

**Waban Area Council  
Meeting Minutes  
February 13 2020 Waban Library Center 7:30pm**

**Community:** Betsy Hewitt, Chris Barber, Garrett Zella, David Bluestein, Karen and Marty Kafka, David Gilon, Sharon Jin, Elizabeth Connelly, Shirley DeChant, Katie Brigham, Eva Barbier, Ken Wing, B. Lankenship, Rita Lundberg, Joshua Korzenik, Tony and Sandra Dadalt, Philip Landrigan, Richard and Barbara Bercarson, Stephanie Racin, Nick Lazoris, John Morkus, Steve Friedman, Fran Godine, Dan Wellen, Linda Gelda. Laura Unflat.

**WAC:** Chris Pitts, Sallee Lipshutz, Bob Jampol, Dinah Bodkin, Isabelle Ahlbeck, Megan Meirav, Rena Getz

**City Council** Andrea Downs, Bill Humphrey

**WAC Annual Report 2019 and Treasurer's Report Approved.**

**Cogen at NWH:** CP reported discussion with John Looney in which Looney stated that NWH will do a neighborhood impact study of their new heating and electricity generating system. NWH will not move forward with the project until the concerns of the neighbors have been addressed. A community meeting at NWH is planned. In addition, NWH representatives will be present at the March WAC meeting and will provide a fact sheet with information on noise and emissions of the new facility. Discussion ensued as to whether NWH communication with the neighborhood has been adequate and truthful, whether increased use of natural gas in this facility will generate an increase in gas leaks, and whether it would be possible for NWH to replace some of the natural gas with fuel cells. A task force headed by Tim Dechant is looking at the issue in depth. Pediatrician Phil Landrigan spoke of the risk to children that increased air borne particulates presents and circulated his recent publication in the New England Journal of Medicine, "The False Promise of Natural Gas."

Community member inquired as to whether NWH was informing its medical personnel of proposed changes. AD reiterated that current back up electrical system is powered using diesel fuel. Proposed system would be much more secure and much cleaner than the forty days of diesel usage that were necessary last year due to decreased power from the electrical grid. See WAC website for more discussion of the NWH cogeneration facility.

**Ban on New Fossil Fuel Infrastructure?** BH City Council considering ban on new fossil fuel infrastructure. Ban would require Newton being granted "home rule" from the state, ie being allowed to issue its own ruling re fossil fuel infrastructure within the city. SL moved that BJ draft a letter to city council supporting the above. Motion passed.

**Public Safety and Transportation Committee Legislative Agenda.** AD: Meeting will be on Wed Feb 19. Citizens should attend meeting to express priorities re public safety and transportation. Or can email Danielle Delaney. AD: We are eligible for state funds for traffic mitigation. BH: state and federal grants are available for increased police enforcement in three locations. AD two stretches of Chestnut St water main are being cleaned and lined, then will determine which mitigation strategies are best at slowing traffic.

**Open Space Initiative** BJ reported on meeting held one week ago in War Memorial Auditorium. Room was full. A new seven year initiative is under way, community members should take the survey on which how to prioritize open space in Newton (*not available as of this writing*).

**Issues from the Community** CM: 15/30 street lights on Quinobequin not working. Quinobequin is a state road. AD agreed to contact Ruth Balsler.

**January Minutes Accepted.** December Minutes still not accepted due to CM claiming an omission from the NWH presentation. CP and DB will listen to audio of meeting if it is available. WAC had moved two years ago that the Secretary can record meetings in order to create accurate Minutes. It was moved that December Minutes be accepted in their current format in case audio recording not available.

**Northland Referendum** RG: area councils not hosting debate on Northland. RG will put up informational page on WAC website.

**Respectfully submitted by Dinah Bodkin**  
**February 24 2020**