

**Town of North Yarmouth  
Select Board  
Meeting Minutes December 19, 2023, 6:30 PM**

**Select Board Members**

Amy Haile, Chairperson  
Karl Cyr, Board Member

Andrea Berry, Vice Chairperson  
Paul Hodgetts, Board Member

Katherine Maloney, Board Member

**Call to Order** (16.35-17:05)

Pledge of Allegiance

**Special Presentations** (17:06-1:02-55)

Chairperson Haile thanked the Fire Department and Public Works for their work during the storm.

Legislative Update, Senator Teresa S. Pierce



2023 North  
Yarmouth Delegation

Questions:

Selectperson Cyr asked about affordable housing. It means different thing in North Yarmouth verses Portland. He asked how they balance those priorities.

Senator Pierce advised there is a housing committee. They are focusing on three areas. Emergency, Inventory, and Systemic issues. The housing inventory is low. It is a concern. The market is softening, but volatile. We have not been building homes since 2008 and now things are more expensive. We need more inventory. It is a focal point. The Committee is working on it.

Vice Chairperson Berry asked about PFAS funding.

Senator Pierce stated she was happy to share more information about PFAS, but she did not have anything with her.

Jim Moulton, 54 Mill Road, stated he knew the Tax legislation LD 290 was unsustainable. He asked about the deferral program.

Senator Pierce stated it was a program that allowed the state to pay a homeowner's taxes. A tax lien would then be placed on the home to pay back the taxes when the property is sold.

Scott Legge, 605 Sligo Road, asked how the public was made aware of the property tax fairness credit. Does this replace LD 130?

Senator Pierce advised it is on the income tax form by checking some boxes. The program was already in existence. The state just increased the benefit from \$1000 to \$2000. You must qualify for the program.

## MSAD#51 School Update, Leanne Candura, School Board Chair



NY Selectboard  
update Dec 19 2023

Vice Chairperson Berry asked if there would be any opportunity for North Yarmouth to be included in a larger school bond to potentially build a playground in North Yarmouth or to support some potential field development due to loss of outside amenities with an on-campus school.

Leanne Candura stated she asked the Recreation Department to do an assessment and look at both towns to see what spaces are available for the school's recreational needs.

Vice Chairperson Berry asked if there will be a joint meeting before the final decision is made.

Leanne Candura advised them to meet in February 2024.

Alicia Dostilio, Parsonage Road, asked how many PreK and first grade classrooms are proposed on campus?

Leanne Candura advised the building will hold about five hundred students. She will know more once the plans are complete.

### **Public Comment-Non-Agenda Items** (1:02:56-1:09:46)

Linc Merrill, 1572 North Road, stated the PFAS list does not list all the sites in North Yarmouth where there is PFAS. The issue is broader than what you see on those maps. He feels the town should make residents aware of land where sludge was spread because those areas contain PFAS and are not on the list.

Dan Merrill, 1045 Sligo Road, stated he was here to talk about taxes. With the talk of the school expansion, he is worried about the amount taxes he pays with the increased population. Please consider the school costs when allowing all these new developments.

Mike Malory, Walnut Hill Road stated Linc was correct about additional PFAS areas. He stated his tax bill has doubled over the years. How are we going to tell someone living on social security that their taxes are going up by \$800.00. He stated some people feel like they must move because they cannot afford their taxes.

Chairperson Haile closed public comments.

### **New Business** (1:09:47-2:33:24)

#### Streaming of Standing Meetings

Selectperson Hodgetts asked why the last EDSC meeting was not broadcasted.

Chairperson Haile stated she would like to give some background. Every Tuesday before the Select Board meeting, she meets with Vice Chairperson Berry and Diane Barnes, Town Manager to go over the agenda. Diane asked if we needed to record it. It is the only standing committee meeting that is recorded. The committee cannot make any independent decisions without bringing them to the Select Board. They looked at stats and not many people watched the recordings. Some residents only watch for about 15 minutes.



Selectperson Hodgetts advised the problem is that they did not include the entire Select Board. He found out on November 30, 2023, that it was not being recorded. The EDSC has been broadcasted since 2021, when the prior Select Board voted to record it. He stated it was previously, recorded due to trust issues. Some prior meetings were not public and this started the mistrust.

Selectperson Maloney advised it would have been nice to know what was going on, but she agrees people are busy and she does not feel it was intentionally done. She was on the EDSC committee as a member in 2020. It was disheartening to hear the rumors. At the time we lost all committee members. Members did not renew their term as they did not want to be the subject of rumors. She was relieved that the meeting was recorded, and she thought there would be more participation. She has not seen any improvement. She is not seeing the benefit that she hoped for.

Chairperson Haile apologized for not notifying the entire committee.

Selectperson Hodgetts stated three other Select Board members felt it should be recorded.

Selectperson Maloney stated yes, in 2020, but she is not sure why it is recorded now. She suggested unique content-based meetings should be recorded.

Selectperson Cyr asked how much it costs per meeting and how much we are spending per view.

Diane Barnes stated it is built into the wages and does not cost anything other than overtime. If it gets done by 8 PM. There are no other costs.

Selectperson Cyr had a family emergency and was excused at 7:47 PM.

Vice Chairperson Berry stated she likes Selectperson Maloney's idea of unique content recordings. Some of the other committee meetings would have been great to record when there was a speaker. It would be wonderful to have those recorded. She has concerns that this specific focus on EDSC is rooted in distrust of how our government here in town is working.

Linc Merrill, 1572 North Road, stated this is not an EDSC issue. What we are talking about is the underlying current that there is a belief that the town officials were not transparent and did not always follow the rules. The issue that has people upset is that the Select Board decided to broadcast the meetings and then made the decisions to not broadcast. He urges the Select Board not to decide tonight. He stated the board brought up some great ideas and some meetings should be broadcast. He felt this warranted a future discussion. We should let go of the past because now we have a good committee doing good work. Put the meeting on a future agenda and talk about it. He agrees that some meetings do not need to be broadcasted, but we should be honest about it.

Alicia Dostilio, Parsonage Road, stated she got notice that the meeting was going to be moved. She did not know if the meeting was going to be recorded or not. Their current charge is public comment on sidewalks, now may not be a suitable time to stop recordings. She has been a member since 2022 and there have been three meetings canceled, one due to snowstorm, one due to Lewiston shooting and another due to covid. She does not recall any being cancelled due to room unavailability. She stated she does not even know if the other EDSC members have any knowledge of what is going on and that feels uncomfortable.

Judy Potter, Walnut Hill Road, advised it does not cost us any money to record it and it is in Jackson's job description to record EDSC. She is not sure why we have the need to stop recording it. She felt the public should have been notified.

Paul Napolitano, 18 Mill Ridge Road, advised he can remember when the meetings were not broadcasted.



By broadcasting you keep everyone sharp. He usually watches every meeting, but when he listens to it, he gets frustrated as it is hard to hear and see.

Paul Whitmarsh, Wild Turkey Lane, stated he wanted to go back to the video equipment installation. He would like to see all meetings recorded and a committee member should be able to do. Why are the viewing numbers so low? Is the quality so poor that people turn it off or are they downloading it? He feels there is more of a discussion needed here.

Mike Mallory, Walnut Hill Road, advised that they should be recorded for the notetaker so information can be validated.

Jim Moulton, 54 Mill Road, In January 2021 EDSC and the Select Board went into executive session. The EDSC was ahead of the Select Board. He thinks transparency is important. He thinks spending a little money to record it is the right decision.

Rachel Whitmarsh, Wild Turkey Lane, advised she watches some of the meetings at home. She used to come to every meeting but due to her family she cannot. She supports broadcasting more of them. She knows the budget is coming up and if it is a financial issue can we get it on the budget to make recording possible.

Select person Maloney wanted to thank everyone who came out for public comments. She listened to all the comments, and she has thought about this. A few comments stood out to her. She believes that the board decided to record all EDSC meetings. She would like to talk to committee members before making any decision on this. She referenced Mr. Merrill's comments that it is a good committee that does good work. She feels they are very committed people and thanks them for their volunteerism. She does not want the recordings to come from a place of mistrust. She does not feel we should rush this and have time to hear from the members that are going to be affected by it.

Vice Chairperson Berry felt we should be consistent with this issue. She felt that the recordings were due to mistrust, and she does not want to uphold the recordings based on that. She felt there should be a policy.

Judy Potter, Walnut Hill Road, stated the board works for the people and the people want it recorded. It will not cost any more money.

Alicia Dostilio, Parsonage Road, thanked Selectperson Maloney for hearing her. She advised it is difficult to hear you applaud volunteerism yet not ask the volunteers what they think. It is difficult listening to the board say we are going to table it, but this is the decision we are going to come back with and that is a decision.

Chairperson Haile, seconded by Vice Chairperson Berry moved that Selectperson Maloney will speak to the EDSC and ask them how they feel about the issue.

Diane Barnes, Town Manager, suggested the liaisons go to other committees and ask what they feel about recording.

Motion amended.

Chairperson Haile, seconded by Selectperson Maloney moved to ask the liaisons of The Parks Committee, The EDSC, and The Waste Reduction Committee to ask for their thoughts on streaming. **Vote 4 Yes/0 No.**

Chairperson Haile stated to be clear, they will keep recording the EDSC meeting.

## **Old Business** (2:33:25-3:04:49)

Select Board Goals, Vice Chairperson Berry



23-24 Board Goals  
Worksheet - Leads A

**Selectperson Maloney, seconded by Chairperson Haile moved to approve the goals and assignments presented by Vice Chairperson Berry. Vote 4 Yes/0 No.**

Senior Tax Program

Chairperson Haile stated that Selectperson Maloney and Selectperson Hodgett will work together on the senior tax program. They both had interest.

Paul Napolitano, 18 Mill Ridge Road, advised he did not qualify for affordable housing in this town. He felt the town needed to give him an incentive to stay. If he sells his home to a family that has three kids, the town will pay \$36,000 to educate the children. The taxes on his second home are only \$1,000.00. His taxes go up in North Yarmouth \$1,000.00 a year. He stated he did not feel the board could come up with a plan in time.

Judy Potter, Walnut Hill Road, asked if have used all the money from the American Resue Act. This money can be used for senior taxes.

Andrea Berry, Vice Chairperson, advised it's as a good idea, but that is a one-time thing, and the senior tax program needs to be sustainable.

Linc Merrill, 1572 North Road, He stated several families moved away due to taxes. The kids were done with school, and they moved up north to their camps. The cheapest way to hold tax increase is to decrease the number of kids in school. Keeping seniors in their home is better for them and better for the town's tax perspective.

Chairperson Haile set a check-in date for January 2, 2024.

Highlights from Community Engagement Activities

This was moved to January 02, 2024.

## **Consent Agenda** (3:04:50-3:05:41)

Payroll Warrants

#42 \$ 51,653.68

#45 \$ 54,088.60

Municipal Accounts Payable Warrants

#41 \$ 16,822.46

#43 \$ 7,715.74

#44 \$ 5,326.81

#46 \$ 11,140.56

#47 \$ 9,562.10

#48 \$ 1,845,810.11

Total \$ 2,002,120.06



**Vice Chairperson Berry, seconded by Selectperson Maloney moved to approve the consent agenda as presented. Vote 4 Yes/0 No.**

**Management Reports & Communications** (3:05:42-3:13)

Select Board Committee Reports:

EDSC-Kit Maloney advised they are working on the sidewalk charge. They have also decided to add another representative to the Climate Resiliency Project. Alicia Dostilio will be the second representative. The next meeting is December 21, 2023, at 6:30 PM.

Recreation Advisory Board-Karl Cyr. No updates.

Parks-Karl Cyr. No Updates.

School Fund Committee-Paul Hodgetts. No updates.

Joint Standing Committee-Amy Haile, Andrea Berry advised they did not meet, and the next meeting is the third week of January 2024.

Prince Memorial Library-Amy Haile. No updates.

Waste Reduction Committee-Andrea Berry advised there are sheep and goat farms that will take your Christmas trees. 10 Apple Farm in Gray takes Christmas Trees. North Yarmouth Variety now has a PakTech and bottles and cans recycling bin. The bottles and cans will be donated to the fire station. Climate action plan public forum is in early February.

Shellfish Commission-Karl Cyr. No updates.

Walnut Hill Parkway-Paul Hodgetts, Kit Maloney. They will not meet until October 2024.

Budget Committee-Andrea Berry. No budget committee updates.

Town Manager's Report, Diane Barnes. The Joint meeting between Cumberland and SAD 51 want to move the meeting to February 2024. The Select Board agreed to February 13, 2024, 6:00 PM, but Diane will confirm that.

**Any Other Business** (3:13:01-3:15:48)

Selectperson Maloney shared she was expecting a child in March 2024.

Selectperson Hodgetts asked if the new board members took the MMA training?

Town Manager, Diane Barnes stated she registered them, but will follow up to make sure.

Chairperson Haile stated happy last meeting of 2023. Enjoy your holidays and breaks.

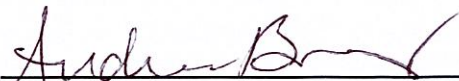
**Adjournment**

**Chairperson Haile, seconded by Selectperson Maloney moved to adjourn at 9:30 PM. Vote 4 Yes/0 No.**


Karen Casale, Recording Secretary

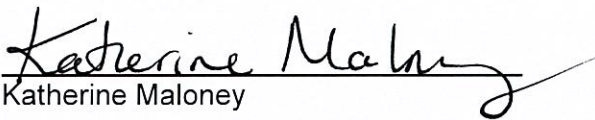
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Amy Haile, Chairperson

Select Board

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Andrea Berry, Vice Chairperson

\_\_\_\_\_  
Paul Hodgetts

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Karl Cyr

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Katherine Maloney