

**Selectmen's Meeting  
Hybrid Meeting**

**October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021  
Meeting is Recorded**

*Under Governor Baker's emergency "Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law G.L. C. 30A, Section 20", issued March 12, 2020 and in effect until termination of the State of Emergency: This meeting of the Board of Selectmen will be conducted in a hybrid model with the Board meeting in person in the Selectmen's Chambers in Town Hall, and all other participants joining remotely. The Meeting will be called to order by the Chairman at 7:00PM. Please, see meeting information below.*

Join from your computer, tablet or smartphone at <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/410037717>

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**Present: Chairman Maloney, Vice Chairman Plasko, Selectman Lane, Selectman Donohue, Town Manager Tony Mazzucco, Clerk Jess Jozwik.**

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Maloney at 7 PM with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silent prayer or reflection. In opening comments, Chairman Maloney made note of the sudden passing of Selectman David Hajjar and on behalf of the Town, offered sincere condolences to Selectman Hajjar's family. Mr. Maloney as well as other Board members – including Selectmen Donohue and Lane and Vice Chairman Plasko – shared their remembrances of Selectman Hajjar.

On motion of Selectman Plasko, seconded by Selectman Donohue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the ratification of the appointments to the Commission on Disability. Laura Duran, Sarah Quinn, Michelle Sweeney, Sue Breen and Marcy Rossi.

On motion of Selectman Plasko, seconded by Selectman Donohue, the Board voted unanimously to invite applicant Maria Gallesyan (Community Preservation Committee) to come before the Board for a brief introduction/conversation before approving the appointment.

Announcement that a Special Election will take place on January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022 to fill the vacant seat on the Board.

On motion of Selectman Plasko, seconded by Selectman Lane, the Board voted unanimously to approve the meeting schedule as follows: November 9<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>, December 7<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>.

On motion of Selectman Donohue, seconded by Selectman Plasko the Board voted unanimously to table the 2022 license renewals until meeting of December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2022.

On motion of Selectman Lane, seconded by Selectman Donohue, the Board voted unanimously to approve the one day liquor license(s) for William Desmond – The Magic Room. 1. Friday October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 7 PM until 11 PM and 2. November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 12 PM until 11 PM.

On motion of Selectman Donohue, seconded by Selectman Plasko, the Board voted unanimously to approve the one day liquor license for Carlos Esteves – Norwood Portuguese Club for November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2021 from 12 PM until 11 PM.

On motion of Selectman Donohue, seconded by Selectman Lane, the Board voted unanimously to approve the request from Edmund Mulvehill, Jr., Norwood American Legion Post #70, to hold the annual Veteran’s Day parade and ceremonies on Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

On motion of Selectman Donohue, seconded by Selectman Lane, the Board voted unanimously to sign the following cemetery deeds:

Deborah McEachern of 16 Windemere Drive, Mansfield for Lot SGW-13.

Lisa Decosta of 120 Pleasant Street, for Lot C3-180.

Francis S. Davenport of 31 Autumn Street, for Lot G6-109.

On motion of Selectman Plasko, seconded by Selectman Lane, the Board voted unanimously to file the following information: Verizon programming change – the removal of Ultra Docu HD, Ultra Macho HD, Ultra Kids HD and ShopHQ Health effective November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021.

#### Manager’s Update

Mr. Mazzucco opened with comments regarding COVID assistance for small businesses (fewer than five employees). Through the work of the Manager’s Office and notably, Joe Collins – the Town was successful in receiving approximately \$165,000.00 in direct support of small businesses. An additional \$210,000.00 will be going directly to small businesses in Norwood through this Micro Enterprise Grant Program.

#### Selectmen’s Addenda

Selectman Plasko: Updated the Board regarding Norwood Hospital. A meeting took place earlier in the day with representatives from the hospital. Mr. Plasko felt that it was an optimistic meeting in which the future of the hospital, plans, etc. were discussed. If all goes according to plan, after demolition and rebuilding – the hospital should reopen sometime in May of 2024. Mr. Plasko also mentioned easements and that a Town Meeting vote would have to take place in order that a few of those easements would need to be abandoned in order for the rebuilding plans to move forward.

Selectman Lane: The League of Women Voters will hold an event at the Norwood Light Department located at 136 Access Road Thursday night, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 6 PM. The LWV asks that those wishing to attend - please register in advance.

Selectman Donohue: Mrs. Donohue spoke of the upcoming 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Town and asked all who are interested in helping – to please get involved. Selectman Donohue also mentioned the New Year's Eve – First Night celebration. There will be all kinds of activities for children and adults. On February 23<sup>rd</sup> – the actual day of incorporation – there will be a banquet held at the Sheraton Four Points. Tickets will go on sale in November.

There is a scheduled public hearing to be held at 8 PM. On motion of Selectman Plasko, seconded by Selectman Lane, the Board voted unanimously to recess for twenty minutes until 8 PM.

Chairman Maloney has recused himself and Vice Chairman Plasko will oversee the hearing. This hearing is part of the cable renewal process to ascertain the community's cable related needs. Notice of this hearing appeared in the local newspaper for two successive weeks and notices were placed on the Town's website. Copies of the legal advertisement are here and entered into the record as Ascertainment Hearing Exhibits 1 and 2. The federal and state law requires the holding of the ascertainment proceedings including this hearing. Comments and testimony will be received from the public and interested persons about what cable related needs are important to the public and about how the Town's cable operators have performed under their existing licenses. The Board has received approximately fifty-two letters of support - specifically in keeping a strong, supported Norwood Community Media organization. These will be entered into exhibit as Exhibit 3.

Appearing before the Board is Mr. Richard Shay, Chairman of our local cable commission. The cable commission's job is to serve as agents for the Board of Selectmen – in contracting for cable services for the Town. The commission negotiates the contracts with legal help and guidance from the selectmen and also oversees that the contracts are fulfilled. This is performed under federal and state regulations. Mr. Shay clarified that Norwood Light, Verizon and Comcast also provide internet service as well as phone service. These services are not affected by these regulations and are not the subject of these contracts. This hearing is for all three of the contracts which is the first time this has been done. At the current time and to the best of the commission's knowledge – all three companies are in compliance with their contracts.

The number of subscribers is down for all three companies not only in Norwood but within the state as well. Mr. Shay believes that the downward trend could be due to COVID with residents cutting cable and moving toward streaming instead. One of the primary goals when negotiating a contract is to make sure that the money required to operate NCM and PEG access is available. The amount allowed by law (5%) historically that has been collected by the cable companies goes to NCM plus in each contract a capital amount has been added that has worked out to be \$15,000.00 per year. Mr. Shay notes that that amount has never been raised which could be an issue. In our last contract with Verizon, the issue was partially addressed in negotiations with them. Verizon was concerned that numbers were going to drop off drastically and that the capital

portion which is split among subscribers would end up being a burden for some of them. A composite of \$7,500.00 plus a small percentage, which Mr. Shay estimated to be at least equivalent to \$7,500.00 per year – was done. For the first three years of Verizon’s five year contract that turned out to be true with a little extra but Mr. Shay thinks that the last two quarters have trended less than \$7,500.00 and that is an issue that NCM would want addressed and he hopes that the Selectmen would want addressed in the negotiations with the companies.

Appearing next before the Board – representing Norwood Community Media – Executive Director, Jack Tolman and Station Manager, Meghan Corbett. A short video was presented. Mr. Tolman stated that they were present to help people understand what NCM does and to learn how they use the funding that is received from the cable subscribers. Mr. Tolman noted how critical the cable licenses are to NCM’s operation. He then gave a brief history of NCM – how long they have been established in the community and spoke of their continued growth. Ms. Corbett then continued with some statistics: Total shows produced annually – 600. Norwood News over 2000 views per week, government meetings – 20 boards and committees, sporting events – over 13,500 views this year. They truly pride themselves with local coverage – mentioning the relationships that have been built with town departments.

Norwood Community Media consists of the Board of Directors, four full time staff, two part time regular staff, 20 part time staff, 25 on camera volunteers as well as community producers. NCM’s educational presence was noted by Mr. Tolman: partnership with Norwood High School, NHS TV Program – professional studio, volunteer opportunities, experience and scholarship, sports coverage – game coverage during COVID and fine arts coverage. Community coverage was highlighted next during which it was noted again that the relationships within the Town are indeed strong and that they were able to help so many residents during COVID by broadcasting information that was important for people to know.

Next Mr. Tolman continued the presentation with slides outlining PEG fees, capital spending and operating expense trends. He is concerned about the trends with regard to the cable television industry – as a reminder NCM is funded by all three cable providers. The cable providers charge a fee to the subscribers and NCM is reliant upon that 5% of operating revenues and the fixed capital spending allowance each year. The fees are decreasing while operating expenses are increasing. In closing, Mr. Tolman spoke of moving forward and why the license and the licensing process is critical. During negotiations that the Town will have with the cable companies – the important items for NCM are: the length of the term of the license, to continue to receive the 5% PEG fees, high definition and keeping up with technology.

Chief William Brooks of the Norwood Police Department, Sigalle Reiss, Director of the Norwood Health Department and Trish Monahan, Outreach Coordinator at the Senior Center all spoke on behalf of the importance of NCM’s presence in the community.

On motion of Selectman Lane, seconded by Selectman Donohue, the Board voted unanimously to close the hearing.

On motion of Chairman Maloney, seconded by Selectman Donohue, the Board voted unanimously to adjourn.

**A True Record:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ATTEST:** \_\_\_\_\_  
**Assistant**