

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, March 22, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Members present: Mary Layton, Chair; John Pepper, Vice Chair; Linda Cook; John Langhus; Stephen Flanders; Dave Ormiston, Interim Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 11 people in the audience.

Also participating: Stuart Richards, Ann Foley, Claudette Brochu, Herb Durfee, Phil Dechert, Courtney Dragiff, Ann Silberfarb, Demo Sofronas, John Farrell, and Liz Russell.

Layton opened the meeting at 6:32 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard agreed to proceed with the agenda as written.
2. Public Comments (Discussion Item). Layton introduced Herb Durfee, the newly-hired Town Manager, who will start work on May 1, 2017. Layton said that, in an effort to keep meetings running smoothly, she will ask members of the public to limit their comments to approximately three minutes in length.
3. Board to sign accounts payable/warrants (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Pepper) to approve Check Warrant Report #17-26 for General Fund in the amount of \$84,568.82; for Buildings & Grounds Fund for \$7,850.00; and for Public Safety Facility Fund in the amount of \$21,930.20. **Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Review of Open Positions and Applications (Discussion/Action Item). Courtney Dragiff appeared before the Selectboard and answered questions about her interest in serving on the Conservation Commission. Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to appoint Courtney Dragiff to the Conservation Commission for a four-year term ending in March 2021. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to reappoint Jillian Collins to the Recreation Council for a three-year term ending in March 2020. **Motion passed (yes- Cook, Langhus, Layton, Flanders; abstain- Pepper).**
Stuart Richards appeared before the Selectboard and answered questions about his interest in serving on the Planning Commission (PC). Phil Dechert clarified that PC terms run from May 1st through April 30th. Selectboard members discussed whether or not to address Richards's application during this meeting, given that the PC current positions do not expire until April 30, 2017. After some discussion, Cook **moved** (2nd Langhus) to appoint Stuart Richards to the Planning Commission for a four-year term ending in April 30, 2021. **Motion failed (yes- Cook, Layton; no- Langhus, Flanders; abstain- Pepper).**
After some discussion about procedure and requirements for existing committee/board members seeking reappointment, a majority of Selectboard members generally agreed they would like all applicants (new and reappointments) to submit written application forms and to attend the Selectboard meeting for interviews. After some discussion about Neil Fulton's application for reappointment to the Greater Upper Valley Solid Waste District (GUVSWD), Flanders **moved** (2nd Pepper) to reappoint Neil Fulton to the GUVSWD for a two-year term ending in March 2019. **Motion failed (yes- Flanders; no- Cook, Langhus; abstain- Layton, Pepper).**
Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to reappoint Irv Thomae to the ECFiber Governing Board for a one-year term ending in March 2018. **Motion passed unanimously.** Langhus **moved** (2nd Cook)

to adopt the Resolution to the Governing Board of the East Central Vermont Telecommunications District appointing Irv Thomae to the Governing Board. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Cook **moved** (2nd Langhus) to reappoint Frank Olmstead as Agent to Prosecute for a one-year term ending in March 2018. **Motion passed (yes-Cook, Langhus, Layton, Flanders; abstain- Pepper).**

Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to reappoint Thad Goodwin as Tree Warden for a one-year term ending in March 2018. **Motion passed unanimously.**

5. Clarify Tower Bond Payments (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to use the unused Tower Bond money to pay down the Tower Bond debt. **Motion passed unanimously.**

6. Selectboard Goals (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) that the five goals of Vision Statement, Community Outreach, Grade and Step System, Position Descriptions, and Negotiated Agreement be adopted as current goals of the Selectboard. After some discussion, during which Selectboard members suggested this issue be deferred to a later meeting, Flanders withdrew the motion. Board members discussed the idea of holding a public roundtable discussion. Ann Silberfarb and Claudette Brochu each spoke in support of this idea.

7. Modernize Selectboard meetings (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard agreed to defer this agenda item to a later meeting.

8. Interim Town Manager Report (Discussion Item). Ormiston reported that the Lions Club International is celebrating their 100th anniversary and the local club wants to donate money for a flagpole at the new Public Safety building. Demo Sofronas, Lions Club member, explained that the Lions will fund a flagpole at the new building up to \$2,500. The TRORC has released a draft for the new regional plan and will hold community meetings at 6:30 pm on April 12 at the Bethel Town Hall and on April 13 at the Thetford Town Hall. The Norwich Fire Department will be doing a live training this weekend on Saturday at the former Events Center on Rte. 5. The Assessors contract proposal for revision will be submitted soon for consideration. The Police Department has found space to rent during the new building construction, from May 1 to approximately December 31. Jay White is planning to have final designs for the Public Safety building by mid-April. It is anticipated that permitting cost may exceed \$20,000, the original estimate. Thursday, April 6 is when the Public Safety building project goes to the Norwich DRB. The highway garage construction contract has been signed, water/sewer for that project has been permitted, and a well will be drilled.

9. Correspondence (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Pepper) to receive correspondence from Calli Guion regarding the Norwich rezoning proposal; from UVM Extension regarding the 2017 Town Officers Education Conference; from Tim Chow regarding the Kendall Station Road railroad crossing; and from Ann Foley and John Farrell regarding Vermont Technical College's (VTC) Norwich Farm. **Motion passed unanimously.**

10. Selectboard

a. Approval of the minutes of the 3/6/2017, 3/8/2017, and 3/11/2017 Selectboard meetings (Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to approve the minutes of the March 6, 2017, March 8, 2017, and March 11, 2017 Selectboard meetings with revisions put forward. **Motion passed unanimously.**

b. Review of next agendas (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard listed the following agenda items for 4/12/2017:

Jay White report to Selectboard
Modernization of Selectboard Meeting Procedures
Open Positions – Interview Applicants
Roundtable Discussion about Selectboard Goals

11. Interim Town Manager contract and personnel (Discussion/Action Item) – executive session may be needed. Cook **moved** (2nd Flanders) that the public body has made a specific finding that premature public knowledge would clearly place the Town of Norwich and an employee at a substantial disadvantage under 1 VSA §§313(a)(1)(A), 313(a)(4), and 313(a)(5). **Motion passed unanimously.**

Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to enter executive session to discuss the Interim Town Manager contract and a possible personnel issue. **Motion passed unanimously.**
The Selectboard moved into executive session at 9:38 pm.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Pepper) to enter public session. **Motion passed unanimously.**
At 10:49 pm the Selectboard moved into public session.

Flanders **moved** (2nd Pepper) to extend the Interim Town Manager contract until April 30, 2017 with stipulations discussed in executive session and to authorize the Selectboard chair and Linda Cook to work with the town's attorney to draft the contract and for the chair to sign it. **Motion passed (yes- Langhus, Layton, Pepper, Flanders; no- Cook).**

At this point, Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**
Meeting adjourned at 10:52 pm.

by Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager

Approved by the Selectboard on April 26, 2017

Mary Layton, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting –April 12, 2017 at 6:30 PM

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