

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, May 21, 2008 at 6:30 PM

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

There were about 40 people in the audience.

Also participating: Liz Blum, Steve Flanders, Neil Fulton, Kelly Griggs, Scooter Hardy, Matt Herbert, Steven Jeffrey, Karen Kayen, Trevor Lashua, Roberta Robinson, Phil Phillips, Matt Swett, Folger Tuggle, Alice Worth.

Chapdelaine opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Appointment with Jim Barlow, VLCT, Re: Process for Hiring a New Town Manager (Discussion/Action Item). Steve Jeffries and Trevor Lashua of VLCT were present at the meeting. Jeffries passed out packets to the Selectboard and the Town Manager. Jeffries went over what VLCT considers a 15 step process for recruiting a new town manager. Highlights of this are: updating the job description, setting a salary range, choosing a selection committee, where to advertise, the timetable, whether the process is confidential or not, interviews, interview expenses, background checks and offer letter. A typical search, including advertising and staff time, runs \$6,000. Also discussed, was VLCT's excellent relationship with certain papers and websites and that through them it would be an international search. The Board asked about an assessment center. VLCT does not do an assessment center, but will research the topic and get back to the Selectboard with further information. May spoke about having an advisory citizens' committee.

May **moved** (2nd Nunan) that the Chair is authorized to sign a service contract agreement with VLCT for up to \$6,000. **Motion passed.**

Jeffries and Lashua thanked the Board and asked for an ad to be emailed to them by Tuesday, May 27th. In response, the Selectboard asked for a special meeting to be warned.

2. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd May) to approve Check Warrant Report #08-24 for the period from 5/8/2008 to 5/21/2008 in the amount of \$280,040.55; of which \$279,278.01 is General Fund and \$762.54 is Police Station Fund. **Motion passed.**

3. Request to Spend Designated Funds (Discussion/Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd May) to approve the payment of \$1,828.10 to Roy Morse General Contracting from the Town Pool Fund for repairs to the gates of the Norwich pool dam. **Motion passed.**

The new Town Pool Designated Fund balance will be approximately \$9,172.

4. Process for Polling Townspeople on Bandstand Choice (Including 28 Emails from Norwich Residents Related to the Bandstand) (Discussion/Action Item). Nunan **moved** (2nd Lupien) to rescind the straw poll motion made at the May 14th Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**

Chapdelaine polled the Selectboard for their opinions. Nunan wants a compromise. May has always been for ADA accessible. Lupien still feels a lot of questions are unanswered and would like a fact sheet from the Bandstand Committee on the pros and cons. She is not ready to vote. Childs choice is Option #3 Reconstruction. Chapdelaine said ADA compliance is important, also historical considerations and that the facility needs to meet the needs of the entire Town. He is also supporting Option #3. After further Board discussion, Chapdelaine asked for the Selectboard to move the question with no further discussion from the public. The Board agreed.

Childs **moved** (2nd May) that the Selectboard support Option #3 Reconstruction. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Childs, Chapdelaine and May; no – Lupien and Nunan).

5. Receipt of Black River Report (Discussion). Childs **moved** (2nd May) that the Norwich Selectboard receive the Progress Report: Phase 2 on the Norwich Public Safety Facility prepared by Black River Design. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Chapdelaine, May, Childs, Lupien; no – Nunan). Soares stated that this report is the second phase of a long-term study. The Board had asked for milestones and this report is the next one. Next steps are design and costs. Nunan asked for documentation of the bidding process for this study. Fulton explained that when the Selectboard at the time decided to do a study there were no Selectboard financial policies, but that bids were asked for and received. Childs would like to see conceptual plans to share with the public and then have a Town vote on whether to move forward with the project. Worth asked questions about the report and spoke about conditions at both the Police and Fire Departments buildings. She would like to see a bare bones version pursued. Also discussed were errors in the numbers on page 9. Phillips does not think the numbers in the report are accurate. Fulton recommends considering this report as the final report. Flanders felt the Board should hold open houses and explain the issues. The Town Manager has spoken with Hanover's Fire Chief. Having fire services provided by Hanover is conceivable, but would probably be more expensive than what the Town is budgeting now. Insurance rates were discussed and personal testimony given that rates are very favorable now due to the excellent Town rating. Herbert spoke about the need for enlightenment and that the Department has a responsibility to educate the public.

6. Capital Budgets (NORCAP) and Strategic Planning (Discussion). Fulton talked about the process of strategic planning stating that the Town Plan will not deal with operating costs and a strategic plan should. Soares said that a Strategic Planning Committee has not been organized so far. He listed residents and Town committee representatives who have indicated willingness to serve on the Committee: Alan Berolzheimer, Brion McMullan, Cheryl Lindberg, Craig Layne, Liz Russell, Mary Ann Hankel, Nancy Osgood and Paul Tierney. There followed a discussion of making this a Board Committee and developing a charge. Chapdelaine agreed to work on a charge for the June 11th meeting.

Hardy asked about the status of the ladder truck. Fulton said it is in service and is safe to work on. Some repairs (not vital to safety) need to be done. Nunan stated that the Vermont Technical College should be checked out for these parts that are hard to acquire now.

Tuggle spoke about the Board taking its time with the charge and that a vision for the Town should be the driving force.

Kayen discussed capital budgeting, the criteria for making a decision and that the NORCAP Report was a great starting place. She also said the Finance Committee would work on ideas for the Selectboard.

May remembered an unfinished piece of business form Item #1 on the Agenda. May **moved** (2nd Childs) that the Selectboard warn a special meeting for June 23, 2008 at 7:30 pm (voting June 24th) to ask the Town vote to take advantage of the provisions of Chapter 37 of Title 24 of the Vermont Statutes Annotated and authorize the Selectboard to employ a Town Manager.
Motion passed.

After the vote, the Board discussed that they felt this was necessary in order to go forward with recruiting a new town manager.

Nunan **moved** (2nd May) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:05 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on June 11, 2008.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Gerard Chapdelaine
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – May 28, 2008 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Norwich Banking Services (5/28)
- 2) Tracy Hall Rental Policy Review (5/28/08)
- 3) Personnel Policies Updates (5/28/08)
- 4) Revisit the Policy for Treatment of Special Articles on the Town Meeting Warning (6/11/08)
- 5) Zoning Regulations Hearings (7/9/08 & 9/24/08)
- 6) Ancient Roads (9/10/08)
- 7) Class 1 Road Designation (9/24/08)

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