



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

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Select Board  
Meeting Minutes  
February 15, 2024

I. Call to Order by Chair

The February 15, 2024 meeting of the Norton Select Board was held at the Norton Housing Authority, Woodland Meadows Community Room, 120 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 7:02 P.M., by Mr. Kevin Snyder, Chair. Members present: Mr. Steven Hornsby, Mr. Alec Rich, III, and Ms. Denise Luciano. Also in attendance: Mr. Michael D. Yunits, Town Manager.

II. Appointments/Resignations/Retirements

1. Appointment of Michael Keaney as Full-Time Water & Sewer System Technician in the Water Department.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to appoint Michael Keaney as Full-Time Water & Sewer System Technician in the Water Department. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

2. Resignation of Patrick J. Mahoney as a Special Police Officer.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to accept the resignation of Patrick J. Mahoney as a Special Police Officer. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

3. Appointments of the Following Individuals as Members of the Civilian Traffic Control Unit:  
a) Patrick J. Mahoney  
b) Timothy F. O'Leary  
c) Keith Silver

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to appoint Patrick J. Mahoney, Timothy F. O'Leary, and Keith Silver as members of the Civilian Traffic Control Unit. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

4. Appointment of Daniel Pearson to the Open Space Committee.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to appoint Daniel Pearson to the Open Space Committee. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

5. Reappointment of Ellen Kane to Norton Cable Access.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to reappoint Ellen Kane to Norton Cable Access. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

III. **Minutes**

Approve Minutes, including but not limited to: January 25, 2024 (Joint Meeting) and February 1, 2024.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to approve the minutes of January 25, 2024 (Joint Meeting with Finance Committee and School Committee) and February 1, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

IV. **Licenses and Permits**

There were no licenses or permits to discuss.

V. **Announcements**

There were no announcements to make at this time.

VI. **Business**

A. **New Business**

1. 7:15 P.M. – Public hearing on the Petition of Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc. to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way: Mansfield Avenue – Install one JO Pole on Mansfield Avenue. National Grid to install new 45' C2 Pole (P2030-60) 25'+/- North of Pole 2030-50 for new senior center complex customer at 120 Mansfield Avenue for the town of Norton.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to open the public hearing at 7:19 P.M. Seconded by Ms. Luciano. Vote: Ms. Luciano – Yes; Mr. Rich – Yes; Mr. Hornsby – Yes; and Mr. Snyder – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

Mr. Michael Parent of National Grid noted that there is no power on that side of the road nor do they have a pole that they could tap over to, so they have to install a new pole with three wires and it goes underground from there. Mr. Snyder clarified that there will be a pole on the same side as the Senior Center and Mr. Parent answered that this was correct. Mr. Parent added that the utilities will be run underground, but power has to be run from across the street. Mr. Slattery asked how long getting the transformer was going to take and Mr. Parent said he was unsure of that. Mr. Parent brought to the Board's attention that a trench inspection will need to be done as well.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to close the public hearing at 7:28 P.M. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Ms. Luciano – Yes; Mr. Rich – Yes; Mr. Hornsby – Yes; and Mr. Snyder – Yes. MOTION CARRIES.**

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to approve the petition of Massachusetts Electric Company d/b/a National Grid and Verizon New England, Inc. to locate poles, wires, and fixtures, including the necessary sustaining and protecting fixtures, along and across the following public way: Mansfield Avenue – Install one JO Pole on Mansfield Avenue. National Grid to install new 45' C2 Pole (P2030-60) 25'+/- North of Pole 2030-50 for new senior center complex customer at 120 Mansfield Avenue for the town of Norton. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

## 2. Discussion with the Town Clerk Regarding Election Ballots.

Ms. Lucia Longhurst made the Select Board aware that an error was made in her office when sending out the post cards for ballots where 115 people received duplicate ballots. She advised that this error was caught after the ballots went out, so she notified the Town Manager, she spoke with State Elections' attorney, and town counsel. Ms. Longhurst stated that they were able to pin point the 115 people, and in result, letters were sent out to them. She noted that there were a few people that came in with both of their ballots, however, the second ballots will not go through the system because there are strong checks and balances in place. She stated that she told these people they can come to her office to see the system and she said 2 people tried sending in duplicate ballots, which were caught.

Mr. Snyder asked if this was for the Primary Election postcards, which Ms. Longhurst confirmed. Mr. Hornsby wanted to clarify for conspiracy theorist people that if you scan the barcode, it can't be scanned twice so it wouldn't go through, which Ms. Longhurst confirmed. Mr. Hornsby recognized that mistakes happen and that's why there are these safeguards in place. Ms. Luciano recognized the great job she does and knows that these things happen and Mr. Hornsby agreed and emphasized for her to not beat herself up over this. Ms. Longhurst thanked the Board for their support.

## 3. Discussion and/or Vote to Approve the Host Community Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Norton and PM Norton, LLC.

Ms. Amanda Paydon of PM Norton, LLC, her attorney, Attorney Nicholas Obolensky, and her business partner, Ms. Alissa Nowak were present for the meeting. Ms. Paydon explained that the proposed business is PM Norton, LLC and it would be a product manufacturing business doing business as Lucky Green Ladies. She informed the Board that she has a Doctorate in Development Psychology and her focus is on those who have been wronged by the justice system with regard to the war on drugs. Ms. Paydon advised that the proposed location is the same location as Lucky Green Ladies, which is located at 394 Old Colony Road. She explained that they would be sharing the space, which include a packaging room and a storage cage in the vault where all of the product is stored and it would have its own separately locked system and security camera system.

Ms. Paydon moved on to discuss the hours of operation, which would be 8:00 A.M. to 10:00 P.M. She stated that the hours may fluctuate a bit, but her plan is to stick to Lucky Green Ladies' schedule and this would be 7 days per week. She advised that she plans to hire a Hiring Manager/Person in Charge that would serve in dual roles. Ms. Paydon explained that some of the product that they would be working with is package flower and make pre-rolls (infused and regular). She stated that with this specific licensing restriction of delivery for Lucky Green Ladies, ~~they are not allowed to manufacture their own products, so they are restricted and limited to~~ purchase whatever sizes and purchases they can from other manufacturers, so her business would be to make those sizes and quantities Lucky Green Ladies' customers are looking for. Ms. Paydon noted that the lab testing would look for things such as mold and mildew.

Ms. Paydon moved on to discuss the unique identifying marks used for branding and ensure that their products would not attract minors. She pointed out that the filtration system for the odor mitigation system is connected to vents and every 10 minutes odor will be pulled with 10lb charcoal filter and an independent fan to change out the air in the packaging room. Ms. Paydon informed the Board that they do have the ability with this equipment to upscale the charcoal filter if it becomes necessary. She further stated that there should be minimal waste, and if there is any, it would mostly be stems from the natural product. She emphasized that if anything spills, it will be recorded and logged. Ms. Paydon added that there will also be two agents present as required.

Ms. Paydon advised that economic mobility is her specialty. She itemized a list of community benefits, including building safer communities, investing back in to the community, creating economic mobility and opportunities for career advancements, and community engagement. Ms. Paydon expressed that she truly believes that this is an opportunity to give back and create career advancement.

Mr. Snyder asked what the anticipated opening date is. Attorney Obolensky stated that getting these agreements approved is the first step and then the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC) is the next step with getting their approvals. However, he pointed out to the Board that a majority of the work has already been done, so he was estimating approximately 6 months and asked Ms. Nowak her opinion. Ms. Nowak referred to her notes and answered that she had down Summer of 2024 as an opening date. Attorney Obolensky stated that it would probably be approximately 3 to 6 months. Mr. Yunits noted that the vehicles will be registered with Norton, so the Town will get the vehicle excise tax too. Ms. Deley pointed out that this HCA has the MOA and is focused on the control technologies for the odor mitigation.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Rich to approve the Host Community Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement between the Town of Norton and PM Norton, LLC. Seconded by Ms. Luciano. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

4. Discussion on Spring Annual Town Meeting Articles List.

Mr. Yunits advised the Board that they have the list of articles in their packet, but he explained that some of these are likely come off such as Article 13 (Pond Management) because after the article was submitted, the Town heard from its consultant and it looks like the Town may have enough funds to get through the rest of 2024 and 2025. Mr. Yunits noted that other articles, such as OPEB (Other Post-Employment Benefits) and Stabilization they usually hold off until the Fall. He noted that Articles 21 (Placeholder: Street Acceptance – Leonard Street Extension) and 22 (Placeholder: Easements – Leonard Street/Leonard Street Extension) they are waiting for information from town counsel as far as proper language. The Town Manager explained that Article 20 (Establish Town-Wide Speed Limits) was a request of the Traffic Safety Committee. He noted that the Police Department submitted an article (Article 24) to withdraw from civil service like the Fire Department recently did. Mr. Yunits stated that if the Board has any questions, to please let him know.

5. Review and/or Vote to Refer Zoning Articles to the Planning Board for its Non-Binding Recommendations.

Mr. Yunits explained that Article 29 (Zoning Bylaw Amendment: Amend Chapter 175 – 20.2 Applicability [Petition of Paraskevi Constantine]) is a petition article and is seeking to change the zoning bylaw. He stated that the petitioner is looking to change the requirements for lighting and he asked the Select Board to refer this to the Planning Board for its non-binding recommendation. Mr. Snyder provided background information for this article stating that this is in result of neighbors having lights shining into their homes, which Mr. Yunits confirmed.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to refer Article 29 to the Planning Board for its non-binding recommendation. Seconded by Ms. Luciano. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

6. Discussion and/or Vote to Award the SERSG DPW Services Contract.

Mr. Yunits explained that these are the Southeastern Regional Services Group bids that came back, which for the most part is for the Highway Department for roadway work, such as paving, cracked sealant, line painting, guardrails, loam, compost, and gravel screening along with snow shoveling flat roofs.

**MOTION was made by Mr. Hornsby to authorize the Town Manager to sign the SERSG DPW Services Contract. Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

7. Discussion of an Override, the Override Process, and/or Vote on Town Meeting Article.

Mr. Snyder explained that they had a joint meeting with the School Committee and Finance Committee and mentioned that the School Committee has had their budget workshop last week. He stated that there has been talk throughout town of an override and wanted to start the discussion with the Select Board. Mr. Snyder asked Mr. Yunits to provide an overview of the process.

Mr. Yunits explained that there are two ways you can do an override, but before he started, he pointed out that there is a distinct difference with an override versus a debt-exclusion where unlike debt-exclusion, an override doesn't go away unless the Town did an override. He stated that the first option for an override is the Town can do ballot question first and then go to town meeting or they can go to town meeting first and approve two budgets: a budget funded with what the Town has available with revenue; or, if the Town wants to do an override, "Budget B" would be for a certain amount above Proposition 2.5% and then the Town would hold a special election and have a ballot question. Mr. Yunits explained in other words that they can either do the override ballot question in April at the town election and do it before town meeting, or they can go to town meeting and have a special election.

In response, Ms. Luciano emphasized that they need to see solid numbers comparing last year's budget and then this year's budget with what a level-services budget would look like to determine what the gap is. Mr. Yunits pointed out that if they do the ballot question before town meeting, then they need to have the ballot question in 35 days before the election and they won't even have all the budgets done by then. Mr. Hornsby emphasized that he would like to see this ballot question on for April and Mr. Yunits replied that he doesn't see how they are going to get the budgets in and get the information out in time before April. Ms. Luciano agreed with Mr. Yunits that they won't be able to if they don't have the budgets. Mr. Hornsby stated that there has been such a sense of urgency that he would rather get this done in April rather than July. Mr. Snyder agreed with the sense of urgency, but he wants to allow for more time to educate people. Mr. Hornsby brought up the added expense of the special election. In response, Mr. Snyder disagreed that with the \$6,000 additional expense for special election, they want to make sure that this is properly done to make up a \$4 million shortfall.

Ms. Deley pointed out that when considering passing the debt-exclusions for the Town Hall, Senior Center, and athletic complex, they also had to take into consideration the additional costs associated with the debt-exclusion such as the operating expenses. She expressed appreciation for the sense of urgency coming from Mr. Hornsby, but she emphasized that they need time to get feedback first. Mr. Hornsby replied that this is what the joint meetings and budget meetings are for and expressed that "educating people" is political. Ms. Luciano stated that they are going to need to have the sequence of budget meetings and presentations, go over the numbers, and then take the time to determine where the cuts need to be made.

Ms. Paula Daniels of the Finance Committee stated that the Finance Committee is going to need time to review all of the budgets and they already have a full schedule and can't imagine trying to digest all of that information to have it on the ballot for April. Mr. Yunits pointed out that the School Department's budget isn't due until 8 weeks prior to town meeting.

A resident named Ms. Valerie Cabral asked Mr. Hornsby if he could tell her right now in this moment how much her taxes would increase definitively without educating the public. She emphasized that she doesn't have a personal stake in this because she doesn't have any kids in the school system, but expressed that she is willing to pay more money to make sure that these kids have a good education. She stated that she doesn't see how putting this off past April is a political move. Mr. Snyder pointed out that the school-aged parents are already paying more in "taxes" essentially because they are paying for bus fees, sport fees, etc.

**B. Old Business**

There was no old business to discuss.

**C. Town Manager's Report**

**1. FY25 Budget Update.**

Mr. Yunits stated that one of the big things with the budget is health insurance and advised that their luck has run out. He informed the Board that he met with actuarial today and the increase for health insurance could be anywhere from 4.5% to 9.1%. He pointed out that the increase the past couple of years was about 1% and that each percentage is equivalent to around \$80,000.

**2. Grant Awards.**

Mr. Yunits informed the Select Board that the Fire Department received \$13,917 from the Department of Fire Services for turnout gear. He also advised that the Council on Aging (COA) received \$10,000 for the Norton Energy Fund. Mr. Yunits stated that if they know if anyone that is having trouble heating their homes, they should contact the COA for assistance.

**3. Storm Update.**

Mr. Yunits noted that there really wasn't a storm to report on, but stated that the Town was ready. Mr. Snyder asked if there were any issues with flooding and Mr. Yunits answered that there was not.

**4. Update on Possible Merger of SEMRECC and MECC.**

Mr. Yunits stated that all the towns agreed to look at the possibility of a merger of the two districts and having them come into their dispatch center. He advised that they are going to explore this more and will come back to the Board with the additional information collected.

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

Recognition of the Norton Highway/Cemetery Department Regarding the Annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony.

Mr. Rich explained that Ms. Patricia (Pat) Tarantino, a community member and Wreaths Across America Location Coordinator for the Annual Wreaths Across America Ceremony, submitted a

letter of appreciation for the Norton Highway/Cemetery Department and read it into the record as follows:

Dear Select Board Members,

The Wreaths Across America Committee wishes to publicly recognize and thank the members of the Norton Cemetery and Highway Department for the tremendous support they extend to our yearly event.

As in many events, the work that happens behind the scenes is not fully apparent to others. Our Cemetery and Highway Department play a crucial role for us and we want them to know our appreciation.

They allow our wreaths to be unloaded in huge pallets, many times with just a few hours notice. Then, they transport the allotted number of wreaths to the two cemeteries that have sheds for safe storage until the day of the ceremony. They also transport the remaining wreaths on the day of the ceremony to the one cemetery where there is no shed.

One month after, weather permitting, they go through each cemetery and remove all 700+ wreaths. This is not an easy feat and as you can imagine, takes considerable time and effort.

Without the Cemetery and Highway Department's help, I cannot imagine the tremendous difficulties our small committee would face.

Sincere thanks and recognition to our Norton Cemetery and Highway Department.

IX. **Warrants**

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

- a. Invoice Warrant AP24-32 dated February 8, 2024.
- b. Payroll Warrant PR24-16 for the week ended February 3, 2024, Warrant dated February 8, 2024.
- c. Invoice Warrant AP24-33 dated February 15, 2024.

X. **Other Business**

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

Mr. Slattery advised that he and the Town Manager have been approached about giving donations as the buildings go up. He stated that he has advised these people to speak with the Town Manager about this.

XI. **Next Meeting's Agenda** – February 29, 2024.

XII. **Executive Session.**

There was no executive session scheduled for this evening.

XIII. Adjournment.

**MOTION was made by Ms. Luciano to adjourn the Select Board meeting at 8:43 P.M.  
Seconded by Mr. Rich. Vote: Unanimous. MOTION CARRIES.**

URL Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i7OxKcHnCWM>


Respectfully Submitted by:

  
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Jennifer Reid, Office Administrator

**SELECT BOARD  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
FEBRUARY 15, 2024**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kevin Snyder, Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Steven Hornsby, Vice-Chair

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Alec Rich, III, Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
Megan Artz

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Denise Luciano

Minutes Approved by Board on: February 29, 2024