

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES – February 26, 2018**

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jason Perreault, Chairman
Jeff Amberson, Vice Chairman
Leslie Rutan, Clerk
Dawn Rand
William Pantazis

*Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – FEBRUARY 12, 2018 REGULAR MEETING

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to approve the meeting minutes of the February 12, 2018 regular meeting as submitted; Selectman Rutan seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

7:00 p.m. - FIRE CHIEF DAVID PARENTI
Swearing-In of Richard Duong as Firefighter/Paramedic.

Fire Chief Parenti introduced Richard Duong as the newest member of the Fire Department. Mr. Duong was appointed as a Firefighter/Paramedic effective February 26, 2018. Mr. Duong worked as an on-call Firefighter/EMT-Basic at the Littleton Fire Department. He also worked for Trinity and Cataldo 911 EMS Ambulance Services doing emergent and non-emergent medical response and transport.

Fire Chief Parenti added that Mr. Duong is a certified EMT-Paramedic with a degree from Northern Essex Community College in Lawrence. He attended the Massachusetts Fire Academy in 2015, where he attained his Firefighter I/II Certification and was also certified as a Hazardous Materials Operations Level Responder. He is scheduled to attend the Massachusetts Fire Academy Recruit Training Program in July.

Members of the Board welcomed Mr. Duong to Northborough. Surrounded by his family and members of the Northborough Fire Department, Duong was officially sworn in as a Firefighter/Paramedic by Town Clerk Andrew Dowd.

REPORTS

William Pantazis

- Noted that the Interview Committee met with an applicant for appointment to the Cultural Council. See below for appointment.
- Attended a tour of the affordable housing units located at 33-39 Main Street. Thanked Habitat for Humanity and thanked the students and faculty at the Assabet Valley High School who continue to work on these projects.

Dawn Rand

- Noted that the Fire Station Building Committee decided to not move forward with unused bond proceeds left over from the Lincoln Street project at the April Town Meeting. Additional time is needed to review the various options and obtain the final reimbursement from MSBA. The Committee is looking at the possibility of pursuing

the next phase of the project in the fall in conjunction with the November election ballot.

- Announced that the Cultural Council is hosting a reception celebrating its grant recipients at the Library on April 4, 2018 at 6:30pm.

Leslie Rutan, Clerk

- Attended a tour of the affordable housing units located at 33-39 Main Street. Thanked Habitat for Humanity and thanked the students and faculty at the Assabet Valley High School who continue to work on these projects.
- Thanked those residents who take the time to express their thanks and appreciation to Town staff as mentioned in the Police Chief's report.
- Thanked DPW Director Scott Charpentier for his status update on the public works projects.
- Urged residents to visit npantry.org or the Northborough Food Pantry Facebook page to see the list of items needed.

Jeff Amberson, Vice Chairman

- Urged residents to attend the Annual Town Meeting on April 23, 2018.

Jason Perreault, Chairman

- Noted that the Town continues to monitor the efforts of the Cannabis Control Commission (CCC). The Town is also monitoring how other communities are regulating medical and recreational marijuana.
- Noted that the Planning Board will hold a public hearing on March 6, 2018 and the Board of Selectmen will hold a public hearing on March 12, 2018 seeking public opinion on the proposed zoning and general bylaws for prohibited uses relating to recreational and medical marijuana.

John Coderre

- No report.

APPOINTMENT TO THE CULTURAL COUNCIL

Selectman Pantazis moved the Board vote to appoint Heidi Knight to the Cultural Council for a three-year term; Selectman Amberson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

None.

7:20 p.m. - PUBLIC HEARING

To consider Petition No. 23502796 from National Grid for the replacement of direct buried cables along Indian Meadow Drive and Agawam Drive in order to supply more consistent power to homes in this neighborhood.

Chairman Perreault opened the public hearing out of order as the representative from National Grid did not arrive until this time. Josh Sztabor was present from National Grid to request the Board's approval of Petition No. 23502796 for the replacement of direct

PUBLIC HEARING CONT. . .

buried cables along Indian Meadow Drive and Agawam Drive in order to supply more consistent power to homes in this neighborhood.

Mr. Sztabor heard a number of questions from abutters seated in the audience. Due to the limited information that he was able to provide on the project, the Town Administrator recommended that the Board continue the public hearing to the Board's regularly scheduled meeting of March 12, 2018. This will allow National Grid the opportunity to provide answers to the abutters questions. The abutters that were present in the audience expressed their support of continuing the hearing. Town Engineer Fred Litchfield stated that he will forward the abutter's contact information to National Grid, who will be responsible for contacting each of the abutters individually to answer their questions and address any concerns.

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to continue the public hearing for National Grid Petition No. 23502796 to the Board's next regularly scheduled meeting on March 12, 2018; Selectman Pantazis seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2019 BUDGET

Mr. Coderre referenced the following overall budget goals and objectives as discussed at the December 14, 2017 Financial Trend Monitoring Presentation:

1. To protect and improve the Town's overall Financial Condition
2. To develop a budget that is in conformance with the Town's comprehensive financial policies
3. To maintain Northborough as an affordable place to live and operate a business
4. To protect the Town's long-run solvency

Mr. Coderre reported on the status of union negotiations pertaining to health insurance, indicating that the Insurance Advisory Committee (IAC) unanimously recommended the Town issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to bid out health insurance under one consolidated carrier, with the primary goal of reducing costs, while maintaining current plan design. Based upon the bid results, Fallon was the carrier brought forward to the IAC for recommendation.

At its meeting on January 30th, the IAC formally recommended consolidating to Fallon. Mr. Coderre added that he and the School Superintendent negotiated separately with each bargaining unit for their formal approval to implement the consolidation plan. Commitments have been received from all but one bargaining unit. He will continue to impact bargain with the one remaining unit with the goal of implementing the IAC recommended consolidation plan, effective July 1, 2018.

Mr. Coderre reported on the unexpected impact of higher Northborough student enrollment on the Algonquin Regional High School (ARHS) Assessment. The overall ARHS Budget is increasing at the targeted 3.5%; however, Northborough's Assessment share will increase by 8.81%, or \$916,664. The increase is \$552,576 higher than projected at the December 14, 2017 Financial Trend Monitoring meeting.

UPDATE ON PRELIMINARY FY2019 BUDGET CONT. . .

Mr. Coderre indicated that in order to accommodate the increased ARHS Assessment, the budget model will require the Town to dip into its unused levy capacity by \$494,708, resulting in an increase to the average single family home tax bill of approximately \$75 in addition to the original projected increase of \$263. It will also impact the Town's five-year financial projections which assume the Town will use its excess levy capacity in a phased approach over the next five years to maintain services.

Mr. Coderre added that the ARHS Assessment is not the result of any decision made by the School Administration and is mainly the result of increasing Northborough enrollment as it relates to the State's Chapter 70 formula and Minimum Local Contribution.

Lastly, Mr. Coderre reported that based upon revised assumptions, the target budgets for the key departments are estimated to increase as follows:

- Northborough K-8 Schools increase \$820,576, or 3.5% to \$24,265,593
- General Government (Town) increases \$731,587, or 3.5% to \$21,634,080
- The overall Assabet Valley Vocational HS operating budget is increasing 3.79%. However, Northborough's Operating Assessment decreases by \$129,255, or 17.43% to \$612,406 as enrollment dropped from 49 to 41 students. Debt service associated with the completed renovation project decreases from \$151,232 to \$145,316, a 3.91% reduction.
 - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is an overall decrease of \$135,171, or 15.14%
- The overall Algonquin Regional High School (ARHS) budget is increasing 3.5%. The ARHS Operating Assessment is increasing \$916,664, or 8.81% to \$11,322,989 based upon Northborough enrollment and related impacts to the State's foundation budget and minimum contribution formula. The debt for ARHS increases by \$17,415, or 2.64% to \$677,989.
 - Net effect of the combined Operating Assessment and new debt service is an overall increase of \$934,079, or 8.44%

Questions and comments were heard from members of the Board. The Board thanked Mr. Coderre for his efforts.

STATUS UPDATE ON FY2018 SNOW & ICE BUDGET

Mr. Coderre provided a status update on the Snow & Ice Account for FY2018. The original Snow and Ice appropriation was \$387,200, of which \$59,935 is remaining. He indicated that although Board approval is no longer needed to deficit spend the Snow & Ice account under Massachusetts General Law, he will keep the Board updated if deficit spending become necessary.

Mr. Coderre reminded the Board that if needed, any shortfall will be covered within the overall year-end FY2018 budget, if possible.

REVIEW OF PRELIMINARY TOWN MEETING WARRANT

Mr. Coderre presented to the Board a draft summary of the warrant articles for the Annual Town Meeting. Following his review of the draft warrant articles, Mr. Coderre added that the Community Preservation Committee will be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss each of their warrant articles in more detail. The Board will vote to close the warrant at its March 26th meeting.

As Selectman Rand mentioned earlier, Mr. Coderre reported the Fire Station Building Committee decided to not move forward with unused bond proceeds left over from the Lincoln Street project at the April Town Meeting. He explained that more time is needed to review the various options and obtain the final reimbursement from MSBA. The Committee is looking at the possibility of pursuing the next phase of the project in the fall in conjunction with the November election ballot.

EXECUTION OF CEMETERY DEED 1042

Selectman Rand moved the Board vote to execute Cemetery Deed 1042 as presented; Selectman Amberson seconded the motion; all members voted in favor.

OTHER BUSINESS

None.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Mr. Coderre indicated that there is no longer a need to meet in Executive Session. The Board agreed to pass over Executive Session and adjourn.

ADJOURNMENT

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

Meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Wackell
Executive Assistant to the
Board of Selectmen

Documents used during meeting:

1. February 26, 2018 Meeting Agenda
2. February 12, 2018 Meeting Minutes
3. Information packet – National Grid Petition
4. New Firefighter/Paramedic Memo
5. FY2019 Budget Memo
6. Snow & Ice Budget Memo
7. Preliminary Town Meeting Warrant
8. Cemetery Deed