

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, February 27, 2019 at 6:30 pm

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

There were about 18 people in the audience.

Also participating: Stuart Richards, Bonnie Munday, Emma Smith, Jordan Kirschener, Oliver Benedict, Jacobi Marotti, Ethan Welder, Karen Trombley, Jonathan Fenton, Sugar Generaux, Kris Clement, and Frank Welder.

1. Approval of Agenda. Selectboard (SB) members agreed to move item 3a.ii (Langhus's draft ordinance regarding plastic bags) out of the consent agenda and address it as its own agenda item, just after #4, Liquor Licenses.

2. Public Comment. Stuart Richards said that he sent an email letter to the SB that will be part of their March 12 meeting correspondence. Richards said that Norwich Affordable Housing, Inc. (NAHI) has been talking to other organizations and is hopeful that a housing project can be worked out, despite some hurdles.

3. Consent Agenda. Cook said that she would like to pull the warrants out of the consent agenda, for discussion. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to approve the consent agenda. **Motion passed unanimously.** Cook then spoke about the warrant, and said that it was an especially high amount because the school payment is in this warrant. Cook also said there is a sand payment for \$13,000 in the warrants. Cook asked if the town would need more sand. Durfee said that we likely will need more, given the way this winter weather is progressing. Langhus **moved** (2nd Brochu) to approve the warrant. **Motion passed unanimously.**

4. Liquor Licenses. Layton **moved** (2nd Langhus) that the Selectboard convene as the Norwich Liquor Commission. **Motion passed unanimously.** Bonnie Munday, Town Clerk, presented to the Liquor Control Board the applications to sign as approved. There were no new applications this year. Layton **moved** (2nd Langhus) to approve liquor license applications for Frasers General Store (Dan & Whit's), Green Visions (Norwich Inn), King Arthur Flour, PLR Enterprises (Norwich Wine and Spirits), Blue Sparrow Kitchen, Co., and L'Elephant Vert (Carpenter & Main). **Motion passed unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to close the Norwich Liquor Commission and reconvene as the Selectboard meeting. **Motion passed unanimously.**

4.5 Proposed Ordinance to Ban Plastic Bags (pulled out of the Consent Agenda). Langhus **moved** (2nd Brochu) to adopt a town ordinance to ban plastic bags in the Town of Norwich, consistent with the draft ordinance in the Selectboard packet. **Motion and second were withdrawn after brief discussion.** Langhus said that this draft ordinance is based somewhat on the ordinance adopted by Brattleboro. Langhus said that he is rethinking Article 7 of the draft, and now thinks that Article 7 should be omitted. Brochu said that she likes the idea of this being a first reading, rather than adopting it now. Brochu also wants to consider waiting to adopt the ordinance until after the Vermont state legislature has acted on statewide legislation concerning this issue. Cook asked about whether dry cleaning bags would be banned, and was told that they would not be banned. Cook said she wants to add the words "people, and animals" to the end of the first sentence in Article 1. Layton said that she supports this ordinance. Emma Smith asked the SB if this means that the transfer station will start accepting plastic bags and film for recycling. Pepper said that the SB has asked Durfee to look into that possibility. Jordan Kirschener suggested that the SB also ban Styrofoam containers.

Oliver Benedict, Jacobi Marotti, Ethan Welder, and Karen Trombley all spoke in support of the ordinance. Pepper said that he supports passing this ordinance before the State acts. Cook said that the SB should let the State know what is happening in Norwich and give the 5th-graders credit for the work they did. Jonathan Fenton said that Tim Briglin will visit 5th graders to discuss the legislation that is being considered at the state level. Fenton said that the state will respond to pressure from various towns passing ordinances. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to adopt the draft ordinance as a first reading of the plastic bag ordinance, as amended by deleting Article 7 and adding to Article 1 the words “people, and animals.” **Motion approved unanimously.** Cook then **moved** (2nd Brochu) to authorize John Langhus to send a letter to Norwich’s state legislative delegation regarding Norwich’s ordinance. Motion passed (yes- 4; no- 0; abstain- Langhus).

5. Town Meeting Presentation Planning. SB members reviewed Pepper’s draft presentation and Pepper made edits as necessary during the meeting, based on other SB members’ input. Frank Welder asked about damage to roads during the July 2017 storm and how the town is planning to make repairs so as to avoid the same extent of damage in the next storm. Durfee explained that the town is doing a more resilient approach to repairs wherever possible, rather than just putting things back to the way they were before the storm, only to be blown out again. The town upsized as many culverts as possible, for example.

6. Agenda for Organizational Meeting. SB members reviewed the draft agenda, as contained in the meeting packet, and made changes during the meeting according to members’ input.

7. Conflict of Interest Policy. Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to amend the Town of Norwich, Vermont Conflict of Interest Policy, as presented with the deletion of Article 9. Exception, per the request made by the State of Vermont in its letter dated February 20, 2019. Kris Clement asked a question about the town’s purchasing policy. After some further discussion, Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to call the question. **Motion passed (yes- 4; no- 0; abstain- Cook).** The SB members then voted on the original motion regarding the Conflict of Interest Policy. **Motion passed (yes- 4; no- 0; abstain- Cook).**

8. Draft Newsletter Content. SB members reviewed the draft submitted by Brochu and agreed to put the first half of the draft into the next issue of the Norwich Times. Langhus **moved** (2nd Pepper) to approve the “Selectboard Corner” first half for inclusion in The Norwich Times, and to authorize the expenditure of \$250.00 to pay for the publication of said “Selectboard Corner”. **Motion passed unanimously.**

9. Current Budget Spending. Langhus suggested that the SB talk about the town’s use of road salt in a future meeting. Cook wants to have the DPW Director present for that SB discussion. Layton agreed that she would like to have more information, including hearing from the DPW Director. SB members agreed to put this item on a future agenda.

At this point, Langhus suggested that the SB set aside remaining agenda items for a future meeting and address the Town Manager Evaluation agenda item at this time. Other SB members agreed.

Langhus **moved** (2nd Layton) to enter executive session under 1 VSA §§ 313(a)(3) in order to discuss personnel issues and to possibly include the Town Manager. **Motion passed unanimously.**

The Selectboard moved into executive session at 9:17 pm.

Langhus **moved** (2nd Pepper) to enter public session. **Motion passed unanimously.**
At 10:02 pm the Selectboard moved into public session.

No action was taken following the Selectboard's return to public session.

At 10:05 pm, Langhus **moved** (2nd Brochu) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:05 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on March 13, 2019

John Pepper
Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – March 5, 2019 – Special Organizational Meeting at 8:00 PM

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