



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

RECEIVED
NORTON TOWN CLERK
2023 DEC 33 AM 10:05

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

Select Board
Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2023

I. **Call to Order by Chair**

The November 16, 2023 meeting of the Norton Select Board was held at the Norton Media Center, 184 West Main Street, Norton, MA 02766 as well as remotely (Web: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83225589285>; Phone: 646-558 8656; Webinar ID: 832 2558 9285), and was called to order at 7:01 P.M., by Mr. Kevin Snyder, Chair. Member(s) present: Mr. Alec Rich, III, Ms. Megan Artz and Ms. Denise Luciano.

A moment of silence was held in remembrance of Mr. Bradford Bramwell, who was a great figure in Norton. Mr. Snyder noted that he was a lifelong resident, graduated from Norton High School, and was a longstanding member of Select Board who had also served as the Chair of the School Committee.

II. **Appointments/Resignations/Retirements**

There were no appointments, resignations, or retirements to discuss.

III. **Minutes**

Approve Minutes, including but not limited to: November 2, 2023.

MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to approve the November 2, 2023 minutes. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

IV. **Licenses and Permits**

There were no licenses or permits to discuss and/or vote on at this meeting.

V. **Announcements**

1. Norton Community Holiday Toy Drive – Saturday, November 25, 2023.

Sponsored by the Norton High School (NHS) Math Honor Society, Norton Police Department, and the C2 Foundation in Memory of Tommy Petersen. Accepting donations on Saturday, November 25th. Drop-off locations and times: Henri A. Yelle School Driveway from 9:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. and Bog Iron Brewing from 1:30 P.M. to close. They are looking for donations of new (unwrapped) toys for local children and gift cards for teens in our community. Toys may also be dropped off at the police station, Bog Iron, or any of the 5 schools in the weeks leading up to the big collection event. For more information, e-mail info@thec2foundation.com.

2. Festival of Lights – December 3, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. on the Norton Town Common.

Live music, cookies, cocoa, menorah and tree lighting, visit Santa, crafts, and more. Sign-up to have your loved one's name on the Memorial Tree. Donate a toy or clothing and be entered to win a ride to a Norton school on a fire truck. For more information, call Parks & Recreation at (508) 285-0228 or visit www.nortonma.org/parks-and-recreation.

3. Norton Community Lions Club Annual Memorial Lights.

Purchase a light in memory of a loved one's life. Cost is \$5 per name. For each name purchased, a light will be lit on the Memorial Lights Tree at the Norton Town Common. To submit a name, e-mail Tammy at tsm758@aol.com or inform any Norton Community Lions member. You can also mail cash or a check for \$5 per name to the Norton Community Lions, PO Box 2071, Norton, MA 02766. Please remember to include the name(s) of the loved one(s) you would like remembered.

Deadline for submitting names: Wednesday, November 15, 2023.

4. Norton Fire Department & Christmas is for Kids Toy Drive – Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 5:00 P.M. on the Norton Town Common.

Please donate new, unwrapped toys and winter clothing (coats, gloves, mittens, hats, and scarves). Everyone who donates an item will be entered to win a ride to a Norton school on a fire truck. For more information, call (508) 285-0240 (Non-emergency Fire Department).

5. Norton Parks & Recreation Department "Letters to Santa" Program.

Children can drop off their letters two ways:

- At the Festival of Lights on Sunday, December 3rd on the Town Common from 5:00 P.M. to 6:00 P.M.
- At Town Hall in the lobby. There will be a mailbox on the desk in the front lobby for the letters to be placed in. Town Hall is open Monday-Wednesday from 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., Thursday 8:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M., and Friday 8:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M.

Letters will be accepted from Monday, November 27th until Friday, December 15th.

In order to facilitate the program, we ask that you please attach the Parks & Recreation form to your letter(s).

6. Mr. Snyder added that the Town Manager sent a nice message to Ms. Estelle Flett, Veterans' Agent, for the great job she does with the Veterans' Day Parade and wanted to share the sentiment on behalf of the Board.

Mr. Snyder also mentioned that he attended the Southeastern Regional Reception Day.

VI. **Business**

A. **New Business**

1. Update on Wreaths Across America from Patricia Tarantino.

Ms. Patricia Tarantino stated that if anyone would like to donate, you can either drop a check off at Town Hall, mail it to her, or give it to Ms. Estelle Flett, the Veterans' Agent. She advised that if they reach their goal, the excess donations will just go towards next year's event. Ms. Artz asked how much they wreaths are and Ms. Tarantino stated that they are \$17. Mr. Snyder asked Ms. Tarantino to provide an overview of the program. Ms. Tarantino stated that the funds are raised year-round to place wreaths on every veteran's grave throughout the United States. She explained that the ceremony starts at noon sharp on Saturday, December 16th and that everyone is welcome. Ms. Tarantino continued explaining that the same script is read at the exact same time at 4,000 locations throughout the country during the ceremony. She stated that the goal is to remember our veterans, honor all of those who have served, and to teach our young. Ms. Tarantino encouraged everyone to visit Wreathsaacrossamerica.org/ma0108 for more information or to make donations.

2. Discussion and/or Vote to Close Library Square for Wreaths Across America Event (Date To Be Determined).

Ms. Tarantino explained that Wreaths Across America has a big trailer that they use to educate people and it has story boards, canopies, interactive activities and is a great opportunity for the community to see and kids to learn about it. She mentioned that she put an application in for it and her thought for a location that would get a lot of eyes on it would be on Library Square. She mentioned that another option would be the lawn along the side of the Henri A. Yelle (HAY) Elementary School because they probably have power there and plenty of space.

Mr. Snyder replied that his only concern was they would have to close Library Square and get sign-offs from the Police Department and Fire Department in order to do so. Mr. Rich mentioned that when the Town Hall is done, they could do it there. Ms. Tarantino emphasized that there is a lack of visibility from there. Mr. Snyder expressed that he believed the next steps would be to talk to Dr. Jennifer O'Neil, Superintendent of Schools, and the School Committee about the event and get their approval to hold the event at the HAY, which she was agreeable to.

3. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve the Closure of Library Square for the Festival of Lights Scheduled for Sunday, December 3, 2023 on the Town Common.

MOTION was made by Ms. Artz to approve the closure of Library Square for the Festival of Lights scheduled for Sunday, December 3, 2023 on the Town Common. Seconded by Ms. Luciano. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Snyder noted that they already had approvals from the Fire Department and Police Department to close this road for the event.

4. Discussion and/or Vote to Declare the 1999 Ambulance Freightliner used for Stormwater and 2 Economizer Sanders as Surplus.

MOTION was made by Mr. Rich to declare the 1999 Ambulance Freightliner used for Stormwater and 2 Economizer Sanders into surplus. Seconded by Ms. Artz. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

Mr. Snyder noted that this was requested by the Highway Superintendent.

5. Discussion and/or Vote to Write-Off \$446,587 of Uncollected Ambulance Bills.

Captain Michael Wilson of the Norton Fire Department stated that they try to do this every 2 years. He explained that the billing company can't collect funds, it is then sent to a collection company and they try to collect as much as they can, but then they get to a point where they can't collect the funds anymore, so this is done to clear up the books. He noted that in 2017, the collections agency collected \$255,743 and the write-off they are looking for from 2017 to present is \$510,152.16.

Mr. Snyder noted that the number presented to them and the figure in their packet differed. Captain Wilson explained that they got an updated figure a couple of days ago. He noted that he didn't think anything changed and that the collections' agency simply had the wrong numbers to begin with.

MOTION was made by Mr. Rich to write-off \$510,152.16 in uncollected ambulance bills as written. Seconded by Ms. Artz. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

6. Discussion and/or Vote to Grant an Extension for the Host Community Agreement (HCA) between the Town of Norton and Queens Bridge Group, Inc.

Attorney David D'Agostino spoke on behalf of Queens Bridge Group, Inc. to request an extension. He explained that they are requesting an extension because the current HCA was entered into December of 2021. He informed the Board that they have run into problems with the site (0 Washington Street, 1B). Attorney D'Agostino stated that they have actually had their engineers find ways around these issues and have slightly reduced the footprint of the building (looking at 11,000 sq. ft. facility) and Queens Bridge has been in constant communication with the Town. He advised that they expect to submit their application before the end of the year and hope to have the HCA extended. Attorney D'Agostino added that the purchase of the land is under contract and they have submitted to the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) Licensure and requested information around 2 or 3 weeks ago. He stated that since they have undertaken to locate their enterprise in town, Queens Bridge has always been moving in a forward direction. He advised that Ms. Tiffani Isom, President/CEO of Queens Bridge, can also fill in the Select Board if they have any further questions.

Ms. Artz asked how long of an extension they would need. Attorney D'Agostino replied that they would request 24 months, not that they think they will need it, but that is what they are requesting. In response, Ms. Luciano suggested giving 12 months because that should be plenty of time and if they need another 12 months, then they are probably having bigger issues and she would like them to come back to the Select Board to explain those issues to them.

Ms. Isom explained that they have been meeting with their engineer, Mr. Brian Dunn, with MBL Development and the vernal pools have been quite the setback and the wetlands they have formulated a plan to work around those setbacks. She emphasized that the major setback is the vernal pools and they don't want to trigger Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA). Ms. Isom pointed out that they have gone through two engineers and they are 50% engineered on the site now. Ms. Isom informed the Board that they have met with the Police Chief, Fire Chief, and Building Department and noted that the Town Manager has been phenomenal and has worked really closely with her. She lastly emphasized that because this is more like a development, it is the entitlement issue with getting that raw land through entitlement, not the CCC, that is causing the delays.

MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to extend the Host Community Agreement between the Town of Norton and Queens Bridge Group, Inc for 12 months. Seconded by Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.

7. Update on Host Community Agreement (HCA) Negotiations.

Mr. Snyder informed the Board that town counsel signed-off on the HCA, and it was just sent to the applicant, Lucky Green Ladies (LGL) tonight, so hopefully they have the final review this evening. Mr. Snyder mentioned that he is on the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and they held an ad hoc meeting to talk to Amanda Paydon (Alissa Nowak's sister) and had to bring them back in front of the EDC to reevaluate their application because there was a change in ownership. He expressed that he believes the proposal is substantially the same and the EDC voted unanimously to recommend this to the Select Board for approval. He stated that when that happens, LGL will have a product manufacturing HCA tailored similar to the retail HCA. He emphasized that there are positive motions with HCAs.

B. Old Business

1. Review and/or Vote on Select Board Code of Conduct.

The Board agreed to hold off on this until they have a full board and the Town Manager present.

2. Update on Select Board's Dedication for the FY23 Town Report.

Mr. Snyder advised that the Town Report photo has been done and the Select Board's Town Report just needs to be reviewed. He noted that the Board does need to discuss who they are going to dedicate the Town Report to. Ms. Artz suggested having Mr. Bradford Bramwell as the dedication.

C. Town Manager's Report

1. Reed & Barton.

Mr. Snyder mentioned that he had asked Mr. Yunits for an update on the Reed & Barton location and he read the following, which was provided by the Town Manager:

The Developers have submitted for a covenant not to sue which would be required to take ownership of the property and have worked with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) to start a final closure list to make 47 Elm Street compliant with outstanding violations. Lastly, they have started the foreclosure process on the property and have received a judge issued judgment which was needed.

2. Design of the Water and Sewer Improvements.

The design of the water and sewer improvements has also continued. Throughout this fiscal quarter, the Town of Norton and Weston & Sampson have engaged in planning meetings for the proposed Elm Street Sewer Extension Design. Preliminary site visit and evaluation of survey requirements based on exiting data, compilation of existing subsurface information, and coordination with geotechnical staff to lay out preliminary soil exploration program. The exiting conditions survey was performed and has been exported into the existing project base map. Continued analysis of estimated wastewater flow in project area, updating town-wide sewer system mapping and review of downstream capacities has been conducted.

We anticipate having the initial proposed sewer layout soon and will commence with public outreach soon after the New Year.

3. Permitting Software

We will be looking for a final data transfer by end of day on November 30, 2023. Hope we can get this done seamlessly and begin utilizing the software.

4. Rail Trail.

Paving has begun on the trail. Paving before the winter will run from the end of the current trail in Mansfield to East Main. Residents are cautioned that this is still an active construction site and should avoid being on the path during construction.

5. East Main Street Improvements.

The lines were painted on Tuesday. Residents should be aware of the traffic pattern change with a left hand turn lane added when heading west on East Main and turning onto South Worcester Street. There is a red blinking light indicating a stop for vehicles turning left. The traffic lights should be activated within the next 30 days.

VII. **Select Board's Report and Mail**

Ms. Artz stated that she was approached prior to this meeting about the possibility of moving away from National Grid and the Town having its own electric plant and asked if there was anything happening with that. Mr. Snyder replied that he believed that due to costs they weren't moving forward on that.

IX. **Warrants**

Mr. Hornsby reported that the following Payroll and Invoice Warrants were approved:

- a. Invoice Warrant AP24-19 dated November 9, 2023.
- b. Payroll Warrant PR24-10 for the week ended November 11, 2023, Warrant dated November 16, 2023.
- c. Invoice Warrant AP24-20 dated November 16, 2023.

X. **Other Business**

Other Business: Topics Not Reasonably Anticipated 48 Hours in Advance.

There was no other business to discuss.

XI. **Next Meeting's Agenda** – Next Meeting: November 30, 2023.

XII. **Executive Session.**

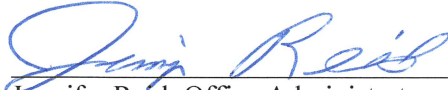
There was no executive session at this meeting.

XIII. Adjournment.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 7:53 P.M.
Seconded by Ms. Artz. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

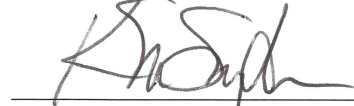
URL Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JatCV_0F4Ns

Respectfully Submitted by:



Jennifer Reid, Office Administrator

**SELECT BOARD
MINUTES OF MEETING
NOVEMBER 16, 2023**



Kevin Snyder, Chair



Steven Hornsby, Vice-Chair



Alec Rich, III, Clerk

Megan Artz



Denise Luciano

Minutes Approved by Board on: November 30, 2023