

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, July 7, 2010 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Roger Blake, Chair; Ed Childs; Suzanne Lupien (arrived @ 7:16 pm); Sharon Racusin; Uwe Bagnato; Pete Webster, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 24 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jake Blum, Linda Cook, Sandra Dell, Raymond Dennis, Marjorie Downing, Sam Eaton, Steve Flanders, Neil Fulton, Andy Hodgdon, Charlie Hodgdon, Roger Howes, Dennis Kaufman, Cheryl Lindberg, Keith Moran, Arthur Owen, Carol Owen, Chief Robinson, Ray Royce, Ann Sargent, David Sargent, Fred Smith, Jr.

Blake opened the meeting at 6:34 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Racusin spoke about her concerns with the discussion and action taken on the piece of correspondence from the Norwich Planning Commission regarding the King Arthur Flour sewer line at the June 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting. She believes correspondence should be received, follow up should be delegated and any issues made an agenda item at a later meeting. Both Childs and Bagnato stated they felt the Selectboard Procedure for Receipt of Correspondence was followed appropriately. After some further discussion, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Bagnato) to approve the Agenda. **Motion passed.**

2. Set Tax Rate (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton explained the numbers on the FY11 tax rate calculation he provided which keeps the Undesignated Fund Balance at 16.4%, has an allowance for tax adjustments of \$180,000 and keeps the total Town tax rate level. Offsetting revenues used in the calculation are estimates. The two adjustable items in the calculation are the Allowance for Tax Adjustments and the Payment from Reduction in Undesignated Fund Balance. Lindberg went over her tax rate calculation which applies the \$180,000 loss to FY10 and keeps the Undesignated Fund Balance at 15.5%. The Finance Committee did not agree on a tax rate. There was considerable discussion regarding the \$180,000 allowance. Also discussed was the GFOA's recommendation of a 16.7% minimum undesignated fund balance. Webster said the Town reduced its budget, still has a fully-funded Undesignated Fund Balance and a level tax rate using Fulton's numbers. Flanders said the Finance Committee had agreed on a 15% level for the Undesignated Fund Balance. After some further discussion, the Selectboard agreed to go with the 15% level and review their Financial Policy #2 at a future date.

Racusin **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Bagnato) to set the Town Tax Rate for FY11 at .4536, plus the Local Agreement Rate of .0052, for a Total Town Tax Rate of .4588. **Motion passed.**

3. Follow Up from Last Meeting (Discussion/Possible Action Item) – Summation of Goals and Action Plan (Discussion/Action Item). Blake had done a two point summation of the Board's goals that boiled it down to effective Selectboard meetings and maintain desirability of Norwich. Lupien urged the Chair to use the specifics outlined previously by Board members. After some discussion regarding timing and what maintaining the desirability of Norwich meant, the Selectboard agreed by consensus to have a roundtable on goals and an action plan on July 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 pm.

4. Public Comments (Discussion). There will be an unwanted medicine collection sponsored by the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District and the Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional Planning Commission Saturday, July 17<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am till noon at the Lebanon Solid Waste Facility. The Norwich Fair starts Friday, July 9<sup>th</sup> at 5:00 pm and runs through Sunday, July 11<sup>th</sup>.

5. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Zero-Sort Recycling has started at the Transfer Station and is getting a positive response from townspeople. Webster hopes to organize a field trip to Casella's Zero-Sort center in the Burlington area sometime this month for anyone interested in seeing how the process works. Norwich experienced some washouts from heavy rain last Sunday and Public Works has been re-ditching, re-grading, etc. all week. The Summer Concert Series sponsored by the Norwich Women's Club successfully kicked off last Friday with a concert by the Fogey Mountain Boys.

Racusin asked people to keep in mind that reducing consumption is important, not just recycling.

6. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Bagnato) to approve Check Warrant Report #11-02 for the period from 7/1/2010 to 7/7/2010 in the amount of \$63,872.61; all of which is General Fund. **Motion passed.** Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Bagnato) to approve Accounts Payable Warrant Number – 11A Health Savings Accounts in the amount of \$9,075.00. **Motion passed.**

10. **7:30 pm** – Appointment with Jake Blum Re: Trees (Discussion). Blum did a brief PowerPoint presentation showing the damaged tree from the car accident at Foley Park which the Town received an insurance reimbursement of \$9,050 for mainly due to Blum's hard work in pursuing, other replacement trees and examples of neglect at Foley Park. Blum pointed out that trees appreciate in value and his budget is not funded adequately to take care of all tree problems. Possible river access at Foley Park was also briefly discussed. Blum was reminded that the voters of Norwich will be asked to establish a tree replacement designated fund next March into which the remaining insurance funds can go if approved.

12. Junk and Junk Vehicles Ordinance (Discussion/Action Item). Blake went over the history briefly. Racusin is in favor of an ordinance but wants revisions to the one presented. Bagnato believes standards are necessary but disagrees with the enforcement article in the current document. Several citizens spoke against the ordinance. They believe the policy is heavy handed, that townspeople were against an ordinance five years ago and are still against, that adequate laws exist to address public health and safety, that Norwich is not a gated community, that people need time to comply, that cleanup is expensive and that it violates property owner rights. David Sargent spoke about the need to make it work for everybody and the unfairness to those who live next door to problem areas. Bagnato suggested setting up an ad hoc committee to come up with a policy that is user friendly. Sargent volunteered to be on such a committee. Childs is tired of revisiting the issue and would like to see it dropped. Also discussed were enforcement issues. Chief Robinson spoke about laws he can and will enforce versus environmental laws he cannot. Blake suggested continuing visits with concerned parties and revisit at a later meeting. After much discussion and many motions that were not voted on, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to authorize Lupien and a citizen of her choice to continue negotiations with the specific party mentioned and report progress to the Selectboard at their August 18<sup>th</sup> meeting. **Motion**

**passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Bagnato, Blake and Lupien; no – Racusin). Bagnato **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) that an ad hoc committee be formed consisting of two members of the Selectboard, the Town Manager and two citizens that represent a spectrum of opinions to work on creating a junk policy. **Motion passed.**

7. Approval for Purchase Order Greater than \$25,000 (Action Item). After a brief discussion, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to approve PO #7141156 in the amount of \$57,523.00 to Twin State Sand & Gravel for the future purchase of 6,688 yards of sand for the winter season of 2010-2011. **Motion passed.**

11. Transfer of Sidewalk Ownership (Discussion/Action Item). Webster briefly went over. Eaton answered Fire District questions. Hodgdon said the Town already sweeps the sidewalks and does winter maintenance. After a brief discussion, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to assume ownership of Section #1 after improvements and Section #2 not already owned by the Town as described in Hodgdon's memo dated June 20, 2010. **Motion passed.**

8. Request to Expend \$15,000 from Sidewalk Designated Fund (Discussion/Action Item). Webster said Montshire has promised \$20,000 towards the project. The remaining \$21,000 would come from this year's Public Works winter purchased services budget, leaving \$18,000 in that line item. Lupien questioned where the request for this sidewalk had come from. Racusin feels it would be "a sidewalk to nowhere" without the crosswalk/traffic signal improvements and that the sidewalk can wait. Chief Robinson said school children do walk along the Road. Cook believes the monies saved in winter purchased services by reducing outside contracted services should go into reserve funds. After some discussion, Childs **moved** to approve the use of \$15,000 from the Sidewalk Designated Fund towards an asphalt sidewalk on Montshire Road. **Motion failed due to lack of second.**

9. Appoint Douglas Rexford as a Trustee of Public Funds (Discussion/Action Item). Rexford was out of town. After a brief discussion, Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to appoint Douglas Rexford as a Trustee of Public Funds. **Motion passed.**

13. 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) Nonresident –

- 1) #13 b). Letter of Thanks from SEVCA. Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to receive a letter of thanks from SEVCA. **Motion passed.**
- 2) #13 c). Letter from TRORC Re: Tracy Hall Energy Audit. Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Bagnato) to receive a letter from TRORC re: Tracy Hall energy audit. **Motion passed.**
- 3) #13 d). Letter of Thanks from RSVP. Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to receive a letter of thanks from RSVP. **Motion passed.**

b) Resident –

- 1) #13 a). Letter from Cornelia Lien Waterfall Re: Garden on Town Land Behind Norwich Senior Housing. Lupien **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to receive a letter from Cornelia Lien Waterfall re: garden on Town land behind Norwich Senior Housing. **Motion passed.** Blake reviewed. Waterfall would like something in writing from the Town designating her as caretaker. Webster has spoken with both residents and Paula Howes from the Norwich Senior Housing. After some discussion, the

Board agreed by consensus that the Town Manager should determine the boundaries and, if Town property, should write a letter to Waterfall.

- 2) #13 e). Email from Anne Day, Chair Norwich School Board Re: Selectboard Letter of June 24, 2010. Bagnato **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to receive an email from Anne Day, Chair Norwich School Board re: Selectboard letter of June 24, 2010. **Motion passed.**

What steps are needed to add a bond vote to the Vermont State primaries in August was briefly discussed. Webster will follow up.

### 13. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 6/23/10 Meeting. Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Racusin) to approve the minutes of the June 23, 2010 Selectboard meeting as amended. **Motion passed.**

Racusin **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 10:20 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on August 18, 2010.

By Nancy Kramer  
Assistant to the Town Manager

Roger Blake  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – August 18, 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
- 4) Listening Posts
- 5) Town Boundaries
- 6) Lister Roundtable
- 7) Ownership of Foley Park
- 8) Norwich Volunteer Network
- 9) Appropriation Discussion (8/18/10)

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.