

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, March 10, 2010 at 5:30 PM

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

There were about 22 people in the audience.

Also participating: Liz Blum, Linda Cook, Phil Dechert, Steve Flanders, Neil Fulton, Linda Gray, Dana Ireland, Nelson Kasfir, Cheryl Lindberg, Alison May, Norm Miller, Scott McGee, Stuart Richards, Harry Roberts, Henry Scheier.

Blake opened the meeting at 5:35 pm.

1. 5:30 pm - Litigation (Executive Session May be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1), Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation and to invite Pete Webster, Richard Blacklow, Steve Wheelock and Dennis Kaufman to join the Session. **Motion passed.** The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 5:36 pm.

At 6:37 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

2. **6:30 pm** - Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda one change.

3. Follow Up from Last Meeting (Discussion/Action Item). Selectboard Participation in March 19th Mediation – Blake said the Selectboard will be represented by two members of the Board (Racusin and Bagnato), the Town Manager and the Assessor. Kasfir, Roberts and Richards spoke about assessing one neighborhood and agreed that a Town-wide appraisal would be a better option. Board members agreed that they could not further address the litigation at this point. Racusin mentioned that the Lister Roundtable could discuss appraisal methods once the lawsuit is settled.

Selectboard Retreat – Bagnato said his focus would be on working effectively together and he believes an executive session would be the best format to accomplish that task. Bagnato also discussed the possibility of using a third party facilitator. Webster went over the Secretary of State's October, 1999 and December, 2004 Opinions which say that retreats that discuss Town business are subject to the open meeting law but that permitted topics "such as interpersonal issues among board members" may be discussed in executive session. After considerable discussion regarding what route to go and costs involved, the Selectboard asked Webster to get a determination on the legality of using an executive session for their retreat by Friday, March 12th.

4. Public Comments (Discussion). Miller asked the Board to set up a committee for Norwich Night. Lupien told Miller to call her and they would discuss. Richards thanked Nunan for her time on the Selectboard and what the Board had accomplished. Lindberg spoke about the three expiring Finance Committee terms. The Selectboard will address this at their March 24th meeting. Also discussed briefly was the Dresden recount and what may need to happen with the Dresden Finance Committee.

5. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Webster thanked townspeople and the previous and current Selectboard for their assistance in getting the FY11 budget approved. Webster also once again thanked the Recreation Council for all they did to make the Hannah Day celebration such a successful event. The Church Street Safe Routes to School (SRTS) sidewalk project should be completed this construction season. A radar speed monitoring device that flashes your current speed as you approach it has been mounted on a utility pole about 150 feet north of Four Wheel Drive on Church Street. A quote of \$3,900 per controller has been received from ARC on updating the heating and cooling system in Tracy Hall. Webster is pursuing further information from ARC and will get back to the Board with details.

Lindberg spoke about the outside auditor choice for the next three years. The Town Manager is reviewing the bids received with the Finance Officer and will be making a recommendation for the Board's final approval.

Richards questioned who was paying for the SRTS sidewalk which is 100% State funded. There ensued some discussion of sidewalks that are Town funded by designated funds and Fire District sidewalks.

6. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After discussion of two items, Racusin **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve Check Warrant Report #10-17 for the period from 3/10/2010 to 3/10/2010 in the amount of \$62,818.86; of which \$34,245.86 is General Fund and \$28,573 is Highway Equipment Fund. **Motion passed.**

7. Request to Expend Designated Funds from Land Management Council Fund to have Paul Harwood do a Preliminary Review of the Fire District Land (Discussion/Action Item). Postponed until March 24th.

8. Appoint Mary Otto to Library Board of Trustees (Discussion/Action Item). After a brief discussion, Bagnato **moved** (2nd Childs) to appoint Mary Otto to the Library Board of Trustees until her term expires in March, 2012. **Motion passed.** Scheier questioned the appropriateness of this appointment by the Board. After some discussion, the Town Manager was asked to clarify this point with Lucinda Walker.

9. Update on Solar Project (Discussion). Gray passed out to the Selectboard a brief history of the project and background and a CREB investor illustration. The proposed project would be a 230 kW solar array connected to Green Mountain Power utility lines located on Town Garage property. A State grant has been lined up. The bond, if approved, would be a tax-credit bond. The Energy Committee is working with the Finance Committee on financials for the project. The bond vote would require a special Town Meeting. Gray is happy to meet with individual Board members to explain the details if requested. Lupien would like to see written material from the Finance Committee before the Selectboard makes a decision to go ahead with the special Town Meeting.

10. Class 1 Road Takeover from the State (Discussion). Hodgdon has provided a memo with updated numbers and a detailed culvert inventory. Margaret Cheney is including the Town's request to take over the road in a Transportation bill. Webster believes that based on current numbers it is a positive step. Cook is not in favor the Town's taking over the road from the State and questions Hodgdon's numbers. Dechert spoke about the conversion giving the Town more authority regarding access control. Lupien asked for an outside review of the costs. Also discussed was where the bill was at present, who maintains culverts and if the Town could back out of the process. The Town Manager will contact Cheney to find out the bill's progress. Webster will also have Hodgdon find out from the State who pays for culverts if the Town takes over the road.

11. Selectboard Financial Policy #3 (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Fulton passed out an Annex to Selectboard Financial Policies defining fund types which he and the Finance Officer are working on which will clarify what each fund is. Fulton also went over the history of how the new policy came to be developed. The Finance Committee, Town Manager and Finance Officer all support the change to Policy #1 and the new Policy #3.

Racusin **moved** (2nd Bagnato) to approve Selectboard Financial Policy #1 as revised. **Motion passed.**

Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to adopt Selectboard Financial Policy #3 as presented. **Motion passed.**

12. Strategy for Updating the NORCAP Report (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Webster said the NORCAP Report needs updating and that he needs to put together a group to do so. Childs offered to be on the committee. Fulton spoke briefly about impact fees and having a framework for priorities on significant capital projects. This will be a Town Manager committee that will operate under the open meeting laws. Scheier asked the Board to seriously think about strategic planning and to coordinate this with the Planning Commission. Lindberg questioned a member of the Selectboard being part of the committee.

13. 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) #13 a) and b). Memo from TRORC Re: Revised Transportation Capital Projects Prioritization and TRORC 1/27/2010 Minutes. Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to receive a memo from TRORC re: revised transportation capital projects prioritization and TRORC 1/27/2010 minutes. **Motion passed.** Blake summarized.

b) Resident –

1) #13 c). Email from Don Kreis Re: Litigation and Mediation in Norwich. Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to receive an email from Don Kreis re: litigation and mediation in Norwich. **Motion passed.**

14. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 2/4/10 and 2/10/10 Meetings. Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve the minutes of the February 4, 2010 and February 10, 2010 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.** Bagnato suggested that Webster include follow up items in his Town Manager's report.
- b) Review Follow-Up Items. Racusin went over the items. Kramer was asked to electronically share Fulton's and Paul Tierney's thoughts on strategic planning with the Board.

Bagnato **moved** (2nd Childs) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on March 24, 2010.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Roger Blake
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – March 24, 2010 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy/NORCAP Report/Strategic Planning
- 2) Municipal Enforcement of the VT Fire Prevention and Building Code
- 3) Code of Conduct for Town Officials/Employees
- 4) Listening Posts
- 5) Town Boundaries
- 6) Lister Roundtable
- 7) Ownership of Foley Park
- 8) Norwich Volunteer Network
- 9) Appropriation Roundtable

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.