



TOWN OF NORWELL
Norwell Town Offices, Room 112
345 Main Street
Norwell, Massachusetts 02061
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Norwell Capital Budget Committee Meeting Minutes March 20, 2023

The meeting was called to order by Chair Tim Greene at 7:00 PM. Also present were Town Administrator Darleen Sullivan, Town Accountant Christine McCarthy, and Committee Members Susan Powell, Meaghan James, Kimberley Dall, and Dane Hutchison. Unable to attend was Peter Bloomfield.

FY 2024 DRAFT CAPITAL BUDGET REQUESTS / VOTES

Chair Greene noted that the Committee had had met with all departments submitting requests at the March 13 public meeting.

Ms. Sullivan advised that a request from the School Department for \$180K to resurface the Clipper Community Complex track had been moved to an article in the May 9 Special Town Meeting, as the work needs to start by June. Requests to purchase a police cruiser, two other vehicles, and election booths will be funded with American Rescue Plan Act funds, which could be used to pay for “any general government purpose.” Ms. Powell asked how these particular items had been vetted and approved; these were approved by the Select Board in a recorded public meeting.

Highways / Trees & Grounds

Ms. Powell would like more detailed vehicle inventory information next year, which Ms. Sullivan will provide; Ms. Dall concurred, noting one had not been provided in several years. Advisory Board Chair Jesse McSweeney noted that Highway Commissioner Glenn Ferguson had provided them this information.

Ms. Powell inquired about Highways employing a part-time mechanic. Ms. Sullivan had asked the same question and was told modern trucks are more computerized and require specialized technicians; thus, the functionality of a staff mechanic would be limited,

School Department

Ms. Sullivan noted that half of the Department’s \$320K request for heating control repairs at both elementary schools was deferred until next year to keep spending amounts down. Ms. Powell expressed concern at possible cost increases next year and asked Ms. Sullivan to find out if there were any efficiencies to doing all repairs at once.

Facilities / Council on Aging

Ms. Dall asked if the water leaks prompting the need for new carpeting at the Council on Aging had been addressed; Ms. Sullivan indicated not yet, but this would be done before the new carpeting was installed. Ms. Powell asked if a less expensive carpet would be installed given the possibility of a new COA building; COA director Sue Curtin noted the carpet would be installed in a basement room where most programming occurs, so they want durable carpeting that will

provide some padding and hold in heat. They are hoping to replace just a section of carpet and not the entire room.

Ms. Powell also asked about the need for a new fire alarm and emergency button system. Ms. Curtin opined that the emergency button, while not essential, would enhance staff safety given the building's isolated location; she considered the fire alarm system an absolute necessity, as the current system is not linked to any networking, and an after-hours fire could be catastrophic.

Select Board

Ms. Powell asked whether the quote for the SB's digitization project was reasonable, as it sounded like a simple job. Ms. Sullivan indicated the IT company provided an estimate based on the information that was given to them, and the project will involve several workers. It will be an ongoing project, as the Town wants to implement the new system one department at a time.

Motion by Mr. Greene to approve the School Department, Recreation Department, Fire Department, and Select Board capital funding requests. Seconded by Ms. Powell and unanimously voted.

Motion by Mr. Greene to approve the Council on Aging carpeting request for \$16,000. Seconded by Ms. Dall and approved 4-0-1, Ms. Powell having voted no.

Motion by Mr. Greene to approve the Council on Aging fire alarm request for \$20,000. Seconded by Ms. Dall and unanimously voted.

Motion by Mr. Greene to approve the Council on Aging emergency button request for \$6,000. Seconded by Ms. Dall and approved 4-0-1, Ms. Powell having voted no.

MISCELLANEOUS

Ms. Powell suggested that the Committee start its review earlier next year to allow for possible on-site visits; she would also like to review the 10 year capital plan, which Ms. Sullivan believes was updated in 2021.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, a motion was made by Ms. Powell to adjourn at 7:30 PM. Seconded by Chair Greene and unanimously voted.

Tim Greene, Chair