

**DRAFT Minutes of the Norwich Selectboard Organizational Meeting of
Wednesday, March 6, 2024**

This special meeting was held in person in Tracy Hall and via Zoom with JAM broadcasting on You-Tube.

Members: Roger Arnold (via Zoom), Marcia Calloway, Mary Layton, Pamela Smith and Priscilla Vincent in person at Tracy Hall

Others Participating: Brennan Duffy, Town Manager; Cheryl Lindberg, Treasurer; Will Smith; and Nan Carroll.

Town Manager, Brennan Duffy, acting as Chair Pro-Tempore, called the meeting to order at 6:32 pm with welcoming remarks and an introduction of the members of the Selectboard.

1. Election of Chair

Duffy opened the nominations for the position of Chair. Layton moved to nominate Calloway (no 2nd required). Vincent moved to nominate Smith (no 2nd required). Following extensive discussion of both candidates and the role of Chair, Duffy called for a vote on the motion to nominate Calloway. Yes: Calloway and Layton; No: Arnold, Vincent and Smith. Duffy then called for a vote on the nomination of Smith. Yes: Arnold, Vincent and Smith; No: Calloway and Layton. Duffy then turned the meeting over to Smith to continue as the newly-elected Chair.

2. Election of Vice Chair

Smith asked for nominations for the office of Vice-Chair. Calloway moved to nominate Layton (no 2nd required). Smith moved to nominate Vincent (no 2nd required). After some discussion, Arnold nominated Calloway (no 2nd required). Calloway responded, "I don't think that it [her serving as Vice-Chair] would be effective at all because Pam doesn't listen very well so I wouldn't be useful". Smith noted that historically a newly-elected member of the Board had been voted as the Vice-Chair. This didn't happen in October 2022 when Calloway became the Chair with Layton as Vice-Chair or in March 2023 at the SB Organizational Meeting. Nan Carroll asked what is the role of the Vice-Chair. Smith called on Layton to explain how she has viewed her role as Vice-Chair. Smith said that we have 3 nominations on the table: Layton, Vincent, and Calloway. Calloway then clarified that she declined. Smith called for the vote on Layton. Yes: Arnold, Calloway and Layton; No: Vincent and Smith. Layton being voted Vice-Chair, Smith closed the voting.

3. Agenda Review

Motion by Layton to approve the agenda as presented (2nd Vincent). Unanimous

4. Selection of Official Town Newspaper

Motion by Layton to select the Valley News as the official Town newspaper (2nd Vincent). Unanimous.

5. Set Selectboard Regular Meeting Schedule, Time, Participation

Motion by Layton to set the regular meeting schedule of the Norwich Selectboard on the 2nd and 4th Wednesday of each month at 6:30pm except for the second meeting in November being held on Tuesday, the 26th and the second meeting in December being held on the 18th with a hybrid meeting format unless warned as remote only (2nd Vincent). Unanimous.

6. Authorize the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair to Sign Payroll Warrants.

Motion by Layton to authorize the Chair and/or the Vice-Chair to sign payroll warrants (2nd Vincent). Unanimous.

7. Authorize the Chair and/or Vice-Chair to sign AP Warrants Off Cycle

Motion by Layton to authorize the Chair and/or Vice-Chair to sign AP warrants off cycle (2nd Vincent). Cheryl Lindberg asked if the motion included the requirement to have the off-cycle warrants included in the next SB packet. Smith offered a friendly amendment to include off-cycle warrants in the next packet. Layton and Vincent accepted the friendly amendment. Unanimous.

8. Adopt Procedure for Receipt of Correspondence

Vincent asked about the use of the Selectboard email address and whether that was an effective way to communicate with the SB. Smith said she was in favor of having a distribution list that functions in the background that would send any email to all SB members because of her past experience when the SB didn't receive correspondence sent to that email address. Arnold said he wants the Selectboard@norwich.vt.us emails to continue to go to the Town Manager's office. Motion by Layton to adopt the receipt of correspondence procedure as presented (2nd Vincent). Unanimous.

9. Adopting the Rules of Procedure

The Board looked at the agreement and decided to remove two sentences from the document. Under "Statutory Authority" the following wording will be removed:

"A printed copy of these statutes will be compiled and located in the physical meeting room for each selectboard meeting and will be appended to these rules and found on the Town of Norwich Selectboard website at <http://norwich.vt.us/selectboard-policies/>."

Under Meetings, Item #4 the following wording will be removed: ***"If a quorum or more of the body attend a meeting (regular, special or emergency) without being physically present at a designated meeting location, the agenda for the meeting shall designate at least one physical location where a member of the public can attend and participate in the meeting, except where act of law otherwise allows."***

Motion by Layton (2nd Vincent) to adopt the Rules of Procedure as amended.
Unanimous. Smith will prepare the revised document for the March 13, 2024, packet.

10. Other Organizational Business, if any

Members discussed items that they wish to see on a future agenda. A lengthy discussion took place about the Town Manager’s request to discuss wage parity between CBA and non-CBA employees at the March 13, 2024 meeting. The Town Manager was directed to prepare documentation regarding the financial impact of this proposed change along with providing all SB members a copy of the draft of the wage study developed by the contractor. If these materials can be ready for the March 13 packet, this can be added to that agenda. If not ready, the agenda item will be added to March 27 or whenever the Town Manager informs the SB that he has the requested materials ready for inclusion in a future SB packet. Smith also stated that the Board needs to decide if they want the Town Manager to prepare a revision of the Grade and Step chart contained in the Condrey Report to reflect his proposed changes.

Layton expressed concern about how the motion sheet will be developed for future meetings. Duffy said that it is not in the job description for the Assistant Town Manager to help prepare the motion sheet. Duffy further stated that neither he nor the Assistant Town Manager have the time to help put together the motion sheet or the agenda. Smith asked Duffy to make the Assistant Town Manager job description available on the Town website so that the SB can understand the duties of this position.

Town Meeting Results

Smith stated that everything passed at Town meeting and that no motion is needed.

Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

There were no public comments.

Future Meeting Dates and Potential Topics

Smith stated that she will develop the agenda for the meeting on March 13, 2024.

Adjournment

Layton moved (2nd Vincent) to adjourn at 8:17pm. Unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Pamela T. Smith
Selectboard Chair

Approved _____, 2024