

Norwich Selectboard

Special Meeting – June 28, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

Participation: Hybrid Physical Location: Tracy Hall meeting room

ZOOM access information: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89116638939> Meeting ID: 891 1663 8939

US Toll-free: 888-475-4499 (Press *9 to raise hand; Press *6 to unmute after recognized by Chair)

1. Welcome

2. Agenda..... Motion required.

Correspondence, AP Warrant, Minutes – SB considers each category. Public comment possible.

3. Minutes – June 21, 2023 meeting minutes..... Motion(s) required.

Informational Items – Important information for which there will be no immediate action.

- DPW update from Brennan

Reports Submitted -- Reports from appointed committees, departments, or other town-related entities submitted without comment or request for agenda time. The chair will identify such reports for the record, and the SB may or may not determine action is necessary.

- None submitted at time of publication

Action Items for motions – Introduction by the chair on items being decided, any related correspondence, public comment, SB discussion, SB action.

4. Interim Town Manager contract discussion, Executive Session may be required pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A), “after making a specific finding that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved a a substantial disadvantage, and to invite the Interim Town
.....Motion(s) possible.

Discussion Items – Issues being framed for future action. – Order of process: an introduction by the chair, any related correspondence, public comment, SB discussion.

5. Tracy Hall Physical Plant Issues: Heating/Oil Burner etc.....Motion(s) possible.

6. Continued discussion of Agenda planning for the remainder of 2023.....Motion(s) possible.

Future Agenda Items Possible

July 12 and 26, 2023

Unscheduled but to be addressed in future

- Sharon-Norwich Boundary Dispute
- Review of Comms, Boards, and coordination of town work.

Adjournment

DRAFT Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, June 21, 2023, at 6:30 pm

This hybrid meeting was held in the Multipurpose Room in Tracy Hall.

Members present: Marcia Calloway, Chair; Mary Layton, Vice Chair; Roger Arnold; Pamela Smith; Priscilla Vincent

Also participating: Brennan Duffy, Interim Town Manager; Wade Cochran, Chief of Police; Cheryl Lindberg, Treasurer; Wilbert C. (Scooter) Hardy; Stuart Richards; Daniel Goulet; Joel Stettenheim; Troy McBride; Jim Merriam; Mary Gorman; Kris Clement; Linda Cook; Kris Clement; Robert Hake; Robert Gere; Linda Gray

1. Welcome. Meeting was called to order at 6:35 PM by Calloway. She also noted that from now on, anyone wishing to join via Zoom must present with both first and last names. This will help prevent unwanted intrusions, generally known as “Zoom bombing.”

2. Agenda Review. Calloway said in reference to Item #11 that recent developments necessitate the Board postpone its discussion of the Katuchi case until a later date, a point granted by consensus. Layton moved, seconded by Smith, to approve the agenda. **Passed unanimously.**

3. Minutes – May 31 & June 7, 2023. Smith moved, seconded by Layton, to approve the minutes of **May 31** and **June 7**. **Passed unanimously.**

4. Correspondence. Layton moved, seconded by Smith, to accept the correspondence. **Passed unanimously.**

5. AP Warrant(s). Layton moved, seconded by Vincent, to approve AP Warrant number 1008 in the amount of \$27,190. **Passed unanimously.**

Layton moved, seconded by Vincent, to approve AP Warrant number 1009 in the amount of \$105,559.71. **Passed unanimously.**

At this point, Calloway invited public comments on any issues not on the Agenda.

Richards urged the Board to “stop wasting money” defending the Town against the Katucki lawsuit regarding alleged violations of the Open Meeting Law (OML).

Duffy said that with her recent report to the Board, the Interim Finance Director, Joyce Hasbrouck is looking for feedback and direction. Calloway added that this particularly pertains to any actions that might require a motion by the Board.

Goulet, Stettenheim, Gorman (via Zoom), McBride (via Zoom), Richards, and Merriam (via Zoom) extended a previous meeting's debate concerning Norwich Solar Technologies' proposed development of a solar power array in Norwich.

Hardy expressed concerns regarding the recent trend toward Town employees working largely from home as well as particular issues related to DPW, the Town Clerk, and the Interim Town Manager.

Smith moved, seconded by Layton, to reassign expenditures in the amount of \$8,847 for new automated speed signs from the Public Safety Reserve Fund to the Operating Budget. **Passed unanimously.**

Cook reported that had the Town employed a different vendor for handling food waste composting it might have saved \$10,000.

Duffy reported two of the Town Garage's support pillars are in such bad repair that a structural engineer has recommended it not be used at this time. He anticipated receiving further information in the next week on how long the building may be unsafe to use and what temporary measures might allow it at least to withstand the snow loads of the next winter.

6. Planning Commission Appointments – 2 vacancies. The Board heard from three applicants for the two current openings on the Planning Commission: Clement, Gere, and Hake. Arnold moved, seconded by Smith, to appoint Robert (Bob) Hake to the Planning Commission for a term expiring on April 30, 2025. **Passed unanimously.**

Smith moved, seconded by Vincent, to appoint Kris Clement to the Planning Commission for a one-year term. **Motion Passed** (Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: **Yes**; Arnold: **No**).

7. DPW Paving Bid Request. Arnold moved, seconded by Layton, to authorize the expenditure of an amount not to exceed \$50,000 for the Transfer Station Paving Project, to be completed by Springfield Paving, \$30,000 of which is to be expended from the FY2024 operating budget and \$16,000 of which is to be expended from the Designated Paving Fund. **Passed unanimously.**

8. Three-month Extension of contract with TRORC for services of Kyle Katz, Planner. Layton moved, seconded by Vincent, to approve the three-month extension of contract with TRORC for services of Kyle Katz. **Passed unanimously.**

9. Delinquent Dog Licenses. Chief Cochran expressed surprise via Zoom that a warrant concerning delinquent dog licenses had been proposed. He recommended against any such measure, suggesting that a simple letter from the Police Department should suffice. No action taken.

10. Personnel Policy Revision Plan. Layton said she's consulted the VLCT and that although there are templates available, she thinks there is sufficient expertise in Town administration to develop such a document. Layton moved, seconded by Arnold, to charge the ITM and ATM to review and make recommendations for a new Personnel Policy, also issue an RFP for a Human Resources person, and issue an RFP for a wage study to inform our budget process.

11. Update on Katucki case.

Tabled.

12. Interim Town Manager contract discussion. Layton moved, seconded by Vincent, to find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage pursuant to 1. V.S.A. § 313(a)(1). **Passed unanimously.**

Layton moved, seconded by Arnold to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(A) to discuss the Interim Town Manager Contract, and to invite the Interim Town Manager. **Passed Unanimously.**

Entered Executive Session: 8:57 PM.

Layton moved, seconded by Arnold, to enter Public Session. **Passed unanimously.**
Entered Public Session: 9:34 PM.

13. Solar Preferred Site Letter. Layton moved, seconded by Vincent, to find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or a person involved at a substantial disadvantage pursuant to 1. V.S.A. § 313(a)(1). **Passed unanimously.**

Layton moved, seconded by Arnold to enter Executive Session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. § 313(a)(1)(F) to discuss confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the body and to invite the Interim Town Manager. **Passed Unanimously.**

Entered Executive Session: 9:36 PM.

Layton moved, seconded by Smith, to enter Public Session. **Passed unanimously.**

Entered Public Session: 10:30 PM.

14. Tracy Hall Report from Living Buildings and Priscilla Vincent, and Any Available Quotes for Boiler work. Arnold moved to table Item #14 on account of the late hour. Motion failed for lack of a second. There ensued wide-ranging discussion of issues involved with various approaches to heating Tracy Hall in the future, with some urgency noted because as Duffy stated, to meet the needs of next winter, purchasing decisions must be made as soon as possible.

The Board determined that an essential next step will be to engage an architect to help develop and compare options.

15. Continued discussion of Agenda planning for the remainder of 2023.

Tabled.

16. July meeting dates. The Board determined they will hold another special meeting on June 28 to work on setting the Town tax rate and review the Interim Town Manager's contract. Calloway indicated they should be able to limit it to two hours or less. They expect to return to the regular schedule of meetings on the second and fourth Wednesdays in July. Via Zoom, Lindberg assured that if the tax rate were set by the meeting on July 12, it would not be a problem to have tax bills mailed by August 30.

Adjournment. Layton moved to adjourn, seconded by Smith. **Passed Unanimously.**

Meeting adjourned: 11:28 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Ralph C. Hybels,

Minutes Taker