

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of  
Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at 6:30 pm

Members present: John Pepper, Chair; Claudette Brochu, Vice Chair; Linda Cook; John Langhus (via telephone); Mary Layton; Herb Durfee, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 30 people in the audience.

Also participating: Charlotte Metcalf, Stuart Richards, Tony Gemignani, Irv Thomae, Brian Riordan, Amber Boland, Nancy Dean, Ernie Ciccotelli, Linda Gray, Brendan Malley, Joel Stettenheim, Michael Goodrich, Marcia Calloway, Andy Hodgdon, Demo Sofronas, and Doug Robinson.

John Pepper opened the meeting at 6:35 pm. John Langhus was not yet present, due to technical difficulties.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard (SB) members agreed to stick with their plan to end the meeting at 9:00 unless a majority of SB members agree to extend the meeting. SB members also agreed to proceed with the agenda as drafted.

2. Approval of Minutes (Action Item). Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Brochu) to approve the minutes of the April 11, 2018 Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed unanimously (4-0; Langhus absent).**

3. Correspondence (Discussion/Action Item). Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Brochu) to receive correspondence from Stuart Richards re: Norwich Affordable Housing, Inc.; from Stuart Richards re: request for affordable housing info.; from Tracey Hayes re: follow-up to Town Plan meeting and request for protecting youth from CBD access/exposure, until harm vs. benefits are known; from Michael Goodrich re: inability of Prudential Committee being able to attend the Board's 4/11/18 meeting; from Charlotte Metcalf re: questions for Enhanced Energy Committee and Selectboard; from Upper Valley Land Trust & VT Technical College re: joint statement regarding Norwich Farms; and from Jamieson Hess re: abutter support of a preferred site for solar development on Norwich Fire District Land, Parcel 11-104.000. **Motion passed unanimously (4-0; Langhus absent).** SB members discussed putting the issues raised by correspondence from Tracey Hayes and Charlotte Metcalf on the agenda for the next meeting.

4. Public Comments (Discussion Item). Stuart Richards said that Norwich Affordable Housing, Inc. has been working on some options and will provide updates as they become available. Charlotte Metcalf said she has given feedback to Rob Wolfe about the proposed Town Plan survey. Metcalf read from a statement she distributed at the meeting, a copy of which will be in the next SB meeting packet. **\*At this point, John Langhus joined the meeting via telephone – at 6:44 pm.\*** Tony Gemignani read aloud from a written statement from the citizen committee, "Friends of Norwich Farm", which statement will be part of the next SB meeting packet. Irv Thomae urged the SB to be sure any questionnaire sent out regarding the Town Plan be examined carefully to avoid bias. Brian Riordan asked the SB to lower the speed limit on Union Village Road at the top of the hill. Stuart Richards said he can email a copy of the Town Plan survey to anyone who wants it. Herb Durfee said that Phil Dechert is retiring at the end of this month, and we will have a reception at the Norwich Inn on Friday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, from 4:30 to 6:00 PM.

5. Liquor Commission – Liquor License: Blue Sparrow Kitchen (Discussion/Action Item). Brochu **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Layton) to recess the Selectboard meeting to reconvene as the Norwich Liquor Commission at 6:55 PM. **Motion passed unanimously.** Amber Boland, who will open a café and

sandwich shop with her husband, said that the new business will be open six days a week, and they want to be able to offer beer and wine. Brochu **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Layton) to approve a First Class (Restaurant) liquor license for Blue Sparrow Kitchen, Co. (d/b/a Blue Sparrow Kitchen). **Motion passed unanimously.**

6. Applicants for Open Positions (Discussion/Action Item). Brochu asked to defer a decision on Planning Commission (PC) appointments until a time when Jeff Lubell (one of the applicants) can be present. There are two applicants for one opening on the PC. SB members agreed to hear from all applicants before making motions on any applicants. Ernie Ciccotelli said he would like to serve on the PC because he would bring a new way of looking at PC issues/problems. Ciccotelli said he has experience working in a variety of fields that touch on PC issues, and is a current member of the DRB and the BCA. SB members discussed the possibility of increasing the PC to nine members, from the seven members as it is currently comprised. Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Brochu) to increase the number of seats on the Planning Commission to nine. Irv Thomae said it might not be appropriate to vote an increase on the PC now, without having warned that as a possible issue for discussion at this meeting. Cook suggested that discussion of that question should happen when both Jeff Lubell and Ernie Ciccotelli are present. Nancy Dean also said the SB should postpone this question to a future agenda. Layton withdrew her motion, with the understanding that the issue would be addressed during the next SB meeting. Nancy Dean said that she would like to continue on the DRB; she has served the town in various capacities for over 50 years. Brochu said she is impressed by the complexity of the work done by the DRB. Cook said that Dean is very good at running a meeting. Irv Thomae said he wants to continue serving on the governing board for ECFiber. Thomae has been on the board since 2008; he enjoys the work and has watched ECFiber grow during that time. Nancy Dean spoke in support of John Lawe being reappointed to serve on the DRB. Irv Thomae spoke in support of reappointing Rob Gere as an alternate on the ECFiber board. Langhus asked Durfee to offer any input about Jeff Goodrich's service on the TRORC. Durfee said that he hasn't heard anything negative about Goodrich's work on the TRORC. Pepper said that it has been helpful to hear from applicants, because the SB learns about what people have been doing. Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Layton) to appoint the following persons to the respective positions and terms:

Nancy Dean – Development Review Board – 3 years; John Lawe – Development Review Board – 3 years; Don McCabe – Development Review Board Alternate – 3 years; Irv Thomae – ECFiber Governing Board – 1 year; Rob Gere – ECFiber Governing Board Alternate – 1 year; John Lawe – Town Health Officer – 3 years; William Aldrich – Historic Preservation Commission – 3 years; Nancy Osgood – Historic Preservation Commission – 3 years. **Motion passed unanimously.**

7. Sign Accounts Payable/Warrants (Discussion/Action Item). Brochu asked about a charge for contracted cleaning services; Durfee explained that it was for cleaning the Public Safety Building. Pepper asked about the Pathways bill; Durfee said that it was for FEMA project related work. Pepper asked about the Town Bond interest payment, and how long would those payments last; Durfee said that he thinks the bond goes through 2023. Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Brochu) to approve check warrant report #18-23 for Recreation Scholarships Fund in the amount of \$65.00; and for General Fund in the amount of \$143,348.56. **Motion passed unanimously.**

8. Energy Committee (Discussion Item). Langhus said that he would recuse himself from this topic and left the conference call at this point. Linda Gray said that Norwich Energy Committee (NEC) has worked on clean energy for some time. The proposed solar project is important so that more people can go solar, and it will help the Fire District budget. Brendan Malley and Joel Stettenheim said that the Hendersons have been given copies of all abutters notices and their concerns have been answered; another project abutter has submitted a letter in support of the project, as well. Charlotte Metcalf said she has submitted questions about the project and is happy to wait for written answers. Cook said she has a problem with this site going forward because there

hasn't been enough public input. Layton said she supports this project because it will provide multiple benefits; she sees no downside. Michael Goodrich said that the Fire District has voted to pursue the solar project, which is on their property. Cook said that she's not against any of these projects but is concerned about having all questions answered before voting. Layton **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Brochu) to authorize the signing of a letter, as revised, to the Public Service Board of Vermont regarding a Certificate of Public Good filed by Norwich Technologies, Inc. indicating the proposed solar project on Norwich Fire District Land, Parcel 11-104.000, qualifies as a preferred site. **Motion passed (3 yes; Cook abstained; Langhus recused)**. SB members then discussed the idea of changing the Energy Committee Charge to increase the minimum number of Energy Committee members from five to seven, and adjusting the quorum number accordingly. Pepper suggest the SB leave this matter for a future meeting; SB members agreed.

9. Town Plan Update (Discussion/Action Item). Langhus rejoined the meeting at this point. Cook and Brochu said that they have been working on compiling the Town Plan input for some time, and it is a very challenging project. After some discussion, SB members agreed that Durfee and Pepper will work together to distribute an updated Town Plan survey, to solicit further public input. The SB will discuss this issue again at their May 9<sup>th</sup> meeting. At this point in the meeting, it was 9:00 PM, and the SB agreed to move agenda item 14, Town Manager Report, up to the next item for discussion.

14. Town Manager Report (Discussion Item). Durfee said the town has received a Byrne Foundation grant for construction of a batting cage at Girard Field. Brochu **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Cook) to spend \$10,000 from the Recreation Facilities Improvement Fund for the purchase and installation of a batting cage by Girard Field at Huntley Meadow. The Dorothy Byrne Foundation donated \$10,000 to the Town for such expenditure. **Motion passed unanimously**. Durfee said that the town solicited bids for the purchase of a Ford 550 to be used by the Department of Public Works (DPW). Andy Hodgdon said that the DPW typically buys used trucks in order to save money; a new truck would cost around \$100,000, and the used truck will be just under \$25,000. The truck the DPW wants to buy will be gone through by the seller to fix any issues so it will be ready for service. After some discussion, Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Layton) to authorize the Town Manager to proceed with the purchase of the used F-550 as recommended by the Director of Public Works. **Motion passed unanimously**. Durfee said there is a proposed change to the Vermont Open Meeting Law making its way through the state legislature that would extend the deadline for posting minutes to allow for holidays. Durfee plans to move the speed limit sign on Union Village Road, unless the SB objects. Doug Robinson, Chief of Police, said that he could have someone do an informal check of traffic speeds on that stretch of road. Durfee said that there is a pending Act 250 application for a project at Goodrich Four Corners.

10. Committee Communication & Accountability (Discussion/Action Item). Brochu said she wants to improve how the SB and public are informed about various committees and commissions activities. Brochu has proposed a policy, which was included in the SB meeting packet, and suggests the policy would go into effect on July 1, 2018. After some discussion, SB members agreed that Brochu and Cook will incorporate SB members' input on the policy and bring a revised version of the policy back to the SB for further consideration.

11. Open Meeting Law (Discussion Item). Pepper handed out a copy of his compilation of information regarding the Open Meeting Law; it will be included in the next SB meeting packet.

12. Conflict of Interest (Discussion/Action Item). Cook will work with Langhus to bring a revised policy to the SB for the May 9 meeting.

15. Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Action Item). The Selectboard agreed to include in their Norwich Selectboard Minutes – 4/25/2018 Mtg

May 9, 2018 agenda the following items:

Applicants for Open Positions (Planning Cmsn, Conservation Cmsn; TRORC)  
Town Plan Survey Update  
Committee Communication & Accountability  
Open Meeting Law Discussion/Summary  
Conflict of Interest  
Tracey Hayes's letter  
Finance Committee

At 10:05 pm, Cook **moved** (2<sup>nd</sup> Layton) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on May 9, 2018

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John Pepper  
Selectboard Chair

Next Meetings – May 9, 2018 – Meeting at 6:30 PM

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