

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, June 8, 2011 at 6:30 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 14 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jean Astley, Jake Blum, Liz Blum, Neil Fulton, John Hanchett, Andy Hodgdon, Dennis Kaufman, Cheryl Lindberg, Brion McMullan, Chief Robinson, Ben Smith, Jonathan Vincent.

Childs opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda as presented.
2. Public Comments. Blake spoke at a dedication ceremony prior to a Hanover High School crew race concerning a new crew boat with the name Uwe Bagnato on the bow. Bagnato was very supportive of this program when he was principal of the High School. Each year there are more than 100 students who sign up for crew. This last of the year home race saw more than 500 entrants from a number of schools. Flanders spoke about the Selectboard having previously agreed upon questions for our State representatives going forward. Childs said the Capital Facilities Planning & Budgeting Committee will be having their first public forum Wednesday, June 15th at 7:00 pm in the multipurpose room. Astley read a statement she had prepared in which she stated the Board was elected by townspeople to keep the budget manageable for all, that the Selectboard should wait for the DPW Committee's report before changing sticker rates, questioned who was collecting and getting roadside wood left by Davey Tree Company and felt that Neil Fulton is doing the Town Manager's work and the "boy's club" should be dismantled.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Webster said the forum on the Single Payer plan sponsored by Aging in Place had a good crowd and went well. The Town has received one proposal so far for banking services. The Listers have successfully filed the abstract. Webster attended a retreat of the GUVSWD Board where options for the 40 acre permitted landfill's use were explored. The Selectboard was invited to pass any thoughts they may have for its use to either Webster or McMullan. The GUVSWD Board is considering applying for a Municipal Planning Grant to bring in a consultant for analysis of best use for this property. Webster, Hodgdon and Lewellyn went to Springfield Monday to look at a grader recently in from Arkansas. The Town Manager is getting quotes on replacing the carpet in the basement except for the office areas. This will probably come before the Selectboard at their June 22nd meeting. Ben Smith spoke about the damage to his septic system at his home on Lewiston Hill Road from a broken water main. He gave maps to the Board showing the damage. Smith said a survey is being done by Pathways and his mound may need to be on Town and/or neighboring property. Smith is looking for the best solution for all. Jake Blum said the wood that is cut and left on the side of the road is picked up by volunteers and placed in the Town stockpile where it is shared with those who need it.

At this point, after Childs reminded the public present at the meeting that comments from them need to be addressed to the Chair, Jake Blum gave the background on his grant application to the Women's Club for chairs at Foley Park. He has been working hard to clear and maintain the plantings put in by the State, with the full support of the State. He thought the chairs would be a good idea and had put in temporary chairs that are getting used. Cook believes that any use of Town land should come before the Selectboard and a process should be followed. Blake stated

the Town does not own Foley Park and State support should be obtained. Childs and Ashley both support Blum's efforts but admit the process could have been better. After some further discussion, the Board agreed to put the approval of the chairs on the June 22nd agenda with the understanding that State support would be obtained. Lindberg reminded those present of what happened with the Playground Project and that all requests by Town employees or officials for Norwich Women's Club grants should go through the Town Manager's Office. Liz Blum spoke in support of her brother saying he has spent a lot of time on Town projects and he deserves thanks for what he does.

Ashley asked for an update on the road sign issue. Webster said the Town needs to stay in compliance with MUTCD sign standards in order to receive State grants. Hodgdon said property butters were notified and asked for comments long before any signs were changed. The State has been notified of comments made in the Norwich Digest and will answer townspeople directly. Cook still believes it came as a surprise to some people.

Vincent spoke about the abstract being out and briefly went over the process. The Listers expect to wrap up grievances by June 28th. Cook questioned the costs involved in filing the abstract. Vincent said he expects bills for technical advice received to be about \$2,000. The Listers employed Dennis Kaufman for technical advice that was needed in order to get the abstract out. The Listers will use monies from the Assessor Wage line item in their budget. Cook wants the \$2,000 to come from the contract they approved and asked other Selectboard members how they felt about this. General consensus of other Board members was that as elected officials this is a Lister decision once the budget is approved. Kaufman reminded the Selectboard that the Listers, by Statute, only need Selectboard approval for expert advice or assistance in making an appraisal and that there is also a line item in the Lister budget for software support. Liz Blum said the Listers did not want to use the extension and needed the help which also came from NEMRC support and Fulton. Lindberg wants it clear that Fulton was not acting in his capacity as Assistant Town Treasurer when he provided support to the Listers.

4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Blake **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #11-24 for General Fund for the period from 5/26/11 to 6/8/11 in the amount of \$423,734.23. **Motion passed.**

5. DPW Review Committee Work Plan (Discussion). Doscher and Gold could not attend the meeting and asked Cook to review for them. The Committee has now broken up into three subcommittees: DPW General, Highway and SW-B&G. A work schedule has been developed through September 28th. The second public forum is scheduled for July 12th and the final forum will be September 13th. Childs suggested that meeting time should be added to the schedule.

6. Fees for Windshield Sticker for Transfer Station (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders believes it is appropriate to proceed now. The Town budget was based on revenue expectations from stickers and thus a shortfall in revenues will result if the sticker increase is not implemented. Childs has spoken with Gammell from the DPW Review Committee and he is fine with testing the fee at \$15 for a year. Gammell feels \$15 is at the low end of the spectrum. Cook said there are no real numbers yet and that the \$15,000 is not accurate. The expanded recycling program already in place at the Transfer Station is generating increased revenues. Hodgdon confirmed this and said he doesn't know yet about being designated a regional e-waste collection site. Cook does not want the Selectboard to show any disrespect for work being done by DPW Review Committee members. Childs and Blake are all good with moving forward with the increased sticker fee. Ashley stands with the motion made at the previous Board meeting. Flanders reminded Selectboard members that the DPW Review Committee is not a legislative body. Webster thinks it is time to do it. Astley does not believe enough research has been

done. Hanchett would like the Board to wait for the facts from the DPW Review Committee and suggested keeping a car count at the Transfer Station for awhile as one way to check volume. After some further discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Blake) to approve fees of \$15 for the first Transfer Station windshield sticker permit and \$5 for subsequent stickers effective July 1, 2011. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Childs, Blake and Flanders; no - Ashley and Cook).

7. Equipment Acquisition Process Re: Grader (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Childs reminded the Board that this item is on the agenda to talk about procedure. Flanders has submitted a draft Capital Equipment Replacement Decision Form for discussion and Fulton submitted his suggestions on how to redo the spreadsheet for comparison. Flanders would like to see the process perfected. When polled on their thoughts on how to go forward with the grader purchase: Ashley asked for updated figures in the spreadsheet and real contracted services numbers, Cook would like the information Selectboard members have requested put together so they can move forward in a timely manner, Childs does not need additional numbers and believes it has been shown that it is cheaper to own the grader, Flanders would like hours used to be per year and not per day. Webster and Hodgdon requested permission to go out to bid. After some further discussion, the Board agreed to let Flanders complete a decision paper so that a process is in place and Flanders, Fulton, Hodgdon and the Town Manager will work on obtaining requested information.

8. Charge for Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Childs asked for feedback from the Listers. Liz Blum said that she favors the formation of the Committee and that there is a need to look at how money is spent in the Listers' Office. Blum believes the new software will make things better going forward. Flanders questioned whether townspeople had the needed expertise for this process or if a consultant was needed. After discussion, the Selectboard agreed by consensus that the first sentence under item 4. Membership should read "The Committee shall consist of a minimum of five members, appointed by the Selectboard. Cook asked that the charge be reviewed for consistency. Fulton explained where the bulleted items in the charge had come from and said the Division of Property Valuation and Review will provide technical assistance. After some further discussion, it was agreed that Flanders would tweak the document and forward it to the Board for input. The charge will be on the agenda for approval June 22nd. The Selectboard will do interviews and appointments at their July 6th meeting and Kramer will advertize for candidates.

9. Conflict of Interest Policy (Discussion/Possible Action Item). After some discussion of previously requested changes and some new suggestions, it was agreed that Ashley would make revisions to the document and circulate to the Board. While conflict of interest was under discussion, Lindberg asked if the Selectboard had any questions for her in reference to Jim Mackall's May 5th email where he questioned whether a conflict of interest occurred according to the Town's policy with Lindberg working for Mascoma Savings Bank and Marion Cross School's decision to transfer PTO accounts to Mascoma. Flanders stated that the Norwich Finance Committee had addressed this matter with Lindberg a year ago and her response at the time satisfied him that she does not have a conflict of interest. Childs advised Lindberg that he had no indications from Board members that she was in violation of the policy and that he was sure the Selectboard would advise her if they saw the need for further conversation.

10. Update Finance Committee Statement of Purpose (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Ashley has spoken with Moran and the consensus of the Finance Committee is to keep the current status. After some discussion regarding who should appoint members to the Finance Committee and Finance Committee duties, Ashley and Cook asked for a simplified, revised Statement of Purpose with no change in appointment. Flanders agreed to provide such a

version for review at the next Selectboard meeting.

11. Budget Development (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Webster said he believes the process has worked well so far. Webster will generate a budget schedule for the Board. Flanders will put forth his suggestions for consideration at an upcoming Selectboard meeting. Ashley suggested that at next year's Town Meeting the Selectboard should do a visual presentation with Town Manager input.

12. Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Childs said he would volunteer to draft a policy but would like some help from one other Board member. Fulton spoke about the NORCAP Report having some suggestions. Cook will look for a model policy.

13. Discussion of Health Insurance Plan (Discussion). Webster gave an update on the process saying he has decided to delay the July 1 changeover due to the recent VLCT changes. VLCT has dropped the penalty for changeover before year end. Webster is still working on comparing MVP with CIGNA and would like to bring in Tanya Chambers from VLCT to do a side-by-side comparison for employees and spouses on the health plan. His goal is to move towards an August 1 implementation. After some discussion, it was agreed that Chambers would be brought in before the next Selectboard meeting in order that the Board could get employee feedback for their June 22nd meeting where Chambers will be present.

14. 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) #14 a). Minutes from 4/27/11 TRORC Board Meeting. Cook **moved** (2nd Flanders) to receive minutes from the 4/27/11 TRORC Board meeting. **Motion passed.**
- 2) #14 b). Memo from TRORC Re: Legislation on New Planning Requirements. Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to receive a memo from TRORC re: legislation on new planning requirements. **Motion passed.**
- 3) #14 a). Memo from LEPC #12 Re: LEPC #12 Bylaw Change. Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to receive a memo from LEPC #12 re: LEPC #12 bylaw change. **Motion passed.**

b) Resident –

- 1) #14 d). Letter from Benjamin Smith Re: Request for Property Line Easement. Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to receive a letter from Benjamin Smith re: request for property line easement. **Motion passed.**

15. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 5/25/11 Meeting. After some discussion it was agreed that 16. d) would be amended to show that going forward items agreed to for the agenda will not be removed, Flanders **moved** (2nd Blake) to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2011 Selectboard meeting as amended. **Motion passed.**
- b) Approve Triathlon Utilizing Parts of Route 5 in Norwich (Discussion/Action Item). Webster said that Streamline Events would like Selectboard and Town support for this event. After some discussion, Ashley **moved** (2nd Blake) to authorize the Town Manager to send a letter to Streamline Events acknowledging support and approval of a triathlon utilizing parts of Route 5 in Norwich. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Childs, Blake and Ashley; no - Flanders and Cook).

- c) Review of Pending Items (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Ashley asked that State of Vermont PACE Initiative be added to pending items. Code of Conduct Policy for Town Manager and Selectboard and Charge for Committee Reviewing Junk Policies were taken off pending items.
- d) Review of Next Agenda (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Chairs for Foley Park, Statement of Purpose for Finance Committee, Charge for Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions, VLCT presentation and review of the Capital Budget Policy will be agenda items for the next meeting.

Afterwards, there was some discussion of the Town Manager review timeline.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:55 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on June 22, 2011.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Edwin Childs
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – June 22, 2011 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Capital Budget Policy (6/22/11)
- 2) Conflict of Interest Policy
- 3) Review Policy for Response to Appeals of DRB Decisions
- 4) Charge for Committee to Review Real Property Assessment Functions (6/22/11)
- 5) Review Appropriation Request Policy
- 6) Update Finance Committee Statement of Purpose (6/22/11)
- 7) Review of Town Plan Document
- 8) Budget Development
- 9) Vehicle Acquisition and Replacement Policy
- 10) Strategic Planning (8/10/11)
- 11) Develop Email Policy (7/27/11)
- 12) Tour of Fire/Police Facilities (8/24/11)
- 13) Review Recommendations for Facilities Improvements at the Fire/Police Facility (8/24/11)
- 14) Evaluate Report from Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee (9/27/11)
- 15) Evaluate Report from Committee to Evaluate Public Works Department (9/27/11)
- 16) Permits – Interior Building Improvements
- 17) State of Vermont PACE Initiative
- 18) 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.