

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, September 14, 2016 at 6:30 pm

Members present: Linda Cook, Chair; Christopher Ashley; Stephen Flanders; Dan Goulet; Mary Layton, Vice-Chair; Dave Ormiston, Interim Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager; Jonathan Bynum, Scribe.

There were about 15 people in the audience.

Also participating: Steve Benoit, Claudette Brochu, John Carroll, Kris Clement, Darius Faudie, Fred Faudie, Abby Friedman, Anne Goodrich, Michael Goodrich, Jim Harlow, Steve Leinoff, Cheryl Lindberg, Suzanne Lupien, Elizabeth McKinstry, Bonnie Munday, Lynn Patyk, Doug Robinson, Ann Shriver Sargent, Demo Sofronas, Jonathan Vincent

Cook opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). After discussion, it was agreed to switch around items 1 and 2, and 4(b) and 4(c).

1. Continuation of Public Hearing on Changing the Boundaries of the Fire District by Removal of the Property Located at 74 Four Wheel Drive from the Norwich Fire District (Open and Close Public Hearing). Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to open a continued public hearing on changing the boundaries of the Fire District by removal of the property located at 74 Four Wheel Drive from the Norwich Fire District. **Motion passed.** This hearing was continued from the February 10th, 2016 Selectboard meeting. Flanders **moved** (2nd Goulet) to receive exhibit 4 submitted by Hugh and Cheryl Rostad deciding not to pursue their request to be removed from the Fire District at this time. **Motion passed.** Ashley then **moved** (2nd Flanders) to close the public hearing on changing the boundaries of the Fire District by removal of the property located at 74 Four Wheel Drive from the Norwich Fire District. **Motion passed.**

3. Public Comments (Discussion). Suzanne Lupien commented on the recent frequent grading of Norford Lake Road and against the politicization of the Hopson Road speed table issue. Darius and Fred Faudie thanked the Interim Town Manager for his decision to move ahead with the speed tables.

a) American Legion update on new monument. American Legion Monument Committee member Jim Harlow spoke on behalf of Commander Lyle Favreau, who was unable to attend. The estimated total project cost is about \$15,000, and the monument will likely have about 80 names. Harlow introduced Steve Benoit, Studio Manager of Rock of Ages Studio, Barre, VT. Benoit showed samples and a drawing of the proposed monument. For symmetry, the Legion would like to see it sited where the Tracy Hall flagpole currently sits. The Selectboard was supportive of the project, but asked for more information on the cost of moving the flagpole.

4. Town Manager Search (Discussion/Action Item).

a) Interview Potential Committee Members for Advisory Town Manager Search Committee and Appoint Committee. The following candidates were interviewed: John Carroll, Elizabeth McKinstry, Michael Goodrich, Anne Goodrich, Bonnie Munday (applying as a resident, rather than as a Department Head), Ann Shriver Sargent, and Steve Leinoff (applying as a Department Head). Candidate John Langhus was unable to appear in person due to another commitment. There was one more candidate than position available on the Committee, according to the Committee's charge. After discussion, Flanders suggested expanding the Committee by one member to accommodate all applicants. Ashley **moved** (2nd Goulet) to appoint John Carroll, Anne

Goodrich, Elizabeth McKinstry, Bonnie Munday, John Langhus, Ann Shriver Sargent, Michael Goodrich and Stephen Leinoff to the Advisory Town Manager Search Committee. After discussion, **motion passed 4 to 1** (yes—Ashley, Flanders, Goulet, Layton; no—Cook).

c) Abby Friedman of the VLCT was present. There are 55 applications for the Town Manager position. There was discussion of the respective roles of the VLCT, the Selectboard and the Advisory Town Manager Search Committee in the process and the process timeline. The adopted timeline seemed excessively tight. Friedman described some of the background checks on candidates that the VLCT will perform. Flanders **moved** (2nd Goulet) that the Selectboard Chair or Vice-Chair be present at the Organizational Meeting of the Advisory Town Manager Search Committee. **Motion passed**. There was discussion of how the Committee will liaise with the Selectboard, and what issues were suitable for discussion in Executive Session.

At this point, Cook **moved** (2nd Layton) to find that premature general public knowledge of the Town Manager Search would clearly place the municipality at a substantial disadvantage because the Selectboard risks disclosing its interviewing strategy if it discusses the proposed interview questions in public, and to invite members of the Advisory Town Manager Search Committee and Abby Friedman of the VLCT to join the Selectboard in Executive Session. After further discussion, Cook **withdrew her motion**, and Layton withdrew her second. Ashley then **moved** (2nd Layton) to find that premature general public knowledge of the confidential information included in the applicants' packets for the Town Manager Search would clearly place the municipality at a substantial disadvantage, because the Selectboard risks disclosing its interviewing issues, and to invite Committee members and Abby Friedman of the VLCT into the Executive Session. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes—Ashley, Cook, Goulet, Layton; no—Flanders). Layton then **moved** (2nd Goulet) pursuant to 1 VSA §313(a)(3) to enter Executive Session for purpose of discussing the Town Manager search, having found that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes—Ashley, Cook, Goulet, Layton; no—Flanders). The Selectboard entered Executive Session at 8:10 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to return to Public Session. **Motion passed**. The Selectboard returned to public session at 8:38 pm.

c) It was agreed to postpone discussion of interview questions until the next meeting.

5. Finance—Board to Sign Accounts Payable Warrants (Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Ashley) to approve Check Warrant Report #17-6 for General Fund in the amount of \$34,495.28, for Conservation Commission Fund in the amount of \$2,780.00, for Police Cruiser Fund in the amount of \$28,725.00, for Land Management Council Fund in the amount of \$400.50, for Long Term Facility Study Fund in the amount of \$6,384.55, and for DPW-Paving Fund in the amount of \$350,980.00 for the period from 8/30/16 to 9/14/16. After discussion of a question, **motion passed 4 to 1** (yes—Ashley, Flanders, Goulet, Layton; no—Cook).

6. Interim Town Manager's Report (Discussion Item). Ormiston introduced Miranda Bergmeier, the newly hired Assistant to the Town Manager. He asked that a request to expend \$11,100 from the Designated Fund for Tracy Hall for refinishing of the gym floor be put on the next Selectboard agenda. This work is ongoing. In response to questions, Ormiston said that there was no significant update on the FEMA Alternative Projects, and that work on Bridge 48 on Bragg Hill should be completed by the end of fall.

7. Public Safety Building (Discussion/Action Item).

a) Bonding and estimated costs. A mathematical error had been made at the prior meeting, and the Selectboard was given a new, corrected cost sheet in the packet with a total project cost of \$1,483,802. This leaves a shortfall in the proposed bonded funding of \$73,802. Ormiston presented a number of possible options for making up this shortfall. There was discussion of the 15% contingency applied, the architectural and engineering fees, the size and cost of the parking lot and its potential for creating run-off issues for neighboring properties, the training hydrant, and the suitability of the parking lot design for Fire Department training. Bonnie Munday pointed out that the ballot including the bond article is two-sided, and that voters will need to turn the ballot over to find the bond article.

b) Public Hearing Schedule. There was to be a pre-voting informational meeting at 7:00 pm in the Tracy Hall Gym on Thursday, 11/3/16. There was tentative agreement to have additional public hearings on 10/5/16 and 10/19/16. Ormiston stressed the desirability of having a settled plan prior to these meetings. After discussion, it was agreed to invite Jay White and Jeff Goodrich to the 9/28 Selectboard meeting to help clarify the following issues:

(i) water issues with the site and neighboring properties, pervious versus impervious pavement, location and function of training hydrant;

(ii) location of car parking, consequent tree/vegetation removal, and potential impact on adjoining Senior Housing.

Due to the lateness of the hour, it was agreed to change the order of the agenda.

9. Traffic Calming Measures (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Lynn Patyk spoke in favor of Hopson Road speed control measures. Ormiston in his capacity as Road Commissioner has the authority to make the decision to install speed tables on Hopson Road, and after consultation with relevant Department Heads has already made the decision to go ahead. Kris Clement was critical of the process. There was general discussion of the broader problem of speeding in Norwich.

10. Treasurer's Quarterly Investments Report (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Cheryl Lindberg presented her 6/30/16 report.

a) Discussion of new account. Lindberg requested that the Selectboard give permission for her to move some Town money from Ledyard Bank to Mascoma Bank so as to receive a higher interest rate than Ledyard was prepared to offer. Lindberg said that there was precedent to moves of this sort, and that she was following the investment policy as she understood it. Some Selectboard members expressed concern that this was not consistent with the Town's 3 year contract with Ledyard, and whether the RFP for banking services addressed this situation. Ashley asked whether Lindberg has a conflict of interest on this issue. Lindberg responded that there was no conflict of interest as she was a salaried employee of Mascoma Bank, and did not stand to benefit personally from the potential transaction. There was no motion on Lindberg's request. Cook suggested that future RFPs for banking services be written so as explicitly allow this sort of transfer.

8. FY18 Budget Guidelines from Selectboard Members (Discussion). There was general discussion of how to proceed with the budgeting process, reviewing the prior year's budget to monitor costs, the grade & step plan, and whether unspent dollars from a prior year indicated that the budget could be cut in those areas.

11. Selectboard Liaison to Committees (Discussion/Possible Action Item). It was agreed to skip this item due to the extreme lateness of the hour.

12. Norwich Representative to VLCT Town Fair (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd

Ashley) to designate Interim Town Manager Dave Ormiston as representative to the VLCT Town Fair. After discussion of whether this would confer voting privileges, **motion passed 4 to 1** (yes—Ashley, Flanders, Goulet, Layton; no—Cook).

13. Correspondence (Discussion/Possible Action Item).

- a) Letter from Claudette Brochu re: Budget talks
- b) Letter from Upper Valley Land Trust re: Norwich Farmland Conservation—Statutory Notice
- c) E-mail from Jim Gold re: Question to the Selectboard about Pool Committee

Ashley **moved** (2nd Flanders) to receive the letter from Claudette Brochu re: Budget talks, the letter from the Upper Valley Land Trust re: Norwich Farmland Conservation—Statutory Notice, and the e-mail from Jim Gold re: Question to Selectboard about Pool Committee. **Motion passed.** In response to Gold's question, Layton remarked that she was looking to the Pool Committee to provide accurate information about possible options, so as to rule out those that are impossible, unsafe, inaccessible or cost-prohibitive.

14. Selectboard

a) Approval of the Minutes of the 7/11/16 and 8/24/16 Selectboard Meetings (Action Item). Flanders had suggested changes to the 7/11/16 minutes, and Ashley had a suggested change for the 8/24/16 Minutes. Flanders **moved** (2nd Goulet) to approve both sets of Minutes with amendments put forward. **Motion passed.**

b) Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). Items on the agenda for September 28th will include:

- Report back from Advisory Town Manager Search Committee (no interviews as previously discussed)
- Interview Questions
- Review Applications (Executive Session may be required)
- Presentation on Fire/Police Station from Jay White and Jeff Goodrich
- Bond/shortfall question

At this point, Goulet **moved** (2nd Ashley) to adjourn. **Motion passed.** Meeting adjourned at 11:40 pm.

Approved by the Selectboard on September 28, 2016.

By Jonathan Bynum
Scribe

Linda Cook
Selectboard Chair

Next Regular Meeting – September 28, 2016 at 6:30 PM

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