

**TOWN OF NORWICH**  
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**Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting Tuesday, January 14, 2003 at 6:30 PM**

Members Present: Liz Blum; Linda Cook; Neil Fulton; Douglas Hoffman, Chair; Nancy Hoggson; Dennis Pavlicek, Town Manager; Tina Moses, Secretary.  
Also Participating: Matt Freeman, Dennis Kaufman, Cheryl Lindberg, Alison May, Creigh Moffatt, Fred Moody, Henry Scheier, Gordon Thomas, Paul Wallace. There were approximately 15 members in the audience at this meeting.

Hoffman opened the meeting at 6:30pm.

- 1) Approval of Agenda – Cook **moved** to approve the agenda with changes (second Blum). **Motion passed.**
- 2) Public Comments – Hoffman noted that Virginia Close has been involved in the publishing of a book about Dartmouth College which is now available in bookstores. Fulton expressed sympathy to Jack Fraser and his family for the loss of Sylvia. Blum said the Energy Committee will be petitioning a short resolution about sustainable energy and how to make it work in Norwich. She said she has the petition and invited anyone interested to sign. Scheier commented about an article that recently appeared in *The Spectator* about the Town Manager. He took issue with a statement made by Hoffman – ‘Finance Director would have created a separate power base in government.’ He felt that statement was not correct and that this could not happen under Town Manager form of government.
- 3) Town Manager’s Report – Pavlicek thanked the Highway Department for their hard work over the last few months. He reviewed Hodgdon’s callout report for the last month or so. He said we owe them a debt of gratitude for their hard work during this very difficult season. There was applause for the department as a whole. Pavlicek said at the last Selectboard Meeting interest was shown to hold more joint meetings with other communities. He has tentatively set up a joint meeting with Hunter Rieseberg of Hartford for early February.
- 4) Finance
  - a) Legal Bills –
  - b) Orders on the General Fund - Cook **moved** to approve Accounts Payable Warrant # 203 in the amount of 402,492.92 (second Blum). **Motion passed.**
- 5) Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District (7:00pm) – Wallace introduce Fred Moody and explained Moody was here to review the budget and give a landfill update. Moody thanked Wallace for his years of dedicated services to the district and the town and said he would be missed.
  - a) Annual review of budget – Moody explained that the per capita fee is remaining unchanged (level funded). He said they continue to provide many perks to the town. They helped with the new commingling setup at the Transfer Station. He said they also have hazardous waste pickups, and take away oil and packing peanuts from the Transfer Station.
  - b) Landfill update – Fulton asked what today’s plan is for the landfill. Moody said they are still trying to get permits. Then they will sit down with the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management Board of Directors to determine development. Blum asked if Moody is working on ideas or plans of how to reduce trash. Moody said definitely. He said one

step is the hazardous waste collections as well as the collection of tires, scrap metal, fluorescent light bulbs. Fulton asked how the recycling system was working, and if it was saving money. Moses said the numbers have almost reversed themselves. She explained in the past the department had always spent more on trash removal than recycling and now due to an increase in recycling, the numbers showed far more in recycling. Fulton asked about the status of the access road at the bridge. Moody said there is a hearing scheduled for review of the ACT 250 permit in February. If they get the permits, the next step would be a bond vote.

6) Affordable Housing Committee

a) Approval of the Memorandum of Agreement –Moffatt said Bill Bittinger has been in the Upper Valley for 20+ years and has been working on housing projects, particularly affordable housing. He has been involved in developing a lot of properties in the upper valley, both NH and VT. He usually works by charging an up front fee, but in this case he has agreed to work under this agreement of memorandum at no charge until a project is actually set up. She said there could be many funding sources. State, federal and/or private funding sources. Hoffman asked if this agreement commits the town to spend any tax dollars. Moffatt and Pavlicek both said no. Fulton **moved** to authorize the Town Manager to enter into this agreement with corrections as discussed after review with Olmstead and authorize the Town Manager to sign (second Cook).

**Motion passed.**

7) First Public Hearing on Budget - Blum **moved** to open the first public hearing of the budget (second Fulton). **Motion passed.** Hoffman asked Pavlicek to give the highlights of the budget. Pavlicek reviewed the highlights of each particular department. Fulton said under Town Administration the Town Manager salary should be increased to \$63,000. May asked about Highway and if there were enough funds to cover the winter costs this year. Pavlicek said it has been a particularly hard winter but he believes we will have enough money next year. Lindberg asked about overtime for police. Pavlicek said that because we are fully staffed we have to pay overtime for any holiday when someone is called in. Hoffman asked about the money in the reappraisal contract for lister wages. He asked if the money in the budget is over and above the contracted \$15,000. Pavlicek said the amount was over and above the budgeted amount. Hoffman said he believes the Selectboard previously wanted to change the Listers to a stipend amount. Fulton said he believes that discussion was to happen after the reappraisal. Pavlicek said he had not anticipated making any changes to that budget this year. Scheier said he has spoken to Pavlicek about the interest to be earned. He said during the current year we have earned about \$15,000 of interest. He said the interest income will decline if the Reserve Fund is utilized at a level of \$155,000. Pavlicek explained he is still working on this issue and has already changed the interest some in light of Scheier's concerns. Blum **moved** to close the public hearing (second Hoggson). **Motion passed.**

a) Review of Town Warning – Pavlicek explained draft warning has been provided to all and asked if there were any questions.

b) Approval of COLA amount – Pavlicek said the Finance Committee is recommending a 2.8% COLA increase. He said he is asking for an increase in this amount to 3.0%. He said he believes it shows the employees how important they are. Fulton **moved** to adopt the 3.0% COLA (second Cook). **Motion passed.**

c) Discussion of proposed warning articles

i) To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Town Clerk, in accordance with 17 VSA section 2144 (b), to approve additions to the checklist (Bonnie Munday) –

Pavlicek suggested this be put on the warning as it allows more leeway to the Clerk on adding voters to the checklist. Blum **moved** to place this request on the warning (second Fulton). **Motion passed.**

ii) Request to consider elimination of Town Auditors position (Linda Cook) – Cook said she was asked by a member of the public to bring this forth. She said some people believe that since we have paid auditors we don't need the town auditors. Thomas said it would be idiotic to do this as the auditors do their work at no charge and provide a valuable free service to the town. In addition, with the Norwich Finance Committee, they also sit on the Dresden Finance Committee. Hoffman said the critical role they do play is in watching over the school board and Selectboard budgets. Blum asked if the people who were interested would petition for this article. Cook said they are aware that they will need to petition if the board doesn't decide to add it to the warning.

8) Roads

a) Fulton **moved** to approve the minutes of the special public hearing of December 17, 2002 (Blum). **Motion passed.** Cook abstained. (4-0). **Motion passed.**

a) Final Report of the Committee to Identify Specific Class 4 Roads for Possible Reclassification as Trails

i) Public Deliberative Session to record decision on the above recommendation – Fulton **moved** to enter into deliberative session to discuss possible reclassification or discontinuation of specific class 4 roads (second Blum). **Motion passed.** Fulton read aloud and reviewed in detail the revised draft potential Record Of Decision for the class 4 issue (see attached). Findings of Fact #1 – Cook **moved** to amend by ending the sentence after roads and add “not now” (second Blum). **Motion passed.** Blum **moved** to approve the Findings of fact as amended (second Hoggson). **Motion passed.** Blum **moved** to approve the Conclusions (second Fulton). **Motion passed.** Fulton **moved** to approve the Record of Decision in the matter with the understanding that editorial changes can be made in all portions of the document but the decision (second Blum). **Motion passed.** Cook **moved** to close the deliberations **Motion passed.**

9) Planning

a) Private Highway Specifications – Hoffman said he is suggesting postponing this to the next meeting for review.

10) Correspondence – Blum **moved** to receive all of the correspondence (second Hoggson). **Motion passed.**

11) Selectboard

a) Appointments

i) Public Transportation Committee – Cook **moved** to appoint Sharon Racusin and Lucy Gibson and authorize Blum to coordinate and establish the first meeting (second Hoggson). **Motion passed.**

ii) Affordable Housing – Cook **moved** to appoint Kathleen Shepherd to Affordable Housing (second Blum). **Motion passed.**

iii) Advance Transit – Fulton **moved** to postpone.

iv) Approval to advertise for Windsor County Courthouse Rehabilitation Committee – Hoffman thanked Adler for her help. Moses explained that an e-mail had been received by Watt Alexander who said they didn't need to fill the position as they met very rarely. May said she would go to this meeting but someone should be appointed

- to cover future meetings.
- c) Approval of revised Sexual Harassment Policy – Fulton **moved** to authorize the Town Manager to sign the revised document (second Blum). **Motion passed.**
  - d) Approval of Sigler Letter – Hoffman asked if there were any changes that needed to be made to the letter. He read the letter out loud. Kaufman said it didn't seem to the listers, the towns attorney or the person from PV&R that the Dream and DO Farm should be exempt from taxes. He stated that the recent Supreme Court ruling has broadened the scope of those eligible for exemption from taxes. He said he objects to the language of "needlessly" in the letter. Hoffman said he would like to not be in the position of litigating with the members of the community. He said it helps to put this to bed. Blum said she feels the suit was "needless". She said she feels that she wasn't fully informed about all of the facts of the case. Blum **moved** to authorize the chair to sign and send to Sigler letter with changes (second Hoggson). **Motion passed.**
  - e) Discussion of meeting with Legislators – Pavlicek said the original date with the school board failed. He said we should try to set up a meeting with legislators and invite the public and other communities to join us. Hoffman said he spoke with Hunter Rieseberg and they will be setting up a meeting with the legislators and Hoffman suggested a joint meeting. Freeman suggested the town join the Vermont Coalition of Municipalities to help make a statewide block for this issue in support of changes to Act 60 and the Killington decision. It was agreed that there would be further discussion of this at the January 28<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting.
  - f) Minutes of Selectboard Meeting
    - i) December 10, 2002 – Cook **moved** to postpone (second Blum). **Motion passed.**
    - g) Selectboard report for Annual Report and Happenings – Hoffman suggested Moses work on both these reports and bring back to the board on the 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Next Regular Meeting – January 28, 2003 at 6:30 PM**

Approved by the Selectboard on February 11, 2003

By, Kristina Moses  
Selectboard Secretary

Douglas W. Hoffman  
Selectboard Chair