

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, January 26, 2022, at 6:30 pm

This meeting was conducted via teleconference using ZOOM and in person in Tracy Hall, in order to comply with Open Meeting Law requirements while providing remote access for attendees. Members present: Roger Arnold, Chair; Mary Layton, Vice Chair; Claudette Brochu; Marcia Calloway; Robert Gere; Rod Francis, Interim Town Manager; Miranda Harris Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Also participating: Chris Kaufman, Linda Cook.

1. Approval of Agenda. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to approve the agenda. **Motion approved unanimously.**
2. Public Comment. No public comment was offered.
3. Consent Agenda. Calloway asked to bring forward Wilberding's correspondence regarding his financial information requests. Calloway asked if Fielding Essensa can answer those questions. SB members agreed to forward the email to the Finance Office. SB also agreed to make Calloway's suggested edits to draft minutes. Calloway will email those edits to the Town Manager's office. After brief discussion about some accounts payable charges, Brochu **moved** (2nd Layton) to approve the consent agenda with agreed edits to draft minutes. **Motion approved unanimously.**
4. Introduction to the New Director of Public Works. Francis introduced Chris Kaufman, our new DPW Director. Kaufman talked about his work background and said he is pleased to be here in Norwich. Layton said that we as a town are very interested in energy efficiency, and she hopes he will be able to offer input on that. SB members welcomed Kaufman. Calloway said that she would be interested in seeing any project tracking sheets he comes up with. Arnold said that Kaufman's project management background will be especially helpful to the town.
5. Interim Town Manager Report. Francis asked if SB members have a preference for when to have a written report from him. Arnold said it has been past practice for the 2nd Wednesday meeting to have a written report and the 4th Wednesday was a verbal report, in the event there's anything to update the SB about. Francis said we have upgraded our server at Tracy Hall and are working through glitches. Calloway asked about purpose statements for the town meeting warning articles. Francis said he will circulate that document. Layton asked about the governor's order regarding in-person meeting requirement. Francis said we're gradually switching over to fully remote meetings and are figuring out how to expand our meeting capacity to allow more meetings. Linda Cook asked if it's possible to have a standard agenda for all committees so there's always a phone number to use for accessing meetings. Brochu asked about the committees' meetings schedule and how the multiple groups will set up their meeting times. Francis said that's an open question; we are working on figuring that out. SB members discussed possible options for calendaring/scheduling meetings for town committees. Calloway asked about the wastewater study mentioned in the Planning Department report in the packet.
6. Ordinance For the Wearing of Face Coverings. Arnold introduced the topic of renewing the face covering mandate. Layton said she heard from a Dan & Whit's employee that there is a confrontation with a couple of people every day who refuse to wear masks. Calloway asked if Norwich should try to match its mask ordinance to those of surrounding towns. After further discussion, Brochu **moved** (2nd Layton) to enact the Rule Requiring Wearing Face Coverings Indoors in Public Spaces, as included in the Selectboard packet, effective January 26, 2022, through

February 25, 2022. **Motion approved (4-yes; Calloway- abstain).**

7. Planning for Information Session and Town Meeting. SB members agreed to conduct two additional informational meetings regarding the town's portion of the warning on February 5, 2022, at 11:00 am and February 14, 2022, at 630 pm. SB members discussed how to develop the SB presentation at informational meetings. Arnold shared his screen showing a draft of the presentation and talked through the presentation slides. SB members discussed the individual slides and options for structuring the presentation and its content. SB members agreed that Arnold and Brochu will work together to write the presentation and will show it to the rest of the SB before the first informational meeting on February 5th. SB members agreed not to have a dress rehearsal of the presentation.

8. Board Review of Draft Contract with Town Manager Candidate (executive session). Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to enter executive session to consider the appointment or employment of a public employee under 1 VSA §313(a)(3). **Motion approved unanimously.** The Selectboard entered executive session at 8:20 pm.

Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to enter public session at 9:35. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) that the Selectboard send a draft contract to candidate #31 for review.

Motion approved unanimously.

Brochu moved (2nd Gere) to adjourn at 9:36. **Motion approved unanimously.**

9. Adjourn. Brochu **moved** (2nd Gere) to adjourn. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 9:36 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on February 9, 2022

Roger Arnold, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – February 9, 2022 – Meeting at 5:30

PLEASE NOTE: CATV POSTS RECORDINGS OF ALL REGULAR MEETINGS OF THE NORWICH SELECTBOARD