

**TOWN/VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD  
JOINT BOARD MEETING  
BOARD OF TOWN SELECTMEN  
BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES  
Minutes of September 14, 2009**

- I. **ROLL CALL.** Selectboard Chair Kenneth Johnson (absent), Vice-Chair Gregory Sanders, Selectmen Melvin Adams, Kenneth Goslant, and Charles Morse; Trustees Chair Samantha Baraw, Trustees Colin Bright, Libby Hambleton, Doug Lawson, and Thomas McCarney. Also present were Municipal Manager Nanci Allard, Accounting Manager Laurie Baroffio, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Warren Hagy, and William Croney (*Northfield News*).

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

III. **JOINT DISCUSSION**

- a. **Inter-Company Charges.** Manager Allard stated that she and Accounting Manager Laurie Baroffio had worked with the Inter-Company Charge Subcommittee (Selectman Goslant and Trustee Lawson) in order to properly assign expenses between Northfield Town and Northfield Village. She added that because of the already existing sharing of resources between the Town and Village, a perfect allocation was not possible but the existing document probably is as accurate as possible. She then went through the various items one at a time.

**Postage Machine/Copiers.** Manager Allard stated that the proposal is for maintenance costs for the postage machine to be allocated as follows: Electric Department 32%, Water Department 16%, Sewer Department 12%, and Town General 40%. The postage costs themselves are already keyed to the various departments. This maintenance costs are about \$2200 per year. The proposed allocation for maintenance of the copiers is as follows: Electric Department 17%, Water Department 10%, Sewer Department 7%, Village General/Highway 16%, Town General Fund 34%, and Town Highway 16%. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve the above allocation of costs for maintaining the postage machine and copiers. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Monthly Telephone/Fax/Modem Charges.** Manager Allard would like to allocate invoices based upon historic usage with the following percentages: Town General 54%, Town Highway 1%, Water Department 20%, Electric Department 16%, Sewer Department 8%, and Village Highway 1%. She noted that the Water Department's share is high because it has dedicated lines for its alarm systems. She also added that these figures will be verified twice a year in order to assure their accuracy. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to approve the above allocation of costs for monthly telephone/fax/modem charges. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Computer Maintenance.** The annual costs of computer maintenance would be split evenly between the Town and Village as follows: Town General 50%, Electric Department 25%, Water Department 14.5%, and Sewer Department 10.5%. The annual costs of software maintenance, which apply to the utilities only, are as follows: Electric Department 50%, Water Department 29%, and Sewer Department 21%. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to approve the above allocation of annual costs for computer and software maintenance. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Sand/Salt.** Manager Allard would like to maintain the current allocation of expenses for the purchase of sand and salt for the roads, which is as follows: Sand: Town 90% and Village 10%; Salt: Town 50% and Village 50%. She noted that this coming year is a trial one as we are now adding liquid calcium chloride to the mix. Trustee McCarney would like to add the liquid calcium chloride expense to this policy with an even split between the Town and Village. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to approve the above allocation of costs for the purchase of sand and salt with the addition that expenses for liquid calcium chloride would be allocated Town 50% and Village 50%. This policy would begin with the next fiscal year. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Municipal Manager's Salary and Benefits.** Manager Allard noted that the previous allocation had been an even split between Town and Village. However, she would like to have the time she spends on highway issues recognized in the allocation. The new proposal is as follows: Town General 42%, Town Highway 8%, Village General 2%, Village Highway 4.5%, Electric Department 22%, Water Department 12.5%, and Sewer Department 9%. The allocation of expenses for the Administrative Assistant position would follow the same allocation. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee Baraw, to approve the above allocation of expenses for the salaries and benefits of the Municipal Manager and Administrative Assistant positions. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Municipal Building Use Policy.** Manager Allard's proposal would have the Town General Fund charged 94% of the costs of the Municipal Building (and the Kent Street Storage Facility) with the remainder allocated as follows: Electric Department 3%, Water Department 1.7%, and Sewer Department 1.3%. In addition, the Water Department would be charged a \$10,000 annual fee for use of the lower portion of the building; these funds would be put into the Village Buildings CIP account. Selectman Adams favors the proposed allocation but would like it reviewed periodically to ensure its accuracy. Motion by Selectman Adams, seconded by Selectman Morse, to approve the proposed allocation of expenses for the Municipal Building and the Kent Street Storage Facility with the above stipulation. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Maintenance Personnel.** Manager Allard would like this position allocated as follows: Town General (Grounds/Parks/Facilities) 75% and Town Highway 25%. Trustee McCarney has no problem with this allocation but, as a Village resident, in the past he has chosen not to vote on Town Highway matters. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Morse, to approve the above allocation of expense for the Maintenance Personnel position. **Motion passed 8-0-1, with Trustee McCarney abstaining.**

**Equipment Rental Fee.** Manager Allard proposes that the Water and Sewer Departments pay an annual fee of \$2500 to the Village Highway fund for use of the backhoe. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve the above annual payment. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Village Highway Sewer Fee.** Manager Allard proposes that the Village Highway Department pay the Sewer Department \$2500 per year to cover the expense of road sand/gravel deposited into the sewer drains. Selectman Morse believes this payment is "ridiculous" as there is no way to accurately track the source of this debris; some might be the result of dirty vehicles (from Roxbury) driven through the Village during rainstorms. Selectman Adams sympathized with this concern but also felt that utility customers should not have to bear the sole cost of highway waste getting into the drainage system. Motion by Trustee Lawson, seconded by Selectman Adams, to approve the above annual payment. **Motion passed 8-1-0, with Selectman Morse voting in the negative.**

**Highway Mechanic.** Manager Allard would like to move this item from the Town General to the Town Highway budget. Individual departments having their vehicles serviced will continue to be charged for specific labor and equipment costs. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to have expenditures in support of the Town Mechanic appropriated in the Highway Mechanic budget. **Motion passed 8-0-1, with Trustee McCarney abstaining.**

**Town Garage.** Manager Allard would like this item also moved from the Town General to the Town Highway budget. The percentage breakdown, based upon square footage usage of the facility, is as follows: Town Highway 45%, Ambulance Service 33%, and Village Highway 22%. Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve the above allocation of expenses for the Town Garage as well move its budget from Town General to Town Highway. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

**Public Works Superintendent.** Manager Allard would like to alter the current allocation of expenses for Superintendent Lyon's position to the following breakdown: Town General 5%, Town Highway 43%, Village Highway 22%, Electric Department 15%, Water Department 9%, and Sewer Department 6%. The main increase is in Town Highway (10% to 43%), which is offset by reductions in the Water Department (30% to 9%) and Sewer Department (30% to 6%) allocations. Selectman Morse did not believe that the redistribution indicated above was appropriate without an explanation. He noted that there was a Highway Foreman to assist with highway maintenance. He also felt that the amount allocated to the utilities was far too low. For example, there have been major water projects the past couple of years that have occupied much of Superintendent Lyon's time. Selectman Adams noted that although the Highway Foreman does contribute to day-to-day operations, he was not an administrator and was not directly involved with long-term planning, etc. In addition, the utility projects only take up a significant part of Superintendent Lyon's time during the construction season; during the rest of the year (i.e. winter and mud season), he spends most of his time on highway maintenance. Manager Allard added that Superintendent Lyon, in addition to the current water project, has been spending much of his recent time on the Road Surface Management System (RSMS) program for the Highway Department. Trustee Lawson noted that the suggested allocation had been presented to Superintendent Lyon, who felt that it was accurate. Selectman Sanders inquired about the status of the transition towards Superintendent Lyon's expected retirement. Manager Allard noted that the affected department heads have been taking management courses in preparation for that eventuality. Motion by Selectman Adams, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the above allocation of the Public Works Superintendent's salary and benefits. **Motion passed 8-1-0, with Selectman Sanders voting in opposition.**

**Town Accounting Charges.** The proposal for the revised allocation of expenses for the Accounting Department positions has been broken down into various categories based upon historic usage, i.e. ambulance bill payments, payroll, etc. Following an inquiry, Accounting Manager Baroffio explained that the Town/Village Highway Street Contract budget is for invoice payments approved by the Town Selectmen for items associated with Village streets, The Village Trustees receive and approve separate invoices for Village vehicle maintenance, etc, Trustee McCarney would like these two accounts ("Town/Village Highway Street Contract" and "Village Highway") consolidated. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to approve the proposed allocation of expenses for the Accounting Department and consolidate the above indicated accounts. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

*The remaining items are Village only and will be solely addressed by the Village Trustees.*

**(A) General Government Administration.** This allocation of the Village Trustees budget will be split as follows: Village General 2%, Electric Department 49%, Water Department 28%, and Sewer Department 21%. **(B) Water/Sewer Technicians.** The wages and benefits for the water and sewer technicians will be allocated as follows: Water Department 60% and Sewer Department 40%. **(C) Customer Service Representatives.** The personnel costs for the utility office employees will be allocated based on the number of customers and as follows: Electric Department 50%, Water Department 29%, and Sewer Department 21%. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve the above items A, B, and C. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board members thanked Manager Allard, Accounting Manager Baroffio, Selectman Goslant, and Trustee Lawson for their hard work upon the revised budget allocation policy.

- b. **Norwich University Request to Lift Parking Bans (Family Weekend and Homecoming Weekend).** The Boards had received a letter from Norwich University asking for a lifting of the parking bans on Central Street and Crescent Avenue during Family Weekend (September 25-27, 2009) and Homecoming Weekend (October 2-4, 2009). Trustee McCarney believed that previous liftings of the parking ban on Central Street only pertained to the west side of the street. Other concerns were raised about access to Green Mountain Family Practice should the parking ban be lifted on Crescent Avenue, resulting in parking on both sides of the street. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Selectman Goslant, that the parking ban for these specified weekends be lifted on the west side only of Central Street and that the parking ban be lifted on Crescent Avenue with the stipulation that Norwich University work with the Municipal Manager to ensure that there is no danger or impediment to the travelling public and/or to emergency vehicles. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

#### IV. BOARD OF TOWN SELECTMEN

a. **Approval of Minutes**

1. **August 24, 2009 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Adams, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

b. **Approval of Bills**

1. **Warrant #06-10.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Adams, to approve Warrant #06-10 in the amount of \$1,011,473.49. Manager Allard explained that the payment to Information & Visualization Services was for providing new tax maps. She stated that the final invoice had been more than \$5000 over the agreed contract price because the company provided additional services that had not been included in the original contract. After negotiation, this increase had been reduced by half. Warren Hagy, a former Lister who is assisting with mapping issues, stated that the additional work included fixing errors on old tax maps as well as adding surveys that were previous to (pre-1995) or more recent than (post-April 2007) the timeframe originally agreed upon. Selectman Morse asked if the maps were proprietary or if Northfield could use another company to provide future maintenance. Mr. Hagy stated that the maps were the property of Northfield and the Town could hire anyone to work with them. Selectman Goslant questioned a tax payment to the Northfield School District. Accounting Manager Baroffio stated that the Town collects taxes on behalf of the school and then forwards a pre-payment. Selectman Sanders asked about an invoice for a portalet for the August car show. Manager Allard stated that it had been agreed that the Town would pay for the portalet when the event was first proposed. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

- c. **2009 Grand List Errors & Omissions.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Selectman Adams, to approve the correction to the 2009 Grand List as presented by the Board of Listers and dated August 31, 2009. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

d. **Status Reports: Various Projects**

1. **Running in the Streets.** Selectman Goslant is concerned about Norwich University students running two, three, or four abreast at the side of the roads. This not only impedes traffic but is a danger to the runners themselves. Trustee McCarney suggested that the Municipal Manager discuss this concern with the appropriate Norwich University officials.
2. **Brush Cutting.** Selectman Goslant asked if the Town Highway was behind schedule in cutting brush. Manager Allard said that it was and this was due to various equipment problems. Selectman Goslant hopes that this can be resolved soon as there is a problem in many parts of Northfield with tree branches hanging over the road.
3. **Police Department Purchases.** Selectman Sanders noted that the Police Department planned to purchase shotguns, patrol rifles, and riot gear with grant money. He would like this matter on the next meeting agenda and does not want the purchases to occur in the interim. Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Morse, that a hold be put on the Police Department purchasing the equipment above until authorized by the Selectboard. **Motion passed 3-1-0, with Selectman Adams voting in the negative.**

#### V. BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES

a. **Approval of Minutes**

1. **August 11, 2009 (Joint Board Meeting).** Motion by Trustee Hambleton, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-2, with Trustees Bright and Lawson abstaining.**
4. **August 25, 2009 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Trustee Bright, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-1, with Trustee McCarney abstaining.**
5. **September 3, 2009 (Special Meeting).** Motion by Trustee Lawson, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-2, with Trustees Baraw and McCarney abstaining.**

**b. Approval of Bills**

1. **Warrant #06-10.** Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to approve Warrant #06-10 in the amount of \$436,828.35. Trustee McCarney asked why the annual maintenance of the fuel tank at the Wastewater Treatment Facility had been charged to "Building Supplies." Manager Allard will look into this. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- c. Village of Northfield SRF Loan (Water Project).** Manager Allard stated that loan documents related to the current Water System Improvements Project (West Phase) had to be approved and signed by the Village Trustees prior to September 15, 2009 (tomorrow). Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve and sign the Resolution and Certificate. **Motion passed 5-0-0.** Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to approve and sign the Tax Certificate. **Motion passed 5-0-0.** Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve and sign the Loan Agreement. **Motion passed 5-0-0.** Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Lawson, to approve and sign the General Obligation Bond in the amount of \$1,354,682. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**d. Status Reports: Various Projects**

1. **Damaged Utility Pole.** Trustee McCarney noted that a pole had been hit on South Main Street near Norwich University. Does the Municipal Manager know when the pole will be replaced? Manager Allard will check on this.
2. **North Main Street Paving.** Trustee McCarney stated that there is a significant bump when the old paving meets the new near Belknap Avenue. Is there a plan to resolve this? Manager Allard will look into this.
3. **Property Taxes on Waterlines.** Trustee McCarney noted that the Board of Listers had been tasked to provide justification for Northfield being billed property taxes on waterlines situated in a neighboring community. He wanted to know if the Listers have responded yet. Manager Allard stated that the Listers have decided that Northfield does have to pay the property taxes. However, she has reviewed this matter herself and is not convinced of their conclusion. Trustee Lawson would like this issue on the next agenda (09/29/09) with all information presented, including examples from other Vermont communities with similar situations.

**VI. MANAGER'S REPORT**

**a. Status Reports: Various Projects**

1. **NAVI Bylaws and Revised Northfield Ambulance Rates.** Both of these items will be on the agenda for the next regular Selectboard meeting (09/28/09).
2. **Police Officer Resignation.** A Police Officer has submitted his resignation. The Police Department will be down two (2) members when he leaves.
3. **Road Surface Management System (RSMS) Program.** The final draft of the program has been distributed to the Board members. Manager Allard would like the Highway Subcommittee to review the document as soon as possible so that the program could be included in the Town and Village Budgets for the next fiscal year. There was a tentative agreement for the subcommittee to meet before the end of the month.
4. **Water System Priority List.** Manager Allard stated that Thomas Nesbitt (Stantec Consulting, Inc.) had provided the requested list of priorities but she would like to review and discuss the list with him before forwarding it to the Trustees.
5. **Village Common Sidewalks.** This item will be on the agenda of the next regular Trustees meeting (09/29/09).

**VII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items.** None.

**VIII. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Selectman Morse, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to adjourn. **Motion passed 9-0-0.**

The Boards adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth L. McCann*

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

These minutes are subject to approval at the next regular meeting.