

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, September 11, 2013 at 6:30 PM

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

There were about 8 people in the audience.

Also participating: Matt Krajeski, Steve Leinoff, Cheryl Lindberg, Bonnie Munday, Peter Stanzel.

Flanders opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). After some discussion of possibly moving the Town Records agenda item, by consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Public Comments. Flanders reminded people that it was the 12th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks. Cook announced that the Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee will hold a Public Forum on Town Facilities Wednesday, September 18th, at 7:00 pm, the Capital Facilities Planning and Budgeting Committee will have a meeting discussing Town Facilities at 8:00 am Thursday, September 19th and there will be a Selectboard meeting September 25th at 6:30 pm where Town Facilities will be on the agenda all held in the Selectboard multipurpose room in Tracy Hall.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). The Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste Management District owns a 175-acre site in North Hartland with 40 acres that have been permitted for a landfill. Norwich's portion of the 10 member town debt service is approximately \$43,817 per year. The District has identified four options: selling the facility, opening a landfill, opening a sustainability park and mothballing the facility for future use. Act 148 establishes the goal of reducing waste that goes to the landfill. Norwich is working cooperatively with other Upper Valley core towns on a regional effort to reduce municipal solid waste and the siting of facilities to handle other waste. The clerk of the Public Service Board called this afternoon to let Norwich know that a certificate of public good had been issued for the tower project. Work on the tower may be completed by the end of November. Testing of the various communication systems continues. Bread Loaf is continuing work on Part 3 of the Facilities Study to define programs for the fire, police and public works facilities. The Norwich Pool permitting process decision has been elevated to the Secretary's Office. Cook thanked Fulton for the work he has done on the tower. Questions were asked regarding the final tower costs, the Town's commitment to the District bond and the rolling three-year continuing reassessment process. Updated tower numbers will be provided to the Board toward the end of the project. Norwich has a 20 year bond commitment to the Solid Waste District. The real property reassessment process will start the end of September.
4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Childs **moved** (2nd Moran) to approve Check Warrant Report #14-07 for General Fund in the amount of \$67,289.52, for Police Special Equipment Fund in the amount of \$3,625 and for Communications Construction Fund in the amount of \$292.50 for the period from 8/29/13 to 9/11/13. **Motion passed.**
5. Errors and Omissions (Discussion/Action Item). A chart summarizing the errors and omissions and showing the change difference with notes was provided to the Selectboard. Krajeski reviewed and explained the Griggs changes. Fulton reviewed the Randall item and suggested dropping the Christiano item. Lindberg, speaking as a Lister, said she was reluctant to have the Selectboard deal with changes the Board of Listers has not reviewed. After some discussion,

Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to postpone voting on the errors and omissions until the September 25, 2013 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed.**

6. Request to Expend up to \$1,320 from the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund to Replace an AED (Discussion/Action Item). The average life span of an AED is 6 to 7 years. The current balance in the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund is \$50,942.30. After very little discussion, Ashley **moved** (2nd Childs) to authorize the Town Manager to spend \$1,320 from the Fire Equipment Reserve Fund to replace an AED. **Motion passed.**

7. Beaver Meadow Chapel Land (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Fulton said the Beaver Meadow School is located at 246 Chapel Hill Road. The School was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places and retains its original classroom interior. It looks like the Town owns the land the School is on. The Town of Norwich School Board apparently deeded over the building to the Beaver Meadow Schoolhouse Association. Stanzel spoke about the School acting as a community center and the Association being responsible for insuring and maintaining the building. The Association would like to formally takeover ownership of the School. They are asking the Town to clean up the title and transfer the land and water rights to the Association recognizing the past and current use of the School. Items discussed were: a land lease, insurance on the property, benefits and exchanges, the property being a Town asset and remaining Town owned and the Association bylaws. Afterwards, the Selectboard asked Fulton to work on options for the Board to review at a later meeting.

8. Investment Policy (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Fulton has met with the Treasurer to review the revised Policy. Page 3 is the crux of the Policy where authorized investments and collateralization are discussed. The Town currently has a sweep account with Mascoma. 8.1 of the Policy is requiring that obligations must be fully guaranteed by the State of Vermont and/or the U.S. Government. Moran explained that although unlikely the worst would happen, he still feels that cash deposits should not be secured with risky assets. Moran would also like the Town to be able to verify the collateral daily. Childs said he has heard similar concerns expressed before and is unaware of a better alternative. Items discussed were: consequences of the Selectboard adopting the Policy, CDARS program and practicality of the Policy. Lindberg reviewed how the Town's money is collateralized by Mascoma and asked for some of the language in the Policy to be tweaked.

11. Town Records (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders reviewed his ratings of documents as poor, fair or good, the unit cost to stabilize/restore and the total cost to stabilize/restore. His chart also showed the cost to microfilm and the backlog total. The box at the lower left describes documents coming through the door. The box at the lower right reviews years to execute with and without digitization and the annual growth. Fulton said he appreciates the work Flanders has done and that it provides a blueprint of how to go forward. Munday briefly discussed the day-to-day process and thanked Flanders for his work. Other items discussed were: the public access computer, plats being digitized and Munday's budget for FY15 reflecting the numbers in the chart.

9. Chart of Accounts (Discussion). Fulton said the Chart of Accounts (COA) for the Department of Public Works in the packet is a working document. The current COA is difficult to understand. They made this one simpler and clearly showing how the money is spent. The goal is to use common everyday language. This COA will be used for Hodgdon's FY15 budget.

10. Finance Committee (Discussion/Possible Action Item). The Selectboard discussed the importance of the Town having representation on the Dresden Finance Committee and what other towns are doing regarding members on their finance committees. Moran reminded Board members that the learning curve for the Finance Committee is steep and that the number of meetings they need to attend is high. After further discussion regarding lack of interest and recruiting, the Selectboard agreed that Flanders would once again contact the Norwich School Board and see if two of their members would like to work with Cook and himself to explore a way to form a Finance Committee charge that works to provide useful advice for both the School Board and Selectboard as well as townspeople.

12. Budgeting Process (Discussion/Possible Action Item). After Flanders opened up the discussion, Ashley reviewed his comments included in the packet concluding that the Selectboard needed to understand the tax implications of their budget changes earlier in the process. Cook reviewed her comments included in the packet also stating that she does not believe Board members should have one-on-one discussions with the Town Manager regarding the budget. Childs commented that the Selectboard failed to put budgets to bed department by department and that he did not like the divisiveness of the Board at Town Meeting. In a discussion of process, Flanders suggested that budgetary guidelines start the process and then there are two phases, self-education phase during which you bounce questions of the Town Manager and the final phase of sharing learned knowledge with the Selectboard. There followed some discussion of having more budget meetings, understanding what current level of services means and incorporating the minority position into the final budget.

13. Communication on Listserv (Discussion/Possible Action Item). 14. Review Next Steps for Committee SWOT Development (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Due to the length of the meeting and the need for the Executive Session, both items were put off until a future meeting.

15. Correspondence (Please go to www.norwich.vt.us, click on Boards & Committees from the blue banner, click on Selectboard and click on Recent Selectboard Correspondence in the middle section to view resident correspondence):

a) Resident –

- 1) #15 a) and b). Letter from Residents of Brookside Drive Re: Not Paving the Rest of Brookside Drive and Email from Alan Berolzheimer Re: Thank You for Support of Solar Project. Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to receive a letter from residents of Brookside Drive re: not paving the rest of Brookside Drive and an email from Alan Berolzheimer re: thank you for support of Solar Project. **Motion passed.**

16. Selectboard

- a) Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). The facilities planning process will be the main agenda item for September 25th. Town ordinances will be an item on a future agenda.
- b) Bargaining Unit Negotiations Update (Executive Session may be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA § 313(a)(1), Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing bargaining unit negotiations and to invite Neil Fulton to join the Session. **Motion passed.** The Selectboard moved into Executive Session at 9:19 pm.

At 9:43 pm the Selectboard moved into public session. Moran **moved** (2nd Childs) to approve a one-year agreement from July 1, 2013 to June 30, 2014 between the Town of Norwich and the New England Police Benevolent Association and authorize the Town Manager to sign the agreement. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Flanders and Moran; no - Cook).

Ashley **moved** (2nd Childs) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:44 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on October 9, 2013.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Stephen N. Flanders
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – September 25, 2013 at 6:30 PM

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