

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

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

There were about 12 people in the audience.

Also participating: Ernie Ciccotelli, Margo Doscher, Linda Gray, Andy Hodgdon, Alison May, Creigh Moffatt, Cheryl Lindberg, Chris Rhim, Robert Sabatelle, Henry Scheier, Gerry Tolman, Bob Walker.

Childs opened the meeting at 6:31 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Fulton said one additional warrant had been added for approval in order to avoid paying late fees to Home Depot. Afterwards, by consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.

2. Public Comments. Blake spoke about the President's mention of the flag he received from the special forces that killed Osama bin Laden in his State of the Union address last night. Blake said that this special gift was a symbol for the nation and recognized the teamwork involved. Cook cautioned townspeople on driving carefully on Bragg Hill where the guardrails are not yet finished. There was some discussion of signage warning people and Hodgdon said he will take a look at what can be done.

3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). The Town has received two of the three expected reimbursement checks from VLCT PACIF insurance. The Public Works Department is well past the midpoint on callouts for the season. The highway crew is working hard due to the many ice storms and doing a great job. The Town has received its first FEMA reimbursement check for Tropical Storm Irene damage. A RFP has been prepared for the Town Pool and FEMA has approved. Permits for the project may be hard to get. Fulton has started work on formatting the Town budget for this year's Town Report. Cook asked where townspeople should call after hours about road problems and was told the Police Station.

4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Blake **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-25 for General Fund for the period from 1/12/12 to 1/25/12 in the amount of \$60,037.90. **Motion passed.** Cook **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-25 for Police Special Equipment Fund for the period from 1/12/12 to 1/25/12 in the amount of \$2,203. **Motion passed.** Blake **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-26 for General Fund for the period from 1/26/12 to 1/26/12 in the amount of \$855.18. **Motion passed.**

8. Matching Funds for Tropical Storm Irene Damage (Discussion). Fulton explained that the current estimate for repairing road damage from Tropical Storm Irene is \$548,671 which includes \$20,000 for guardrails. Inspection of bridges found six bridges needing repairs and \$350,000 is being used as the maximum cost for repairing or replacing the Town Pool Dam. Thus, Fulton is recommending the appropriation article on the Town Meeting Warning be increased to \$95,000. Fulton has used \$95,000 in his tax calculations for the Town Report.

7. Request for Redetermination of Equalized Education Property Value and Coefficient of Dispersion (Discussion). The Listers came to the Town Manager requesting an appeal of the values established by Property Valuation and Review (PV&R), effective January 1, 2012, on the last day an appeal could be filed, January 18, 2012. Fulton did not want to miss the opportunity to appeal so a letter was drafted, signed by the Chair of the Selectboard and emailed to PV&R. Ciccotelli spoke about at least two properties that he knows of that he believes are incorrectly valued by PV&R. This appeal will be handled in house by the Listers. After some further discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) that the Norwich Selectboard confirm the letter from the Chair of the Selectboard dated January 18, 2012 to the Director of Property Valuation and Review requesting a re-determination of the EEPV and/or COD assigned to Norwich by the State of

Vermont, Department of Taxes. **Motion passed.**

6. Town Manager's Response to Public Works Review Committee's Recommendations (Discussion). Fulton thanked the DPW Committee for all their hard work on reviewing the Department of Public Works. Margo Doscher was present at the meeting to answer questions. The Selectboard discussed the report being on the Town's website, cost-efficiencies, administrative support for Hodgdon, classification of Town highways, high-priority paved roads and plow operators defining a visible edge. The Board asked for periodic updates from the Town Manager on progress on the reports recommendations. Doscher said she was pleased to get this feedback on a timely basis, that the Town should trust the road crew on priorities, that she is happy to see Hodgdon is getting administrative help and thanked Hodgdon for the high level of satisfaction by townspeople on the survey the Committee did. Hodgdon thanked the Committee also.

5. Interview and Appoint Lister to Serve Through Town Meeting on March 6, 2012 (Discussion/Action Item). Lindberg and May were present and were interviewed by the Selectboard. Dwinell could not attend the meeting due to family commitments. Lindberg was asked about her ability to commit to day hours. Fulton said that a 15-20 hour time commitment was needed. Childs asked Lindberg if she felt there was any conflict of interest with her job of Treasurer and Lindberg said she did not see any. May and Lindberg both responded that they agreed with the Listers being on a stipend decision. The Board took a ballot vote and Lindberg received 1 vote and May 4. Afterwards, Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to appoint Alison May to the Board of Listers to serve until the next Town Meeting (March 6, 2012). **Motion passed.** May was thanked for her wiliness to serve.

9. Approve Town Portion of 2012 Town Meeting Warning (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton said he had provided the Selectboard with a suggested process and then reviewed the changes. The appropriation amount in Article 5 has been increased to \$95,000, the number of years before the money would be returned to the General Fund in Article 12 was increased to five and Articles 17, 19 and 28 are new articles that came in by petition. The appropriation amount in Article 27 has tentatively been changed to \$3,000 pending receipt of a petition tomorrow by the Town Clerk. Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve the 2012 Town Meeting Warning excluding school articles. Flanders **moved** to divide the question and vote on Articles 4, 6, 9, 13, 16, 17, 19, 22, 27 and 28 as separate motions. **Motion passed.** There was some discussion of Selectboard authority to put petitions on the Town Warning.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 4 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Flanders and Ashley; no - Cook).

Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 6 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Flanders and Ashley; no - Cook). Cook spoke against this article and Ashley spoke in support.

Blake **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 9 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Cook and Ashley; no - Flanders). Flanders does not believe that Green Mountain RSVP has met the needed criteria for an appropriation.

Cook **moved** (2nd Blake) to add Article 13 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Cook and Ashley; no - Flanders). Flanders does not believe that the Legion has met the needed criteria for an appropriation.

Blake **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 16 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Cook and Ashley; no - Flanders). Flanders does not believe that the Historical Society has met the needed criteria for an appropriation.

Cook **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 17 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 3 to 1** (yes – Blake, Cook and Ashley; no – Flanders; Childs abstained). Flanders does not believe that the Lions Club has met the needed criteria for an appropriation. Sabatelle and Scheier both spoke about the Lions

Club decision not to fund the fireworks. Scheier suggested making it part of the Recreation Department budget going forward. Blake and Ashley both also spoke on the article.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Blake) to add Article 19 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Cook and Ashley; no - Flanders). Flanders does not believe that Sustainable Energy Resource Group (SERG) has met the needed criteria for an appropriation. Gray, Tolman and Moffatt all spoke in support of SERG. Blake and Ashley also spoke on the article.

Cook **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 22 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Childs, Blake, Cook and Ashley; no - Flanders). Flanders does not believe that the Upper Valley Trails Alliance has met the needed criteria for an appropriation.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to add Article 28 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning. **Motion passed.** Cook and Flanders spoke on the article.

Cook **moved** (2nd Ashley) to add Article 27 to the 2012 Town Meeting Warning with an appropriation amount of \$2,000 that that would be revised to \$3,000 if a valid petition is received by the Town Clerk. **Motion passed.** Rhim and Moffatt both spoke in support for the \$3,000 appropriation for Youth-In-Action (YIA). After hearing their comments, Flanders said he had been persuaded to support YIA's appropriation request.

Fulton said he would let the Board know when the Warning was ready for their signatures. There was a brief discussion of guidelines for outside agency petitions and that petition levels are increasing.

10. Review Tax Rate Calculation for Town Report (Discussion). Fulton reviewed his calculation of the projected Undesignated Fund balance as of June 30, 2012 which uses \$95,000 to match FEMA grant funds. Fulton has prepared tax rate calculations with and without the \$75,000 paving appropriation. The final numbers for the school are not in yet. Fulton believes his calculations show the Selectboard has adopted a fiscally conservative budget. Fulton is looking for Board direction on what level to show the Undesignated Fund at for the Town Report. Fulton recommends a total town tax rate of 0.4708 which leaves the Undesignated Fund at 12%. After some discussion of the Undesignated Fund balance, the Selectboard agreed by a straw poll of 3 to 2 to have Fulton use 12% in his Town Report calculations.

11. Recommendation for Facilities Codes and Needs Assessment Study Consultant (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton reviewed his memo to the Board and recommends retaining Mink Brook Management. Each of the three departments will equally share the cost. After a brief discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Blake) to authorize the Town Manager to retain Mink Brook Management to provide Code and Functional Needs Consulting Services for the Fire, Police and Public Works Facilities for \$11,370 to be funded from the Fire Station, Police Station and Highway Garage Reserve Funds. **Motion passed.**

12. Selectboard and Town Manager Goals (Discussion/Action Item). After some discussion in which it was determined Selectboard members would email their thoughts to Fulton for review and discussion at the February 8th meeting.

13. 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) Resident –

1) #13 a). Email from Bob White Re: Resigning from Capital Facilities Committee.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Blake) to receive an email from Bob White re: resigning from the Capital Facilities Committee. **Motion passed.**

2) #13 b). Email from Chris Rhim Re: Resigning from Finance Committee. Flanders

moved (2nd Ashley) to receive an email from Chris Rhim re: resigning from the Finance Committee. **Motion passed.**

Both were thanked for their service to the Town. These open positions will be advertized.

14. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 1/11/12 Meeting. Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve the minutes of the January 11, 2012 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**
- b) Review of Pending Items (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Tolman has managed to get the State to recognize errors that were made when the maps were digitized. He also said that mainly you have to rely on historical records. Tolman is continuing to work on. Right now the boundaries seem to be in line with the parcel map with the exception of the Norwich/Sharon line.
- c) Review of Next Agenda (Discussion/Possible Action Item). The Town Meeting budget presentation, Lister Clerk and Assessor job descriptions and review of the Finance Committee SOP will be agenda items for February 8th.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:14 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on February 22, 2012.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Edwin Childs
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – February 8, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:

- 1) Update Finance Committee Statement of Purpose (2/8/12)
- 2) Strategic Planning
- 3) Town Boundaries

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