

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, June 24, 2009 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Sarah Nunan, Chair; Ed Childs; Suzanne Lupien; Sharon Racusin; Roger Blake; Pete Webster, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 25 people in the audience.

Also participating: Alan Berolzheimer, Ames Byrd, Stephen Flanders, Alma Gray, Linda Gray, David Hubbard, Arnold Katz, Dennis Kaufman, Steve Lajoie, Cheryl Lindberg, Don McCabe, Norm Miller, Arthur Owen, Harry Roberts, Chief Robinson, Ann Sargent, Kathleen Shepherd, Demo Sofronas, Brett Tofel, Dan Weintraub.

Nunan opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Follow Up from Last Meeting (Discussion/Action Item). Lupien has spoken with Annah Dupuis and the Grange will consider having a pancake breakfast on Olde Home Day.
3. Public Comments (Discussion). Roberts commented on the High Risk Rural Roads grant through Vermont AOT to improve the Union Village Road and VT Route 132 intersection discussed at the May 27th Board meeting. Roberts was not happy about the money being spent on the Town match in these financially trying times. Roberts also was disappointed in the Selectboard's approval of designated funds being spent for a new cab and chassis and dump body and equipment for the Highway Department at their May 13th meeting. After some discussion regarding the bid process, grants and the intersection being dangerous, Webster offered to sit down with Roberts and review the bids and grant process.

At this point a discussion ensued regarding speeding in Town and what is being done about it. Chief Robinson spoke about a grant he has received to help with this, but he is waiting for the State approved list of items he can purchase.

Weintraub spoke about economy problems such as unemployment, heavy debt and inflation.

Childs reminded people that the 61st annual Norwich Fair on the green is July 10th – 12th and invited Selectboard members and other Town officials to join him in being on the dunk tank.

Chief Robinson said the Police Forum on "sharing the road" is scheduled for Wednesday July 1, 2009 at 6:00 pm in the Community Room at the Norwich Public Library.

4. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Webster attended the preconstruction conference today for the State paving/sidewalk project. This project starts Monday, June 29th and the deadline for completion is October 23rd. The final accounting for the bandstand looks good and may even come in under budget. The Town Manager has met with the Energy Committee, GUVSWD, delinquent tax payers, Norwich Business Council, Finance Committee and the VTCMA Board. Webster has purchased a condo at Norwich Meadows and is doing renovations. He also met with Brion McMullen and Racusin to go over the history of the Solid Waste District's starting its own landfill and to talk about recycling. The Millers organized a cookout to introduce the Town Manager and his wife to many residents.

Webster also met with Brion McMullan and residents of Hawk Pine to discuss their specific water issues. The VYCC will be building a bridge on the Ballard trail this summer. The Town will only be paying for the materials necessary for this project. The new ploughshare building at the Transfer Station will have a bulletin board on it. This should happen next month.

5. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After discussion of a couple of items, Lupien **moved** (2nd Childs) to approve Check Warrant Report #09-26 for the period from 6/11/2009 to 6/24/2009 in the amount of \$240,749.75; of which \$216,991.86 is General Fund and \$23,757.89 is Bandstand Fund. **Motion passed.** Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve Warrant Number 10 – Health Saving Accounts in the amount of \$20,250.00. **Motion passed.**

6. Change Sugarhouse Road Posted Legal Load Limit (Discussion). Owen owns land there, is aware of the culvert damage and supports the weight change. Nunan read the email from Hodgdon to Webster on the subject. Hodgdon also supports the change. There was some discussion about enforcement. Chief Robinson said Sharon does not have a police department so enforcement would fall to the Norwich Police Department. Robinson believes the Town Truck Ordinance will require revision in order to enforce. By consensus, the Selectboard agreed to look at the Truck Ordinance at their July 8th meeting.

Lupien **moved** (2nd Racusin) to change the legal load limit on Sugarhouse Road to 16,000 pounds. **Motion passed.**

7. Listers – Further Appeal of CLA (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Kaufman explained the process thus far. Both the Listers and the Assessor recommend going to the next level of appeal. There is no cost to the Town as the appeal will take place here. Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) that the Norwich Selectboard authorize the Town Manager to write a letter of appeal signed by the Selectboard Chair to the Valuation Appeal Board on the Redetermination of the 2009 EEPV and/or COD (derived from the 2008 Grand List) assigned to Norwich by the State of Vermont, Department of Taxes, Division of Property Evaluation Review. **Motion passed.**

Kaufman also discussed this year's grievances saying they heard about 18 and about that same number have withdrawn their grievance. Kaufman briefly touched upon possible tax rates for this year.

8. Energy Committee – Solar Project Next Steps (Discussion/Action Item). Berolzheimer went over what the Energy Committee is trying to accomplish, saying they are trying to reduce the collective carbon footprint of residents while saving them money. They are also attempting to take advantage of the immediate incentives. Byrd reviewed the process thus far stating they are looking for permission to do the two applications. A system design is required with the CREB grant. Byrd believes that at least \$5,000 is needed. Tofel from ReKnew Energy Systems went over the revised spreadsheets provided to the Board which incorporate Tolman's concerns. Hubbard spoke about costs and possible mechanical problems with a dual-axis tracking system. Weintraub advised against funding the project by going into debt. At this point there was considerable discussion regarding the needed \$5,000. The Energy Committee will work on getting permission to use the grant money and get back to the Selectboard. It was agreed a special Selectboard meeting may be needed.

9. Finance Committee – Budget Goals and Objectives. Lajoie said the Finance Committee is working on a three-pronged approach. Lajoie talked about unemployment continuing upwards until 2010, social security remaining flat, income from savings down, State fees up and revenues from the State being reduced or put off. The Finance Committee will get guidelines to the Town Manager before he starts the budget process with Department Heads. The Board was invited to the Finance Committee's special meeting on July 7th at 4:30 pm. The Selectboard agreed to attend by consensus. The Town Manager was asked to encourage Department Heads to attend also.

10. Norwich Open Meeting Policy (Discussion/Action Item). Put off until July 8th.

11. Town Report FY09 Process (Discussion/Action Item). Put off until July 8th.

12. Foley Park (Presentation/Discussion). Miller discussed how the Park is an observation point, a teaching point, an historic point and a boating point. Miller said there will be a Norwich and the Connecticut River presentation July 24th at 7 pm in the gym of Tracy Hall. McCabe spoke about the Park being a Town-owned resource where a low impact multi-use park could be established. Katz said his wife is an avid birder and that the Park is a sanctuary for birders. Having a public forum was discussed. Lupien said the Selectboard will take hold of the project going forward.

13. Appeal State Set Church Street Speed Limit (Discussion/Action Item). Selectboard will review letter and get back to Webster.

14. Beaver Meadow Road Bus Stops (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Sofronas spoke about moving the proposed Moore Lane stop to the vicinity of the Legion. This would better accommodate people who signed his petition and want to walk to the bus. The new schedule goes into effect July 6th. After some discussion, the Board asked Webster to discuss this idea with Van Chesnut.

15. 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) Resident –

a) Email from Nancy Dean Re: Foley Park. Put off until July 8th.

b) Nonresident –

a) TRORC 5/27/09 Minutes. Put off until July 8th.

16. Selectboard

a) Approval of the Minutes of the 6/10/09 Meeting. Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve the minutes of the June 10, 2009 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**

b) Change Date for Policy/Ordinance Roundtable. Date has been changed to July 27th at 6:30 pm.

Blake **moved** (2nd Racusin) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:28 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on July 8, 2009.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Sarah Nunan
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – July 8, 2009 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy/NORCAP Report/Strategic Planning
- 2) Strategic Planning Committee Organization
- 3) Municipal Enforcement of the VT Fire Prevention and Building Code
- 4) Class 1 Road Designation
- 5) Town Report FY09
- 6) Listening Posts
- 7) Lister Roundtable
- 8) Electronic Selectboard Packets on Website
- 9) Code of Conduct for Town Officials/Employees
- 10) "Aging in Place"
- 11) Bulletin Board at Transfer Station for Outreach
- 12) No Through Union Village Road

PLEASE NOTE THAT CATV RECORDS ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD. FOR A MORE DETAILED TRANSCRIPTION PLEASE REFER TO THE DVD. DVDs ARE AVAILABLE ONE WEEK AFTER AIRING AT THE NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY.