

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, April 13, 2011 at 5:30 PM

Members present: Ed Childs, Chair; Roger Blake; Christopher Ashley; Steve Flanders; Linda Cook; Pete Webster, Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 12 people in the audience.

Also participating: Liz Blum, Ernie Ciccotelli, Joshua Durst, Neil Fulton, Martha Graber, Jill Kearney, Bill Krajeski, James Mackall, Bill Pierce, Jonathan Vincent.

Childs opened the meeting at 5:30 pm.

1. 5:30 pm - Litigation (Executive Session May be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1), Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing litigation and to invite Pete Webster, Don Kreis and the Listers to join the Session. **Motion passed.** The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 5:32 pm. At 6:31 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to authorize the Town Manager to work with the Town Attorney on a settlement for the Wilson Road tax appeal. **Motion passed.**

2. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.

3. Public Comments. Blake said it is the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of when the Town's charter was signed. Hoggson and Munday will be going to the Northeast Document Conservation Center in Andover, MA with the original charter to get a digitally enhanced photo of the charter. They will be bringing back three archival replicas which will be good for 200 years. Cook questioned how dates of events for 250<sup>th</sup> celebrations in Norwich were being disseminated. Blum, speaking for the Listers, said they had posted new information on the Norwich Digest regarding Form HS-131 Vermont Homestead Declaration filing. If you have filed a 2010 Homestead Declaration you do not have to file a new one unless there has been a change in the use of the property or a different property becomes your homestead. Due date is April 18<sup>th</sup> and there are penalties for late filings.

4. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). The new 2006 John Deere grader should be delivered with the next two weeks. The Town Manager and Hodgdon support the paving of a half mile of road that includes part of Willey Hill and Hawk Pine Road that is discussed in a letter to be received as correspondence later in the meeting. Mike Koloski has been hired as an equipment operator for Public Works. The Town Manager and Roberta Robinson have been meeting with Department Heads to go over their FY11 budgets. Expectations are that the Town will come in under budget as a whole. The Fire Department roof work is ongoing. The dispatch agreement with Hartford is being reviewed and possible other options are being discussed. A plaque for the bandstand has been ordered and will soon be up. Hodgdon has been diagnosed with Lyme disease and is undergoing treatment. Hodgdon has applied for two grants. One to replace a culvert on Bragg Hill and one to pave a section of road on Beaver Meadow. Cook questioned why Bragg Hill culverts instead of the three high priority bridges on Turnpike Road and why we are paving Beaver Meadow. Webster will respond to her questions tomorrow. Webster will be sending letters out to delinquent taxpayers. The Town Manager is looking into using Competitive Energy Services, as other towns do, to conserve on energy costs. TRORC has money available to implement some of the recommendations from the Tracy Hall energy audit. The local roads blogger network has been discussing a four 10-hour day work week for town crews and Webster will research this. Cook questioned the cost of overtime if workers were called in on the 5<sup>th</sup> day.

5. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Cook discussed having three separate reports, one for each fund, which she believes, and Roberta Robinson agrees with, would simplify the motions. After some discussion, the Selectboard agreed by consensus to this change going forward. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to approve Check Warrant Report #11-20 for the period from 3/24/11 to 4/13/11 in the amount of \$97,112.71; of which \$84,590.29 is General Fund, \$4,000 is Highway Equipment Fund and \$8,522.42 is Fire Equipment Fund. **Motion passed.**

Warrant Number – 11C Health Savings Accounts. Blake **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve Accounts Payable Warrant Number – 11C Health Savings Accounts in the amount of \$375.00. **Motion passed.**

6. Request by Listers to Expend Funds from Assessor Wage Line Item for Professional Services to Retain New England Municipal Consultants to Assist with Preparation of the 2011 Grand List (Discussion/Action Item). Vincent explained that the Listers have half a dozen properties they need help with. About 30 hours will be needed at the rate of \$75 per hour. Krajewski reviewed the process briefly stating that most of the work will be folded into the reappraisal process. After some discussion, Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve the expenditure of funds from the Assessor wage line item for professional services to retain New England Municipal Consultants to assist with the preparation of the 2011 Grand List. **Motion was withdrawn.** The Selectboard asked the Listers to bring a contract for Krajewski's services to their April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting for approval.

7. Review Draft Charge for Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions (Discussion Item Only). After reviewing the charge, Vincent believes the review could be helpful but the timeframe should be extended. Ciccotelli and Vincent would like to defer the review for now. Blum has no objection to the review and would like to find economies for the Town in the Listers Office. Blum would also like the date changed and understandable language used. Childs said this review would affect how the Lister Department operates going forward. Flanders supports the line of inquiry and would like the process to go forward. Blake believes the level of transparency in the Lister Office has improved. Ashley would rather wait until the fall and would like further information provided on the three statistical measures mentioned on page 1 of the charge. Cook, after questioning the authorship of the charge, would like to further review the charge before the Board makes a decision.

8. Town of Norwich Open Positions Interviews/Appointments (Action Item). Applicants present: Martha Graber, Joshua Durst and James Mackall were interviewed. The possible "conflict of interest" for Mackall was discussed. Mackall does not personally see the conflict but will recuse himself if he does perceive a conflict on an issue going forward. Flanders once again discussed the makeup of the Committee. After some further discussion, the Selectboard agreed to go ahead with Finance Committee appointments.

Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Cook) to appoint Martha Graber to the Conservation Commission for a four-year term ending in March, 2015. **Motion passed.** Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Cook) to appoint Joshua Durst to the Finance Committee for a two-year term ending in March, 2013. **Motion passed.** Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to appoint James Mackall to the Finance Committee for a two-year term ending in March, 2013. **Motion passed.** Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to appoint Jeff Goodrich as the TRORC alternate for a one-year term ending in April, 2012. **Motion passed.** Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to appoint Doug Rexford to be a Trustee of Public Funds for a one-year term ending in March, 2012. **Motion passed.**

9. 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) Resident –

1) #9 a). Letter from Willey Hill Residents and Abutters Re: Paving Willey Hill Road. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to receive a letter from Willey Hill residents and abutters re: paving Willey Hill Road. **Motion passed**. Pierce spoke about the concerns regarding deterioration of the road and its impact on safety and quality of life. Cook said that stretch of road has serious ditching and drainage problems. There was also some discussion of wells and economic savings if the road was paved.

b) Nonresident –

1) #9 b). Letter from State of Vermont Department of Taxes Re: Redetermination of Equalized Education Property Value and Coefficient of Dispersion. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to receive a letter from the State of Vermont Department of Taxes re: redetermination of equalized education property value and coefficient of dispersion. **Motion passed**. The appeal process was briefly discussed and it was determined that just the Listers are involved at present.

10. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 3/23/11 and 3/30/11 Meetings. After some discussion, Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2011, as amended, Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed**. Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve the minutes of the March 30, 2011 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed**.
- b) Reschedule Date for Interviews/Appointments to Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee (Action Item). After discussing further recruiting of candidates, the Board decided to reschedule interviews/appointments for April 27<sup>th</sup> with the possibility of delaying until May 11<sup>th</sup>.
- c) Letters of Thanks for Solar Project Participants (Action Item). The Selectboard signed the letters.
- d) Review/Revise Town Manager Evaluation Form (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders reviewed the changes and offered to speak individually with any Board member that has further questions. After further discussion, the Selectboard agreed by consensus to start the April 27<sup>th</sup> meeting at 5:30 pm and have this the first agenda item.
- e) Schedule Annual Review of Selectboard Approved Policies (Discussion/Action Item). After some discussion of the policies, the Board picked Capital Assets Accounting, Selectboard Financial Policy #2, Capital Budget Policy, Conflict of Interest and Annex to Selectboard Financial Policies for further review. Kramer will generate hard copies of the five policies for the Board.
- f) Follow Up on Selectboard/Finance Committee Discussions (Discussion). The Board discussed the importance of clearer communications with the Finance Committee, changes in the Finance Committee makeup and a clearer charge for the Committee. Flanders has asked VLCT for input on what other towns do. After further discussion, the Selectboard agreed by consensus to ask the Finance Committee to draft a charge and forward it to the Board for review.
- g) Review of Pending Items (Discussion/Action Item). No changes were made.

At this point, Kearney spoke briefly about the remaining open position for the Recreation Council and her belief they have found a candidate for it.

- h) Personnel (Executive Session may be Required). After some discussion, Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(3), Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing personnel. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Ashley and Cook; no - Flanders). The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 9:02 pm.

At 9:54 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Blake) to adjourn. **Motion passed**. Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on April 27, 2011.

By Nancy Kramer  
Assistant to the Town Manager

Edwin Childs  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – April 27, 2011 at 5:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Schedule Annual Review of Selectboard Approved Policies
- 2) Review/Revise Town Manager Evaluation Form (4/27/11)
- 3) Discussion with Board of Listers (4/27/11)
- 4) Bandstand Rental Policy (4/27/11)
- 5) Review Appropriation Letter and Process (5/11/11)
- 6) Update Finance Committee Statement of Purpose (5/11/11)
- 7) Review of Town Plan Document (5/25/11)
- 8) Review Town Manager List of Department Projects/Goals (5/25/11)
- 9) Budget Development (6/8/11)
- 10) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy (6/8/11)
- 11) Strategic Planning (6/8/11)
- 12) Develop Email Policy (7/27/11)
- 13) Tour of Fire/Police Facilities (8/24/11)
- 14) Review Recommendations for Facilities Improvements at the Fire/Police Facility (8/24/11)
- 15) Evaluate Report from Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee (9/27/11)
- 16) Evaluate Report from Committee to Evaluate Public Works Department (9/27/11)
- 17) Code of Conduct Policy for Town Manager and Selectboard
- 18) Charge for Committee Reviewing Junk Policies
- 19) 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.