

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, October 10, 2018 at 6:30 pm

Members present: John Pepper, Chair (until 7:23 pm); Claudette Brochu, Vice Chair; Linda Cook; John Langhus; Mary Layton; Herb Durfee, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 8 people in the audience.

Also participating: Jaci Allen, Stuart Richards, Rod Francis, and Demo Sofronas.

1. Approval of Agenda (Action Item). Selectboard (SB) members agreed to move agenda item #5 (BoardDocs.com) to a later point in the meeting, after the Town Manager's report.

2. Consent Agenda Items (Action Item). Cook requested that each of the consent agenda items be discussed separately. Cook presented to the SB her suggestions for edits to the 9-26-2018 draft minutes. SB members agreed to the revisions. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to approve the September 26, 2018 minutes of the Selectboard with revisions put forward by Linda Cook. **Motion passed unanimously.** Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to accept correspondence from the Planning Commission consisting of their quarterly report. **Motion passed unanimously.** Cook asked if information about the enhanced energy working group was included in the report, and Jaci Allen said that it was. SB members agreed that a reminder should go out to other committees and commissions that have not yet submitted reports. After some discussion about items on the accounts payable warrants connected to bond payments, Cook **moved** (2nd Pepper) to approve the warrants after removing the five items relating to the Bond payment, and for the SB chair to sign the warrants after the Town Manager relays to the chair and SB members the answers to their questions about the bond payments. **Motion passed unanimously.**

3. Public Comments (Discussion Item). Stuart Richards said that the Honor the Heroes event is happening at the Hanover Inn soon. Richards urged people to support the Semper Fi Fund, which supports good causes in the area. Richards also said that there will be a meeting of the Norwich Affordable Housing, Inc. on October 25, 2018. Demo Sofronas said that he will be retiring from CATV taping as of October 24, 2018. Sofronas thanked the SB for their support and he has enjoyed the work.

4. Family Place – Alcohol Policy Waiver Request (Discussion/Action Item). Langhus **moved** (2nd Pepper) to grant the Family Place's request for a waiver in order to serve alcohol at their event on November 30, 2018 at Tracy Hall. **Motion passed unanimously.** At this point, SB members agreed to take up item #11 (Town Survey Results).

11. Town Survey Results - Update (Discussion/Action Item). Pepper said the 483 responses were received, which is a statistically significant level of response. Pepper is compiling the results, including using some of the area's 12-year-olds to help teach them about municipal government interactions. Pepper will look into how to share survey responses without sharing any identifiable information. Cook said that it would be important to make the complete answers available to the public. Stuart Richards said that a great deal of effort went into the survey. Richards said he doesn't think the question about how much the respondent would be willing to increase taxes should have been left out of the final survey. Pepper said that he had listened to others and made a decision that seemed sound. As the goal of the SB, Pepper said that subsequent shorter surveys will elicit that kind of information. At the conclusion of this discussion, Pepper requested a break and said that he

needed to leave the meeting. After the break, the meeting was reconvened by Brochu, Vice Chair. SB members agreed to postpone the agenda item regarding BoardDocs.com, due to Pepper's need to leave the meeting early.

7. TRORC Decision To Deny Approval of Town Plan (Discussion/Action Item). Layton said that she is in favor of having the Planning Commission (PC) talk with the SB to decide how to proceed. Langhus agreed that it would be good to have the SB meet with the PC to discuss next steps. Langhus asked what would happen if Norwich decided to revise its Town Plan. TM explained that there would be at least 1 public hearing with the PC, and then the SB would have 2 public hearings. Langhus said he was very surprised by TRORC's denial. Brochu wants to know more about why TRORC denied approval. TM agrees it would be good to query the TRORC chair for further explanation. TM said he could have Planning Director, Rod Francis, schedule a meeting with TRORC staff to get more information. Rod Francis spoke about the TRORC meeting, which he attended. The staff at TRORC and Francis were expecting approval. TRORC members discussed various aspects of the Town Plan. Then, one of the commissioners brought up the question of the definition of compatible and what level of compatibility is required by law. Then, discussion ended without an answer to the question, and not one commissioner voted in favor of approving the Town Plan. Francis told the SB that he recommends having discussions with TRORC to find the way forward. SB members agreed with TM's suggestion to have Francis approach TRORC and then report to TM to relay to the SB and PC information regarding next steps. Jaci Allen asked the SB when they expect to get a report back; SB members agreed they would like to hear more at their next meeting on 10-24-2018. SB members then agreed to take up agenda item #13 (Enhanced Energy...).

13. Enhanced Energy – Committee or Working Group? (Discussion/Action). Cook asked what type of entity is the Enhanced Energy entity. TM said he had initially suggested that they function as a working group so they would have open, warned meetings, but have the added flexibility for bringing in additional people into their discussions. The group is currently functioning with just Energy Committee members. Francis said the current work of the Enhanced Energy group is to read the enhanced energy chapter of the Town Plan and decide whether or not to pursue "enhanced" status before the Public Utilities Commission. Brochu asked for the Enhanced Energy group to submit a quarterly report to the SB regarding their activities. At this point, SB members agreed to take up agenda items #8 and #9.

8. Finance Committee Charge (Discussion/Action). Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to acknowledge that the Finance Committee Charge as presented in the Board packet for signature is the charge adopted by the Selectboard on June 13, 2018. **Motion passed 3 to 1 (no- Cook)**. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to authorize the TM to advertise openings for the Finance Committee and for candidates to be interviewed and appointed by the Selectboard at their November 14, 2018 meeting. **Motion passed 3 to 1 (abstain- Cook)**.

9. Audit Committee Charge (Discussion/Action). Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to acknowledge that the Audit Committee Charge as presented in the Board packet for signature is the charge adopted by the Selectboard on June 13, 2018. **Motion passed 3 to 1 (no- Cook)**. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to authorize the TM to advertise openings for the Audit Committee and for candidates to be interviewed and appointed by the Selectboard at their November 14, 2018 meeting. **Motion passed 3 to 1 (abstain- Cook)**.

10. Fraud Policy (Discussion/Action). Layton suggested that the SB defer this item until a later meeting. SB members agreed to do so.

12. Electric Vehicle Charging Station (Discussion). TM said that he is continuing to investigate applying for a grant for electric vehicle charging station(s). However, they are no longer looking at placing one at the school employee parking lot, because the charging station would need to be freely accessible to members of the public, under the terms of the grant, and this is problematic when school is in session. They continue to look at placing one at Huntley Meadow park & ride. TM is getting an estimate from an electrician. The grant would cover the bulk of the cost of the charging station(s). TM will continue to report to the SB on this matter. Langhus expressed concern about such charging stations and overall costs to town. Clarification made by Durfee that actual costs of charging was credit card charge to individual but the town pays a fee for the station. Langhus cautioned the board about accepting "free" money that could potentially need to be repaid.

14. Town Manager's Report (Discussion). TM said that he has submitted his written report, and is happy to answer questions, if any.

15. Review of Next Agendas (Discussion/Action Item). SB members listed the following as agenda items for the next meeting on October 24, 2018:

- Personnel Policies - Appendices
- Fraud Policy
- Update from Rod re: TRORC
- General Policy Update
- BoardDocs.com
- Errors & Omissions
- Police Department Bulletproof Vests
- Cannabis Forum follow-up

For November 14, 2018 meeting:

Applicants to Open Positions (Finance & Audit Committees, Recreation Council)

At 9:37 pm, Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on October 24, 2018

John Pepper
Selectboard Chair

Next Meetings – October 24, 2018 – Meeting at 6:30 PM

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