee.

Mr. Savas spoke to how reputable Mr. O'Neil is and thanked him for sticking his neck out when it came to the Elm Street site. He emphasized that Mr. O'Neil is a fantastic candidate who is extremely conscientious and is a very civic-minded and intelligent person. In contrast, Mr. Savas said he was very unhappy with the current process in appointing members to the PBC. He stated that it seems like the process is being very rushed and last-minute due to a misunderstanding as to how this process was supposed to go.

Ms. Artz acknowledged Mr. Savas' opinions and feelings on the matter. She stated that they also don't have the luxury of picking and choosing volunteers because there is a lack of people willing to volunteer. She added that some of them were not aware of the full process, so they have to learn as they go. Ms. Artz emphasized that when they do get candidates such as Mr. O'Neil, sometimes they have to push through and make sure that they don't lose someone because they are so worried about the actual process itself. She agreed that if the circumstance was they had 10 candidates, then they should make sure they take the time to sit down and vet every candidate; however, in this circumstance they happen to have a candidate who has been on the Committee and is also the only person that has thrown their hat into the ring. Ms. Artz also pointed out that they had an abrupt resignation from the PBC, which is what is causing this sort of precarious position, but they have someone willing and wanting to jump in and they have work to do. In response, Mr. Savas replied that he understood what the Chair was saying, but stated that this is also with the assumption that everyone knows and is familiar with Mr. O'Neil, which for some members might not be the case; so, to give them 5 minutes to speak with him to make a decision as to whether or not to appoint him seems unfair. Ms. Artz reiterated that this meeting is take this time in a public forum to vet the candidate and ask them any questions they may have and they don't necessarily have to vote this evening and could decide to vote at another meeting, but this meeting is to give the Board and Committee the opportunity to ask the candidate any questions they may have. Mr. Savas asked when this vacancy was posted. Mr. Yunits answered that on November 22<sup>nd</sup>, all the vacant positions were posted, advertised in the newspaper, put on local cable, put on the Town bulletin board, and put on the Town website. Mr. Savas then argued that the Board originally had this on their agenda for their November 30<sup>th</sup> meeting, which means they had the agenda posted on November 28<sup>th</sup>, so the position was only posted for 4 or 5 days and that is with Thanksgiving in the middle of it. Ms. Cohen asked the Town Manager if the School Committee was allowed to post the list of vacancies because they have a different target audience, which Mr. Yunits answered "yes, the more, the better." Ms. Cohen, to Mr. Savas' point, said if they had known about this, then they could have publicized as well. Ms. Cohen stated that she has worked with Mr. O'Neil on a number of projects and she is fully prepared after having worked alongside Mr. O'Neil to vote to appoint him and keep these projects going.

Mr. Sheedy addressed the fact that Mr. O'Neil has previously served on the PBC and left to pursue other public roles and asked if his intent this time is to remain on the PBC at least until the completion of these two projects, or if he has other public aspirations that may result in him have to leave the PBC again. Mr. O'Neil did inform the Select Board and School Committee that he has applied to be appointed to the Planning Board to fill a current vacancy there as well. He stated that serving on the PBC and Planning Board will be filling his time and that he has no other public service aspirations that would result in his resignation from the PBC.

Mr. O'Neil responded to Mr. Savas comments on the timeline of this appointment and pointed out that his formal submission requesting to be appointed to the PBC was November 16<sup>th</sup> and he remembered referencing the posting of the vacancy when making his submission and questioned if the posting of the vacancy was sooner.

Mr. Toole supported Mr. O'Neil by stating that he thinks he is a great candidate who is qualified to serve on the PBC.

During the motion, Mr. Hornsby asked if there was only one open seat on the PBC, which Ms. Artz confirmed.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Toole to include Kevin O'Neil as a member of the Permanent Building Committee. Seconded by Mr. Snyder. Vote: Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Hornsby – Yes; Mr. Snyder – Yes; and Ms. Artz – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

**MOTION was made by Ms. Cohen to approve Kevin O'Neil as a member of the Permanent Building Committee. Seconded by Ms. Gallagher. Vote: Ms. Cohen – Yes; Ms. Gallagher – Yes; Mr. Savas – Abstention; and Mr. Sheedy – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

Mr. O'Neil questioned when the end of his term would be seeing as he is filling the remainder of the previous Chair's term. Mr. Yunits answered that he was not sure, but he would find out and get back to him.

Mr. James Slattery, Interim Chair of the PBC, expressed his support of Mr. O'Neil and thanked the Board and Committee for appointing him.

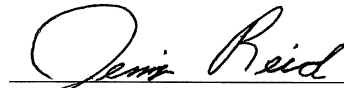
### III. Adjournment.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Toole to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 7:23 P.M. Seconded by Mr. Hornsby. Vote: Mr. Toole – Yes; Mr. Snyder – Yes; Mr. Hornsby – Yes; and Ms. Artz – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

**MOTION was made by Ms. Gallagher to adjourn the School Committee meeting at 7:23 P.M. Seconded by Ms. Cohen. Vote: Ms. Gallagher – Yes; Mr. Savas – Yes; Ms. Cohen – Yes; and Mr. Sheedy – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

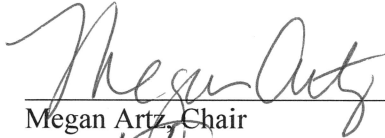
URL Link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM\\_dgyFG9Nw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DM_dgyFG9Nw)

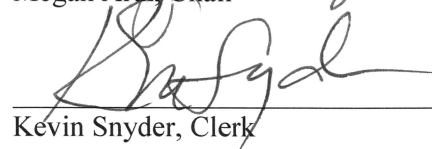
Respectfully Submitted by:



Jennifer Reid, Office Administrator

**SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
DECEMBER 13, 2022**

  
Megan Artz, Chair

  
Kevin Snyder, Clerk

  
Michael Toole, Member

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Steven Hornsby, Member

Minutes Approved by Board on: December 28, 2022