

**Norwell Board of Selectmen  
Meeting Minutes  
December 2, 2015**

TOWN OF NORWELL  
TOWN CLERK  
2016 JAN 14 PM 12:17  
**RECEIVED**

Mr. McBride opened the meeting at 7:35pm, and introduced Ellen Allen, Alison Demong, Peter Smellie and Town Administrator Peter Morin. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved the agenda as written. Seconded by Peter Smellie and unanimously voted.*

**REPORTS**

**Citizen Comments** – None

**Selectmen's Report** – Ms. Allen reported that the Baker administration is going to unveil an omnibus piece of legislation on Monday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, which may address a range of outdated statutes affecting municipalities. The exact components of the bill are not known yet. She will keep the BOS informed.

**Announcements**

Sunday, December 6<sup>th</sup>, from 2:30-4:30pm, all are invited to The Town Common to celebrate the upcoming holiday. Various activities are planned, and the tree lighting will take place at dusk.

**Town Administrator's Report** – None

**7:35 - Public Hearing - Tax Classification Hearing**

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, to open the tax classification public hearing. Seconded and unanimously voted. Clerk Peter Smellie read the legal notice from the Patriot Ledger for this hearing.*

Present: Joan Osborne (Chair), Sue Kirby and Bill Houser, Assessors Board members, Barbara Gingras, Town Assessor

Ms. Osborne gave a summary of MA law Chapter 797, which explains various options for a town wishing to adopt measures that would shift the tax burden by re-allocation of the real estate tax. She stated that the Assessors must look at all types of properties. As the Town doesn't have a significant commercial tax base, the board must decide whether a change would have an adverse effect. Shifting part of the tax burden to the commercial base at this point in time could put undue hardship on business contributions to the town.

Barbara Gingras prepared a spreadsheet to illustrate what might happen to the tax burden with a shift in allocation; the benefit was not significant enough to warrant the split tax rate. There would be more impact on businesses than residential. The Assessors board agreed via unanimous vote to stay with the single tax rate. Ms. Gingras gave an overview of the mechanics of calculating the tax rate, as well as a summary of the past year, including assessments. The tax rate stayed the same.

Ms. Gingras stated that the average tax bill will go up about 10%. Mr. Morin explained the significant rise in the residential tax percentage, and added that the Town must try to offset the tax increase in the residential base with commercial growth. Hopefully the Assessors will speak up in support of economic development at Town Meeting. Per Mr. McBride, there is certainly room for commercial growth.

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adopt a single tax rate of \$16.50. Unanimously voted*

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, that the town not adopt any residential exemption (797) for the fiscal 2016 real estate tax. Unanimously voted*

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, not to have any small business commercial exemptions in fiscal 2016. Unanimously voted*

*Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to close the public hearing. Unanimously voted*

### **Callie's Miracle Run Request**

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the fourth annual Callie's Run road race, subject to the written conditions required by the Police and Fire chiefs. Unanimously voted*

### **Website Design Discussion**

The latest update was reviewed by the board. Ms. Allen asked about some apparent redundancy, which Mr. Morin will investigate. Mr. Morin stated that tabs can be changed to accommodate the Town's specific requests. The board discussed the best way to structure the Home page, and also discussed whether Facebook, Twitter, etc. links should be part of the Home page. Ms. Demong asked Mr. Morin to please add Recreation to the Home page, as this information is highly used by Town residents. The Town Calendars tab will be deleted as it is redundant.

### **8:00 – Public Hearing – McLaren Boston, Motor Vehicle Class 1 Application**

*Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to open the public hearing for McLaren Boston Class 1 Vehicle application. Unanimously voted.*

Clerk Smellie read the legal notice in the Patriot Ledger.

The applicant is Mr. Dan DeSantis, owner of McLaren Boston. The business will occupy the former site of Shaw Saab on Pond St. Mr. DeSantis gave an overview of his business, which will sell new and used exotic cars. He plans to make very few changes to the building. The parking areas will be the same, but he will probably not have as many cars. Strawberry Fair will be allowed to continue their use of the extra parking.

Mr. DeSantis is ready to put inventory on the lot, which will consist of McLaren new cars, and Ferraris, Bentleys, etc. as used cars. Mr. McBride summarized letters from all pertinent parties stating that there are no concerns at this time.

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve a Motor Vehicle Class 1 license for BMD, LLC, dba McLaren Motors. Unanimously voted*

*Motion; made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to close the public hearing. Unanimously voted*

### **Library Town Hall Study Committee Update**

Present: Committee members Jean Ivas, Bob Molla and Scott Brodsky

Ms. Ivas gave an overview of the executive summary draft, which will be done by December 16<sup>th</sup>. The committee suggested that the impending audit results be transferred to the Building Committee and gave a summary of recommendations for the remaining tasks to be completed.

They would like to establish the Building Committee sooner rather than later, and also wish to transfer the remaining Article Account balance of \$23,422.05 to the Building Committee at the May Town Meeting.

The BOS discussed at length various aspects of the proposed project with this committee, highlighting such topics as construction reimbursement rates, towns that have built a library similar in size and type to that proposed for the Town, grant applications and requirements that must be met when going through this process. The Library trustees want to be involved in the design and building process. Mr. McBride had a conversation with Laurence Gogarty, Chair of the PBMC, and both felt that the library should have a strong role in the building committee. Per Ms. Ivas, the committee could be a combination of both boards. All discussed combinations of committee options at length. The Town will need to hire an OPM for this project. The BOS should also be mindful of the committee size in order to facilitate bill payments, etc. All felt that the PBMC should be involved from the beginning. More discussion of committee composition ensued. The board addressed the question of voting vs. nonvoting members (if some members are Town employees). Ms. Allen would like to research what other towns have done before making any decisions on committee composition. The schedule for the OPM process is to start in January. Mr. Morin gave examples of various committees and how the OPM is chosen.

Perhaps a subcommittee could do the prep work and the full committee could sign the bills. The user of the building needs to be involved throughout the planning and construction process. Careful thought should go into this committee composition. Members of both boards will do some research first, then come back to discuss options, tentatively at the BOS meeting on December 16<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Ivas will send more info to the board.

Mr. McBride brought up one final item. He would like the committee to consider including a TV Cable studio in the design, as it makes sense that new construction would be the perfect site for a studio. The addition of a cable studio would increase the size of the project, but funding for that piece of the project would come from a different source. The size of a potential studio was briefly discussed. Ms. Allen hopes that a studio would be used, and reminded all that the PEG account is upwards of \$800,000. The Town is approaching a negotiation period, so hopefully this account will acquire more revenue. Mr. McBride asked that the committee consider this in the technical feasibility process that will be coming up, as it might be a great symbiotic combination with the library. Library programs could be broadcast if there were a studio. Discussion of potential options ensued.

The committee has done a huge amount of work, for which they were thanked by the BOS.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

*Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to approve the meeting minutes of November 4, 2015. Unanimously voted*

**Adjourn** – None *Motion: made by Ellen Allen, seconded by Peter Smellie, to adjourn at 8:43pm. Unanimously voted*

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Board of Selectmen

