

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, August 26, 2009 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Sarah Nunan, Chair; Ed Childs; Suzanne Lupien; Sharon Racusin; Roger Blake; Phil Dechert, Acting Town Manager; Pete Webster, Town Manager (arrived 7:02 pm); Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 24 people in the audience.

Also participating: Richard Blacklow, Terry Boone, Virginia Close, Steve Flanders, Alma Gray, Scooter Hardy, Steve Lajoie, Cheryl Lindberg, Robert Mitchell, Phil Phillips, Sue Pitiger, Harry Roberts, Chief Robinson, Henry Scheier, Gerry Tolman, Jonathan Vincent, Dan Weintraub.

Nunan opened the meeting at 6:29 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Follow Up from Last Meeting (Discussion/Action Item). None.
3. Public Comments (Discussion). Weintraub spoke about real gold being scarce and the possible collapse of fiat currencies. Class 1 road designation was briefly discussed and moved on pending items. Dechert announced that the Planning Commission is holding a Natural Resources discussion Thursday, August 27<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 pm as part of the Town Plan development. The loss of parking spaces on the Green due to the State Hartford-Norwich road improvement work was also discussed.
4. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Dechert read the portion of the Town Manager's report dealing with the lane closure and paving project.
5. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After discussion of one item, Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to approve Check Warrant Report #10-04 for the period from 8/13/2009 to 8/26/2009 in the amount of \$3,109,208.16; of which \$3,086,682.16 is General Fund, \$2,000.00 is Solar Project Fund and \$20,526.00 is Police Cruiser Designated Fund. **Motion passed.**
6. Errors & Omissions (Discussion/Action Item). Blacklow went over both.

Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to accept the Listers' Errors and Omissions and decrease the taxable assessment of Parcel 05-034.000 by \$11,300 to a revised taxable grand list of \$598,000. **Motion passed.**

Racusin **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to accept the Listers' Errors and Omissions and decrease the taxable assessment of Parcel 10-078.000 by \$15,000 to a revised taxable grand list of \$998,500. **Motion passed.**

7. **7:00 pm** - Public Input on Fiscal Year 2011 Budget (Discussion). Nunan said the Selectboard is looking for public input on the budget before the formal budget process gets started and asked for helpful/positive comments. Lupien commented that the Board and the Finance Committee are trying to do what is right for the Town. Several townspeople spoke on the subject. Items mentioned were: cutting paving for a year, Town budgets growth, Public Works spending, reduction in services, return on investment, budgets based on goals and charging fees for services that cover costs. The consensus of those present who spoke was to reduce the FY11 budget by 5%. Nunan summarized Chapdelaine's and Griggs' emails who were unable to attend.

8. Selectboard Discussion of FY11 Budget Guidelines (Discussion/Action Item). Lupien talked about Roberts' idea of fees for services that cover the costs. The Recreation Department in particular was discussed. The Board also discussed the budget by departments spreadsheets comparing multiple years. Lindberg agreed to ask Tierney for his prior work on this.

After further discussion, the Selectboard asked for five-year budget comparisons to be done and reiterated last meetings' guidelines of a 5% reduction, minimum budget necessary to maintain current level of services and a guideline of no tax increase. Webster will work on his budget letter to the Department Heads and bring the first draft of the budget to the Board by early November.

9. Personnel Policies Updates (Discussion/Action Item). Webster said most of the changes were housekeeping and to update the Policies regarding our new health plan and employee contributions to the health plans. Also added was a paragraph describing the new Town of Norwich Flexible Benefit Plan which goes along with the Health Savings Accounts needed for the new High Deductible Health Plan.

Blake **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) that the Norwich Selectboard readopt the Safety Policy Mission Statement as presented. **Motion passed.**

Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) that the Norwich Selectboard amend the Town of Norwich Personnel Policies as presented. **Motion passed.**

10. Town Boundaries (Discussion/Action Item). Racusin spoke about this coming up at the Board meeting that Andrew Toler from Thetford attended. Blake talked about one particular instance of a border issue. After some discussion regarding what the next steps should be, it was agreed that Webster would meet with Tolman to discuss getting GPS coordinates of the northern border of Norwich with Thetford, Strafford and Sharon from the State.

11. Replacing of Welcome to Norwich Sign (Discussion). Webster said the sign was reported missing July 23<sup>rd</sup>, an insurance claim filed with VLCT on August 19<sup>th</sup> and a \$1,000 reward from private funds has been offered. Chief Robinson says he has received no further information to date. Webster will proceed with speaking with the Norwich Women's Club about having the sign replaced.

Also discussed were the 30 missing "Story Walk" signs from Huntley Meadow. Vincent expressed the consensus feeling by stating the sign should be replaced and people should be punished for both these actions.

12. Correspondence (Please go to [www.norwich.vt.us](http://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) #13 a). Letter from James Gold Re: Safety Island at Junction of Union Village Road and Route 132. Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to receive a letter from James Gold re: safety island at junction of Union Village Road and Route 132. **Motion passed.** Racusin summarized. Lupien said she has been getting a lot of negative comments on the island. Hardy spoke about the difficulties for trucks in stopping and making the turn. After some discussion, the Board agreed to have Racusin follow up with Hardy and Hodgdon and get back to the Town Manager.

13. Selectboard

a) Approval of the Minutes of the 8/12/09 Meeting. Racusin **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to approve the minutes of the August 12, 2009 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**

- b) Choose Voting Delegate for VLCT Annual Business Meeting. The Board designated Webster to be the Town's voting delegate.
- c) Town Manager/Leadership Upper Valley. Webster explained that this is a once a month day long commitment for nine months starting in September. Webster has agreed to pay half of the \$850 tuition and believes he will benefit from this experience. The Board agreed by consensus that the Town Manager should participate in the program.
- d) Authorize Chair to Sign Solar Grant Agreements. Webster went over the Grant Application Agreement which was drafted by Frank Olmstead. After a brief discussion, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to authorize the Selectboard Chair to sign all Solar Grant Agreements on behalf of the Town of Norwich. **Motion passed.**

Kramer was asked by the Selectboard to put a review and prioritize of pending items on the agenda for the September 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

Nunan read the following statement from the Board's August 19<sup>th</sup> meeting: "The Selectboard has met with the Town Manager Pete Webster and reviewed the future goals and objectives as listed in the evaluation. The purpose is to improve the working relationship and both parties would like to state they are committed to working together."

Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on September 9, 2009.

By Nancy Kramer  
Assistant to the Town Manager

Sarah Nunan  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – September 9, 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) Town Report FY09
- 5) Listening Posts
- 6) Lister Roundtable
- 7) Electronic Selectboard Packets on Website
- 8) Code of Conduct for Town Officials/Employees
- 9) "Aging in Place"
- 10) Bulletin Board at Transfer Station for Outreach
- 11) No Through Union Village Road
- 12) AED at Huntley Meadow
- 13) Class 1 Road Designation

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.