

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, November 17, 2010 at 6:30 PM

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

There were about 13 people in the audience.

Also participating: Richard Blacklow, Linda Cook, Linda Gray, Dennis Kaufman, Buff McLaughry, Susan McLaughry, Peter Milliken, Keith Moran, Miriam Richards, Anne Silberfarb, Irv Thomae, Jonathan Vincent.

Blake opened the meeting at 6:34 pm.

1. Blake said public comments would be restricted to three minutes each and read the following warning: The Norwich Selectboard will be hosting a Lister Roundtable and Public Forum to discuss the Town-wide reappraisal, assessment practices, how to maintain equity for taxpayers and the process involved in maintaining and updating the Town Grand List.

Vincent spoke about the software needed for the Town-wide reappraisal. Kaufman said all programs will need to be customized to do State values. One program is supported by the IT department of the State, it undervalues utilities and is used by 199 towns in Vermont. There are 27 appraisers approved by the State of Vermont. The Listers believe the RFP should allow choices on the software. Blacklow said that Thetford is happy with ProVal. All firms will need to set up tables for land, residential and commercial. Cost tables are done using recent sales figures. The Listers are hoping the Town will receive several bids. The process going forward, once a firm is chosen, is that tables will be set up, test inspections will be done, data inspectors accompanied by either a Lister or the Assessor will inspect all properties, data will be inputted and reviewed and 10% will be selected for a redo to verify. The Selectboard will approve the article for the Town Warning. There is currently \$96,000 in the Town Reappraisal Designated Fund. Once the reappraisal is done all taxpayers will get a booklet listing all properties mailed to them.

The composition of the Board of Listers, the Assessor and compensation were discussed. All three Listers indicated they would not work for a stipend. All towns not chartered must have three Listers. There followed a discussion of Selectboard authority versus Lister authority. Listers have to sign off on the Grand List. Listers are elected officials and can do a petition for wages.

When asked about the problems with the last Town-wide reappraisal, the Listers said all sketches were done by hand and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor square footage was off.

At this point, Racusin said she recommends using the State-supported NEMRC owned software for the reappraisal. Thomae felt the Board should keep an open mind and work together with the Listers to choose a vendor. Vincent said the CAMA 2000 software is out of date.

After a brief discussion of the CLA, why the Town is doing the reappraisal, the "carrot" from the State for doing a reappraisal if values do not go down and who the Assessor reports to; the Selectboard asked the Town Manager to come up with a list of eight similar towns that could be contacted and asked the same questions as to what is done in their town.

Kaufman asked Racusin if she would send him the email from Jim Barlow she had referred to. The

Board also agreed by consensus to change the start time of the November 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting to 5:30 pm.

Racusin **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Lupien) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on December 8, 2010.

By Nancy Kramer  
Assistant to the Town Manager

Roger Blake  
Selectboard Chair

Special Selectboard Meeting – November 30, 2010 at 6:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting – December 8, 2010 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy/NORCAP Report/Strategic Planning
- 2) Joint Meeting with Norwich School Board
- 3) Code of Conduct Policy for Town Manager and Selectboard
- 4) Charge for Committee Reviewing Junk Policies
- 5) 250<sup>th</sup> Celebration Plans
- 6) Town Eating Day Participation
- 7) Town Boundaries