

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, January 9, 2008 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Ed Childs, Chair; Alison May; Jack Candon; Gerard Chapdelaine; Suzanne Lupien; Stephen Soares, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 36 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jake Blum, Susan Blum, Margaret Cheney, Al Converse, Anne Day, David DeLucia, Neil Fulton, Scooter Hardy, Matt Herbert, Andy Hodgdon, Nancy Hoggson, Jennie Hubbard, Dennis Kaufman, Bill Lamb, Jenny Lamb, Jim Masland, Brion McMullan, Martha Nelson, Sarah Nunan, Sharon Racusin, Chief Robinson, Roberta Robinson, Liz Russell, Henry Scheier, Matt Swett, Lisa Talmadge, Warren Thayer, Alice Worth.

Childs opened the meeting at 6:34 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Public Comments (Discussion). None.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Clay Adams from the Land Management Council notified the Town Manager that timber harvesting will be resuming soon near the intersection of Kate Wallace and Bragg Hill (Parcel 1). They believe this project will be completed in about four weeks. Immediate abutters have been contacted. Jon Kaplan, Safe Routes to School Coordinator, has asked the Town for a choice of engineers from five they recommended. DuBois & King was the selected engineering firm.
4. Draft Town Meeting Warning (Excluding School Articles) (Discussion). Article 5 – Town liability was discussed. Article 6 – the Selectboard asked the Town Manager to check the language used and to put in that no tax dollars are involved. Article 7 – dollar amount should be \$106,000. Article 8 – change revolving fund to loan and work on wording.

Also discussed was why approved by the voters Article 13 on last year's warning, asking about decomposing the Town budget, was not incorporated in this warning. Candon said that the Mooney case decided that the Australian ballot requires a single line item budget and that this decision is under appeal to the Vermont Supreme Court".

5. **7:00 pm** Appointment with Jim Masland and Margaret Cheney Re: Route 5/Corridor/Class 1 (Discussion). Soares stated that he had recently learned that the paving (and culvert repairs) by the State on Route 5 will not be taking place until calendar year 2009. Consequently, he is recommending the Board wait until next legislative session to pursue conversion.

Day asked for a full discussion of traffic and more public meetings when the matter is again taken up.

Regarding the Corridor Project, the Town Manager reported that the consultant's job is done and final plans were submitted Tuesday to the State. Soares has been communicating with Curtis Johnson of VTrans regarding integration of the paving and the Corridor Project. He is researching what the State would do with the money left. This would mean the State would become the project manager.

Nunan proposed putting an article on the warning asking if the public wants to pursue. The Selectboard asked her to submit something in writing to them.

The Town Manager was asked if he could get an Acrobat version of the final plans for others to review.

DeLucia discussed getting the opinion of the voters on losing a lane.

Masland delineated what he considered the issues involved.

Hardy does not believe the Town should take over the road from the State.

Worth stated displeasure with the whole process, maintaining that the Town should do business in a meaningful way that is productive.

McMullan reiterated that the Fire District has not signed off on the plans yet.

6. **7:45 pm** First Public Hearing FY09 Budget (Discussion). May **moved** (2nd Chapdelaine) to open the Public Hearing. Soares went over some proposed/required changes to version 7 which included: \$5,000 for an emergency operations center setup in the multipurpose room, an additional \$2,000 in Town Administration for professional services, an additional \$5,000 for the Police Cruiser Fund, an additional \$2,000 for fire equipment, add \$750 to the Tree Warden's budget and a cost addition by Hanover of \$3,376 to the Ambulance Contract. Items discussed were: the \$20,000 for a Communication Study, sticking with a 2.5% budget, cutting salt and sand budgets and that the Fire Station is not compliant in regard to proper ventilation.

Talmadge read into the record a two-page letter regarding health risks faced by Norwich firefighters and EMS volunteers.

May **moved** (2nd Candon) to close the Public Hearing.

Candon stated that he would like to see the budget come in at 2.5%.

Kaufman made a presentation of comparable CLA and other towns' data and materials were given to the Selectboard and Town Manager. Chapdelaine still believes the Lister budget is inflated. Lamb pointed out that assessments must be fair for everyone and the need for professional people doing it. Childs said that further discussion would be deferred until next week after the Board has the opportunity to review the materials presented.

7. Correspondence (Please go to www.norwich.vt.us, click on Town Offices bullet in left panel, scroll down to Norwich Selectboard section and click on Recent Selectboard Correspondence to view resident correspondence):

a) Nonresident –

- 1) Letter from Vermont Coalition of Municipalities Re: Resolution on Vermont Education Finance and Property Tax Reform (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard asked that this matter be turned over to the Finance Committee to review.
- 2) Memo from TRORC Re: Amended TRORC Bylaws (Discussion Item)

May **moved** (2nd Lupien) to receive correspondence 7 b and c. **Motion passed.**

b) Resident -

- 1) Memo from Matt Swett Re: Norwich Fire Department Vehicle Exhaust Extraction System (Discussion/Action Item). May **moved** (2nd Lupien) to receive correspondence from Matt Swett Re: Norwich Fire Department Vehicle Exhaust Extraction System. **Motion passed.**
- 2) Letter from Sharon Racusin, Alice Worth and Sarah Nunan Re: Corridor Project (Discussion/Action Item). May **moved** (2nd Lupien) to receive correspondence from Sharon Racusin, Alice Worth and Sarah Nunan Re: Corridor Project. **Motion passed.** Racusin spoke about being blindsided this evening on the Corridor Project news and

that she is very upset.

- 3) Letter from Letter from McKenna Road Association Re: Safety and Security of McKenna Road Residents (Discussion/Action Item). May **moved** (2nd Chapdelaine) to receive correspondence from McKenna Road Association Re: Safety and Security of McKenna Road Residents. **Motion passed.** Worth stated that residents feel they have been ignored and that the Town is stuck in a process going nowhere. She is in hopes that some stage of the Corridor Project will happen this spring. Childs said that some progress has been made. Lupien suggested that the Town have another public hearing as soon as possible.

9. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 11/28/07, 12/5/07, 12/12/07 and 12/19/07 Meetings (Action Item). May **moved** (2nd Chapdelaine) to approve the minutes of the November 28, 2007, December 5, 2007, December 12, 2007 and December 19, 2007 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.**
- b) Litigation, Labor Relations and Personnel (Executive Session may be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1)(3), May **moved** (2nd Candon) to move into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation, labor relations and personnel and to invite Steve Soares, the Listers and Steve Wheelock to join the session. **Motion passed.** The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 10:31 pm.

At 10:59 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

May **moved** (2nd Chapdelaine) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 11:00 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on January 23, 2008.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Edwin Childs
Selectboard Chair

Special Selectboard Meeting – January 16, 2008 at 6:30 PM

Special Selectboard Meeting – January 22, 2008 at 6:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting – January 23, 2008 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Public Budget Sessions

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