

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, February 9, 2011 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.

There were about 17 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jean Astley, Phil Brunelle, Linda Cook, Steve Flanders, Kelly Griggs, Chief Leinoff, Cheryl Lindberg, Alison May, Don McCabe, Chief Robinson, Dan Schneider, Matt Swett.

Blake opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Public Comments. May read an ode for Lupien and then presented her with the plaque.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Webster spoke about the weather and how the Public Works Department is holding up. Sand supplies are doing fine but salt supplies are dwindling. The solar project is not going to happen even with the \$220,000 Clean Energy Development Fund grant. The Energy Committee could not come up with a project that made financial sense for the community. At some point, the Committee will come before the Board to summarize what transpired. Webster thanked Nancy Kramer, Neil Fulton, Jean Lawe and the committees that worked on this year's Town Report, which should go out in the mail next week. Assuming Article 10 passes, the Town-wide reappraisal fieldwork will start July 1. Jake Blum will be applying for a Community Forestry Project grant via the Preservation Trust of Vermont for up to \$10,000 which requires matching funds. Senator Leahy and Senator Susan Collins from Maine have introduced a bipartisan bill which would allow Vermont and Maine to increase their interstate weight limits. Eleven people have applied for the committee to evaluate the Public Works Department. Webster has printed out a hard copy of individuals in the Town of Norwich who have unclaimed property with the State of Vermont Office of the State Treasurer. A message about this list will go out on the Town Email List and the Norwich Digest. The FY11 budget is on track so far. The Police Department has received a \$7,350 grant for highway safety equipment with no match. The Town is still dealing with the graffiti problem. Lupien questioned why plows were not lifting their wing for driveways, the salt traveling from the road to yards and the bridges Webster wrote about in his Town Manager's Report. Webster said that the State inspects all bridges every two years and he will put copies of Hodgdon's memo on bridges in the Selectboard's mailboxes.
4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve Check Warrant Report #11-16 for the period from 1/27/11 to 2/9/11 in the amount of \$100,473.41; all of which is General Fund. **Motion passed.**
5. Request to Expend Designated Funds from Police Station Fund for Renovations to the Police Station (Discussion/Action Item). Robinson said the funds would be used to update the foyer, administrative area and squad room. All labor will be done by the Buildings and Grounds Department. The work for this project should start next week. After some discussion, Racusin **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve the use of up to \$2,500 from the Police Station Designated Fund for renovations to the Police Station. **Motion passed.**

The new Police Station Designated Fund balance will be approximately \$9,039.

6. Request to Expend Designated Funds from Fire Equipment Fund to Purchase Firefighter Protective Clothing (Discussion/Action Item). Leinoff explained that the Fire Department was awarded a \$7,767 AFG grant to purchase turnout clothing. The net cost to the Town would be \$842.27. This will put the Department in good shape for gear. Turnout gear should be replaced approximately every ten years. After some discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to approve the use of \$8,609.27 from the Fire Equipment Designated Fund to purchase firefighter protective clothing and the reimbursement from AFG of \$7,767 to be placed back in the Fire Equipment Designated Fund. **Motion passed.**

The new Fire Equipment Designated Fund balance will be approximately \$54,262.

On another note, Leinoff was asked about the Firehouse roof repairs and responded that the contractor needs four clear days to get the job done.

7. Request to Expend Designated Funds from Fire Equipment Fund to Repair Two SCBA Units and Purchase Voice Amplifiers (Discussion/Action Item). Schneider and Swett from the Fire Department demonstrated how the SCBA unit works and the difference the voice amplifier makes. Fire scenes are noisy and the amplifiers will be an asset. All firefighters have their own mask and all units are monitored. After some further discussion, Racusin **moved** (2nd Lupien) to approve the use of \$12,800 from the Fire Equipment Designated Fund to repair two SCBA units and purchase 25 voice amplifiers. **Motion passed.**

The new Fire Equipment Designated Fund balance will be approximately \$41,462.

8. Police Chief's Contract (Discussion/Action Item). 9. Fire Chief's Contract (Discussion/Action Item). Webster said both contracts are three-year renewal contracts that he has negotiated with the Chiefs. There was discussion regarding the timing of the contracts and wage increases that occur in the 2nd and 3rd years of the contracts.

Racusin **moved** (2nd Childs) to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Police Chief Employment Agreement effective July 1, 2011. **Motion passed.**

Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to authorize the Town Manager to sign the Fire Chief Employment Agreement effective July 1, 2011. **Motion passed.**

10. Charge for Committee to Evaluate Public Works Department (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Lupien would like the Board to accept all community members who want to participate. Lupien also has concerns with the charge. She would like to do more than five years of historical departmental budget review and she does not think the survey is necessary. Lupien would like the focus to be on needs not wants. Racusin agrees but still feels the survey is necessary in order to determine what level of services people expect. Flanders shared his write up on the committee with the Selectboard and Town Manager. Flanders believes committee members should have an open mind and a certain skill set. He would like to see the committee review staffing levels and best practices. Cook believes that reviewing the Public Works Department is complicated and dependent upon where you live. Astley asked that her application to be on the committee be withdrawn. Other items discussed were: using common sense, reviewing Hodgdon's job description, having the committee be under the direction of the Town Manager, keeping an open mind, what the Board will do with the committee's results and not rushing the process. After some further discussion, Childs agreed to redraft the charge including Flander's recommendations for the February 23rd meeting.

11. Review Questions for Interviewing Candidates for Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Childs asked if Selectboard members need to fill out an application if they wish to be on the committee. After discussion it was determined they should. Webster said only one person has applied so far. The Board discussed reviewing the ad and recruiting people. By consensus, the Selectboard agreed to work on recruitment and delay the interview and appointment time. Lupien will review the ad and get her suggestions to the Town Manager's Office.

12. Year End Report on Advance Transit (Discussion). Racusin is giving this update as part of her role as Norwich's representative to the Advance Transit Board of Directors. Ridership from Norwich has increased 131% over the last ten years. The Operations Center has been updated which includes a photovoltaic solar energy system. A building dedication is scheduled for May. Advance Transit has ordered three hybrid buses. Advance Transit now has a live feed on Google Transit and has real time transit arrival signs. Also included in the information distributed was a Sustainability Report. Advance Transit thanks Norwich for their continued support.

13. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 1/26/11 Meeting. Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to approve the minutes of the January 26, 2011 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**
- b) Discuss How To Best Use Town Meeting (Discussion). Blake spoke about a book he received as a gift called "Know Your Town" that is full of fascinating information about Norwich. The first town meeting in Norwich was in 1768 so they have been going on for eight generations now. It was agreed that Webster would speak to Article 8 and that each Board member would speak at Town Meeting.

Racusin **moved** (2nd Childs) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on February 23, 2011.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Roger Blake
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – February 23, 2011 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy/NORCAP Report/Strategic Planning
- 2) Code of Conduct Policy for Town Manager and Selectboard
- 3) Charge for Committee Reviewing Junk Policies
- 4) 250th Celebration Plans
- 5) Town Eating Day Participation
- 6) Town Boundaries

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.