

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, September 27, 2017 at 6:30 pm

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

There were about 22 people in the audience.

Also participating: Cheryl Lindberg, Phil Dechert, Elaine Waterman, Brian Lucas, Kristin Braun Close, Dana Ireland, Jen Shepherd, Nancy Turkington, Jenn Roby, Jim Wilson, Elissa Close, Bill Scavone, Claudette Brochu, Sean Ogle, George Clark, Brie Swenson and Andy Hodgdon.

Layton opened the meeting at 6:31 pm.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard agreed to add the item "Road & Bridge Standards" to the agenda just after #7 Correspondence.
2. Public Comments (Discussion Item). Cheryl Lindberg notified the board that she had recently attended a conference in Maine, and listed some topics she had learned about. Lindberg told the board that there will be an Open Meeting Law training available for members to attend.
3. Board to Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Langhus) to approve Check Warrant Report #18-8 for General Fund in the amount of \$101,006.76; and for the Public Safety Facility Fund in the amount of \$7,643.75. **Motion passed unanimously.**
4. Town Treasurer – Quarterly Investment Report (Discussion/Action Item). Cheryl Lindberg offered to answer any questions regarding her quarterly Town Treasurer report, previously provided to the Selectboard. The board thanked her for the report, and did not have questions. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Langhus) to accept the Town Treasurer's Quarterly Investment Report. **Motion passed unanimously.**
5. Selectboard Vision/Goals (Discussion/Action Item).
  - a. Sidewalks – Safe Routes to Schools. Phil Dechert, Planning & Zoning Director, gave a synopsis of the timeline for the Safe Routes to School project, starting in 2007 with the work of the Transportation Committee and continuing through the present. Layton asked how much money has been spent by the town thus far. Dechert said that the town has not spent any money. If the town does not follow through with the project, the town will be responsible for paying approximately \$66,000.00. If the town does follow through, there will be no costs to the town. Several residents offered input about the project, some expressing support for the need for sidewalks, and some expressing opposition to installing sidewalks. Many residents spoke about the need to protect the health of trees on site, especially an elm tree. Many residents also said that they want to think creatively about a solution that would ensure children's safety while also protecting the trees. After discussion, Langhus **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Pepper) to suspend any further spending in furtherance of the Safe Routes to Schools project and further moved that the Town Manager is requested to convene himself or through his staff public meetings of property owners, neighbors and other concerned citizens for the purpose of exploring alternatives for ensuring both safe paths for pedestrians and respect for property owners along the Church Street corridor.

**Motion passed, 3 to 2 (yes- Cook, Langhus, Pepper; no- Flanders, Layton).**

b. Sidewalks – Proposed Acquisition of Fire District Sidewalks. Selectboard members agreed to move this topic after agenda item 5c (Trails).

c. Trails – Status Report & Future Plans. Flanders briefly summarized the memo included in the packet that addressed goals for town trails. Flanders and Pepper were on the Ballard Trail recently talking to Trails Committee members about trails. Layton expressed concern about the connectivity of trails and being aware of the needs of wildlife. Cook expressed concern that the needs of all trail users be balanced to allow for access but not overuse. George Clark and Brie Swenson, members of the Trails Committee, talked about Trails Committee efforts, including mapping trails, making minimally-invasive small connective trails, and trail maintenance work. Other community members offered input about trail usage.

b. Sidewalks – Proposed Acquisition of Fire District Sidewalks. This item was moved from earlier in the meeting (per Selectboard discussion). Cook reported that the Town had looked at this before. She said that the Town asked the Fire District to put funds up front to bring the sidewalks up to good condition, and stated that they are now in poor and unsatisfactory condition. After brief discussion, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Pepper) to ask the Town Manager to approach the Prudential Committee with the idea of acquiring the Fire District sidewalks, “as is”.

**Motion passed 4 to 1 (no- Cook).**

d,e,f Selectboard members agreed to move agenda items 5d, 5e, and 5f (Codification of Ordinances; Personnel Policies; and Financial Policies, respectively) to the October 11, 2017 Selectboard meeting.

6. Town Manager Report (Discussion/Action Item). Durfee said that the Public Safety Building is progressing, and pictures of the project taken on 9-27-2017 are posted on the Multipurpose Room bulletin board in Tracy Hall. On 9-26-2017, excavation was started on the DPW garage addition. Regarding July 1<sup>st</sup> storm damage, FEMA is very pleased with Norwich’s progress; we are going out to bid for the repair work by the end of this week. Durfee also said that the Selectboard needs to update the Town’s annual filing regarding road and bridge standards, so that Norwich will be in compliance with State of Vermont requirements. Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Langhus) to readopt the March 13, 2013 “*Town Road and Bridge Standards, Town of Norwich, Vermont*”, as is, and to authorize the Town Manager to certify to the Vermont Agency of Transportation that the Norwich Selectboard readopted said road and bridge standards. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7. Correspondence (Discussion/Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Pepper) to receive correspondence from Elaine Waterman regarding sidewalks; from Christopher Katucki regarding property assessment; and from Vermont Land Trust regarding Polashenski Farm. **Motion passed unanimously.**

8. a. Approval of the minutes of the 9/13/2017 Selectboard meeting (Action Item). Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Pepper) to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2017 Selectboard meeting, with revisions put forward. **Motion passed unanimously.**

b. Review of Next Agendas. The Selectboard agreed on the following items for the October 11, 2017 agenda:

- Codification of Ordinances
- Personnel Policies
- Financial Policies
- Vacancy on Conservation Commission

Town Plan – if a draft has been submitted  
Norwich Farms – Pat Moulton, VTC President  
Review Code of Conduct / Rules and Procedures  
Meeting Debrief Discussion

At 10:00 pm, Flanders **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Pepper) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 pm.

by Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager

Approved by the Selectboard on October 11, 2017.

---

Mary Layton, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting –October 11, 2017 at 6:30 PM

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