

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, March 22, 2006 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Alison May, Chair; Jack Candon; Ed Childs; Gerard Chapdelaine; Stephen Soares, Town Manager. Absent: Ben Ptashnik.

There were about 7 people in the audience.

Also participating: Brooke Adler, Neil Fulton, Mary Ann Hankel, Dennis Kaufman, Cheryl Lindberg, Roberta Robinson, Henry Scheier

May opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve. **Motion passed.**

2. Public Comments (Discussion). Kaufman reminded people of the April 15<sup>th</sup> deadline to file their **yearly** Declaration of Vermont Homestead (HS-131) with the Vermont Department of Taxes. A 1% penalty of the education tax is assessed for a late filing. It can also be filed on-line through [www.vermont.gov](http://www.vermont.gov). The link to this form is found on the home page.

3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Soares met with Kearney and Hodgdon regarding plans for the expected June 10<sup>th</sup> delivery of the new playground equipment. Soares also met with Brooke Adler concerning the ongoing process of codification of the Town ordinances. The Personnel Policies are being edited by Fulton on information regarding fire personnel and in two weeks should be ready for final reviews. VLCT has introduced a new Leader Program that is a health promotion incentive program for Health Trust Members. The Town of Norwich is participating in this health and safety promotion program which makes members eligible for a maximum of 4% credit on their health plan costs. John Lawe will be attending a Pandemic Flu Workshop sponsored by VLCT on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Soares deferred giving an update on Tubestock to the next Selectboard meeting.

4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve the General Fund Check Warrant Report #06-50 in the amount of \$130,084.30 for the period from 3/9/2006 to 3/22/2006. **Motion passed.** Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Chapdelaine) to approve the Solid Waste Fund Check Warrant Report #06-51 in the amount of \$645.49 for the period from 3/9/2006 to 3/22/2006. **Motion passed.** Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve the Recreation Facilities Fund Check Warrant Report #06-52 in the amount of \$53,780.08 for the period from 3/9/2006 to 3/22/2006. **Motion passed.**

5. Review Sullivan, Powers & Co. Management Letter (Discussion/Action Item). The Board discussed with the Town Manager, Roberta Robinson, Scheier, Fulton and Lindberg "reportable conditions" and "other recommendations" made by the outside auditors regarding the 2005 audit.

a) Reportable Conditions:

1) Recording fees. Soares is working on this.

- 2) Fraud risk assessment. Soares will contact VLCT to see if there are sample policies available.
- 3) Receipts. Deferred to April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 4) Recreation receipts. Deferred to April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.

b) Other Recommendations:

- 1) Authorization of general journal entries. The Selectboard agreed and Scheier concurred that the Town Auditors will authorize these entries on a monthly basis.
- 2) Accounting and Procedures Manual. Soares and Robinson will continue to work on this.
- 3) Revenue budget. There was general agreement that the Town uses year end revenue estimates when setting the tax rate for the next year. The Town does not have a revenue "budget" per se.
- 4) Grants management. Soares has already addressed this item. Department Heads notify the Finance Office when grants are received.
- 5) Trustees of Public Funds accounting. Issue was discussed and noted.
- 6) Cash accounts. Deferred to April 26<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- 7) Highway funds. The consensus of the Selectboard was to not track highway funds on a cumulative basis.
- 8) Sale of supplies. Issue was discussed and noted.
- 9) Disaster recovery plan. Plan is already in process.

6. Charge to Norwich Finance Committee Re: Highway Review (Discussion/Action Item). Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve the Charge for the Highway Study to be done by the Subcommittee of the Norwich Finance Committee. **Motion passed.**

"The purpose of the Highway Study Subcommittee is to examine the budget of the Highway Department to determine the cost effectiveness of services provided by the Department. The Subcommittee will report their findings to the Selectboard by September 13, 2006, in order to help the Town Manager and the Selectboard develop an appropriate Highway Department budget. The process could include, but is not limited to:

- Creating a zero based budget, i.e., what would be required to provide the necessary services to maintain roads and sidewalks in Norwich? Examine job descriptions.
- Examining relevant standards for Best Practices, i.e., policies, sand/salt, plowing, grading, repaving, retreatment, job descriptions, etc.
- Contacting neighboring towns to inquire as to their practices; i.e., policies, sand/salt, plowing, grading, repaving, retreatment, job descriptions, etc.
- Are there practices Norwich performs that are unnecessary? Are there practices Norwich should adopt? Examine the current requirements (statutory, agreements with agencies) or national standards under which the department operates.
- Examine community desires."

7. Review Draft Selectboard Annual Calendar (Discussion/Action Item). Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Chapdelaine) to approve. **Motion passed.**

The Norwich Pot Luck Supper to honor Town volunteers was discussed; no date was set as yet.

8. Review Town Investment Policy (Discussion/Action Item). The Board reaffirmed the 1999 policy. The Selectboard and Lindberg agreed that she will provide the Board with investment activity quarterly, with the first report to be received at the April 12<sup>th</sup> meeting.

9. County Budget (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard asked Soares to prepare a letter to be sent to our State Representatives and Senators requesting legislation to create a fair check and balance system for the adoption of County Budgets.

10. Private Driveway Policy (Discussion). After a considerable discussion between the Board, Fulton (as Deputy Fire Chief) and Kaufman regarding safety and personal rights, May **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve the Private Driveway Guidelines and forward them to the Planning Commission. **Motion failed 2 to 2** (yes – May, Childs; no – Candon, Chapdelaine). By consensus, but without endorsement, the Selectboard asked the Town Manager to pass the Guidelines to the Planning Commission for consideration in the new Zoning Regulations.

11. Review Email Policy (Discussion/Action Item). Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Candon) to approve the Policy with the addition of the sentences: “The Town Manager may allow the use of this list for nongovernmental meetings on issues that may be of general interest to citizens. If such a meeting is sponsored by a political group, no campaigning or fund raising will be allowed.” **Motion passed.**

12. Correspondence

- a) National Weather Service Declares Week of 3/20 – 3/24 Flood Awareness Week
- b) TRORC January 25, 2006 Minutes. Candon noted how few representatives attend the meetings. It was also noted that Nancy Hoggson, our representative, has been a regular attendee.
- c) NIMS (National Incident Management System) Alert Information/Recommendations. Fulton and May discussed the desirability of having all Selectboard members complete the IS-700 training program, which is available online. Board members present indicated their intent to do so.

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

May reminded interested applicants that the deadline to file for Town Open Positions is April 6<sup>th</sup>.

13. Selectboard

- a) Authorize Chairman or Alternate to Sign Payroll Warrant. Chapdelaine **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to authorize the Chair or the Vice-Chair to examine and sign the Payroll Warrant. **Motion passed.**
- b) Authorize Chairman or alternate to Sign Accounts Payable. Chapdelaine **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to authorize the Chair or the Vice-Chair to examine and sign the Accounts Payable Warrants. **Motion passed.**
- c) Proposed Letter to Dresden School Board. The Draft Letter was approved unchanged by consensus.
- d) Approval of the Minutes of the 3/8/06 meeting. Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to approve. **Motion passed.**

- e) Litigation (Executive Session may be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1)(3), Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Chapdelaine) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation and personnel and to invite Steve Soares to join the Session. **Motion passed.**

At 9:20 pm the Selectboard moved back into public session. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Candon **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:25 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on April 12, 2006. Revised and approved by the Selectboard on May 24, 2006.

By Nancy Kramer  
Administrative Assistant

Alison May  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – April 12, 2006 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Zoning Regulations Review
- 2) Kendall Station Road Status
- 3) Personnel Policies

PLEASE NOTE THAT CATV VIDEO TAPES ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD. FOR A MORE DETAILED TRANSCRIPTION PLEASE REFER TO THE TAPE. TAPES ARE AVAILABLE ONE WEEK AFTER THE MEETING AT THE NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY.