

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, July 25, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Christopher Ashley, Chair; Ed Childs; Linda Cook; Stephen Flanders; Keith Moran; Phil Dechert, Acting Town Manager; Nancy Kramer, Assistant to the Town Manager. Absent: Neil Fulton, Town Manager.

There were 5 people in the audience.

Also participating: Joshua Durst, Andy Hodgdon, Cheryl Lindberg, Harry Roberts.

Ashley opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Public Comments. Roberts expressed concern over roadside mowing of wild parsnip. He has contacted the Town Manager who indicated he would refer the matter to the Conservation Commission. There was some discussion about the Town adopting a policy regarding the matter. Durst said he feels the Selectboard and Town Manager are doing an excellent job but unfortunately they have lost control of the finances of the Town due to school expenses.
3. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After some questions, Childs **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #13-3 for General Fund in the amount of \$269,492.98 for the period from 7/16/12 to 7/25/12. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Ashley, Childs and Flanders; no – Cook and Moran).
4. Errors and Omissions (Discussion/Action Item). Lindberg reviewed the requested changes with the Board. The contract Assessor, Bill Krajewski, has submitted a revised Errors and Omissions memo dated July 24<sup>th</sup> that lists the Parker property as one parcel. Flanders asked why these mistakes are happening and Lindberg said they were mostly due to a lack of communication and follow through. There followed discussion regarding the Holzberger conservation easement, voted exemptions, homestead declaration responsibility and whether the Listers should have held a public meeting to discuss the July 24<sup>th</sup> memo.

Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to change the value of Parcel ID 10-004-200 to \$936,900 on the April 1, 2012 Grand List, to change the value of Parcel ID 11-058-010 to \$254,900 on the April 1, 2012 Grand List and to change the value of Parcel ID 20-211-000 to \$351,500 on the April 1, 2012 Grand List. **Motion passed.**

After some further discussion, Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Moran) to hold off voting on the Parker parcels until the next regular Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Cook, Moran and Flanders; no – Ashley and Childs).

5. FY13 Paving Program Award and Approval of the Expenditure of \$275,000 from the Paving Designated Fund (Discussion/Action Item). Dechert said this is part of the FY13 paving program that includes \$275,000 from the Paving Designated Fund and the budgeted amount of \$60,000 under Purchased Services. Hodgdon would like to keep the \$60,000 in reserve in case there is a hard winter this year. Hodgdon indicated that the quoted price from Blaktop is good through the spring of 2013.

After some discussion, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Childs) to award the FY13 paving contract to Blaktop, Inc. and authorize the expenditure of \$275,000 from the Paving Designated Fund. **Motion passed.**

6. Selectboard Review of Between Meeting Communications Among Members (Discussion). Flanders, having shared material from Selectboard training at VLCT, said his intention was to remind Selectboard members of the open meeting Statute and that Board emails discussing Town business amongst three or more members is a violation of the open meeting law. He emphasized that this applies to serial communications as well as simultaneous ones. Flanders said that a two-person subcommittee of the Selectboard must warn any communications on the topic for which they have been established. Ashley pointed out that this only applies if three or more Selectboard members are discussing Town business. Ashley also reminded townspeople that communications to the Board are public documents. The Selectboard briefly discussed that subcommittee meetings need to be warned if a quorum of the body is participating.

7. Selectboard Strategic Planning Projects Followed by Public Comments. Due to public comments received by Ashley at the Transfer Station, the seating arrangement of the Selectboard for roundtable discussions has been changed. Ashley said the Board was asked to bring two goal topics in an expanded form to this meeting. Starting with Cook each Selectboard member reviewed their topics. Cook – Route 5 South development. Ashley – Flanders's trail network and implementation of capital projects strategies. Childs – capital planning strategies and affordable housing. Moran – reduce municipal fleet size and Town infrastructure. Flanders – next-generation high-speed internet for Norwich and enhanced walking opportunities for Norwich. After discussion, the Board agreed by consensus on three general categories to proceed with: capital planning strategies, expansion of commercial and residential development within the context of the Norwich Town Plan and expanding community amenities that improve the quality of life for Norwich residents. Flanders will package the ideas presented in a unified document and review those ideas with the Town Manager for possible discussion at the September 12<sup>th</sup> Selectboard meeting.

8. Review of Next Agenda (Discussion/Possible Action Item). The main item on the agenda for August 15<sup>th</sup> will be a discussion of the radio communications system and tower including the VTel offer. Items mentioned for the August 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting include review of the Town of Norwich Financial Management Policy, the Town Manager job classification and evaluation processes and Selectboard and public input on the FY14 budget.

Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Moran) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on August 22, 2012.

By Nancy Kramer  
Assistant to the Town Manager

Christopher Ashley  
Selectboard Chair

Special Selectboard Meeting – August 15, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting – August 22, 2012 at 6:00 PM

Pending Items:  
None

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