

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – December 19, 2011**

7:00 p.m. - Selectmen's Meeting Room, 63 Main Street, Northborough, MA

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeff Amberson, Chairman
Dawn Rand, Vice Chairman
Leslie Rutan, Clerk
William Pantazis
Aaron Hutchins

*Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – NOVEMBER 21, 2011 REGULAR MEETING

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the meeting minutes of the November 21, 2011 regular meeting as submitted, Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

7:00 p.m. - BILL FRAHER, TOWN AUDITOR
Presentation on FY 2011 Audit Report.

Due to illness, Bill Fraher was not present. In his place, Town Accountant Jason Little made the presentation to the Board on the completed Final Audit Report for FY 2011. Finance Director June Hubbard was also present.

In summary, the Town continues to be in a good overall financial position. The Management Letter detailed a clean audit with no material weaknesses or reportable conditions. It also recognized the Town's hard work over the past several years to maintain a strong financial position.

Following the presentation, questions and comments were heard from members of the Board.

7:15 p.m. - PUBLIC HEARING WITH BOARD OF ASSESSORS
For the purpose of discussing the valuation of each class of property; the minimum residential factor and the allocation of the tax burden among the four classes of real property: residential; open space, commercial and industrial, and of personal property.

Principal Assessor Diane O'Connor and Finance Director June Hubbard-Ward were present. Mr. Coderre made the presentation, which included information and options for the Board of Selectmen to determine whether there shall be a single or split tax rate for the various classes of property for FY 2012.

Mr. Coderre added that the Town continues to experience strong economic development. That coupled with conservative budgeting and strong new growth resulted in a minimized tax impact to the average homeowner. If the Board were to continue with a single tax rate, the FY 2012 tax rate would increase from \$15.11 to \$15.49. The average single family tax bill would increase \$143 from \$5,971 in FY 2011 to \$6,114 in FY 2012.

It was noted that the Board of Assessors unanimously recommended that the Board of Selectmen continue with the single tax rate. A major factor in the Board's

PUBLIC HEARING WITH BOARD OF ASSESSORS CONT. . .

recommendation is the amount of the Town's value that is derived from the commercial, industrial and personal property (CIP) classes. Of the Town's 6,295 taxable accounts, commercial and industrial properties represent 5.2% of the taxable parcels in Northborough, but account for 23.26% of the total tax revenue.

Members of the Board expressed their support of the continuation of a single tax classification. Mike Allard from Corridor Nine Area Chamber of Commerce was present in the audience. He indicated that the Corridor Nine Area Chamber of Commerce strongly supports the continuation of a single tax classification.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to close the Public Hearing with the Board of Assessors for the purpose of discussing the valuation of each class of property; the minimum residential factor and the allocation of the tax burden among the four classes of real property: residential; open space, commercial and industrial, and of personal property; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to maintain a uniform tax rate for all classes of property at a factor of one; to oppose the implementation of a residential exemption; and to oppose the implementation of a small commercial exemption; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

7:55 p.m. - JOHN CODERRE, TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Presentation of Government Finance Officers Association FY 2012 Distinguished Budget Award.

Mr. Coderre invited Finance Director June Hubbard-Ward, Town Accountant Jason Little and Assistant Town Administrator Kim Hood to join him in announcing that the Town recently received its second consecutive Distinguished Budget Presentation Award for its Fiscal Year 2012 Budget from the Government Finance Officers Association of the United States and Canada (GFOA).

Members of the Board congratulated Mr. Coderre and his staff on this very significant achievement.

7:15 p.m. - BURGER KING

To consider an application for a Common Victualler and Entertainment License for premises located at 1102 Shops Way.

Robert Smith from Burger King was present to request a Common Victualler and Entertainment License from the Board. The entertainment license is needed for a TV. Mr. Smith informed the Board that the restaurant will open sometime between the Christmas and New Year Holiday.

Selectman Rutan moved the Board vote to grant a Common Victualler and an Entertainment License to LBK, LLC d/b/a Burger King for premises located at 1102 Shops Way; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

REPORTS

Aaron Hutchins

- Noted that the Interview Committee met with an applicant for the Cable Television Advisory Committee. See below for appointment.
- Requested some feedback from the Town Administrator in regards to whether or not it would be appropriate to modify the authority granted to the Cable Television Committee. Is it possible for them to oversee other items such as internet in addition to cable television?
- Commended Town Staff for their efforts in regards to the continued storm clean-up.
- Happy Holidays.

William Pantazis

- Attended the Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony. Requested that the Town look into providing some additional lighting during next year's ceremony.
- Asked that the public remember to support the local businesses and shops.
- Happy Holidays.

Leslie Rutan, Clerk

- Attended the Tree Lighting Ceremony. Thanked those who coordinated and attended the event.
- Commended the High School students on their great performances in the Pippin production. Also thanked the school staff for helping out.
- Announced that the Annual Holiday Concert will be held this Thursday at the High School at 7:30 p.m.
- Thanked George Curtis for his recent booklet entitled "The First Decade of the Northborough Trails Committee". The booklet summarizes the efforts of the Committee and those involved over the last ten years.
- Happy Holidays.

Dawn Rand, Vice Chairman

- Attended the Tree Lighting Ceremony.

Jeff Amberson, Chairman

- Informed Mr. Coderre that the Flag at Ellsworth Square on Church Street is missing. Requested that it be replaced.
- Thanked the DPW employees for putting in extra hours in order to help out with the weekend brush days following the October 29th storm.
- Reminded residents to help keep their area hydrants clear of snow.
- Recognized a new club at the high school called "Algonquin Gives Back". Highlighted the many things that they have accomplished in the spirit of helping people in the communities of Northborough and Southborough.

John Coderre, Town Administrator

- Announced that December 21st will be the last drop-off day for brush.
- Announced that the Town is being recognized with an award certificate for placing among the top three municipalities in the MMA's Annual Town Report contest. An award ceremony will take place on January 21st when the winners will be announced.

APPOINTMENT TO THE CABLE TELEVISION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Selectman Hutchins moved the Board vote to appoint Jack Gold to the Cable Television Advisory Committee for a three-year term; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

OCTOBER 29, 2011 STORM REIMBURSEMENT UPDATE

Mr. Coderre provided a brief summary of the clean-up to date following the October 29, 2011 Storm. Based upon the updated estimated cost of the storm clean-up, he requested that the Board increase its deficit spending authorization from the previously granted \$200,000 to \$450,000. Mr. Coderre added that he anticipates that the clean-up costs will be subject to a 75% reimbursement rate from FEMA.

Selectman Pantazis moved the Board vote to amend the vote taken November 7, 2011 which approved incurring liabilities not to exceed \$200,000 in excess of appropriations to respond to the major disaster caused by the October 29, 2011 snow storm; such amendment is made to authorize an additional \$250,000 for this purpose, amending the total amount of liabilities authorized to incur to not exceed \$450,000 in excess of appropriations, pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 44, Section 31; Selectman Rand seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

FY 2013 BUDGET DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

Mr. Coderre provided a brief update on the development of the FY 2013 Budget. Based upon revenue projections thus far, the preliminary budgets for the key departments are estimated as follows:

Assabet Valley Vocational HS Assessment

Estimated increase of 29.98% due to increased enrollment

Algonquin Regional HS Operating Assessment

Estimated increase of 3.55%

Northborough K-8 Schools

Estimated increase of 3.55%

Town (General Government)

Estimated increase of 3.55%

Mr. Coderre added that the significant budgetary items that remain outstanding are: the actual ARHS and Assabet Assessments; Worcester Regional Retirement System Assessment and Health Insurance premiums. The budget model, which includes the level of funding we can expect for State Aid, will continue to be updated as more information becomes available.

LETTER OF SUPPORT FOR APPLICATION TO THE CPC

Mr. Coderre briefly reviewed the application to the Community Preservation Committee for a funding request of \$350,000 to help convert the Town Offices antiquated and unreliable steam heating system to a hot water heating system and to replace rooftop air conditioner condensing units.

Selectman Hutchins moved the Board vote to send a letter to the Community Preservation Committee in support of the Town Administrator's Community Preservation Funding request to help convert the Town Offices steam heating system to a hot water heating system and to replace rooftop air conditioner condensing units; Selectman Pantazis seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

RENEWAL OF SELECTMEN'S LICENSES FOR THE CALENDAR YEAR 2012

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the renewal of the annual licenses by the Board of Selectmen for the calendar year 2012 as indicated on the "2012 License Renewals List", providing that all licensees are in compliance with both Municipal and State codes and regulations by December 31, 2011, with the exception of Chet's Diner who shall have until January 16, 2012 and the one seasonal license, Tougas Family Farm Kitchen, that they receive a satisfactory inspection prior to their re-opening in the Spring; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEEDS A884 & A885

Selectman Hutchins moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deeds A884 & A885; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Chairman Amberson informed the audience that the Board will pass over Executive Session.

ADJOURNMENT

Selectman Hutchins moved the Board vote to adjourn; Selectman Pantazis seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

Meeting adjourned at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. December 19, 2011 Meeting Agenda.
2. November 21, 2011 Meeting Minutes.
3. Information packet – FY 2011 Audit.
4. Information packet – Tax Classification Hearing.
5. Information packet – GFOA Award.
6. Information packet – Burger King Licenses.
7. Information packet – October 29, 2011 Storm Reimbursement Update.
8. Information packet – FY 2013 Budget Development Update.
9. Information packet – CPC Application.
10. Information packet – Selectmen’s 2012 License Renewals.
11. Cemetery Deeds.