

Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting of
Wednesday, October 26, 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: Jack Cushman, Liz Blum, Lily Trajman, Peter Orner, Jaan Laaspere, Arline Rotman, Stuart Richards, Marshall Heinberg, Linda Cook, Susan Barrett, Cheryl Lindberg, Neil Fulton, Pam Smith, Manu Tesone.

1. Convene Meeting. Meeting convened at 6:34 PM
2. Agenda Review. Layton moved (2nd Lamperti) to approve the agenda. Motion approved unanimously.
3. Board Reorganization, Election of Chair and Vice Chair. Calloway nominated Layton for Chair. Layton nominated Calloway for Chair. After discussion, Layton moved (2nd Gere) to name Marcia Calloway as Selectboard Chair. Motion approved (4-yes; Calloway- abstain). Layton nominated herself as Vice Chair. After discussion, Gere moved (2nd Layton) to name Mary Layton as Selectboard Vice Chair. Motion approved unanimously.
4. Public participation. Jack Cushman said he hopes the SB and everyone will seek consensus and common ground, rather than litigate and seek division. Liz Blum thanked Francis for the job he has done; she said she thinks Francis is very competent. Lily Trajman urged the SB to return to in-person meetings as soon as possible. Peter Orner asked the SB to reconsider their decision regarding the Moore Lane Bridge. Jaan Laaspere asked the SB to put executive sessions at the end of the meeting agendas. Arline Rotman said she has had the pleasure of working with Francis for some time and he is one of the most competent public officials she has worked with; she thanked him for his work. Linda Cook asked if the State of Vermont might help with the expense of dealing with the Moore Lane Bridge. Susan Barrett asked if there is any way for townspeople to help. She thanked Rod for serving and thanked the SB and town staff members for their work.
5. Townwide Reappraisal RFP. Francis reviewed his memo and the draft RFP included in the Meeting packet. After some discussion, Arnold moved (2nd Layton) to approve the RFP and ask the Town Manager's office to release it following amendments according to form 411. Motion approved unanimously.
Layton moved (2nd Gere) to approve the establishment of a panel supported by the Town Assessor comprising the Listers, one Selectboard member, one member of the Board of Civil Authority and one member of the public to review any responses received to the RFP. Motion approved (4- yes; Calloway- no).
Layton moved (2nd Lamperti) to solicit applications from members of the public to join the panel, select a member of the Selectboard to sit on the panel, and invite the Board of Civil Authority to nominate a member to the panel. Motion approved (4-yes; Calloway- no).
6. Appoint Layton and Arnold to Collective Bargaining Committee. Arnold said that SB members will need to serve in collective bargaining session, and the town's attorneys have asked the SB to name two SB members to do so. After some discussion, Gere moved (2nd Lamperti) to appoint Mary Layton and Roger Arnold to the Collective Bargaining Committee. Motion approved unanimously.

7. Response to Alleged Violation of Open Meeting Law. Layton moved (2nd Gere) to find that premature general public knowledge of communications with legal counsel would clearly place the Selectboard at a substantial disadvantage because it would waive attorney client privilege covering confidential legal opinion and advice concerning a response to the Notice of Violation sent to the Selectboard on October 17, 2022. Motion approved unanimously. Layton moved (2nd Arnold) to enter into executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Sec. 313(a)(1)(F) to consider confidential attorney-client communications made for the purpose of providing professional legal services to the Selectboard and invite legal counsel to join the Selectboard in the executive session pursuant to 1 V.S.A. Sec. 313(b). Motion approved unanimously.

The Selectboard moved into executive session at 8:06 pm.

Arnold moved (2nd Layton) to enter public session. Motion approved unanimously. The SB moved into public session at 8:43 pm.

Layton said that on October 17, 2022 the SB received a notice alleging a violation of the Open Meeting Law. After due deliberation, Layton moved (2nd Gere) to deny the notice of violation. Motion approved unanimously.

8. Consent Agenda. Layton moved (2nd Gere) to approve the consent agenda. Motion approved unanimously.

9. Future Agenda Items. SB members agreed on dates for the next three SB meetings: November 9, November 22, and December 6. SB members discussed possible future agenda items.

11. Adjourn. Layton moved (2nd Gere) to adjourn. Motion approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 9:24 pm.

By Miranda Bergmeier

Approved by the Selectboard on November 9, 2022

Marcia Calloway, Selectboard Chair

Next Meeting – November 9, 2022 – Meeting at 6:30

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