NORTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Norton, Massachusetts

NORTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE JOINT MEETING  
with  
FINANCE COMMITTEE and BOARD OF SELECTMAN  
MINUTES OF MEETING

Date of School Committee Meeting: Thursday, January 9, 2020

Location: Norton Middle School Library

Selectmen Meeting - Call to Order:

Chairman Bramwell called the Selectmen Meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. and announced all members were present.

Pledge of Allegiance

Selectmen - New Business:

Selectmen opened meeting with discussion and vote on:

1. Contract Awards – DPW Services 2/1/2020 through 1/31/2021 with Option to Renew
2. Declare Cruiser 85 (2011 Black Ghosted Ford Explorer) as surplus

Mr. Chris Carmichael Building Commissioner updated the status on the demolition at Elm Street.

Mr. Mike Yunits Town Manager updated the status of Blue Star Business Park and Water Treatment Plant.

Selectmen - Warrants and Minutes:

Chairman Bramwell read Invoice Warrants, Payroll and Minutes that were approved.

Call to Order Joint Meeting - School Committee, Selectmen and Finance Committee 7:18 pm  
- Chairperson Kathleen Stern

Vote to Appoint New Member to the Permanent Building Committee

Mr. Kevin O’Neil will be resigning from the Building Committee. Applications were presented from Kevin Morley and Brian Bechet. The applicants presented their qualifications to the committees and answered questions. Individual voting from School Committee and Selectmen awarded the position to Brian Bechet via an 8-0 vote.
FY2021 Budget Discussions

Dr. Baeta addressed issues:

- Meetings have been held to discuss mandated needs and the general budget.
- Teacher and Paraprofessional negotiations have begun combining as one contract.
- Additional funds may be provided for SPED Transportation by Circuit Breaker for a seven-year period from FY21-FY27. Waiting on outcome.
- Would like to present Finance Committee with more of a balanced budget.
- School Department and Police Department are working together on capital for flashing lights around the schools.
- SRO Officers will be in attendance more at the elementary schools. Dr. Baeta also recognized how proud we are of the police and community during some recent situations.
- Dr. Baeta also thanked Keith Silva and staff from the Highway Department for all they do.
- Continue to work well with other departments.

Mr. Conway addressed that today was National Law Enforcement Appreciation Day and thanked the police department for all they do.

The Finance Committee appreciates the town and school leadership collaborating to discuss the budget. It is good to show the town where we are going. This will help the annual budget easier for town people to support.

Ms. Deley presented a Timeline graph of dates and activities that need to be addressed. The Timeline will address a previous issue of not getting information to appropriate personnel and town people in a timely manner. The Timeline will be a good opportunity to keep working together and beneficial to everyone.

Discussion was held from all committees about preventing any changes of an article on the floor during the night of a Town Meeting. Holding meetings prior to a Town Meeting is not beneficial and should not be held at that time. Committee meetings should be conducted in advance to allow all committees to fully understand articles being presented and/or vote to be prepared for Town Meeting. Dr. Baeta addressed an issue that may arise if collective bargaining agreement were finalized a few days before a Town Meeting, the budget may need to be adjusted at that time.

Dr. Baeta presented creating an education sub-committee with the Finance Committee to discuss the school budget. One or two members from the Finance Committee can meet with school personnel with intentions to fully understand the school budget versus the town budget. Then those members can communicate the school budget to other members of the Finance Committee. These meetings will be specific about the needs for mandate and general funding. The Finance Committee accepted this offer and Dr. Baeta will start to put this process into place.
Mr. Yunits presented a five-year Estimated Operating Revenue and Expenditure spreadsheet. This indicates a $3.8 million shortfall by FY24. He also addressed concern about health insurance rates for the upcoming years and not fully knowing what that will be. The Blue Star Business Park has generated some additional revenue by unexpected permits but we do not know fully the revenue in new growth.

All committees shared input regarding the issue of the predicted shortfall for the budget and what is the solution. Many suggestions and concerns were discussed as to what is the next approach and what should be priority.

Mrs. Cohen recommended cancelling the next ad hoc meeting and scheduling another joint meeting to further discuss the budget shortfall. All committees were in agreement.

The rest of the agenda items will be tabled.

Ms. Deley presented information on the Marijuana Bylaw and Zoning. She is proposing bringing to the Town Meeting in May the opportunity to zone more areas to allow for the potential business. This new business can generate more traffic throughout other town businesses and increase tax revenue. A map will be provided for the townspeople to understand where the businesses will be located to help move forward with this proposal.

**Motion to Adjourn**

MOTION: by Mr. Flaherty  
SECOND: by Mrs. Cohen  
VOTE: Motion Carries

**The meeting adjourned at 9:33 p.m.**

**Documents and Other Exhibits Used at Meeting:**

- Building Committee applicants' resumes with Permanent Building Committee bylaws
- Estimated Operating Revenues and Expenditures spreadsheet
- Annual Town Meeting Timeline
- Marijuana Bylaw and Zoning
Respectfully Submitted,
Joseph F. Baeta, Ed.D.
Secretary Pro Tem

Kathleen Stern, Chairman

Carolyn Gallagher, Vice-Chairman

Sheri Cohen

Deniz Savas

Dan Sheedy