

**Town of Norwich, Vermont**  
**Minutes of the Selectboard Meeting**  
**Wednesday, June 25, 2025**

**Active Participants at Tracy Hall:** Mary Layton (SB Chair), Priscilla Vincent (SB member), Marcia Calloway (SB member), Brennan Duffy (Town Manager), Cheryl Lindberg (Lister), Peter Orner (Town member), Karen Kayen (Town member), Alexa Manning (Town member)

**Active Participants on Zoom:** Kimo Griggs (SB Vice Chair), Matthew Romei (Police Chief), Brie Swenson (Recreation Director), Jaan Laaspere (Planning Commission), Pam Smith (Lister)

Matt Swett (SB member) was not present.

**Key:** *Motions noted in italics.*  
[Public comment noted in blue.](#)

**The meeting was called to order by Chair Mary Layton at 6:30 pm.**

**YouTube Timestamp: 43:47**

**1. Agenda**

**Timestamp: 44:12**

*I move to approve the agenda as presented. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

**2. Chair's Report**

**Timestamp: 45:17**

The Chair (1) received an update from VLCT about the passage of Act 51 and noted associated Selectboard meeting requirement updates, (2) attended a meeting with Homes for Norwich, and (3) met to establish the agenda.

**3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda**

**Timestamp: 48:02**

Vincent praised Administrative Assistant Brita Vallens for her proactive efforts to alert citizens about work being done on Kate Wallace Road. The Chair added appreciation for Brita and Miranda's support for the new Finance Committee.

Cheryl Lindberg gave an update on the reappraisal process, including the receipt of the informal hearing results from KRT, the coordination for upcoming updates to the website, and the target of Monday, June 30<sup>th</sup> for the filing of the abstract and the mailing of the change of assessment and change of land use letters.

Peter Orner noted his appreciation for the pedestrian corridor on Beaver Meadow Road but requested further work to paint fog lines along the road and publicize the purpose of the walkway among citizens.

Karen Kayen asked that pedestrians wear brighter colors to increase visibility for drivers.

#### **4. Animal Control Ordinance**

**Timestamp: 57:12**

Selectboard members reviewed version seven of the draft animal ordinance, which the Chair acknowledged was not in the packet but included minimal changes to the previous version. Calloway initiated a virtual screen-share of the version seven draft ordinance, which can be seen in the YouTube recording.

The Chair suggested discussion of section three on definitions, section five on collars and licenses, and section thirteen on leashing, and referenced correspondence from citizens that informed her ideas.

Selectboard members debated the meaning of “voice control” and “running at large.” Calloway shared concern over the ability to enforce subjective terms. Griggs and Calloway questioned how Huntley Meadows would fit into the definition of “running at large.”

The Chair shared feedback from Town Counsel on section five regarding licensing language and section thirteen regarding flexibility in off-leash hours and designated dog areas.

Vincent highlighted concerns about damage from dogs to the playing turfs, which Griggs had raised in his memo. Vincent further noted that there are more constituencies than sports players and residents who are pro-off leash dogs.

Selectboard members contemplated the various stakeholders in the ordinance discussion and recognized the likelihood of not meeting everyone’s interests completely.

The Town Manager suggested adopting the proposed edits from Town Counsel, returning to the conversation at the next meeting, and voting on it at that meeting. He highlighted that the ordinance would not take effect immediately upon the Selectboard's vote.

Griggs asked that "in season" be removed from section thirteen.

The Town Manager countered that it would be difficult to limit access to playing fields outside of the playing season given the lack of sustained clearly marked boundaries.

Selectboard members and Recreation Director Brie Swenson discussed the forms of activity across seasons at Huntley Meadows, including cross country skiing.

Alexa Manning asked for clarification on what would stay in the ordinance from section 13 in the draft ordinance adjusted to Town Counsel's guidance.

The Chair read through the updated language and shared that it would be included in the next Selectboard packet. She noted a lack of reference to a dog park in the updated language.

Manning described the broad footprint of athletic fields and playing courts on Huntley Meadows and asked for clarity on where dogs could run free in the area.

Calloway acknowledged the possibility that it could be impossible to have dogs off leash during sports season if they are not under voice control enough to stay in a certain area.

The Chair recognized the strict nature of the draft ordinance language.

Swenson noted that the Recreation Department would not manage restrictions on Huntley Meadows.

Kayen asked "what is considered to create the problem" and shared that there needs to be more education for dog owners and dog-meeters on how to handle encounters.

Calloway noted that she was contacted by a townspeople five years ago asking for support on the matter of dogs at Huntley Meadows during weekends. Calloway further referenced an instance of a child being bitten at a playing event and requiring rabies shots.

*I move to incorporate and adopt the changes discussed and language recommended by Counsel, and to review a clean copy of draft #8 at the next meeting. – Calloway (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

## **5. Approval of Audit Scope and Objectives**

**Timestamp: 2:07:05**

The Town Manager shared that this was the annual agreement to engage with the auditing firm to do their annual audit for FY25.

Vincent shared that she had requested feedback on the document from a member of the Finance Committee, who confirmed that it was standard.

*I move to approve the Audit Scope and Objectives as presented and authorize the Chair to sign. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

## **6. DPW FY26 Annual Financial Plan and Certificate of Compliance**

**Timestamp: 2:09:22**

The Town Manager shared that this was standard and would allow Norwich to have access to the State's grant funding for roads.

*I move to approve the Annual TA-60 Financial Plan and Certificate of Compliance as presented. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

## **7. DPW Bid Evaluation and Recommendation: Engineering Services for Route 132 Culvert 18**

**Timestamp: 2:10:55**

The Town Member explained that this request was for approval to move forward with the bid for preliminary engineering for the project.

Vincent pointed out errors in dates in the memo.

The Chair highlighted the prevalence of culverts on Route 132.

*I move to approve the bid from Hammond Engineering in the amount of \$27,280.00 as presented. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> x) Vote: (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

**8. NPD Request for Designated Fund Expenditure: Radio Equipment**

**Timestamp: 2:13:39**

Vincent noted increasing discomfort with recent town requests and her difficulty with understanding the relevant numbers.

Calloway suggested updates to the Department Request for Spending form to more thoroughly capture a department's financial standing.

*I move to authorize the expenditure of up to \$12,000 from Fund #11 to purchase radio equipment for the Norwich Police Department and up to \$17,000 from Operational Line Item 1-5-500536 for in-vehicle dispatch services. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Griggs) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Layton), no (Vincent)*

**9. NPD Request for Designated Fund Expenditure: Enclosed Cargo Trailer**

**Timestamp: 2:17:49**

The Town Manager shared that this proposed purchase would be a more efficient way to transport equipment.

*I move to authorize the expenditure of up to \$12,500 from Fund #21, to purchase an enclosed cargo trailer. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

**10. Planning for Hearing on Proposed Zoning and Subdivision Regulations**

**Timestamp: 2:19:20**

The Chair noted that it was necessary to have a planning hearing before passing the Planning Commission's recommended regulations.

The Town Manager clarified that the earliest possible meeting to do this at would be the July 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

Jaan Laaspere explained that the changes proposed are the relatively uncontroversial ones to clean things up and be in line with state statute, and that there is a running list of more in-depth changes for the next bundle of proposals.

Selectboard members and Laaspere discussed jurisdiction of town boundary lines, as well as subdivision of lots. Calloway suggested edits to language and the attachment of relevant maps due to possible issues arising from inconsistencies.

*I move to hold the statutorily required Selectboard hearing on the proposed bylaw amendments and subdivision regulations on July 23, 2025. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

## **11. Town Manager Report**

**Timestamp: 2:45:49**

The Town Manager shared that (1) the auditor letter has been signed, (2) the annual Town of Norwich COLA increase has been calculated, (3) planning bylaw updates are in progress, (4) DPW roadway work is in progress or completed, (5) the Hemlock Road project is on target for completion in mid-July, (6) the culvert replacement will start next month, (7) an equipment operator has been hired, (8) a building and grounds technician has been promoted to an equipment operator position, (9) a building and grounds position is being advertised, (10) summer camps are beginning, (11) the RFP for tennis court resurfacing and basketball court did not receive any responses, (12) Swenson is reissuing the RFP for just the tennis court resurfacing, (13) the Tracy Hall boiler bid package has been issued, (14) the cell tower RFP did not receive any responses but will be reissued, and (15) he wants guidance on the contract renewal for Amanda's position in the Lister's Office.

The Town Manager explained his concern over signing off on a contract for a role in the Lister's Office. He further questioned the new wage scale being proposed for the Lister's Office, which would be higher than the rate of the contract position, despite the contract position having been established to provide a skillset not covered by others in the office. The Town Manager highlighted the suggestion to keep Amanda on contract for another six months, and his preference for a shorter contract to get through the reappraisal, followed by a shift to find an interested assessor.

Calloway questioned the timing of the three-grade salary hike for the listers given the ongoing reappraisal and advocated for considering the budgeting of the office once the budget season arrives.

The Chair shared Calloway's surprise at the raises.

Griggs requested the matter be added to the next meeting's agenda and noted that the subject has "come out of nowhere."

Lindberg shared that the listers had provided the document "weeks ago" and had tried to have a conversation with the Town Manager but "it didn't end up going down this path."

Lindberg expressed her frustration and disappointment that the matter was not in the Town Manager report before the packet was distributed.

The Town Manager explained that the listers held a special meeting last Thursday that changed his approach to the matter and requested guidance from the Selectboard on how to proceed.

Pam Smith asked what the topic of the discussion was given the lack of reference to the contract or listers in the meeting agenda.

The Town Manager, Smith, and Lindberg debated the details of communications surrounding the contract renewal.

Selectboard members, the Town Manager, and Smith debated the appropriateness of discussing the matter at that night's Selectboard meeting and the allowance for discussion of matters arising after the creation of the Town Manager's report.

Vincent suggested discussing updates to Tracy Hall beyond the boiler project.

## **12. Department Reports**

**Timestamp: 3:07:33**

Vincent thanked the Finance Department for their overview in the packet.

## **13. Approve Minutes**

**Timestamp: 3:07:54**

On #15, Calloway thought she said pejorative, not abusive.

*I move to approve the minutes for June 11, 2025 as amended. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Vincent, Layton)*

## **14. AP Warrants**

**Timestamp: 3:09:03**

*I move to approve AP Warrant #1341 in the amount of \$344.72 to be paid from the General Fund; AP Warrant #1342 in the amount of \$185.00 to be paid from the General Fund; and AP Warrant #1343 in the amount of \$106,180.34 to be paid from the General Fund.– Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Layton), abstain (Vincent)*

## **15. Receipt of Correspondence**

**Timestamp: 3:10:03**

The Chair asked for confirmation from the Selectboard as to whether they would like to add strategic planning to the next meeting's agenda. Calloway requested the Selectboard invite the Affordable Housing Subcommittee to the next meeting. Vincent requested a discussion of the next steps for Tracy Hall improvement.

*I move to receive all correspondence. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Layton, Vincent)*

## **16. Adjournment**

**Timestamp: 3:24:20**

*I move to adjourn the meeting. – Calloway moved (2<sup>nd</sup> Vincent) Vote: yes (Calloway, Griggs, Layton, Vincent)*

Meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Minutes taken by Jenny Tolman.

**Minutes approved on July 9, 2025**

---

**Mary Layton, Selectboard Chair**