

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, May 25, 2016 at 6:30 PM

Members present: Linda Cook, Chair; Christopher Ashley; Steve Flanders; Dan Goulet; Mary Layton, Vice-Chair; Phil Dechert, Interim Town Manager and Jonathan Bynum.

There were about 9 people in the audience.

Also participating: Kris Clement, Neil Fulton, Robert Johnson, Tom Kennedy, Stuart Richards, Doug Robinson, Fran Walz.

Cook opened the meeting at 6:31 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Layton wanted to include Selectboard discussion of Alternative Projects under item #3 b). The agenda with this inclusion was agreed to by consensus.

2. Public Comments.

1. Stuart Richards made remarks about his unsuccessful candidacy for Planning Commission at the prior meeting, and about the need for diverse viewpoints to be represented. Ashley responded.

2. Fran Walz gave a warning that the temporary wooden planks relating to the bridge work on Turnpike Road have a large exposed edge that might be hazardous to traffic.

3. Stuart Richards again asked why Town Road 88 (Old Bridge Road) was paved, who was responsible for the decision and what the cost was. Dechert replied.

4. Chief Doug Robinson reported a very active telephone scam from persons purporting to be from the IRS. He reminded all residents that the IRS will never contact you by telephone demanding money, and that such calls should be reported to the Norwich Police.

3. Interim Town Manager's Report (Discussion).

a. Illsley Road update—In reference to the snowmobile club's request to consider installing a culvert, Dechert reported that the State had already rejected the culvert plan. Discussions are ongoing with the other issues.

b. Alternative Projects—Route 132 Box Culvert Project—Dechert reported that the Town had been notified on 5/16/16 that VT Route 132, a Class 2 Town Road, was also a Federal Aid highway, and FEMA cannot fund Federal Aid highways, so this project was rejected for funding. Since the 3 projects were treated as a package, all 3 were therefore rejected. Dechert had asked whether the other 2 projects had been reviewed or not, but there was no response. Andy Hodgdon was in the process of putting together a proposal for a different bridge project on Turnpike Road as a possible alternative.

Cook expressed concern about the timeframe, and whether there would be time for the projects to be completed by November 1st. Layton noted that the email from Mary Andes suggested that a vehicle purchase would likely be easier to get approved than a bridge project, which would require permitting. There was discussion of having a vehicle purchase, possibly a loader, be "Plan B" if necessary. Cook had asked the Secretary of State's Office whether the Warrant articles passed by the Town in March cover us in spite of the subsequent changes. She had been advised to consult the Town attorney. There was further discussion of this issue.

c. Solid Waste Fees—Dechert said that the increase in trash coupons to \$35 on July 1, 2016 should cover most of the increased recycling costs resulting from the new Casella contract. It was felt that since this increase was already incorporated into the budget for next year, no Selectboard action was necessary.

4. Finance – Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Action Item). Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve Check Warrant Report #16-26 for General Fund in the amount of \$39,668.09 and for DPW Bridge Fund in the amount of \$22,303.00 for the period from 5/12/16 to 5/25/16. **Motion passed.**

5. Interviews/Appointments—Committee to Identify Community Pool Options (Action Item). Richard Johnson was present and was interviewed. In Gered Dunne's absence, it was pointed out that he had recently been appointed to the Recreation Council. Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to appoint Robert Johnson and Gered Dunne to the Committee to Identify Community Pool Options. **Motion passed.**

6. GUVSWD—Update from GUVSWD Representative & District Manager and Review of Charter (Discussion). Tom Kennedy (District Manager) and Neil Fulton (Norwich Representative) gave a history of GUVSWD and the two bonds used to pay for the bridge over Interstate 91. GUVSWD is in the process of selling off a portion of its property, and hopes to employ the proceeds in a favorable debt restructuring this summer. GUVSWD is exploring possible uses of the property that would generate revenue. One proposal, to construct a solar farm on the site, has been put on hold by the significant upgrade that would be needed to the local GMPC infrastructure. There was further discussion of the need for GUVSWD to make agendas and minutes available in a timely fashion and of Brion McMullen's status as alternate to the GUVSWD Board.

7. Town Manager Search Process—VLCT contract; salary range, job description and advertising (Discussion). Due to not having the VLCT contract in the packet, it was decided to put this item on the agenda for the next meeting.

8. Town Service Officer job description and policy (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Dechert had prepared a draft Town Service Officer proposal. There was discussion of the automatic extension provision. Ashley said he did not think it should be a Selectboard member due to the potential for a conflict of interest given that only the Town Manager and Town Service Officer would be aware of the actual expenditure. Ashley also stated that many nonprofit organizations require two people in different chains of command approve all expenditures. When polled by the Chair, other Selectboard members supported the proposed language. Flanders **moved** (2nd Goulet) to accept the Town Service Office job description and policy as presented in the document to the Selectboard from Phil Dechert, Interim Town Manager, dated 5-19-16. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes - Cook, Flanders, Goulet and Layton; no - Ashley).

9. Process for Additions to Agenda Items/Possible Rules of Conduct Policy Revision (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Flanders had distributed a revised version of the "Town of Norwich Selectboard--Rules of Conduct for Regular and Special Meetings." There was discussion of the process of adding items to the agenda subsequent to the prior Selectboard meeting, and of adding things to the Selectboard packet subsequent to its publication on the Friday before the Selectboard meeting. Flanders said that the proposal made clear that late packet material would be added to the *subsequent* packet for the public record, and was designed to make the role of the Administrative Assistant easier. Cook and Goulet felt that the existing policy was adequately clear. Ashley **withdrew** the motion on the table from the prior meeting (Flanders withdrew the 2nd). Afterwards, Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to change the Rules of Conduct Policy by including draft language in section 4 of Flanders' document dated 5/25/16. **Motion failed 2 to 3** (yes – Ashley and Flanders; no - Cook, Goulet and Layton).

10. Correspondence (Discussion/Possible Action Item).

a) Correspondence from John Eller, dated 5-16-16. After discussion, the Zoning Administrator said he intended to issue a decision letter that could be appealed to the Development Review Board, if desired.

11. Selectboard

- a) Approval of the Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meetings of 5/4/16 and 5/19/16 and the Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of 5/11/16 (Action Item). Flanders distributed some proposed changes to the minutes of 5/4/16, which he had previously sent to the Selectboard but which had not been included in the packet. After discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve the minutes of the May 4, 2016 Selectboard meeting with inclusions in boldface noted in the email from Flanders and distributed at this meeting. **Motion passed 4 to1** (yes - Ashley, Flanders, Goulet and Layton; no - Cook). Flanders **moved** (2nd Goulet) to approve the minutes of the May 11, 2016 and May 19, 2016 Selectboard meetings. **Motion passed.**
- b) Review of Next Agendas
 - i. Alternate Projects
 - ii. VLCT Town Manager Contract (contract, salary, advertising, job description) (Discussion/Possible Action Item)
 - iii. Interim TM Process (Executive Session May be Needed)
 - iv. Police Cruiser Proposal (Out for Bid Item)
- c) Interim Town Manager Hiring Process (Executive Session May be Required). Pursuant to Title 1 VSA §313(a)(3), Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to enter into Executive Session for the purpose of discussing the employment of the Interim Town Manager. **Motion passed.** The Selectboard entered into Executive Session at 8:56 pm.

At 10:27 pm, Flanders moved (2nd Ashley) to move into public session. **Motion passed.** No action was taken as a result of the Executive Session.

Goulet **moved** (2nd Flanders) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 10:28 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on June 8, 2016.

By Jonathan Bynum

Linda Cook
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – June 8, 2016 at 6:30 PM

PLEASE NOTE THAT CATV RECORDS ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD.