

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, April 25, 2012 at 5:30 PM

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

There were 12 people in the audience.

Also participating: John Carroll, Nancy Dean, Phil Dechert, Karin Dwyer, Todd Gammell, Andy Hodgdon, Jill Kearney, Cheryl Lindberg, Don McCabe, Chief Robinson.

1. Town Officials Photograph – 189 Brigham Hill Road.

Ashley opened the regular meeting at 6:30 pm.

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

3. Public Comments. Lindberg reminded people that the spring Nearly New Sales runs the first weekend in May. Fulton said he received an email from Jeff Goodrich this afternoon asking that the Town consider “buy local” principles when selecting professional services. Fulton’s response was that he proposes the Town retain the firm who can do the best job at the best price. Fulton also said he had received an email from Robin Shield today opposing the use of license plate readers.

4. Town Manager’s Report (Discussion). The Assessing Clerk, Darlene Cook, started work April 23rd and is helping to get the office caught up. Peter Brink and Jill Kearney are sponsoring a fundraiser to restore the bread oven Sunday, April 29th at 5:00 pm at Barrett field. A pavilion at that location is also being discussed. Public input will be solicited before any work is done. The Town has received FEMA reimbursements of \$141,541 to date. FEMA has approved expenditures of \$541,544. There is still no agreement on the bridges and Town Pool. Fulton stated that Andy Hodgdon, Roberta Robinson and Jonathan Bynum have done an amazing job with the paperwork for FEMA. Bridge 41 is in serious condition and needs to be repaired this summer. Fulton is suggesting moving funds allocated for Bridge 48 to Bridge 41. Fulton shared and discussed photos showing damage to Bridge 41 with the Board. Fulton also discussed with the Selectboard potential detours when the work on Bridge 41 is in progress and asked for feedback.

5. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-38 for General Fund for the period from 4/12/12 to 4/25/12 in the amount of \$29,438.71. **Motion passed.** Flanders **moved** (2nd Moran) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-38 for Main Street Flags Fund for the period from 4/12/12 to 4/25/12 in the amount of \$7.97. **Motion passed.** Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #12-38 for Town Reappraisal Fund for the period from 4/12/12 to 4/25/12 in the amount of \$3,724.92. **Motion passed.**

6. Town of Norwich Open Positions Interviews/Appointments (Action Item). Candidates present and interviewed were: John Carroll, Nancy Dean, Don McCabe and Karin Dwyer. Kearney spoke in favor of the Recreation Council reappointments and new candidate Dwyer.

After reviewing options and discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to reappoint Nancy Dean and John Lawe to the Development Review Board for three-year terms ending in April, 2015.

Motion passed.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to reappoint Don McCabe as an alternate to the Development Review Board for a three-year term ending in April, 2015. **Motion passed.**

Cook **moved** (2nd Childs) to appoint John Carroll as an alternate to the Development Review Board for an unexpired term ending in April, 2013. **Motion passed.**

Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to reappoint Jeff Goodrich to the Planning Commission for a four-year term ending in April, 2016. **Motion passed.**

Flanders **moved** (2nd Childs) to reappoint Kristin Brown and Kris Strohbahn to the Recreation Council for three-year terms ending in March, 2015. **Motion passed.**

Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to appoint Karin Dwyer to the Recreation Council for a three-year term ending in March, 2015. **Motion passed.**

7. FY12 Paving Plan (Discussion Item). Fulton said that \$260,000 was budgeted for paving and \$40,043.64 has been spent so far leaving \$219,956.36; minus 95% of the predicted FEMA non-reimbursed funds leaves \$183,284.52. Priority roads were discussed, also the increase in costs per ton. For FY13, the total funds available for paving are \$335,000. The Town will put this paving out to bid in June. Hodgdon and Fulton have looked at the roads. The Selectboard also discussed: Bloody Brook repairs and costs, when the pavement management software would be operational and why new paving such as Willey Hill and Hawk Pine was not being considered.

8. Town Road and Bridge Standards (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton spoke about Norwich adopting Road and Bridge Standards in 2000 that met the Agency of Transportation (AOT) standards at that time and still meet FEMA requirements. Due to legislation the AOT has revised their standards. In order to receive favorable cost sharing funding, that will save the Town \$31,258 in two recent grant applications, Norwich needs to adopt Road and Bridge Standards based on the AOT January 4, 2011 template. The only standard that Norwich does not currently meet or exceed is Section 3.1.2 on U-shaped ditches because the Town does not have the necessary equipment to efficiently do this. However, this only applies to substantial reconstruction or new ditches so the Town's new road standards will need to be revised. After some discussion regarding culverts and narrow roads, Flanders **moved** (2nd Childs) to adopt the proposed Road and Bridge Standards for Norwich and authorize the Town Manager to sign. **Motion passed.**

9. National Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Emergency Watershed Protection Program Projects (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton said that as a result of Tropical Storm Irene there are two stream areas with major debris piles that are not eligible for FEMA assistance or HMGP grant programs. The two are: Charles Brown Brook and Bloody Brook. Representatives from NRCS and an ANR stream management engineer have inspected the two locations, paperwork to implement the projects is being developed and a permit has been issued. Fulton needs a signed Signature Authority letter in order for the projects to proceed. After discussion regarding the choices made, the permit and why the Department of Public Works is not doing the work, Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to designate the Town Manager as having signature authority for Natural Resource Conservation Service Emergency Watershed Protection Projects and authorizing the Chair to sign the letter so designating. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Cook and Flanders; no - Moran).

10. Casella Waste Management Contract (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton is recommending the Board approve a contract that will reduce the Transfer Station's Zero Sort costs by 8% and provide two containers that we currently rent for \$100 a month at no charge for an annual savings of \$2,400. Included in the annual savings is a reduction in transportation, per haul, costs from \$345 to \$200. Moran questioned the Zero Sort disposal/processing fee increase from \$15 to \$30 per ton. Gammell said costs for Casella have increased and that other towns are paying more than the \$30 rate being offered to Norwich in this agreement. After some further discussion of Zero Sort and revenues, Flanders **moved** (2nd Childs) to authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Casella Waste Management for Transportation, Disposal, Recycling and Rental Services for the Transfer Station. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Cook and Flanders; no - Moran).

11. Pool Dam Consultant (Discussion/Action Item). Three firms submitted proposals and were interviewed by Dechert, Kearney and Fulton. The consensus of the interview team was to recommend DuBois & King due to their experience, their proposal, their presentation and experience with permitting. They also had the best ideas on how to work with fisheries. The Capital Facilities Committee reviewed the proposals and concurred with the interview team. After some discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to authorize the Town Manager to retain DuBois and King to provide Consulting Services for Repair or Reconstruction of Pool Dam and Recreation Area for an estimated cost of \$47,100. **Motion passed.**

12. License Plate Readers (Discussion Item). The Norwich Police Department has received a grant for 100% of the cost of purchasing, installing and three years of maintenance for a License Plate Reader (LPR). Fulton wanted a public discussion to occur before a decision was made on whether or not to accept the grant. Postings have gone out on both the Norwich Digest and the Town Email List which are generating some discussion. Chief Robinson said that each state has their own database, that it is more efficient if this data is retained by the state and that there are hundreds of success stories provided from use of LPRs. Flanders said he was on the fence about this but indicated at the end of the discussion he felt that, since the readers record license plates in public settings on a chance basis, they were minimally intrusive and could be valuable as a law enforcement tool. Moran believes it is a concerted national effort of spying and that misuse is a problem. Childs feels that if it enables police to do their job better than he supports. Cook supports and said that protecting our officers is important. Ashley spoke about having a huge amount of respect for the Chief but he is concerned about the database. Ashley believes it is a great tool but takes us further than we need to go and recommends letting it go for now. After some further discussion, Fulton said he will check on the privacy policies further and get back to the Selectboard. Chief Robinson will follow up on whether or not the retention period can be shortened from five years and specific use of data asked for.

13. PACE Program (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton said after the affirmative Town Meeting vote there are three additional steps necessary to implement the PACE program. Two of the steps, adoption of the Resolution and executing an agreement with Efficiency Vermont to be the Program Administrator for Norwich are before the Board for approval tonight. The third step of executing an inter-municipal agreement with other PACE towns and a lending institution for funding the program is being developed by Efficiency Vermont. After a brief discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Childs) to approve the Resolution titled Resolution Adopting Pace Program Description and Guidelines and authorize the Town Manager to execute the agreement with Efficiency Vermont. **Motion passed.**

14. Classification and Compensation Study (Discussion/Action Item). Between budgeted monies and end of year projections, Fulton believes sufficient funds are available for the study. This is due mainly to managing legal cases differently which Fulton briefly described. The study would classify all Town employee jobs, review and update job descriptions and compare compensation to the Upper Valley market. Condrey and Associates did successful studies for both Hanover and Hartford. A grade and step plan would be produced for all Town employees; bargaining unit employees will be included in the study. After some discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with Condrey and Associates for a Classification and Compensation Study. **Motion passed.**

15. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 4/11/12 Meeting. Childs **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2012 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**
- b) Review of Next Agenda (Discussion/Possible Action Item). FY12 Audit Engagement Letter and an automatic reply to correspondence will be on the next agenda.
- c) Planning Future Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders has prioritized the goals and objectives adopted by the Board. After some discussion, Fulton agreed to provide a ballot for the Selectboard to rate the goals and objectives for the next meeting. Fulton envisions the Outside Agency Appropriation Policy being reviewed in the June/July timeframe. Strategic planning models will need additional time for Fulton and his staff to prepare. Cook asked if an update from the Capital Facilities Committee on projects could be provided for the next meeting. Fulton said he would make the request to the Committee.

Cook **moved** (2nd Moran) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 8:37 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on May 9, 2012.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Christopher Ashley
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – May 9, 2012 at 6:30 PM

Pending Items:
None

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