

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, July 14, 2021 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 (joined the meeting at 6:50 pm), Vice Chair; Claudette Brochu; Marcia Calloway; Robert Gere; Herb Durfee, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

There were about 9 people in the audience.

Also participating: Pam Smith, Doug Wilberding, Linda Cook, Andy Scherer, Pam Smith, Peter Orner, Shoshana Hort.

1. Approval of Agenda. Brochu **moved** (2nd Gere) to approve the agenda after deleting item #8 [Discussion of Policing Study]. **Motion approved 4-0 (Layton absent).**
2. Public Comment. Doug Wilberding asked about a bicycle charge on the A/P warrant. Durfee will address his question under the next agenda item, which includes A/P warrants.
3. Consent Agenda. SB members agreed to affirm Durfee's response to Amy Stringer's correspondence regarding police cameras. SB members agreed it makes sense to continue with Zoom. SB members agreed to forward Ann Marie Smith's correspondence regarding the Childcare Committee to that committee. Linda Cook said it might be good to put out an additional survey regarding childcare. Durfee said the charge Wilberding asked about was for a bicycle instructor. The amount is the town's share of the cost of summer programs and is at least partially covered by program fees. Durfee said he will ask the Recreation Director to provide details. Calloway **moved** (2nd Gere) to approve the consent agenda. **Motion approved 4-0 (Layton absent).**
4. Town Manager Report. Durfee said the Fire Department received a \$1,000 PACIF grant from VLCT. Durfee said we have hired a Finance Director, who will start remotely in September and then in person as soon as possible thereafter. Also, Larry Wiggins, DPW Director, has resigned effective July 31, 2021. Durfee is putting into place the working foreman position and has advertised for a new DPW Director. We have officially named Simon Keeling as the Interim Police Chief. The IT Services RFP finalists will be interviewed next week. The Moore Lane bridge has been dripping into Bloody Brook and needs to be remediated. Durfee met with the DPW Director, the Planning Director, and the Interim Police Chief to discuss traffic options for Beaver Meadow Road (BMR). Durfee said that the Solaflect information has been sent to the town's auditor; the town has not received those audit results yet.

*Mary Layton entered the meeting at 6:50 pm.

Andy Scherer said that road signs are generally used to address failed infrastructure and roads. Scherer said he'd like to know more about the information behind the Town Manager's assessment about BMR. Pam Smith asked about liability concerns about speed bumps. Peter Orner said he would like to see more progress on BMR issues. Orner wants to know if the road's classification is open for discussion and how it is determined. Durfee said he has relied on the expertise and knowledge of his staff to raise possible issues about traffic calming options. Andy Scherer said that not having striping on BMR has helped the traffic speed. Scherer asked if the town can hold off on striping. Orner said he wants to see action on this issue and wants the road to be narrowed. Durfee said that the state does the center line striping; the town can request that the state not stripe. Durfee said that yes, he can meet with BMR residents and the town's department heads. Orner said he'd like to see the town purchase a speed cart for BMR.

5. Bridge Management Program. Calloway asked about Stantec's proposal and is the low price realistic. Layton asked if Stantec will be doing a complete inventory, or will they be assessing the bridges' condition. Durfee said they will be doing both. Durfee said Stantec's price is lower because they are not taking as many hours to complete the work. Durfee said the proposal review team agreed that Stantec's proposal was the best. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to authorize the Town Manager to proceed with the Bridge Management Program as proposed by Stantec and to authorize the expenditure of up to \$34,375.00 from the Designated Fund – Bridges to complete said Program work. **Motion approved unanimously.**
6. ARPA Funding Certification. SB members discussed the importance of being deliberate and careful about how the town spends the ARPA funds. As of now, the federal government has not issued details about ARPA spending stipulations. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to confirm that the Town of Norwich will adhere to the ARPA award requirements and related compliance. **Motion approved unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to appoint the Town Manager as the authorized representative for the Town of Norwich for the purposes of ARPA award requirements. **Motion approved unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to affirm that the Town Manager will serve as contact person for the Town of Norwich for the purposes of ARPA funding. **Motion approved unanimously.**
7. VTrans Paving Grant. Durfee said that the town unexpectedly received a \$128,000 paving grant. Durfee explained that the town is responsible for 20% of the paving total cost. The grant would cover paving on part of Beaver Meadow Road. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to authorize the expenditure of approximately \$32,000.00 from the Designated Fund – Paving according to the terms of a VTrans paving grant, which amount represents the town's 20% share of the estimated \$160,000.00 cost of the paving project. **Motion approved unanimously.**
8. As per earlier SB discussion, this agenda item was deferred to a future meeting.
9. Capital Budget and Program Policy. Calloway summarized the reasoning and process behind the draft policy included in the meeting packet. After discussion, SB members agreed that Calloway and Brochu will bring a revised draft back to the SB at a future SB meeting.
10. Parking Lot Items. SB members discussed various possible future agenda items, among which were: personnel policies, the gift policy, capital planning, committees' work/relationship to the SB, and the animal control ordinance and related issues.
11. Executive Session re: Personnel. Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to find that premature general public knowledge of attorney client communications between the Selectboard and Town Attorney as to matters for which legal advice is sought would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage by disclosing privileged communications and waiving attorney-client privilege. **Motion approved unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2nd Calloway) to find that premature general public knowledge of the Selectboard's discussion of a contract with a town employee would clearly place the Town at a substantial disadvantage because of the potential for disclosing the Selectboard's internal exchange of ideas as to what the agreement may allow or require. **Motion approved unanimously.** Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to enter executive session for the purposes of considering attorney-client advice that has been shared with the Chair, for discussion of an employment agreement with a Town employee, and for evaluation of a Town employee. **Motion approved unanimously.** SB moved into executive session at 9:31 pm. Brochu **moved** (2nd Calloway) to enter public session. **Motion approved unanimously.** At 10:01 pm the Selectboard moved into public session.

After returning to public session, Brochu suggested that SB members submit memos for the next SB packet with ideas and suggestions for ARPA funding. Brochu also said she wants to be sure the SB gets public input.

12. Adjourn. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to adjourn. **Motion approved unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:06 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on July 28, 2021

Roger Arnold
Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – July 28, 2021 – Meeting at 6:30

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