

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at 6:30 pm

Members present: John Pepper, Chair; Claudette Brochu, Vice Chair; Roger Arnold; Mary Layton; Herb Durfee, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager. John Langhus was present via computer teleconference for part of the meeting.

There were about 10 people in the audience.

Also participating: Kris Clement, Christine Pinello, Jennifer Frank, Brie Swenson, Alex Northern, Jonathan Fenton.

1. Approval of Agenda. Selectboard (SB) members agreed to proceed with the agenda as drafted.
2. Public Comment. Kris Clement spoke about animal impoundment issues, and spoke in support of local veterinarian Christine Pinello continuing as the town's pound provider. Christine Pinello, veterinarian in Norwich, said that she has served as the town pound for dogs and she objects to being told she can no longer house cats. Pinello said that she has submitted her resignation as the town pound. Police Chief Jennifer Frank said that the budget situation around boarding animals, particularly cats, has increased well beyond the planned amount. Frank said that she is seeking a way to control costs to be fiscally responsible, and so she has sought to discuss the matter with Dr. Pinello. Frank explained that the town leash ordinance is written about dogs. After further discussion, SB members said that they would like the Town Manager, Dr. Pinello and Chief Frank to meet and seek common ground on the pound issue, in order to come to an understanding. Layton said that she would like an update at the next SB meeting. Brie Swenson, Recreation Director, said that the Recreation Council and Linda Cook have been working on rehabbing the former Norwich pool site and are proposing that the area be renamed as Ballard Park. They are looking into various improvements to the area, such as picnic tables.
3. Police Personnel Update – New Sergeant Hire. Police Chief Frank announced the hiring of Simon Keeling into the sergeant position. Keeling's start date will be June 9, 2019 and his first shift will be June 10, 2019.
4. Emergency Management Training for SB Members & Staff. Alex Northern, Norwich Fire Chief, gave an update on the fire department activities over the last year, including new members, maintenance of equipment, training, and coordination and cooperation with area departments. Herb Durfee, Town Manager, said that he has asked Chief Northern to arrange for training regarding emergency management. Northern asked the SB members what kind of time frame they are available for a 4 to 5 hour training session. The training will be conducted in Norwich by a Vermont state trainer. SB members offered input on what days and dates work best for them.
5. See 4, above. Northern gave an update along with his discussion about training.
6. Consent Agenda. Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to approve the consent agenda. **Motion passed unanimously.**
7. Town Manager Report. Durfee said that he has put out an RFP for a bank loan, per the terms of Article 11 of the 2019 Town Meeting. Durfee said that Contract 3 (July 2017 storm repair) for work on Needham Road should be starting soon. Durfee said that the Finance Director search is progressing. We received 25 applications, from which 11 were selected for initial interviews, and 3 of

those applicants were selected as finalists. Durfee said that he hopes to make an offer within a week, subject to background and references. VTrans is insisting that the town go out to bid for work on Tigertown Road culverts. Brochu asked about the town's fee structures. Durfee said that he has received input from the town staff department heads and will provide the information to the SB in a unified document later in June. Also, financial budget projection will be given to the SB at the next meeting.

At this point, SB members agreed to move to agenda item #9 and return to #8 afterward. John Langhus joined the meeting electronically during this discussion, at 8:33 pm.

9. Expanded Plastics Recycling. Langhus said that the town should look at options to expand recycling with minimal cost. Langhus suggested that we not decide now how to transport the recyclables, but instead, start collecting them, then see what volume we get and decide how to handle it on that basis. Layton agreed with that approach. Brochu asked about storing the new recyclables and also how to ensure there are minimal contaminants. Jonathan Fenton offered information about how Thetford, Hannaford, and the Barre recycling facility handle contaminants. Arnold asked about the burden on our transfer station employees. Durfee said that we will need to educate people about what is recyclable and where. Durfee said that we can do this on a trial basis without undue burden. Langhus suggested that the Marion Cross School 5th graders could help out with educating the patrons at the transfer station. Brochu and Arnold said that they are uncomfortable making any decisions now on this issue, given that there are too many things undetermined at this time. Langhus **moved** (2nd Pepper) that the Selectboard authorize the town manager to begin accepting additional plastics for recycling with cooperation from the DPW as to the best way to implement that collection. **Motion passed 3 to 2 (no- Brochu, Layton)**. Brochu asked if the SB should state a start date and said she thinks the motion is too vague. Fenton talked about how Thetford handles their film plastics recycling. Fenton also urged the SB to act on the offer from the Barre recycling facility to accept Norwich materials. Arnold said that he is concerned about the impact of this additional work on town employees.

At the conclusion of this discussion, Langhus left the meeting – at 8:40 pm.

8. Distribution of Reusable Shopping Bags. Brochu introduced her proposal, as outlined in her memo to the SB included in the meeting packet. SB members discussed various options to provide shopping bags. Fenton said that the Norwich Congregational Church may have begun a program to gather reusable bags for people. SB members agreed that Brochu will look into options, including corporate support, and report back to the SB. Durfee offered to help Brochu if she needs.

10. Selectboard Policies. Pepper said that he has written a sheet summarizing the SB goals. Layton said that she has been working on the financial policies and suggests indexing the policies by date and thematic content. Layton will complete this work before July. Arnold said that he is about halfway through typing into Word format all of the policies needing review. SB members agreed to readdress the policies project at their next meeting. Pepper handed out to SB members the goals summary he wrote. SB members agreed they need to keep working toward the goals. Durfee made suggestions for how to approach their goal work. Arnold said that he is interested in working on affordable housing in particular. Layton said that she is, as well. Arnold and Layton will arrange to meet with Ralph Hybels of the Affordable Housing Working Group sometime in the next 3 weeks. Pepper and Brochu will do some research into trains, per another of the SB's goals. Brochu said the Norwich Times summer issue is approaching. Brochu said she will find out when the deadline falls, and let other SB members know.

11. Future Meeting Agenda Items. SB members agreed to the following agenda items for their next meeting:

Animals / Town Pound
Policies Status
Status on Plastics Recycling
Follow-ups on:
 Shopping Bags ("Bag Bank")
 Union Negotiations
 Great River Hydro litigation

At 9:26 pm, Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to adjourn. **Motion passed unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:26 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on June 12, 2019

John Pepper
Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – June 12, 2019 – Regular Meeting at 6:30 PM

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