

## MINUTES OF SELECTMEN'S MEETING

Chairman Kiley called the meeting to order at 6:03PM on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Senior Center, Mr. Tripp also present.

APPROVAL of MINUTES- Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to approve the minutes from 8/6/2019. So voted.

APPROVAL of WARRANTS-Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to approve the following warrants: School Warrant #1008 \$14,095.25, General Warrant #1009 \$270,655.25 and Payroll Warrant #4 \$266,571.13. So voted.

### NEW BUSINESS-Joint Meeting of Town Committees

Dale started the joint meeting by explaining that the Downtown Development Committee requested a meeting with other committees so make everyone's efforts more cohesive and to stay up to date on projects.

FRIENDS OF THE TOWN HOUSE-Jim Buzzell stated that the painting of the Town House continues, the Friends have donated \$6,970 to the project. In June the Mass Cultural Council awarded them a \$10,000 grant to help make the building into a performance and creative life center. They hope to have all types of creative classes such as art, music, theater and technology. This has been endorsed by Senator Anne Gobi and Representative Donnie Berthiaume. They've been contacted by Berkley University among other schools that will assist with mentoring, teaching and setting up a curriculum. There will be a capital campaign to raise funds in 2020. On October 19<sup>th</sup> they will start cleaning out the building for the start of construction.

FIRE DEPARTMENT BUILDING COMMITTEE-Dave Harris spoke about the plans for the new Fire Department as the current building is over 140 years old and doesn't meet NFPA codes. Several pieces of equipment are stored outside or in the highway barn next door. The new building would be located at 11 Grove St, next to the police station and would have access to School St at the back of the building. It will be able to house all equipment and provide sleeping quarters, office space, and training space for the department. They are working with an architect to get the design and should have it in the next few weeks. Chief Joe Holway spoke about the cost of the new building, original "wish list" building would cost 14 million dollars, bringing the building down to bare minimum requirements would cut the cost in half (7 million dollars). When there is a design in place Joe would like to present the drawings to the town with the architects present to explain cost of each room and allow the town to ask questions and give opinions. Dale asked about grant money, Joe said he had spoken to a gentleman that works directly under Anne Gobi, and to Donnie Berthiaume himself, and was told funding is very hard to get and there are no grants for a fire department building available.

PLAYGROUND COMMITTEE-Danny Roman spoke about trying to grow our community and how we can make the Common a more age friendly place. He gave out design information for new equipment, courts, and a walking path around the perimeter of the common. Danny would like to see a bandstand or pavilion to do summer concerts on the common as towns around us have. The common needs TLC and updating but Danny needs volunteers to help with the process. Dale asked about a bunker being removed that no longer serves the playground as it gets moldy. Jason Benoit stated he took a look and the Town doesn't have the equipment to remove the concrete bunker but possibly a crane truck could

be brought in. Danny said he took apart the merry go round and is replacing the ball bearings. He's removed unsafe equipment, repaired what he can, painted structures to bring more life to the common but essentially it needs a complete overhaul. Dale asked about encroachment issue from neighbor on St. Clair, still an issue which Dale will address. Dale also stated that after the remediation of the Aztec property is complete there is potential to add parking and to connect to the Rail Trail. Diane Nichols stated that she was very excited about this as the Senior Center hosts a walking club that would take full advantage of the new track. Danny is working with an architect who has plans to make the common more handicap accessible, age friendly, and add more parking.

TOWN FOREST PARK COMMITTEE-Joe Holway stated the park is doing good, trails are being maintained by The Lions Club. There's a 9 hole Frisbee golf course, walking trails, and is used by hikers, bikers, and horses regularly. Joe said it would be beneficial to the Town if they could combine a few committees (playground, rail trail, forest, and beach) to make a Parks and Recreation Committee. This would open us up to more grant availability, more money, and a more cohesive vision. Dale said the BoS would be open to that and encouraged Joe to talk to the other committees to get the ball rolling.

PLANNING BOARD-William (Bill) King spoke about the Planning Board, they meet the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month. They are in the process of updating their Master Plan as it hasn't been updated in 10 years. He's planning on sending out a community questionnaire. There are Solar Projects which have slowed down because National Grid is doing their own study of the grid. There will be zoning amendments to allow battery storage containers which will need to be screened from view. Bill stated that the building inspector wants to amend non-conforming property policy to make it easier for landowners and business owners to prosper in town.

LIBRARY-Peg Bodine spoke about the library being a cultural and community center for all ages. They have 3 long range goals. 1-Connections, the library has books, DVD's, e-books, computers, ect for the public to use and want to encourage residents to come into the library. Safety is an important issue and they'd like a dedicated handicap parking spot with an indented curb to allow for easier access for wheelchairs and strollers. They'd like outside lighting and more awareness on Main St of the pedestrian traffic. 2-Recreation-They try to maintain a fun environment with the May Festival, different types of workshops, story time, legos and robotics. 3-Preservation-they are trying to preserve the building and local history and resources. There are leaks in the tower which has plagued the library almost since it was built in the 1890's. They've had a hard time figuring out what the problem is but Kristen from the school committee stated they used someone who identified their issue and would give Peg and Dawn his information.

LOCAL CULTURAL COUNCIL-Laura Dusty stated they are funded by the Mass Cultural Council. She is going to be sending out a community survey and the council is a source for people to request grants.

NBHELPS-Sue Lewandowski spoke about the decorating of Town. In April they had Earth Day cleanup, they provide flowers in baskets throughout town, they got new flags throughout town, and in December they decorate and do a big Christmas Celebration. They get money through donations from residents and occasionally use GoFundMe as another source of donations. Sue wants to place more trash receptacles throughout town and she saw a design for a wooden structure with a flower pot on top, she sent the designs to the Boy Scouts to see if they'd be interested in building them. She needs to find out who would be responsible for emptying the bins. Dale stated that the BoS appreciates all NBHELPS does to make the Town look great and enjoys the Christmas parade every year. April came in later and stated

that the Christmas Tree in town needs to be stripped of all lighting (some is over 40 years old). She got a high quote from Aresenault (3-year contract, \$1000/year) for them to decorate and light the tree. Joe Holway said he'd take a look and see what he can do.

**SENIOR CENTER**-Diane Nichols spoke about how many seniors use the Senior Center and that they provide meals, rides, house visits, classes, and clubs to the seniors in town. She encourages residents of ALL ages to enjoy the services at the Senior Center as it is good for seniors to socialize with people outside of their peer group. The center also provides health screenings, legal, mental, and financial help as well as referral services. Seniors can apply for the SNAP program at the senior center. Diane is working to make North Brookfield and Age and Dementia Friendly Community which is a collaborative effort. Diane spoke about the hardships at the Senior Center: stains on ceiling, window leaks, different level and surfaced flooring, need more space (up or out) to run two classes at once. Dale stated he was impressed with the Halloween parade the SC did last year, they had over 300 people use the Senior Center during Trick or Treat. The Senior Center is also available for renting, and non-profits are not charged the usual fee.

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY**-Brandon Avery said the Historical Society is located in the basement of 197 Main Street and open 1 day a week May-December. He's got hundreds of photos, thousands of documents, books, magazines, maps, prints, paintings. He's working in 800 square feet of space so most inventory is kept in storage. Mr. Avery said he's worked with residents and students on historical research, and he'd like the opportunity to grow so that he can better organize and categorize all the inventory. The current building is for sale so he'd like to find a larger, permanent place. Dale stated that they are trying to get the Train Station back and thinks that would be a great place to house the Historical Society. Mr. Avery also runs an FB page about North Brookfield History.

**BOARD OF HEALTH**- Bob spoke about the recycling center and switching from to new system. They are finishing up the requirements for the DEP by meeting with an engineer to help fix drainage issues. Dale told Bob that we entered into an agreement with a solar company for canopy panels pending the DEP final approval.

**DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**- Sheila Orsi Thanked everyone for coming to the joint committee meeting and sees there's a lot of overlap with the different committees. In September 2018 the Friends of the Townhouse stated they needed the downtown area to be more developed which led to Sheila working with CMRPC on their Complete Streets Policy. Water, Sewer, and Highway are all on board. They applied and were given a \$20,000 grant to develop a plan for the downtown area which will include updating sidewalks, crosswalks, bike trails and parking. They have 5 objectives: 1<sup>st</sup>-Complete Streets, 2-Townhouse project, 3-Downtown redevelopment-working on helping landlords update the outside of their properties, 4-connect walking trails and create maps and signage, 5-expand business in town because there are a lot of vacant buildings and space for lease. MassDOT ADA compliant-surveying downtown businesses. They should have a plan completed by October and will be breaking ground in May 2020.

**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**- Kristin Depasse spoke about "Edge-anuity" an online learning opportunity for NB students to expand their studies (especially those not offered at the school) and earn college credits while completing their diploma's. The elementary school is being painted which has substantially brightened the hallways, and they've created a "Wellness Way" which is a way for the kids to take a break and get out some energy. WPI is helping the school with their STEM courses a few days a week.

The gymnasium floor was recently redone as well. Dale stated the painting has made a huge difference when walking down the halls, and that it would be great if they students could use the Town House for music and theater lessons. Dale asked Jason Benoit (Highway Super) if he could paint the crosswalks near and in the school grounds before school starts. Jason said he could do that in house without having to hire an outside vendor.

Ethan Melard asked if the Board of Selectmen has plans to work on the infrastructure in town, Dale explained that it's given out to the different committees because it is a lot of work and the BoS doesn't have the time to deal with all of it.

Dale stated there is a new electronic sign coming to Main St to replace old sign. Will still have a hometown feel and will be visible from all four corners. John stated that Brown put the electrical service in and John built the backboard with many of the materials donated by Howe Lumber. Dale said there is one tree being taken out to accommodate the new sign.

Alicia from the NBHELPS committee stated the Christmas Tree lighting this year will need some additional effort and money. The current lights are very old, some over 40 years old, and all electrical needs to be stripped and replaced. She got a quote from Arsenault-3 year contract for \$1000 each year. This is FAR above the NBHELPS budget. Joe Holway said he'd take a look at the lights with the ladder truck.

At 7:58PM, there being no further business, Mr. Tripp moved, and Mr. Kiley seconded, a motion to adjourn. So voted.