

**VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of April 27, 2010**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Chair Samantha Baraw (absent), Trustees Colin Bright, Libby Hambleton, Doug Lawson, and Thomas McCarney. Also present were Accounting Manager Laurie Baroffio, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

Vice-Chair Lawson called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Scheduled):** None.

III. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approval of Minutes

- 1. April 13, 2010 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

b. Approval of Bills

- 1. Warrant #21-10.** Motion by Trustee Hambleton, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve Warrant #21-10 in the amount of \$80,930.72.

Trustee McCarney saw that the warrant included property tax payments to the Town for property outside the Village that have municipal water lines; whether this tax obligation is valid or not remains under discussion. He would like it made clear that this payment is made under protest. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, that it be noted on these specific property tax checks that the payment is being made under protest. **Motion passed 3-1-0, with Trustee Bright voting in the negative.**

Trustee McCarney noted that the costs of actual tree trimming and the traffic control costs associated with it are paid out of the same line item. He would like a report back from the Accounting Department with the separate expenditures for each indicated (to date). On a related matter, Trustee Bright would like a report from Superintendent of Public Works William Lyon on the general progress of the new, more pro-active tree trimming program.

Motion to approve Warrant #21-10 passed 3-0-1, with Trustee McCarney abstaining due to the possible appearance of a conflict of interest on warrant items.

- c. Village Common Sidewalks Improvement Project.** Trustee Lawson stated that the area currently under discussion involved the sidewalks on the south section of the Common (along with the retaining wall at the southeast corner). He noted that the Board members had held a Special Meeting last week (04/20/10) with engineer Thomas Nesbitt (Stantec Consulting Services) present in order to help decide whether or not to include sidewalk and wall replacement in the soon to be resumed Water Project construction. Mr. Nesbitt suggested removing \$24,000 in the current Water Project bond monies designated towards this area and reserve this amount for future use. At the Board's request, he consulted with the Village's bond attorney; it was confirmed that this was legally permissible.

Some discussion then followed regarding whether it would be better to address the poor conditions of the sidewalks and wall in the near future (as part of upcoming Water Project construction) or if it were preferable to wait and see if the federal grants monies (estimated at \$30,000) for Northfield Village Common Rehabilitation/Restoration actually materializes.

Trustee Lawson believes that we should know by late May or early June whether this federal grant has been successful or not. If successful, construction in the area could be done in the late summer or early fall. If not, the Board would need to find other funding sources (i.e. bond vote, fundraising, etc.), which would push construction back to next spring at the earliest. Neither Trustee Lawson nor McCarney would like to put a lot of money into short-term solutions in the interim. Trustee Hambleton suggested that this matter should be reviewed with Superintendent Lyon so that the more hazardous sections of sidewalk could be repaired in the most cost effective manner. Trustee McCarney agreed that areas with real safety concerns should be addressed.

Trustee Lawson noted that even without the federal grant money, the Village would still have the aforementioned \$24,000 along with Village Common CIP funds, etc. An educated decision on how to proceed would be possible by mid-summer. Trustee McCarney agrees that it might be best to postpone making a decision because of the many questions that still need to be answered; if this meant putting off construction under next spring, so be it. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Bright, to remove the monies (approximately \$24,000) in the current Water Project dedicated to sidewalk and curbing on the south side of the Village Common (from Central Street to Main Street) and set it aside for future use. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

Trustee Lawson asked if the Board would like to discuss the retaining wall this evening. Trustee Bright thought it best to research this matter further and reserve this discussion for another time.

- d. **Executive Summary: Bridge Inspection Reports.** The Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) inspects all bridges in the state on a two-year schedule; the only bridge in Northfield Village inspected in 2009 was the Main Street Bridge. The Trustees are being asked to sign the form confirming that the inspection report has been "received, reviewed, and shared with those individuals charged with preventative and routine maintenance of the structures." Although the report indicates that the bridge is in "fair and good condition," it also has some confusing jargon that the Board would like Superintendent Lyon to explain (as well as some structural concerns that may need to be addressed sooner rather than later). Motion by Trustee Bright, seconded by Trustee Hambleton, to acknowledge and sign the inspection report receipt form. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- e. **Review of Village Common Two-Hour Parking.** Trustee McCarney had asked for this matter to be put on the agenda as he believes that the ordinance restricting parking to two hours on some areas of the Common is not being enforced. In fact, it appears that the merchants who asked for the ordinance have become the biggest offenders. Perhaps the ordinance should be repealed if it is going to be both unenforced and unobserved. Trustee Lawson thought that it might be a good idea to forewarn the merchants that the Board is considering this action. The merchants will be informed by letter that the Board will review this matter at its regular meeting of May 25, 2010.

- f. **Approval of 2010 Village Meeting Warning.** Motion by Trustee Bright, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to approve and sign the 2010 Village Meeting Warning. Kathleen Lott noted that the warning specifies that \$0 will be raised in tax revenues to fund the Village General Fund. Where will the money come from instead? Accounting Manager Baroffio stated that it would come from administrative fees, PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) receipts, rent, etc. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- g. **Farmer's Market on Village Common.** Verne DuClos, who organizes this and other community farmers markets in the area, has asked for the Board's permission to hold the Northfield Farmers Market again this year. As in past years, it would be held on Tuesday afternoons from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. beginning in mid-May and ending in mid-October. Motion by Trustee McCarney, seconded by Trustee Bright, to grant permission for the Northfield Farmers Market to be held on the Village Common provided that the established guidelines (e.g. post-event cleanup, etc.) are maintained. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

IV. REPORTS

a. Miscellaneous

- 1. **Green Up Day: Saturday, May 1, 2010.** Northfield residents who want to take part should meet behind the Northfield Fire Station (128 Wall Street) at 9:00 a.m. Please bring gloves, warm clothing, rain gear, work boots, and (if possible) your own pick-up truck.
- 2. **Inter-Local Agreement Committee Meeting: Monday, May 3, 2010.** The committee will meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Municipal Building in order to review the proposed water and sewer rates (prior to their approval next month by the Village Trustees). The public is welcome to attend.
- 3. **Site Visit: 52 East Street (former police station): Tuesday, May 11, 2010.** Immediately prior to their next regular meeting, the Trustees will meet at this location at 6:30 p.m. to inspect the premises; the Board would like to make an informed decision regarding its future use (or potential sale).

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Unscheduled). None.

VI. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Trustee Hambleton, seconded by Trustee McCarney, to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 8:07 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

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