

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, January 25, 2017 at 6:30 pm

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

There were about 25 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jill Kearney-Niles, Bernard Haskell, Anne Goodrich, Bonnie Munday, John Carroll, John Langhus, and Claudette Brochu.

Cook opened the meeting at 6:30 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard agreed to proceed with the agenda as drafted.
2. Public Comments (Discussion Item). There were no public comments.
3. a. Finance - Recreation Department request to expend up to \$3,500 from the Recreation Facilities Fund for the purchase of a used commercial grade snow machine to be used to groom the ski trails at Huntley Meadows (Discussion/Action Item). Jill Kearney-Niles, Director of Recreation, said that the Recreation Facilities Fund is funded with donations and contains ample funds for the proposed expenditure. The current 1970 snowmobile used for grooming is broken down beyond repair. Bernard Haskell said that he has groomed the trails for the last five years at Huntley Meadows. The trails are used by skiers, snowshoers, sledders, and walkers, and get a lot of use in the winter. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to authorize expenditure of up to \$3,500 from the Recreation Facilities Fund for the purchase of a used commercial grade snow machine to be used to groom the ski trails at Huntley Meadows. **Motion passed unanimously.**  
  
b. Update on short-term financing for the Police/Fire project (Discussion Item). David Ormiston said that Merchants Bank offered the lowest interest rate for an up-to-one-year line of credit. The paperwork will be ready for the Selectboard to sign at the next meeting. Also, the Vermont Bond Bank paperwork has been submitted.
4. Pool Committee presentation (Discussion/Action Item). Anne Goodrich, chair of the Pool Committee (PC), said that the PC has submitted its final report, which she then summarized. She said that the current PC is willing to continue to serve if the Selectboard wants further action taken. Goulet expressed concern that linking the pool to the removal of the Fire District dam might derail the entire project. Ashley asked if any PC members had spoken to the Vermont Agency of Natural Resources. Goodrich said no. Flanders volunteered to draft a charge for a continuing committee, for discussion at the next Selectboard meeting.
5. Town Meeting Warning (Discussion/Action Item). Ormiston said that we won't get the school's information for the warning until February 1<sup>st</sup>, so Selectboard members will need to come in to sign. Bonnie Munday said that this timeline is not unusual and she can get the warning posted within the legal time limit. Munday requested the Selectboard members come in on February 3<sup>rd</sup> in the morning to sign the warning. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to approve the Town portion of the 2017 Town Meeting Warning, striking the date from Article 9. **Motion passed 3 to 2** (yes – Ashley, Layton, Flanders; no – Cook, Goulet). Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Flanders) to approve the warning for the Town of Norwich, Vermont and Norwich Town School District Annual

Meeting on March 7, 2017 as presented and amended, except for Articles 4, 5, and 6, which will be approved by the Norwich School Board. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6. Town Manager Search – executive session may be needed

a. Evaluation Process (Discussion/Action Item). Layton said that she thinks that the evaluation framework developed by John Carroll would work well for the Selectboard. Layton said that the Board should evaluate the Town Manager twice a year. Flanders spoke in support of the evaluation framework he developed. Carroll told the Board that the evaluation framework should be a starting point for discussion. Goulet and Ashley expressed support for this approach. Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to adopt the evaluation framework developed by John Carroll. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes- Cook, Ashley, Goulet, Layton; no- Flanders).

Flanders told the Selectboard that the Interim Town Manager's current contract is set to expire on January 31, 2017. After brief discussion, Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to find that a clear substantial disadvantage to the Town would exist by discussing the Interim Town Manager's contract in public session. **Motion passed 4 to 1** (yes- Cook, Ashley, Goulet, Layton; no- Flanders). Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to enter executive session to discuss the Interim Town Manager contract, pursuant to Title 1 VSA §313(a)(2)(1) and to invite David Ormiston into the executive session. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Selectboard moved into executive session at 8:08 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to enter public session. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Selectboard moved into public session at 8:30 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to amend the Interim Town Manager contract's paragraph 2 to substitute March 31, 2017 for January 31, 2017 and to authorize the Selectboard Chair to contact the town attorney to amend the contract. **Motion passed unanimously.**

b. Town Manager Contract Language (Discussion/Action Item). Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to find that a clear substantial disadvantage to the Town would exist by discussing the proposed Town Manager contract in public session. **Motion passed unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to enter executive session to discuss the proposed Town Manager contract, pursuant to Title 1 VSA §313(a)(2)(1). **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Selectboard moved into executive session at 8:35 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to enter public session. **Motion passed unanimously.** The Selectboard moved into public session at 9:35 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to authorize the Chair and Co-chair to contact an attorney to draft the Town Manager contract. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7. Interim Town Manager Report (Discussion/Action Item). Ormiston reported that personnel from the Norwich Fire District and the Norwich Fire Department are going to meet to discuss the use of hydrants and fire equipment. The contract with Jay White, architect, has been signed. Pathways Consulting is finishing the site plan for the public safety building, and the permitting process is moving forward. Police Chief Robinson and Fire Chief Leinoff are collaborating to develop recommendations for the building's communications equipment, and hope to have their

recommendations available for Selectboard review at their February 8, 2017 meeting. Ormiston said that he met with Robinson and the Norwich Trails Committee regarding Gile Mountain. The Committee will continue to work on ideas to optimize proper use of the trail. Cook asked to include the neighbors in these discussions. Ormiston said that the Town Report preparation is in full swing. Ormiston will submit the request for a FEMA extension as soon as possible.

8. Correspondence (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to receive correspondence from Ann Greenwald regarding the Norwich Town Pool; Hope Hussey regarding the Norwich Town Pool; Claudette Brochu regarding budget questions, with answers from Interim Town Manager; Stephen Flanders regarding Jay White's contract; Nancy Dean regarding FEMA money; and VLCT regarding a Special Membership Meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

9. Selectboard

a. Finance – Board to sign accounts payable/warrants (Discussion/Action Item). Ashley **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Goulet) to approve Check Warrant Report #17-18 for General Fund in the amount of \$66,965.69. **Motion passed unanimously.**

b. Approval of the Minutes of the 1/4/2017, 1/11/2017, and 1/18/2017 Selectboard meetings (Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to approve the minutes of the January 4, 2017, January 11, 2017, and January 18, 2017 Selectboard meetings with revisions put forward. **Motion passed (yes- 4; abstained- Cook).**

c. Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Possible Action Item). The board agreed to hold a special meeting on January 18, 2017 for the purpose of discussing the Town Manager contract.

For the February 8, 2017 meeting, agenda items will include:

1. Town Meeting presentation discussion
2. Pool Committee charge
3. EOC Equipment discussion
4. Wright Construction (possible agenda item)

At this point, Goulet **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Ashley) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

by Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager

Approved by the Selectboard on February 8, 2017

Linda Cook, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting –February 8, 2017 at 6:30 PM

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