

**NORFOLK BOARD OF FINANCE
MINUTES OF AUGUST 11, 2020 MEETING**

Members present were: M. Sconyers, G. Allyn; N. Ritson and D. Torrey.

Members absent: G. Mudge and J. Tarrant.

Alternate members present were: S. Anderson and A. Bennett

Alternate member absent was: L. Battis

The meeting was called to order at 7:34 p.m. by M. Sconyers.

Minutes of the June 9, 2020 meeting were approved on a motion by N. Ritson, second by D. Torrey and unanimously approved.

Under correspondence, the Board discussed the non-lapsing account for education funds. M. Sconyers indicated it is the logical thing to do and indicated that New Hartford has done so for a number of years. The Board asked various questions. The Board voted unanimously to create a non-lapsing account for education funds from Botelle and Region 7.

Under Selectmen's Report, the Selectmen request to move an amount greater than \$15,000 from the Capital Reserve account to the Selectmen's Budget to purchase a roller for the Public Works Department. The roller no longer functions; it is a 1960's version and the cost to repair would be more than \$5,500. The roller would be used to repair driveway aprons when repairing catch basins, other patch jobs around town, etc. The Selectmen have found a used roller for \$15,000 and are requesting the BOF move the money into the Selectmen's Budget. The road grader was sold for \$13,500, as it was used sparingly. This request was approved on a motion by N. Ritson, second by G. Allyn and unanimously approved.

The Selectman is trying to get information together for some large capital expenditures meaning Maple Avenue, some of the bridges, and for a new firehouse. Currently money is fairly inexpensive, and he is working on budgets for the next ten (10) years. He is hopeful to have updated information at the next BOF meeting.

The Selectman relayed one bit of good news, he spoke to the engineer company for Mountain Road, which now does have funding for the small town bridge programs; he is hoping to hear if the Mountain Road bridge is chosen.

At tonight's Selectmen's meeting, the Selectmen approved to move forward with a fiber optic study. This committee will collect information on fiber optics. It would be helpful to have someone from the BOF to go through this process of how it would be implemented and present to the BOF next January. This is only a committee that would be making recommendations – there is a need to research funding sources, per year, to borrow the kind of money that is being discussed.

The Selectmen have agreed to a Letter of Intent to Lonestar to put a solar field at the landfill. This process is in the early stages; Lonestar has to do homework to implement a 3-megawatt installation. It is estimated the Town would take in \$42,000 per year. The Letter of Intent is for 3 years.

The Selectman raised the issue of borrowing money to do Capital Improvements as there are roads and bridges that need to be done, Maple Avenue being one, as well as building a new firehouse. The Selectman emphasized how the Fire Department has been a valuable asset to the Town of Norfolk and that he cannot say enough about the work of Richard Byrne and Jon Barbagallo for this event, and other events, including during Covid. The Selectman would like to further investigate what the Town can do and afford as far as a new firehouse. This is one of his reasons for doing a study of ten (10) years out. There are approximately five (5) years left on one of the Town's long-term debts, and seven (7) years on another. He realizes it is not easy, there is not a simple answer, but the Town needs to look at the issue of a new firehouse pretty seriously. Chairman Sconyers indicated that the BOF will be open minded.

The Treasurer attended the meeting, and at only one month into the fiscal year stated that there is not a great deal to report.

There was nothing under 2/3 vote.

Under Public Comment, Jon Barbagallo discussed how this past week brought to the front the communications challenges that the various crews have, which are totally separate from the dispatch center.

Troy Lemaire and Jon wanted to bring to the Board's attention that they need to be able to talk to each other from north to south Norfolk, which is exactly what they were unable to do during the storm this past week. There are various solutions that cost various amounts. They are working to develop a feasible plan for both emergency services and the road crew, something financially reasonable for the town.

Troy reiterated during the storm Norfolk Ambulance contacted the Department of Public Works to get to a location that they could not get to, and that it is very disturbing to not be able to communicate efficiently. Troy indicated there have been problems with radios since he started. A new antenna was put on the roof at Town Hall, which alleviated a little of the problem. It is very dangerous for the Town, and very hard to communicate.

Chairman Sconyers is glad they brought this to the Board's attention and thanked them both. He stated there is nothing more important than emergency services, and that the Board will give it their attention.

One member of the BOF wondered if this request could be made to Eversource in an attempt to redeem themselves by funding this.

Troy added that he appreciates the BOF looking towards Norfolk's future and buying equipment to make Norfolk a better place.

On Motion of D. Torrey, second by G. Allyn and unanimously approved, the meeting adjourned at 7:58 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Ryan, Secretary