

**VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Minutes of June 15, 2010**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Trustees Samantha Baraw, Colin Bright, Libby Hambleton (absent), Doug Lawson, and Larry Porter. Also present were Village Manager Nanci Allard, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Richard Sutor, Lawrence Garland (Northfield Conservation Commission), David Packie (Northfield Trail Association), Louisa Reilly, Sue MacMartin, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

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

II. ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING OF THE BOARD

- a. Election of Chair.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to nominate Doug Lawson as Chair. **Motion passed 3-0-1, with Trustee Lawson abstaining.** The meeting was then turned over to Chair Lawson.
- Chair Lawson then introduced Larry Porter to the public, as this was his first meeting since his election as Village Trustee.
- b. Election of Vice-Chair.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Porter, to nominate Colin Bright as Vice-Chair. **Motion passed 3-0-1, with Trustee Bright abstaining.**
- c. Committee Appointments.** As Trustee Hambleton could not attend tonight's meeting, the committee appointments were postponed until the next regular meeting. There were two exceptions. Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to appoint Manager Allard and Richard Sutor as VPPSA Representatives. **Motion passed 4-0-0.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to appoint Richard Sutor as the primary representative to the Vermont System Planning Committee (VSPC) and Manager Allard and Trustee Hambleton as secondary representatives. **Motion passed 4-0-0.** Mr. Sutor thanked the Board for the appointments. He added that since this will be last year he will be able to serve in these positions, he looks forward to training his replacement(s).
- d. Regular Meeting Schedule.** The Board will continue to hold its regular meetings on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month.
- e. Designation of Official Newspapers.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to designate the *Northfield News* and the *Times Argus* as the official newspapers. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

III. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Scheduled):

- a. David Packie, Northfield Trail Association: Recreation in the Village Forest.** Mr. Packie and his family moved to Northfield a couple years ago and since then he has become very interested in the Village Forest's trail network. He has been consulting with the Northfield Conservation Commission (NCC) and would now like the Trustees' permission to provide some maintenance work on the trails, i.e. the removal of "blow down" trees and address some serious erosion problems. The work would be done by volunteers from the Northfield Trail Association. This would be done while the NCC completes its management plan for the Village Forest.

Trustee Porter asked what Mr. Packie believed was the appropriate use of the trails. Mr. Packie replied that this is what the NCC is attempting to determine through its management plan. He added that he has attended several NCC meetings and has acted as a conduit for his and other user groups. He is only asking for permission to perform maintenance work on existing trails; any extension of the trail system would have to go through the NCC.

Larry Garland, who serves on the NCC, confirmed that the commission is developing management plans for municipal properties. Unfortunately, these plans are not yet ready for public review but a draft version should be available this fall. He added that public input has been limited so far and that most of focus has been on the Dog River to this point. Mr. Garland stated that the NCC has no problem with Mr. Packie's proposal to perform basic maintenance work on the existing trail system (so long as this does not include creating new trails). He added that he himself has seen serious erosion problems at various locations.

Manager Allard thought that it would be good to have the Village Forest's problems addressed by these volunteers. She also was encouraged by Mr. Packie's pledge to work with the NCC on this.

Sue MacMartin said that she has hiked in the Village Forest for a number of years, usually starting at the end of Slate Avenue and then up to the Cheney Farm. She added that a lot of people enjoy the area and that it is a real asset to the community. Louisa Reilly also uses the trails on a regular basis. Her only worry is with the level of maintenance; she would like the area to be left as natural as possible.

Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve Mr. Packie's request to perform trail maintenance work in the Village Forest under the guidance of the Northfield Conservation Commission. Chair Lawson fears that the proposed work might lead to more "liberal" use of the trails; hikers should be able to use the trails without worrying about two- and four-wheeled traffic. Trustee Porter also is concerned about abuse of the trail system as well as conflicts over appropriate use. Mr. Packie reiterated that the proposed work would only maintain the current trail system in order to keep it usable. Trustee Bright stated that he and his family use the trail system too and he appreciates Mr. Packie's enthusiasm for his project. **Motion passed 3-0-1, with Chair Lawson voting in the negative.**

IV. ACTION ITEMS

a. Approval of Minutes

1. **May 25, 2010 (Joint Board Meeting).** Since only two of the Trustees present tonight were at this meeting, approval of the minutes was postponed until the next regular meeting. Trustee Porter had questions regarding a reference to a grant awarded for the Village Common sidewalks. Chair Lawson provided a brief overview of this project to date.

b. Approval of Bills

1. **Warrant #24-10.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve Warrant #24-10 in the amount of \$392,784.49. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

c. **VPPSA Project 10 update.** Mr. Suitor provided a brief history of Project 10. He noted that Northfield entered into an agreement a few years ago with Vermont Public Power Supply Authority (VPPSA) in support of this project, which was the purchase of two used electric generators from California. The generators were sited in Swanton and designed for quick start-up power generation during emergencies or high usage periods. Both generators were tested last December; one operated fine but the other caught on fire and had to be repaired. They were both put into service this spring and have operated well, even though there are some questions regarding possible air pollution emissions. VPPSA is working on those concerns. Mr. Suitor concluded that, overall, the project is coming along well. Manager Allard agreed and offered to arrange a field trip for the Trustees (if they are interested). Mr. Suitor agreed that it is an impressive sight.

d. **Utility Billing Abatements.** Manager Allard noted that these were the normal end-of-the-fiscal-year write-offs for uncollectable utility bills. Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Baraw, to abate the inactive utility accounts totaling \$11,753.06 (all Electric). **Motion passed 4-0-0.** Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Baraw, to abate the bankruptcy discharge or deceased utility accounts totaling \$492.95 (Electric: \$240.77, Water: \$125.25, and Sewer: \$126.93). **Motion passed 4-0-0.** Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Baraw, to abate the small balance and/or no available address utility accounts totaling \$10.01 (all Electric). **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

e. **Highland Avenue and Slate Avenue Water Main.** Manager Allard stated that replacing this water main was an item on the priority list for water system improvements developed by Stantec Consulting. They would provide the engineering design for this project but our own crew will (probably) do the actual construction. Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve and authorize Manager Allard to sign the agreement for Stantec Consulting to prepare plans for a new main on Highland Avenue and Slate Avenue. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

- f. **Executive Summary: Vermont AOT Annual Village Highway Plan.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Porter, to approve and sign the Annual Village Highway Plan. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- g. **Joint Board Meeting (Tax Rates): Tuesday, July 6, 2010.** Manager Allard stated that the Town Selectmen and Village Trustees will be asked to approve the proposed tax rates at this meeting so that the tax bills can go out in time.

V. REPORTS

a. Village Manager

- 1. **South Main Street Parking.** Manager Allard had received a request to lift the parking ban on the west side of South Main Street near the United Methodist Church (152 South Main Street) on Saturday, June 26, 2010 for a wedding that will commence at 3:00 p.m. There is expected to be overflow parking. Motion by Trustee Porter, seconded by Trustee Bright, to approve a temporary lifting of the parking ban at this location for the date and time indicated above. **Motion passed 4-0-0.** The Northfield Police Department will be informed.
- 2. **Water Project (South Phase).** Manager Allard stated that she will be filing an application this week for the next phase of the Water Project. We are still waiting to hear from USDA Rural Development about possible funding. She will keep the Board informed of any developments.
- 3. **Central Street Culvert Replacement Project.** Manager Allard reported that the contract had been signed with the low bidder for this project (W.B. Rogers, Inc.). Since the bid was a bit lower than expected, there will be money available to pave the sidewalks on lower Central Street. Construction will commence on Thursday, July 15, 2010 and the road will be closed at this time. The public will be informed beforehand.
- 4. **Wellfield Protection.** Manager Allard stated that she met with Chuck Goodling (DuBois & King, Inc.) last week regarding septic systems along Vermont Route 12A. A proposal will be developed and brought to the Board.
- 5. **Road Surface Management System (RSMS) Program.** Manager Allard stated that the Town Selectmen have approved the revised figures for the initial year of the program. The figures for the Village have not changed much since the Trustee gave their approval.

b. Miscellaneous

- 1. **Email Requests.** Chair Lawson had received emails from two residents asking that that specific road and sidewalk problems be resolved. He would like it to be the policy that such emails should be acknowledged when received. Manager Allard stated that she always acknowledges such emails, passes on what information she has to the sender, and makes sure that the appropriate department head is notified of any such request (or complaint). Trustee Porter thought that if any Trustee received any such email inquiry, it should be forwarded to the Village Manager, as that is the logical first step.

VI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Unscheduled)

- VII. **EXECUTIVE SESSION** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to go into executive session with Manager Allard present in order to discuss a personnel matter (Town/Village Union negotiations). **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board went into executive session at 8:20 p.m.

Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to come out of executive session. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 8:40 p.m. No action was taken.

- VIII. **ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Trustee Baraw, seconded by Trustee Bright, to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 8:41 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

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