

Minutes of the Special Selectboard Meeting of
Monday, October 24, 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; Marcia Calloway; Robert Gere; Aaron Lamperti; Rod Francis, Town Manager; Miranda Bergmeier, Assistant to the Town Manager.

Also participating: Stuart Richards, Mary Gorman, Chris Katucki.

1. Convene Meeting. Meeting convened at 6:34 PM
2. Agenda Review. Layton moved (2nd Gere) to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Public participation. Stuart Richards made a request for public question and answer session; he offered concerns about the Moore Lane Bridge, Open Meeting Law, job advertising, and HR Happens. Mary Gorman spoke about the HR Happens letter and expressed concern about town employees. Chris Katucki asked about the Health Officer appointment; Arnold said that Alka Dev will be appointed Health Officer and Alena Berube will be named Deputy Health Officer as of November 1, 2022.
4. Executive Session: Town Manager Contract. Layton moved (2nd Gere) to find that premature general public knowledge would clearly place the public body or person involved at a substantial disadvantage regarding the terms and conditions of an employment contract. Motion approved unanimously. Layton moved (2nd Lamperti) to enter executive session pursuant to 1 VSA §313(a)(1)(a) for the purposes of considering the Town Manager contract. The SB entered executive session at 6:37 pm.

Layton moved (2nd Gere) to enter public session. Motion approved unanimously. The SB entered public session at 7:01 pm.

Layton then read aloud a public statement:

The Town of Norwich Selectboard and Town Manager, Rod Francis, have agreed to a separation of employment with the Town. Mr. Francis's last day of work will be November 7, 2022.

Unique challenges facing the town over the last year have created unusual difficulties affecting the Town's operations and the Manager's role in Norwich town government. Rod has acted honorably and professionally during his tenure despite a personal cost resulting from what the Selectboard respectfully finds has been an unwarranted level of negative public sentiment and scrutiny on the part of some.

The Selectboard thanks Rod for his commitment and hard work on behalf of the Town and Rod appreciates the support offered by the Board and their recognition of his service to the community.

Layton moved (2nd Gere) to ratify the separation of employment agreement between the Town of Norwich and Rod Francis, and to have the Selectboard Chair sign the agreement. Motion approved (4- yes; Calloway- no).

5. Adjourn. Layton moved (2nd Lamperti) to adjourn. Motion approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 7:06 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on November 9, 2022

Marcia Calloway, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – October 26, 2022 – Meeting at 6:30

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