

**Norwell Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes
November 28, 2012**

Gregg McBride opened the meeting and introduced Ellen Allen, David DeCoste and Town Administrator James Boudreau. The Agenda was amended to add: Appointments to the Commission on Disabilities. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved the Board approve the agenda as amended. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

CITIZEN COMMENTS – None

7:35 Adrienne Vavpetic – Personnel Board Applicant – Adrienne Vavpetic briefed the Selectmen on why she is interested in serving on the Personnel Board and what she could bring to that Board. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved to appoint Adrienne Vavpetic to the Personnel Board to a Term Expiring June 30, 2015. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

COMMITTEE APPOINTMENTS

Gregg McBride explained that there are 2 applicants interested in serving on the Commission on Disabilities, which has 4 openings. Ellen Allen noted their relevant professional backgrounds for this Committee.

Patti M. Nelson – Commission on Disabilities Applicant – *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved to appoint Patti M. Nelson to the Commission on Disabilities to a Term Expiring June 30, 2015. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

Deborah M. Paine – Commission on Disabilities Applicant – *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved to appoint Deborah M. Paine to the Commission on Disabilities to a Term Expiring June 30, 2015. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

7:40 Melanson, Heath & Co. – Town Auditor Frank Biron – Frank Biron discussed the Town's Audit report for FY 2012. Copies are available at Town Hall. Highlights:

- All the Town's year end reports were well prepared and completed quickly. Financial controls are good.
- The Town had responded well to last year's few recommendations and was receiving only a few minor ones in this year's Management Letter (also available at Town Hall).
- The reduction in net assets of ~\$1.7M was due to the increase in the OPEB liability, which was determined without yet giving effect to recent changes negotiated in employees' health insurance.
- The Net OPEB obligation was ~\$10.5M, up from ~\$8.2M for FY 2011. It was noted that Norwell is among the first communities starting to set aside funds for this, though not nearly enough to meet the unfunded liability.
- The Unassigned Fund Balance remained very strong, increasing slightly from FY 2011 to over \$2.9M. This is the most important number to debt ratings agencies. Together with Stabilization, these total 10.2% of General Fund expenditures, within the Town's financial guideline of 10-15%. Stabilization of \$1,977,276 represents 3.8% of GF expenditures, also within its guideline of 3-5%.

- Substantial Free Cash & Overlay Surplus were used to fund the FY 2012 budget, but because a similar amount of new Free Cash was generated, this should be acceptable to debt ratings agencies.
- Total expenditures were only \$378K under budget (0.9%), which shows very tight budgeting.
- \$145K was raised by the newly adopted Meals Tax and placed into the OPEB trust fund.

8:30 Finance Department Update – Town Accountant & Finance Director Donna Mangan, Treasurer/Collector Angela Chandler, and Town Assessor Barbara Gingras presented information about their departments. It was noted that the Treasurer/Collector has been pursuing Tax Title more aggressively this year, which reflected positively in the Audit. There has been increased work handling health insurance benefits due to the increased number of school employees and changes negotiated in health plans last year.

9:00 Public Hearing – Tax Classification Hearing (See separate minutes.)

OLD BUSINESS

Farm Licenses – The proposed Farm Licenses with John Hornstra and Norwell Farms for separate portions of the Jacobs Farm House property were presented. The License with John Hornstra for a portion of the Donovan Fields was also presented. It was noted that licenses with George Whittaker for another portion of the Donovan fields, with Hornstra at the former Osborn Fields, and with the owner of the bees hives at Donovan and Jacobs Farm still need to be negotiated. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved that the board execute the two Licenses with John Hornstra and the License with Norwell Farms. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

NEW BUSINESS

Road Opening Season Ends December 14, 2012 – Gregg McBride read a letter from Highway Surveyor Paul Foulsham requesting that the closing date for Road Opening Permit Applications be December 3, 2012. In addition, all anticipated work to be completed by December 14, 2012.

MOTION: Ellen Allen moved that the Closing Date for Road Opening Permits be December 3, 2012, with all work to be completed by December 14, 2012. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.

Request for Holiday on the Common – The Norwell VNA and the Norwell Men's Club had submitted a letter to the Selectmen asking permission for use of the Town Common for the Annual Holiday on the Common on Sunday, December 2, 2012. The Tree Lighting will be at 4:00 PM. *MOTION: Ellen Allen moved that the Board approve the request from the Norwell VNA and Norwell Men's Club for use of the Town Common on Sunday, December 2, 2012. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*

NSRWSA request New Years Day Walk on January 1, 2013 – Assistant Director Paula Christie of the North and South Rivers Watershed Association (NSRWA) requested permission from the Norwell Board of Selectmen to have their Annual New Year's Day walk at 1:00 PM on the new bike path. Walkers will park in the Middle School parking lot, walk the path to Cushing Hill Road and back to the Middle School. They requested that the Parking Lot be plowed and said that light refreshments would be served at the end.

MOTION: Ellen Allen moved that the Board approve the request from the NSWRA to hold their Annual New Year's Day Walk starting at 1:00 PM on January 1, 2013 at the Norwell Middle School Parking Lot. Seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.


UPCOMING MEETINGS:

December 5, 2012

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Holiday on the Common on Sunday December 2, 2012 starting at 2:00PM at the Cushing Center and ending with the Tree Lighting on the Common at 4:00PM.
- Gregg McBride reported that Eleanor Norris had passed away at the age of 100. She was known for donating 100+ acres which became Norris Reservation under the Trustees of Reservation.

ADJOURNMENT – *Motion was made to adjourn by Ellen Allen, seconded by David DeCoste and unanimously voted.*



Board of Selectmen