

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, January 22, 2014 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 3 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jill Kearney, Genevieve Verlaak-Graham.

Flanders opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the Agenda.
2. Public Comments. Cook said that due to the weather conditions people should check on the elderly in the community and if help is needed contact the Town Clerk or the Town Service Officer.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). The Town has received its first electric bill showing the net metering credits for the three Town buildings receiving power from the solar project. The community skate was last Friday and was a well-received event. The Public Works staff has done winter road maintenance 16 out of the last 20 days. Ashley asked for an update on the Town Pool. Fulton said the decision has reached the Secretary's office and the Town has not received an update after three calls to the office. The alternative action is to formally apply for a permit and if denied to litigate. Fulton believes this process would be too long.
4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After some discussion of the motion given the Selectboard in the packet being inaccurate, Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve Check Warrant Report #14-18 for General Fund in the amount of \$820,922.75, for Recreation Facility & Improvement Fund in the amount of \$198.18, for Town Reappraisal Fund in the amount of \$7,718, for Citizen Assistance Fund in the amount of \$822 and for Communications Construction Fund in the amount of \$2,467.43 for the period from 1/9/14 to 1/22/14. **Motion passed.**
5. Waiver under Section 6 of the Alcohol Ordinance for the Spring Gala from the Norwich Women's Club (Discussion/Action Item). Verlaak-Graham spoke on behalf of the Women's Club saying they have done the event for the last two years and would like to do again this year. Fulton said the Town has not had any problems with this event. Afterwards, Ashley **moved** (2nd Childs) to approve a waiver in accordance with Section 6 of "An Ordinance to Regulate the Possession and Consumption of Alcohol on Town of Norwich Property" (Ordinance) to allow the possession and consumption of alcohol in accordance with the Ordinance at the Spring Gala to be held on March 14, 2014 in Tracy Hall. **Motion passed.**
6. Outside Agencies Appropriation Policy (Discussion Item). Flanders put together three items for the Selectboard packet: a simple letter (per Cook's suggestion) to outside agencies, a revised Appropriation Request and Disbursement Policy and a summary of outside agencies, amounts requested for FY15, the service they provide and the appropriate Statute for their request for appropriation. Flanders reviewed the process for outside agencies to establish a unit of services, keep a log and submit an invoice to the Town quarterly for reimbursement. Agencies may be excused from attending a budget hearing if there are no changes to their appropriation request and the Selectboard is satisfied with their quarterly reports. Moran thinks it is a great idea but believes outside agencies will not be happy with the request. Flanders responded that the letter he is suggesting be sent out is to ask for their reactions. Questions were asked about how to determine the value for a unit of service, Selectboard follow up, language in the Policy and when funds are allocated. Cook said this is

the third change to the appropriation process and will come as a shock to some agencies. Fulton suggested adding the Statute regarding the contract to the Policy.

7. Town Meeting Budget Presentation (Discussion Item). Flanders provided a revised presentation for the packet taking into consideration comments from the previous meeting. Ashley asked that the slide titled In the Voting Booth provide both if you vote yes and if you vote no comments. The Selectboard discussed what would be appropriate. Cook asked for more detail and the Town Manager's presentation by the February 12th meeting. Fulton said his presentation will be the budget approved by the Board and updates on major projects.

8. Selectboard Resource Manual (Discussion Item). Flanders has once again updated his Table of Contents. After some discussion, the Selectboard agreed to the content. Cook asked that a hard copy of the manual be kept in the Town Manager's Office.

9. Norwich Strategic Planning (Discussion Item). Flanders, built on adopted work of the Planning Commission, Energy Committee and Capital Facilities Committee, has developed a plan broken down into three categories: opportunities for regionalization, future of Norwich Town government and future of the Norwich community. He then discusses: what we have, what we want, SWOT analysis, implementation plan and impact on the future of Norwich. The Selectboard discussed: where the ideas came from, what the process should be going forward, costs, reaching out to other entities and defining functions. The Board agreed to pick two items to begin with: energy efficiency and traffic from feeder roads. The Selectboard will start with energy efficiency at their next regular meeting.

10. Root District and Beaver Meadow School Properties (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Fulton said that a version of the two draft articles in the packet will be part of the Norwich School District Warning. If Town Meeting concurs, the Town of Norwich will convey the two properties to the appropriate organizations with a provision that the property will revert to the Town if the use changes. Fulton said that clarity is needed on the transfer conveyance. Cook and Moran want the land to stay in Town hands.

11. Finance Committee Charge and MOU (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders said the Norwich School Board (NSB) has voted to adopt the Charge and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Norwich Selectboard can adopt the two items or make changes and send it back to the NSB. After some further discussion, Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) for the Selectboard to adopt the revised Finance Committee Charge and approve the Memorandum of Understanding with the Norwich School Board and authorize the Chair to sign the MOU. **Motion passed.**

12. Second Review of Draft Town Meeting Warning (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton said the draft Warning in the packet is the same as last meetings with two proposed changes. Petitions for articles are due in the Town Clerk's Office by 5 pm Thursday, January 23rd. There is now space at Marion Cross School for a second Circus Camp. This would require an increase in the Recreation Department budget of \$20,000. Expected revenues from the second Circus Camp would be approximately \$29,000. The second change would be to correct the appropriation request for WISE to be \$2,500 which is the same as last year's request. We have not received a petition for HIV/HCV Resource Center so the motion would need to indicate receipt of petition to include this article. Fulton said there might also be an advisory article petition. If so, the Selectboard would need a short meeting Friday to approve these additions if received. Kearney said the Circus Camp is the most expensive program the Recreation Department offers. However, there is a guaranteed profit as the Town receives 30% of what is taken in for the Camp.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Childs) to revise Article 4 to read as follows: Shall the voters of the Town of Norwich approve a gross spending General Town Budget of \$4,161,554 plus state and federal grants and gifts consistent with budgeted programs for the period July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Moran and Flanders; no - Cook).

Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to revise Article 24 to read as follows: Shall the voters of the Town of Norwich appropriate \$2,500 to WISE (Women's Information Service) to be used to support WISE's crisis intervention and support services and prevention education, such amount being reasonably necessary for the support of programs to benefit Town residents. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Moran and Flanders; no - Cook).

Childs **moved** (2nd Moran) to approve the Town portion of the Town Meeting Warning as amended with the exception of Article 9 which is conditionally approved based on a valid petition being received by the Town Clerk before 5:00 pm on Thursday, January 23, 2014. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Moran and Flanders; no - Cook). Cook said she voted no on this motion due to it not being included in the Selectboard packet.

13. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the 11/20/13, 11/26/13, 12/4/13 and 12/11/13 Meetings. Cook asked that the minutes for November 26th be voted on separately. After considerable discussion regarding changes, Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve the minutes, as amended, of the November 20, 2013, December 4, 2013 and December 11, 2013 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.** Childs **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2013 Selectboard meeting, as amended. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Childs, Moran and Flanders; no - Cook). Fulton left the meeting at 8:45 pm due to frozen pipes at home.
- b) Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Items on the February 12th agenda will include: outside agencies, strategic planning and the resource manual. The meeting next Wednesday is a special meeting with the Capital Facilities Committee to discuss options for Fire, Police and Public Works facilities. If a special meeting is needed to approve the Town Warning, it will be at 4:30 pm Friday, January 24th.

Ashley **moved** (2nd Cook) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:00 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on February 26, 2014.

By Nancy Kramer
Assistant to the Town Manager

Stephen N. Flanders
Selectboard Chair

Special Selectboard Meeting – January 29, 2014 at 6:30 PM

Next Regular Meeting – February 12, 2014 at 6:30 PM

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