

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, February 23, 2011 at 6:30 PM

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

There were about 17 people in the audience.

Also participating: Neil Fulton, Nancy Hoggson, Betsy Maislen, Don McCabe, Henry Scheier.

Blake opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). After some discussion, by consensus the Selectboard approved the Agenda.

2. Public Comments. Blake spoke briefly about a Better Communication seminar he attended sponsored by Vermont Local Roads. Racusin read the following statement: "Starting in late November the Board started the Town Manager evaluation process. We performed all the items on our list and met January 12th in executive session to discuss the findings and the Chair was to put it in order and send the rest of the Board members a draft. Many weeks had passed and when I finally asked what the status was and reminded everyone that Suzanne was leaving town, Ed emailed to say HE had sent the draft to Roger. Neither Suzanne nor I were informed that someone other than Roger was compiling the draft or of the status. The draft finally ended up in our boxes but not in time for Suzanne to see it. All members of the Selectboard are expected to be involved in this confidential evaluation. In my opinion this process has been inordinately delayed. The delay means that the final evaluation will NOT be completed. That has the appearance of unfairness by seeming to marginalize my opinion. I object to that. I therefore submit my evaluation in a sealed envelope to the Chair of the Selectboard and request him to give it due attention when the joint evaluation is prepared and the contract is renegotiated." McCabe said that Candidates' Night had gone well and that people are fighting for the right to vote right now. Maislen talked about the Friends of the Appalachian Trail working to get Norwich designated as an official Appalachian Trail Community. They have the support of the Norwich Library, Dan & Whit's and the Norwich Recreation Department. The Town Manager has also submitted a letter of support. The application will be submitted in March and Maislen expects to hear back in April. Hoggson said the Historic Preservation Commission has been awarded a grant to do the Walking Tour Brochure. Lufkin Graphic Designs has been working on the banner design and Hoggson shared some ideas with the Selectboard. Scheier spoke briefly about Town Eating Day.

3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Webster spoke about the second tax payment delinquencies and the need for townspeople to not put off payments until the final day. Town Reports have been mailed out and Webster once again thanked Kramer, Jean Lawe and Fulton for their efforts. Webster thinks the new printer we had this year, R.C. Brayshaw, did a nice job and also thanked Lufkin for his work. Norwich lost 130 people in the 2010 census a 3.7% drop to a population of 3,414. Webster has tried to have as much discussion and debate as possible on the grader and he appreciates the work that has gone into this. Two Selectboard members, the Town Manager, three Norwich Finance Committee members and others had a demonstration of the grader by Hodgdon and Lewellyn at the Town garage

yesterday. The Finance Office has a new assistant, Jill Haney, who is also helping out in the Lister Office as a replacement for Bynum who has resigned. Webster attended Local Government Day and particularly enjoyed sitting in on Margaret Cheney's committee on Natural Resources and Energy.

4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to approve Check Warrant Report #11-17 for the period from 2/10/11 to 2/23/11 in the amount of \$3,472,671.92; of which \$68,552.63 is General Fund, \$285 is Highway Garage Fund, \$3,834.29 is Fire Equipment Fund and \$3,400,000 is School Tax. **Motion passed.**

5. **7:00 pm** – Appointment with Margaret Cheney to Discuss House Bill H.155 Re: PACE and Other Pending Legislation (Discussion). Dropped from agenda. Cheney will be present at the March 9th meeting.

6. Request to Expend Designated Funds from Highway Equipment Fund to Purchase a Grader (Discussion/Action Item). Tabled until the March 9, 2011 Selectboard meeting.

7. Charge for Committee to Evaluate Public Works Department (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Childs said that the document before the Board reflects edits from the last meeting and working with Flanders and Fulton. After a brief discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to approve the revised charge for the Committee to Evaluate the Public Works Department. **Motion passed.**

8. Wrap Up of Solar Project (Discussion). Dropped from agenda.

9. 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) #9 a). Memo from TRORC Re: Draft East Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to receive a memo from TRORC re: Draft East Central Vermont Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. **Motion passed.**

10. Selectboard

a) Approval of the Minutes of the 1/19/11 and 2/9/11 Meetings. Childs **moved** (2nd Racusin) to approve the minutes of the January 19, 2011 and February 9, 2011 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.**

As this point Racusin said there will be a Health Fair to hear testimony on House bill H.202 and Senate bill S.57 March 7th from 6-8 pm in the industrial park across from Dothan Brook School.

Fulton thanked Blake for his service to the Town as Chair and Racusin for her two years of service as a Board member.

Racusin **moved** (2nd Childs) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 7:02 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on March 9, 2011.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Roger Blake
Selectboard Chair

Special Selectboard Meeting – March 2, 2011 at 5:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting – March 9, 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

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