

Minutes of the Norwich Selectboard Meeting of Wednesday, August 14, 2024

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

All members of the public body present in Tracy Hall¹: Pam Smith, Chair; Mary Layton, Vice Chair; Priscilla Vincent.

All members of the public body present via Zoom: Roger Arnold; Marcia Calloway.

All other active participants in the meeting²: Brennan Duffy, Town Manager; Lily Trajman, Town Clerk; Chris Kaufman, DPW Director; Peter Orner; Jaan Lasphere; Andy Scherr.

Meeting was called to order by Smith at 6:30 p.m..

Item 1 Agenda.

- Vincent moved to approve the agenda; seconded by Layton. Arnold, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes; Calloway, No as to Item #2. **Motion Passed.**

Item 2 Chair Report.

- Smith reported of her conversations about the agenda; and, that Alex Northern has declined the position of Town Health Officer.

Item 3 Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

- Lily Trajman, Town Clerk, recapped the election of 8/13/2024, and noted that more volunteers are needed for the November 2024 election.
- Jaan Laaspere re Moore Lane Bridge, and concern that Clean Harbors applied less of the absorbent material than was previously applied and that this short-term solution will not hold until a long-term solution is employed.
- Peter Orner re Moore Lane Bridge, echoed Laaspere's concerns, noted that the bridge foundation is being eroded by the leaking toxic material, asked how much the town has spent from 2002 until now, and about the RFQ. Town Manager Duffy responded that the documents Orner requested are available for pick up. Duffy reviewed the estimated recent expenses, work done by Winterset and Clean Harbors, and confirmed that the RFQ seeking long-term solutions is due Monday.

Item 4 Subcommittee Appointments

- Smith received three responses from committees, two were sent to the Town Manager's office for inclusion in the packet: Emerald Ash Borer Management Group and Milton Frye Nature Area Subcommittee. The Affordable Housing Subcommittee will be included for the August 28 Selectboard meeting.
- Vincent moved to create the Emerald Ash Borer Management Group under the Norwich Conservation Commission, and to appoint the following members to the Emerald Ash Borer Management Group under the Norwich Conservation Commission: David Hubbard and David Hobson to a term ending March 2025; Lindsey Putnam, Peg Merrens and Alex Gottlieb to a term ending March 2026; and Chris Rimmer, Doug Hardy and Matt Hall to a

¹ 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(1)(A)

² 1 V.S.A. § 312(b)(1)(B)

term ending March 2027. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

- Calloway moved to create the Milton Frye Nature Area Subcommittee under the Norwich Conservation Commission, and to appoint the following members to the Milton Frye Nature Area Subcommittee under the Norwich Conservation Commission: Chris Morley and Chris Rimmer to a term ending March 2025; Lindsey Putnam, and Derek Walker to a term ending March 2026; and Lynwood Andrews and Brie Swenson to a term ending March 2027. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes. **Motion Passed.**
- Vincent moved to waive Attorney-Client confidentiality to make the opinion letter received from Town Counsel, dated August 5, 2024, regarding Planning Commission Committees, public and to place this document in the packet for the August 28, 2024 regular Selectboard meeting. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 5 Committee/Subcommittee Welcome Letter

- Layton moved to approve the Committee/Subcommittee Welcome Letter to be sent to every person appointed by the Selectboard to serve on a committee or subcommittee. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 6 Better Bin License Renewal

- Andy Scherr answered questions about experience with the application to date, and his hope for more people to use it. Discussion included parallel signage, the contract's choice of law, and type of advertisements served to users.
- Vincent moved to authorize the Town Manager to renew the Better Bin subscription for the period July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025 for an annual fee of \$1,500.00. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Smith, Vincent: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item #7 Fire District Invoice for Fire Protection

- Discussion by Selectboard members about the \$30,000 outstanding, being the remainder of the total \$60,000 billed to the Town for this year. Board members mentioned: the benefits and reasons to pay the remainder; legal arbitration; the DEC's publication, "How to Form a Fire District;" the need to review the 1922 Selectboard certificate to be on file in the Town Clerk's office; the DEC list of available grants, loans and other assistance for fire districts; that the issue of sidewalks make this a larger issue; and the possibility of a charter. Duffy reminded the board that \$34,000 had been budgeted and that the amount next year would be \$90,000. There was discussion about whether this topic would be appropriate for the November ballot, possibly as an advisory article.
- Vincent moved to pay the March 6, 2024 Fire District Invoice for Fire Protection Assessment/hydrant use from 1/1/2024 to 6/30/2024 in the amount of \$30,000 from FY24 operational funds. Second by Smith. Vincent, Smith: Yes; Arnold, Calloway, Layton: No. **Motion Failed.**
- Vincent moved that the town pay the Fire District the remaining \$4,000 budgeted for the fire protection assessment from FY24 operational funds. Second Smith. Vincent, Smith: Yes; Arnold, Calloway, Layton: No. **Motion Failed.**

Item #8 DPW Request to Purchase new Freightliner

- Smith concerned about having one bid. Chris Kaufman, DPW Director presented DPW use and experience with Freightline thus the cost effectiveness of choosing the company that sells them.
- Vincent moved to authorize the purchase of a new Freightliner 1085D Plus Dump Truck in the amount of \$218,934 from Fund 07 Highway Equipment Fund, as outlined in the proposal from the Department of Public Works Director dated August 7, 2024. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent: Yes; Smith: No as to only one bid. **Motion Passed.**

Item 9 Casella Service Agreement

- Duffy reported that local municipalities will be discussing ways to save money on waste streams.
- Vincent moved to approve the Amendment to Service Agreement from Casella Waste Management for the period ending March 31, 2025. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 10 Extension of Zoning Administrator Contract

- Vincent moved to approve the extension of the contract with TRORC for a part-time Zoning Administrator for 6-8 hours per week with a cost not to exceed \$13,530 for the period of September 1, to December 31, 2024. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 11 Grand List Errors & Omissions Request

- Vincent moved to approve amending the 2024 Grand List to correct an error on Parcel #06-022.000 by reducing the value of this parcel by \$5,000 due to a lot line adjustment. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 12 ANR Notice of Alleged Violation

- Duffy reported receipt of an alleged violation letter regarding the trail intersection on LaDue Road and Bradley Hill. The Town will respond as to mitigation.

Item 13 A/P Warrants

- Layton moved to approve AP Warrant #1160 in the amount of \$162,942.04 to be paid from the General Fund. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**
- Layton moved to approve AP Warrant #1159 in the amount of \$222.60 to be paid from Fund #47 Public Safety Facility Fund. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

- Layton moved to approve AP Warrant #1158 in the amount of \$3982.40 to be paid from Fund #21 Police Special Equipment Fund. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**
- Layton moved to approve AP Warrant #1156 in the amount of \$86,250.00 to be paid from Fund #54 Culvert Reserve Fund. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 14 Approval of July 17, 24 and 25, 2024 Minutes

- Layton moved to approve the July 17, 2024 minutes. Second by Vincent. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**
- Minutes of July 24, 2024,
 - Smith omitted a motion when she prepared the minutes of July 24, 2024, and requested the minutes be amended to include that motion.
 - Calloway requested Item 5 be corrected to show the discussion was about Open Meeting Law violations as to the grievance hearings and the possible effect on the grand list.
 - Layton moved to approve the July 24, 2024 minutes as amended (to add the omitted motion). Second by Vincent. Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. Calloway: No as to Item 5. Arnold: Abstain. **Motion Passed.**
- Layton moved to approve the July 25, 2024 minutes. Second by Vincent. Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. Arnold: Abstain. **Motion Passed.**

Item 15 Receipt of Correspondence

- Selectboard discussed Stephen Hepburn's request to confirm authorities and duties granted by the Selectboard to the Recreation Advisory Council.
 - Layton moved to authorize Calloway to contact committees regarding their charge. Second by Vincent. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**
- Vincent moved to accept all correspondence. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.**

Item 16 Adjournment

- Vincent moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Layton. Arnold, Calloway, Layton, Vincent, Smith: Yes. **Motion Passed.** Meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.