

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, July 6, 2022, at 6:30 pm

This meeting was conducted via teleconference using ZOOM according to Open Meeting Law requirements. Members present: Roger Arnold, Chair; Mary Layton, Vice Chair; Claudette Brochu; Marcia Calloway; Robert Gere; Rod Francis, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Also participating: Stuart Richards, Jaan Laaspere, Cheryl Lindberg, Fielding Essensa, Jack Cushman.

1. Meeting convened at 6:31 pm.

2. Agenda Review. Layton **moved** (2nd Layton) to approve the agenda. **Motion approved unanimously.**

3. Public Participation. Stuart Richards asked when questions will be answered. And said he wants to meet in person and remote. Jaan Laaspere said he is concerned about town employees; he had questions about the HR consultant. Cheryl Lindberg said the Board Listers has lodged the 2022 Grand List. She said copies are available from the Town Clerk and it will be posted on the town's website. Claudette Brochu announced that she is resigning because she is moving to another town. Brochu thanked everyone for their support. Arnold, Layton, Calloway, and Gere each thanked Brochu for her work and service. Arnold **moved** (2nd Layton) to accept Claudette Brochu's resignation effective July 11, 2022, with regrets. **Motion approved unanimously.**

4. Set Tax Rate FY2023-24. Fielding Essensa, Finance Director, spoke about the proposed tax rate. After some discussion, Layton **moved** (2nd Brochu) to set the Fiscal Year 2023-24 **Total Homestead Tax Rate at \$2.5195** (equal to a school homestead rate of \$1.9178 a town rate with local agreement of \$0.5940 and a county rate of \$0.0077) and the **Non-Residential Tax Rate at \$2.3389** (equal to a school non-residential rate of \$1.7372, a town rate with local agreement of \$0.5940, and a county rate of \$0.0077). Brochu left the meeting after this motion was voted.

5. Authorize Contract with Clean Harbor for Moore Lane Bridge Clean-up. After some discussion, Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to authorize the Town Manager to enter an agreement with Clean Harbors for an amount not to exceed \$8,000. **Motion approved unanimously.**

6. Authorize Purchase of Exmark Zero Turn Lawnmower. After some discussion, Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to authorize the Town Manager to purchase a Laser E 60" mower with mulch attachment for a price not to exceed \$11,069. This mower will be purchased with the condition that an immediate research and testing schedule of viable municipal electric lawn mowers is established and administered by a Green Procurement Team, to be designated, with first testing sessions conducted no later than June 1, 2023. Research and testing will continue annually until a viable mower is found and procured. At this point the gas mower will be sold or retired. **Motion approved unanimously.** Francis clarified that the funds for this purchase will come from a reserve fund. SB members discussed forming a green procurement team.

7. Executive Session: Attorney-Client Communications. Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) 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 Gere) to enter executive session pursuant to 1 VSA sec. 313(a)(1)(F), for the purposes of considering confidential attorney-client advice, and to invite the town's attorney. **Motion approved unanimously.** The Selectboard went into executive session at 7:42 pm.

Layton **moved** (2nd Gere) to enter public session. **Motion approved unanimously.** The Selectboard moved into public session at 8:22. No action was taken.

8. Adjourn. Layton **moved** (2nd Calloway) to adjourn. **Motion approved unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 8:23.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on July 13, 2022

Roger Arnold, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – July 13, 2022 – Meeting at 6:30

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