

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, March 12, 2014 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Christopher Ashley, Chair; Linda Cook; Steve Flanders; Keith Moran; Neil Fulton, Town Manager; Jonathan Bynum, Scribe. Absent: Dan Goulet.

There were 3 people in the audience.

Also participating: Linda Gray, Jonathan Teller-Elsberg.

Ashley opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). By consensus, the Selectboard approved the agenda and agreed to postpone item #5 until 7 pm, as warned.
2. Public Comments. None.
3. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). Fulton reported that DPW had received a recent delivery of salt and \$20,000 worth of sand in anticipation of the winter weather currently being experienced.
4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). After a couple of questions, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Moran) to approve Check Warrant Report #14-21 for General Fund in the amount of \$64,893.89 for the period from 2/27/14 to 3/12/14. **Motion passed.**
6. Appraisal Services for Facilities Study (Discussion/Action Item). Ashley noted that the services in question would cost a total of \$6,000 and would provide appraisals of both the ABC Dairy property (\$3,500) and the existing Police/Fire site (\$2,500). Moran said that he would like to continue consideration of the Upper Valley Events Center site as well. After some discussion of this, the anticipated schedule for receiving the report from Bread Loaf and the source of the funds in question, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to authorize the Town Manager to spend approximately \$6,000 from the Police Station, Fire Station and Long Term Facility Study Reserve Funds for appraisal services. **Motion passed.**
7. Contract for Assessing Services (Discussion/Action Item). Fulton related that NEMC's current contract with the Town to provide assessing services expires 6/30/14 and that they are in the first year of the three-year cyclical inspection process. The proposed new contract would cover fiscal years 2015 and 2016 and would include completion of new cost and land tables for the 2016 Grand List which would be a Town-wide reappraisal. After brief discussion, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to authorize the Town Manager to execute an agreement with New England Municipal Consultants to provide Contract Assessing services for the Town of Norwich from July 1, 2014 through and including June 30, 2016 in the approximate amount of \$139,600. **Motion passed.**
8. Selectboard
  - a) Approval of the Minutes of the 2/12/14 and 2/26/14 Meetings. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Moran) to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2014 and February 26, 2014 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.**
  - b) Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Ashley noted that he would not be able to attend the next meeting on 3/26/14, but that Goulet was expected to attend. There was discussion of having agenda items on Strategic Planning with the Norwich Energy Committee, Appointments to Vacant Positions, Outside Agency Appropriations, Consideration of Sites for a new FD/PD Facility and an Executive Session on Litigation. Since it was approaching 7 pm, it was agreed to postpone further discussion of this item until later in the meeting.

5. Strategic Planning with Norwich Energy Committee – Define Norwich Energy Goals (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders made a presentation on the feasibility of adapting the Vermont goal of sourcing 90% of energy from renewables by 2050 for use in Norwich. He emphasized the difficulty of weighing current financial costs against future “downstream” costs, both financial and environmental, and asked what additional cost burden the Selectboard would be willing to bear now in return for downstream benefits. Cook objected that Flanders’ presentation represented his opinion and that she wanted to hear from others. Jonathan Teller-Elsberg noted that existing energy expenditures tend to go out of State and added that it made sense to have goals both for increasing the percentage of renewables and for lowering greenhouse gas emissions. He emphasized the close relationship between growth in the economy and growth in energy consumption. Linda Gray suggested that the Vermont goal had been put through a comprehensive process and there was no reason for the Selectboard to deviate from that. She was also concerned that overemphasis on budgetary issues would forestall any action. Ashley pointed out that, while many different possible goals had been discussed, they had much overlap and that all were laudable. Flanders pointed out that you could have distinct goals for the Norwich municipal structure and for the greater Norwich community and that the Selectboard’s primary influence was over the former. Moran agreed with Flanders that a municipal goal was more manageable, but felt that a community goal was also important. Cook thought that the Selectboard was trying to direct the Energy Committee and that instead the Energy Committee should be allowed to discuss the matter independently of the Selectboard and come back to the Selectboard with specific, flexible options. After further discussion, Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to appoint Flanders and Moran as delegates from the Selectboard to meet with the Norwich Energy Committee or delegates thereof to work more on these issues. **Motion passed 3 to 1** (yes – Ashley, Flanders and Moran; no – Cook).

8. b) Continued. It was agreed to have a discussion of Selectboard Goals and Appointments for Vacant Positions on the agenda of the meeting of 3/26/14 and an Executive Session on Litigation. Discussion of the Outside Agency Appropriations Process and more on Selectboard Goals, if necessary, for the meeting of 4/9/14.

Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to adjourn. **Motion passed**. Meeting adjourned at 8:22 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on April 9, 2014.

By Jonathan Bynum  
Scribe

Christopher Ashley  
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – March 26, 2014 at 6:30 PM

PLEASE NOTE THAT CATV RECORDS ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD. FOR A MORE DETAILED TRANSCRIPTION PLEASE REFER TO THE DVD. DVDs ARE AVAILABLE ONE WEEK AFTER AIRING AT THE NORWICH PUBLIC LIBRARY.