

Minutes

Town of Norwich Finance Committee Meeting Tuesday, January 19, 2010 Tracy Hall, Norwich, Vermont

Members present: Stephen Lajoie (Chair), Stephen Flanders (Secretary), Cheryl A. Lindberg (arrived at 4:44), Keith Moran, Dan Weintraub (left at 5:05)

Members absent: Robert Mitchell and Ann Sargent

Also Present: Pete Webster (Town Manager), Neil Fulton, Henry Scheier, Roger Blake (Selectboard Member), and Dennis Kaufman (Lister)

Chair Lajoie called the meeting to order at 4:41 PM.

Agenda Items Discussed

1. Review/Amendment of Agenda:

Lajoie asked if there were any changes to the agenda. There were none proposed.

2. Review/Approval of Minutes:

Lajoie asked for comments on the minutes of the meeting of 10 January 2010.

Motion: Moran moved and Weintraub seconded that the 10 January 2010 minutes circulated to the NFC be accepted as drafted.

The motion passed unanimously.

Lajoie asked for comments on the minutes of the meeting of 12 January 2010.

Motion: Moran moved and Weintraub seconded that the 12 January 2010 minutes circulated to the NFC be accepted as drafted (with the substitution of "Lindberg" for "Cheryl" in the move to adjourn).

The motion passed unanimously.

3. Public Comments: Scheier spoke to the NFC about Town Eating Day. His group has drafted some guidelines for participants, which he handed out. There will be less of an emphasis on specific topics for participating committees.

4. Norwich Town Budget:

Lajoie introduced this topic by explaining that the NFC was awaiting input from the town on the budget at the 13 January Selectboard meeting and so it deferred taking action on a recommendation regarding the town budget at the January 12th NFC meeting.

Motion: Flanders moved and Weintraub seconded that the Norwich Finance Committee supports the proposed FY2010-11 gross town expenditure budget of \$3,666,130 with the intent of using of the Undesignated Fund Balance to achieve a town tax rate (exclusive of school tax rate) that is essentially the same as that of FY2009-10.

Discussion – There was no further discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Webster touched briefly on his proposal to have a multi-year pavement program. He explained that it was too late at this date to plan on it for the next fiscal year. He reported that Andy Hodgdon, Director of Public Works, recommends two five-year paving programs that would provide complete maintenance on town highways on a continuing basis. He distributed some supporting material.

5. Norwich School Budget:

Lajoie reported that the Norwich School Board (NSB) looked for \$122K of budgetary impact reduction by applying \$60K in cuts to operating cost and a \$52-K reduction in special reserve accounts. \$30K was from special education and \$22K from the building reserve. The transfer from reserve funds equates as a revenue source, not an expenditure reduction. The total expenditure reduction that they achieved was a \$205K, a 4.4% reduction. The NFC had asked for a \$238-K reduction.

Motion: Flanders moved and Weintraub seconded that the NFC reaffirms its previously expressed guideline for the FY 2010-2011 Marion Cross School gross expenditure budget to be reduced by 5%, compared with the FY 2009-2010 budget.

Discussion – There was no further discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Action: Lajoie to contact the NSB chair to advise the NSB of the NFC's stance on the upcoming budget.

Motion: Flanders moved and Moran seconded that the NFC further encourages the Norwich School Board and administration to take measures that will encourage increased enrollments in the Marion Cross School (MCS). The NFC encourages the Vermont legislators, representing the town, to address the rising statewide educational tax rate.

Discussion – There was no further discussion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Action: Lajoie to contact the NSB chair to advise the NSB of the NFC's recommendation on increasing MCS enrolments.

Action: Lajoie to contact the Vermont legislative delegation, representing Norwich and Windsor County to advise them of the NFC's concern about the statewide educational tax.¹

¹ See Appendix A

6. Other Topics:

Kaufman noted that Representatives Masland and Cheney have made some commentary on the Norwich list serve, concerning the status of state educational tax rate.

7. Adjournment

Motion: Flanders moved and Lindberg seconded that the committee adjourn.

The vote was unanimous.

Adjourned at 5:25 PM.

Upcoming meeting dates (4:30 PM in Tracy Hall):

Tuesday, January 26, 2010 (Special meeting)

Tuesday, February 16, 2010

Tuesday, March 16, 2010

Appendix A: Windsor County Legislators

Senators by County: 2009 - 2010 Legislative Session WINDSOR COUNTY

* D Campbell, John F., P.O. Box 1306, Quechee, VT 05059 (802) 295-6238 Campbell, Buckholtz, Saunders & Nelson, P.O. Box 1221, Quechee, VT 05059 (802) 295-1111
E-Mail: jcampbell@leg.state.vt.us, vt13@aol.com Fax: (802) 295-6344

* D McCormack, Dick, 127 Cleveland Brook Rd., Bethel, VT 05032 (802) 234-5497
E-Mail: rmccormack@leg.state.vt.us, metcalf@sover.net

* D Nitka, Alice W., P.O. Box 136, Ludlow, VT 05149-0136 (802) 228-8432 Eckerd Youth Alternatives, Inc., 230 Asa Bloomer Bldg., Rutland, VT 05701
E-Mail: anitka@leg.state.vt.us

Representatives by District: 2009 - 2010 Legislative Session WINDSOR-ORANGE-2 (2): Norwich, Sharon, Strafford, Thetford

* D Cheney, Margaret, P.O. Box 521, Norwich, VT 05055 (802) 649-3039 The Sharon Academy, P.O. Box 207, Sharon, VT 05065 (802) 763-2500
E-Mail: mcheney@leg.state.vt.us margaret.cheney@gmail.com

* D Masland, Jim, 714 Pero Hill Rd., Thetford Center, VT 05075 (802) 785-4146
E-Mail: jmasland@leg.state.vt.us jamesq56@yahoo.com