

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, April 27, 2005 at 5:30 PM

Members present: Alison May, Chair; Jack Candon; Ben Ptashnik; Ed Childs; Gerard Chapdelaine; Stephen Soares, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Administrative Assistant

Also participating: Watt Alexander, Neil Fulton, Scooter Hardy, Andy Hodgdon, Nancy Hoggson, Dennis Kaufman, Cheryl Lindberg, Chief Robinson, Henry Scheier, Chuck Wise. There were about 15 people in the audience.

May opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. 5:30 pm Selectboard/Town Manager Goal Setting (Action Item). Items discussed were:

- a. Budget – Soares was charged with developing a written schedule for the budget process. The Selectboard decided to invite the Finance Committee to the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Selectboard meeting as part of the discussion of financial policy. The Selectboard asked Soares to set up proposed review cycles for all departments with the Finance Committee and to bring this list to the May 11<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting. It was also decided that Soares and the Finance Officer would work together to establish a **2-year operating budget and** a 5-year capital budget.
- b. General – Soares reported that Dechert is stretched for time with the added responsibilities of both the Planning Commission and the Development Review Board. Soares feels however that progress is being made. Soares also reported that setting up regular meetings between the Selectboard and the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Conservation Commission, Prudential Committee and Corridor Committee has been moving along smoothly. Candon suggested adding the Recreation Council and Norwich School Board to this list. Childs stated that, as the Selectboard designated attendee, he would let the board know when the Dresden Athletic Fields Committee was at a point where they would like to meet with the Selectboard. There was a consensus among the Selectboard members that they would like to meet with all Town boards, commissions and committees. Also discussed was the need for timely dissemination of all meeting information.

2. 6:30 pm Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Candon **moved** to approve with two additional items (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs). **Motion passed.**

3. Public Comments (Discussion). None.

4. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Town Manager's Briefing and FY05 Budget Update (Discussion). Soares announced that the Route 132 Project had started early, April 27<sup>th</sup>, and was expected to be completed sometime in August. Soares met with representatives of the Recreation Department and Listers to discuss shifting costs now paid by the Town to the School with the result of tax cuts to the citizens of Norwich. It was determined that more study of this concept was needed before moving forward. Soares reminded the Selectboard that he expected to have a revised draft, after review by VLCT, of the "Junkyard Ordinance" before them by the June 8<sup>th</sup> meeting. Soares also stated that a contract with Trumbull-Nelson has been signed for the repairs for Tracy Hall. He expects

repairs to be completed in time for the Women's Club Nearly New Sale from May 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>. Soares announced that Chief Robinson has hired Larry Lamphere to replace Roger Berry with a start date of May 16<sup>th</sup>. Also announced was the Great American Dog Race to take place in Norwich on June 26<sup>th</sup>. Soares stated that he will be attending, and that he has recommended all Department Heads attend, the May 9<sup>th</sup> NIMS Awareness Course at the Fire Station starting at 7:00 pm.

Preliminary review of the FY05 budget (early projections) shows a shortfall of approximately \$25,000. The Town Manager and the Finance Officer are meeting weekly to review/update budget information. Soares has also instituted a Purchase Order Policy that mandates the Town Manager's signature for all purchases exceeding \$500.00. Soares indicated that factors contributing to the budget deficit were: rising health care and fuel costs, unexpected generator and elevator service costs, Police Department injuries and Workers' Compensation claims. Scheier requested further review of the FY05 budget with the Town Manager and Finance Officer to more closely examine the projected end of year fund balance.

5. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After discussion in light of the letter to all Department Heads, Candon felt that all future expenditures should be revisited, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Candon) to approve Check Warrant Report # 05-38 in the amount of \$59,453.24 for the period from 04/14/2005 to 04/27/2005. **Motion passed.**

6. 7:00 pm Appointment with Mr. "Scooter" Hardy – Request Audience with Selectboard Re: Truck Enforcement. Hardy spoke for approximately 30 minutes addressing his concern that the Town of Norwich was "not being truck friendly". In his opinion: (a) truck permit issuance should be out of the Town Clerk's office rather than the Police Department, (b) the Selectboard should direct the Town Manager to not buy scales for the Town, (c) heavier trucks are being discriminated against and (d) special permits for townspeople should be issued for them to drive home **empty** overweight trucks.

The Selectboard requested that Soares work with Chief Robinson on a response to Hardy that will be shared with the Selectboard.

7. 7:15 pm Development Review Board – Advertise/Discuss Appointments. There was discussion on changing the expiration date on appointments to be made by the Selectboard to June 30. The Selectboard directed Soares to converse with the Chairs of the various boards, commissions and committees to get their input on such a change. It was decided by the Selectboard to advertise the open positions with a due date for applications to be received of June 10<sup>th</sup>. Interviews and appointments will be made at the June 22<sup>nd</sup> Selectboard meeting. Soares asked the Chair **of the DRB**, Watt Alexander, for guidance on the language for the advertisement.

8. Selectboard Policy Regarding Town Email List (Discussion). After discussion and some changes, Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve the email policy worded as follows:

“The Town email list, maintained and managed by the Town Manager, is for use by the Town Manager and the Town Manager’s Administrative Assistant. The Selectboard and other **elected Town** officials; and Chairs of other Town Boards, Commissions and Committees appointed by the Selectboard; may also request use for the purposes of disseminating warnings, agendas and minutes. The above entities may use this email list to disseminate notices and information about items pertinent to their activities and/or Town specific public information. Outgoing email addresses on any messages sent through the Town email list shall not be shown.”

**Motion passed.**

Childs brought to the Selectboard’s consideration whether or not emails between board members discussing Town business are considered public documents. Candon stated that he believes they are. The board asked Soares to get an updated opinion from VLCT.

9. 8:15 pm Appointment with Chuck Wise (TRORC) Corridor Project Update. As a representative of the Norwich Corridor Committee, Wise updated the Selectboard on where the project stands now. Wise stated that once the updated project contract is approved by the Selectboard and signed, the consultant should be able to finish the plans by July, for a fall bid and a spring construction start. Soares indicated that there will be a public meeting to discuss **amendments to the** original design **of** the project, including the removal of trees from the median, on May 24<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm in Tracy Hall. It was agreed that the Selectboard would review the amended agreement between the Town of Norwich and SVE Associates at their May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting.

10. Correspondence

- a) Letter of Thanks from Eugene Lyons
- b) Town Manager Letter to Department Heads
- c) VTrans Letter Re: Grant Award to Norwich (Bridge)
- d) VTrans Letter Re: Grant Denial to Norwich (Paving)
- e) Robert Sokol Email Re: Dresden Survey
- f) TRORC March 23, 2005 Minutes

Chapdelaine **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to receive all correspondence. **Motion passed.**

11. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 4/13/05 meeting (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Candon) to approve. **Motion passed.**  
Approval of the Minutes of the 4/19/05 meeting (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Candon) to approve. **Motion passed.** May and Ptashnik abstained.
- b) Fire Warden Appointment (Action Item). Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ptashnik) that the Selectboard recommend Nancy LaRowe for appointment by the commissioner to Town Forest Fire Warden for a term of five years or until a successor is appointed. **Motion passed.**
- c) Article for Norwich Times. May asked for and received approval from the Selectboard for submission of an article to the Norwich Times.

- d) May noted that the Planning Commission, Development Review Board, Conservation Commission and the Selectboard had previously formulated a "Punch List Committee" to evaluate requests for changes in land use regulations, with the Committee consisting of the Chairs of the four entities. May requested the ability to designate Childs as her liaison to these meetings, recognizing that he would have a better understanding of the issues being discussed. Childs' role would be to attend the meetings and report to May with the results. Board members consented to this action.

Ptashnik **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Candon) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on May 11, 2005.

By Nancy Kramer  
Administrative Assistant

Alison May  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – May 11, 2005 at 6:30 pm

Pending Items:

- 1) Ordinance Regulating Solid Waste "Junkyard Ordinance" (June 8)
- 2) Kendall Station Road Status (Public vs. Private)

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