

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, August 23, 2017 at 6:30 pm

Members present: Mary Layton, Chair; Linda Cook; Stephen Flanders; John Langhus (via teleconference); Herb Durfee, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Members absent: John Pepper

There were about 11 people in the audience.

Also participating: David Sargent, Stuart Richards, Colin Calloway, Marcia Calloway, Claudette Brochu, John Carroll, and Kris Clement.

Layton opened the meeting at 6:40 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard agreed to proceed with the agenda after omitting item 3 (Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants), as there were no warrants to be signed.
2. Public Comments (Discussion Item). David Sargent expressed concern about the condition of a property in his neighborhood; he handed Selectboard members a copy of Bradford, Vermont's ordinance regarding junkyards. Stuart Richards asked for an update on the discussion of a possible town wide vote for the new Town Plan. Colin Calloway said that he wants to be sure that the Selectboard will proceed properly – without collusion – regarding the Town Plan process. Marcia Calloway expressed concern that the town is rushing forward with the Town Plan and not following Vermont state law properly.
4. DPW Garage Addition (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee gave an update on the town garage project. There is an increase in building costs resulting from some contract additions, some of which were required by the permit process. The Selectboard discussed options to minimize costs on the project, and also discussed the impending FEMA deadline and Norwich's request for an extension. The Selectboard asked Durfee to follow up again with FEMA personnel regarding the extension request. After some discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to authorize the Town Manager to sign an AIA construction contract with Wright Construction for the DPW garage addition in an amount up to \$463,299.00, subject to the availability of funds. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent)**. Flanders then **moved** (2nd Langhus) to authorize the Town Manager to sign an AIA contract with Wright Construction for additional items in the DPW garage addition up to \$37,438, subject to the availability of funds. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent)**.
5. NRCS Program Approval Re: Storm Damage (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee said that Norwich is getting FEMA reimbursement for public property work, but there is no coverage for private owners. The NRCS program may help private owners, and Durfee wanted to keep the Selectboard in the loop about his efforts to pursue this possible option for helping private owners. Part of this project would hopefully be to clear out debris in streambeds. After some discussion, Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to authorize the Town Manager to request Emergency Watershed Protection (EWP) Assistance. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent)**.
6. Selectboard Vision/Goals (Discussion/Action Item).
 - a. Budgetary Guidance. Durfee requested guidance from the Selectboard for drafting

a proposed budget for FYE 2019. Langhus said that he would like to see a couple of options for the overall budget; what would a decreased budget look like, and what would a “keep steady” budget look like? This would be a helpful discussion starting point, with concrete examples. Claudette Brochu and John Carroll each offered comments about the budget process, emphasizing the importance of gathering as much information as possible while developing the budget. Flanders **moved** (2nd Langhus) to request that the Town Manager draft an FYE 2019 proposed budget that reflects the current level of services, but that he identify broad categories of cost reductions that would achieve a 10% budgetary reduction. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

b. Property Assessment, Introduction of Memo. Flanders summarized the finding from a survey conducted of other Vermont towns. The Selectboard will discuss the memo in further detail at a future meeting.

c. Personnel Policies. Durfee handed out confidential copies of the draft policies to Selectboard members. Durfee recommended that the Selectboard have a work session about this topic in executive session at a future date, and not adopt policies until after union negotiations are complete.

d. Conflict of Interest Policy. Langhus explained that the policy in this week’s Selectboard packet is the clean copy of the policy discussed at a prior meeting after incorporating those prior comments. Flanders **moved** (2nd Layton) to adopt the Conflict of Interest Policy, as presented at the Selectboard meeting on August 23, 2017. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

7. Appoint VLCT Annual Meeting Voting Delegate (Discussion/Action Item). Cook **moved** (2nd Flanders) to appoint the Town Manager as delegate to the VLCT 2017 Annual Meeting. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

8. Lister Vacancy Status (Discussion/Action Item). The Lister vacancy will be considered at the next Selectboard meeting. Kris Clement has submitted her application, but it was not received in time for inclusion in this meeting’s information packet. The Selectboard will take up the matter at their next meeting.

9. Request to consider “Local Option Tax” (Discussion/Action Item). After brief discussion, Selectboard members agreed that this was not a desirable option for Norwich, and decline to take action to enact a tax.

10. July 1 Storm Event Status Report (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee stated that FEMA is being very particular with this event and the Town has to use different procedure and process that it did after Hurricane Irene. Town staff will attend a mandatory FEMA training regarding the submission process. School buses have checked out all routes and all roads are passable by bus for school purposes.

11. Request for Transfer Station Sticker Fee Waivers (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard agreed to ask the Town Service Officer to look into any situations where a waiver would be appropriate.

12. Town Manager Report (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee summarized some highlights from his written report (included in Selectboard packet). The Mackenna road analysis has been published; the furniture bid for the Public Service Building has gone out to the involved parties; Pat Moulton, President of Vermont Technical College will attend the October 11th Selectboard

meeting.

13. Request to Address Properties with Excessive Outdoor Storage (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee said that has spoken with the aggrieved neighbors and suggested that an ordinance is one option for a possible next step. Also, the Norwich Police Chief has spoken with the homeowners. The Selectboard asked that the Town Manager continue to pursue the matter to seek resolution.

14. Correspondence (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2nd Cook) to receive correspondence from Southeastern Vermont Community Action regarding a thank-you; from Frank Manasek regarding the town plan; from Jonathan Frishtick and Holly Glick regarding storm damage; from Stuart Richards (two items) regarding the town plan; from Marcia and Colin Calloway regarding the town plan; from Charlotte Metcalf regarding the town plan; from Rusty Sachs regarding the town plan; from Ann Marie Smith regarding the public safety building; from John Carroll regarding property assessment models; and from Cheryl Lindberg, Town Treasurer, regarding a quarterly investment report. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

15. Pepper's "End of Meeting Debriefing" (Discussion Item). Selectboard members offered ideas and thoughts about what had worked well in the meeting and suggestions for moving forward.

16. Selectboard (Discussion/Action Item).

a. Approval of Minutes: 7-12-2017 and 8-15-2017 Selectboard meetings. Cook **moved** (2nd Flanders) to approve the minutes of the July 12, 2017 Selectboard meeting as amended, and the minutes of the August 15, 2017 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

b. Review of Next Agendas. The Selectboard agreed on the following items for the September 13, 2017 agenda:

DPW Highway Garage Addition Status (and Possible Action)

Lister Vacancy (Possible Appointment)

Selectboard Vision/Goals – Lister/Assessor Memo

Capital Facilities Improvement; Equipment Replacement Funds

Negotiated Agreement (Union Contract)

Meeting Debrief Discussion

At 9:45 pm, Cook **moved** (2nd Flanders) to adjourn. **Motion passed 4 to 0 (Pepper absent).**

Meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

by Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager

Approved by the Selectboard on September 13, 2017.

Mary Layton, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting –September 13, 2017 at 6:30 PM

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