

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
Minutes of April 14, 2014**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Chair John Quinn III (absent), Vice-Chair Matthew Gadbois, Selectmen Brad Denny, Lynn Doney, and Kenneth W. Goslant. Also present were Town Manager Robert Lewis, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Stephen Fitzhugh (Acting Village Manager), Laurie Baroffio (Finance Director), Peter J. DeMasi (Fire Chief), Ramon E. Hudson (Road Foreman), Sonya Bourne, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

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

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There were no changes to the posted agenda.

- IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None.

V. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT

- a. Fire Chief Peter J. DeMasi.** Chief DeMasi had provided the Board members with a report that broke down all Northfield Fire Department (NFD) calls by month and by category (i.e., car accidents, structure/chimney fires, etc.) for the five (5) month period from November 2013 through March 2014. There were a total of sixty (60) calls during this timeframe. In addition, the NFD conducted its monthly fire drills during which the firefighters pump water through the apparatus, check air packs, and complete certified training. In addition, Chief DeMasi reported that the tower truck passed its state inspection. He then reminded the public that this is grassfire season and that they should contact Fire Warden Brian Elwell (485-9036) or Assistant Fire Warden Titus Soble (793-9030) before conducting a burn.

Selectman Denny noted that fire engines from neighboring communities had assisted during last week's structure fire on Bear Farm Road. He asked how Mutual Aid worked in such circumstances. Chief DeMasi stated that he requested an additional tanker and tower truck during the fire and they were sent from Williamstown. The Barre Fire Department did not send equipment to the fire site but did provide coverage at the Northfield Fire Station in case there had been a callout during the fire.

Selectman Goslant asked if it was necessary to send out a fire truck to every car accident. Chief DeMasi said that it was as a precaution in case of a fuel line break that could result in a fire. Selectman Goslant asked if the NFD responded to accidents on Interstate 89. Chief DeMasi replied that the Williamstown and Berlin Fire Departments covered the freeway.

Manager Lewis had spoken to Chief DeMasi regarding a complaint that an out-of-town fire engine had been driving too fast to the fire scene. Chief DeMasi will speak to that department's chief. Manager Lewis added that he had received many good reports on how Chief DeMasi had coordinated all the responding units at the fire scene. It is clear that we have a very good Fire Chief in Northfield.

Selectman Gadbois then thanked Chief DeMasi for his presentation tonight and for the good work that he has been doing.

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. March 25, 2014 (Joint Board Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-1 with Selectman Doney abstaining.**

VII. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. Warrant #20-14.** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve Warrant #20-14 in the amount of \$227,903.86. Selectman Goslant inquired about a payment for "legal services." Manager Lewis would like to discuss this matter later in executive session (see below). **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

- b. **Approval of Bi-Weekly Payroll through March 30, 2014.** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the bi-weekly payroll in the amount of \$54,842.75. Selectman Denny wanted it noted that there are not any overtime expenditures again for the Northfield Police Department (NPD) due to its new work schedule. He added that this was an employee-initiated action that has been very beneficial to the municipality. Finance Director Baroffio has reviewed the timesheets turned in today for the last two (2) week period and confirmed that there will not be any NPD overtime on the next payroll. Selectman Goslant stated that he recently spoke informally with a NPD officer and it was a very informative conversation and he also was very impressed with the officer himself. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

VIII. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

- a. **Liquor License Renewal Applications**
 - 1. **Convenience Plus.** Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
 - 2. **Knotty Shamrock.** Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
 - 3. **Northfield Country Club.** Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- b. **Tobacco License Renewal Application**
 - 1. **Convenience Plus.** Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the tobacco license renewal. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

IX. SELECT BOARD

- a. **Acknowledgement of Receipt of 2013 Bridge Inspection Summary Reports.** Manager Lewis stated that the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) inspects all of Northfield's bridges over a two (2) year period and issues reports on those that have problems. In addition to the report is an acknowledgement of receipt form that the Town Selectmen need to approve and sign. Manager Lewis noted that the current report specified two (2) problem bridges in Northfield: one in the Town (Sunny Brook Bridge) and another in the Village (Main Street Bridge). These bridges now are on a priority list so that the municipality can apply for AOT structure grants to repair them. Selectman Gadbois asked if there was any money set aside in the Town's budget for bridge repair. Manager Lewis said that there was a CIP account for this that is mainly used to provide local matching funds for any grant received. Selectman Goslant hopes that AOT will provide financial assistance for the repairs on the Main Street Bridge since that should be a major undertaking. He then asked if the Sunny Brook Bridge was on a one (1) house road. Road Foreman Ramon Hudson confirmed that it was. Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to acknowledge receipt of the AOT bridge reports and sign the accompanying form. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- b. **Out-of-Cycle Replacement of 2008 Mack Tandem Dump Truck.** Manager Lewis stated that as was discussed at the last meeting (03/25/14), the 2008 Mack Tandem Dump Truck has been in constant need of repair since its warranty expired three (3) years ago, costing the municipality about \$35,000. About one-half (½) of this amount has been spent this year alone. After the meeting, Manager Lewis met with Ms. Baroffio and Mr. Hudson to find a way to replace the truck earlier than scheduled (FY 2019/2020). Mr. Hudson obtained quotes on new dump trucks from JB International (2015 Western Star for \$195,870), Patriot Freightliner (2014 Western Star for \$198,096), and Sheldon Trucks (2014 Mack Granite for \$188,437). With the trade-in allowance for the 2008 Mack Tandem Dump Truck included, these bids become (respectively) \$148,370, \$148,096, and \$134,437. Mr. Hudson recommends purchasing the 2014 Western Star from Patriot Freightliner since the vehicle is in stock and it would be ready for service this summer. There would be an additional expense of about \$3000 to repaint the vehicle (from red) to the Town Highway's colors.

Ms. Baroffio then explained the funding mechanism she has developed to purchase the new vehicle without borrowing. Monies can be transferred from the 2005 Tandem Dump Truck replacement CIP account for this purchase. When combined with the money set aside to replace the 2008 Tandem Truck, this should cover the full amount. Additional money would have to be set aside for the FY 2016/2017 scheduled replacement of the 2005 Tandem Truck to avoid borrowing but there will be two (2) budget cycles to plan for this. She added that these CIP accounts can be combined since the voters authorized setting aside these funds for all dump truck replacements. Manager Lewis stated that the purchase price will include an extended warranty (seven years), which he hopes will become standard practice for all heavy vehicle purchases.

Selectman Goslant noted that JB International is offering a 2015 Western Start for sale while Patriot Freightliner has the 2014 model; wouldn't it be better for the Town to purchase the latest model available? Mr. Hudson stated that the 2015 model would not become available until November 2014 and he would prefer to have the new vehicle in Northfield for summer road maintenance. He also would like to get rid of the troubled truck as soon as possible before it breaks down again and costs the Town more money. Manager Lewis added that according to Mr. Hudson, the 2005 Tandem Dump Truck is in such good shape that it might last beyond 2017. Mr. Hudson added that this truck has about 60,000 miles on it and trucks of its nature usually last until they have over 100,000 miles.

Selectman Goslant still thinks it would be better to wait and purchase the 2015 model. Mr. Hudson repeated that he would rather purchase the 2014 model now and have it in service this summer and fall. Manager Lewis added that if the 2008 Mack Dump Truck continued to be used this summer, its trade-in value could be significantly reduced if it broke down again. This would be in addition to any new repair costs.

Selectman Goslant asked why there was no thought of purchasing the 2014 Mack Granite from Sheldon Trucks; this would be the least expensive purchase option. Mr. Hudson stated that he had not been impressed with the Mack dealership's explanation for why we have had so much trouble with the 2008 Mack Tandem Dump Truck over the past three (3) years. He did not believe that this was due to normal "wear and tear" as they tried to tell him.

Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Doney, to support management's recommendation to purchase a 2014 Western Star Dump Truck from Patriot Freightliner by transferring up to \$93,606 from the CIP account for the 2005 Mack Tandem Dump Truck replacement. The total cost of the new vehicle would be approximately \$195,096, which is the quoted purchase price minus the \$3000 estimated cost to repaint the vehicle.

Selectman Gadbois asked if the snowplow on the 2008 Mack Truck could be reused on the new vehicle. Mr. Hudson stated that he looked into this possibility but concluded that it would be more cost-effective to purchase everything new rather than retrofit old equipment that would have to be replaced in a year or two. Also, some of the trade-in value would be lost if the snowplow and other equipment were removed.

Motion passed 3-1-0, with Selectman Goslant voting in the negative.

- c. **2015 Budgeted Sale of 2005 International Dump Truck to Water/Sewer Department.** Manager Lewis stated that when the 2014/2015 combined municipal budget was being prepared, there was a CIP account created with \$34,000 in revenue coming from the sale of the 2005 International Dump Truck from the Town Highway Department to the Water and Sewer Department. Manager Lewis since has learned that the Village Trustees do not have any interest in purchasing this vehicle. He has subsequently advertised this vehicle on Craig's List for the same price and there seems to be some interest in the vehicle. Acting Village Manager Fitzhugh explained that there had been some confusion during the budget meetings that led to the misunderstanding that the Village had committed to purchase the vehicle. The Village is setting aside funds to purchase a new vehicle that could perform the same function for the Water and Sewer Department for less money.

Selectman Denny stated that the misinterpretation was that since it was said that the Town Highway used the vehicle in the winter and the Water and Sewer Department used it during the summer, there had been an assumption that these departments used it a similar amount. In fact, the truck is used constantly during the winter but for only about six (6) hours during the summer. Manager Fitzhugh stated that this is why the Village has no interest in purchasing the used truck.

Manager Lewis added that the truck now is listed for sale on the open market and the Town will make every effort to sell it. Selectman Doney asked if the truck was being sold "as is, where is." Manager Lewis confirmed that it was. Ms. Baroffio stated that the money from this sale would be put into the CIP account and used to help fund replacement of the 2008 one ton truck next year.

- d. Sidewalk Snow Removal Equipment Replacement.** As was discussed at the last meeting, the plan is to replace the current trackless with a McLean MV-2. Selectman Doney asked how old the trackless was. Mr. Hudson said that it is a 2006 model and is ready for replacement. Manager Lewis stated that since the dealer has concerns about revealing his pricing in open session before a decision is made, this matter will be discussed in executive session. Selectman Gadbois would like more information on what the extended warranty will cover. That also will be discussed during the executive session (see below).
- e. Utilities Budget Meetings: April 15, 17, 22, and (if necessary) 24, 2014.** The meetings will be held at 7:00 p.m. and the first three (3) will be held in the Community Room. If a fourth meeting is necessary, it will be held in the Training Room at the Police Station.
- f. Joint Board Meeting: Monday, April 28, 2014.** The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room.
- g. Status Reports: Various Projects**

 - 1. Village Common Rehabilitation Project.** Manager Fitzhugh reported that the conduit for the burying of telecommunication lines on the west side of the Village Common has been installed. If all goes on schedule, the poles should come down early next week. The construction crew now is working on curbing and sidewalk installation on the north side and great progress is being made.
 - 2. Town Manager Search Process.** The search committee will be meeting this coming Wednesday (04/16/14) at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. At last week's meeting (04/09/14), the committee worked with Abby Friedman (VLCT) on creating a short list of candidates. There were forty-six (46) applications received by the deadline.
- X. MANAGER'S REPORT.** Manager Lewis had provided a written report to the Board members.

 - a. Combined Facilities.** Manager Lewis stated that he and Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) Supervisor Lawton Rutter have met and reviewed the submissions received for a feasibility study regarding the proposed combined Fire/Ambulance facility. Chief DeMasi was unable to attend but he is part of the decision process.
 - b. Municipal Pool.** Selectman Gadbois asked if the pool has been painted for the upcoming summer season. Manager Lewis confirmed that it was painted last fall. Selectman Goslant asked if the Town Highway Department now would be responsible for turning the water off at the end of the day. Manager Lewis confirmed that this was the case and overtime funds have been budgeted for this.
 - c. Police Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).** Manager Lewis reported that a certified full-time officer soon would be leaving Northfield. Selectman Goslant would like him replaced with an experienced officer even if that costs more money.
 - d. Fairground Bridge Replacement.** Manager Lewis is working with the State in order to get grant money to pay for the Town's five percent (5%) local share of the replacement costs. The Town had been told on numerous occasions that FEMA would pay the entire cost of the project.

- e. **Economic Development.** Selectman Goslant is very pleased with the steps now being taken to expand local business opportunities. Manager Lewis advised the Board members to check out the report issued by the Vermont Downtown Action Team after its visit to Northfield last week. There are links on the municipal website to the report itself as well as a YouTube PowerPoint demonstration.
- f. **Merged Ordinances.** Manager Lewis stated that he and Manager Fitzhugh are working on the reconciliation of the various Town and Village ordinances before merger goes into effect.
- g. **Annual Highway Plan.** Manager Lewis is working on this annual report to AOT that has to be submitted before Northfield is eligible for grant money.
- h. **Annual Town and Village Audit RFPs.** Manager Lewis reported that Ms. Baroffio sent bid forms to eleven (11) accounting firms. As the Select Board requested, the RFP also will be advertised in this week's *Washington World*. The firm that has performed the audits in recent years will be precluded from bidding because it was felt that it would be a good idea to obtain a different perspective from another accounting firm this year. This is in no way a reflection on the performance of that accounting firm, which was considered to have done an excellent job.

XI. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items

- a. **Kathleen Lott: West Hill Road.** Ms. Lott wanted to thank the Town Highway crew for its recent work on West Hill Road, i.e. gravel was put down, the potholes were filled in, etc. Manager Lewis and Selectman Goslant travelled the road recently and also had been impressed.

XII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (1) Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to go into executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1), in order to discuss a possible contract with Manager Lewis, Ms. Baroffio, and Mr. Hudson present. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board went into executive session at 9:10 p.m.

Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to come out of executive session. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 9:58 p.m.

Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to authorize the purchase of a McLean MV-2 for a net cost of \$97,000 and to authorize the borrowing of \$44,000 to cover the budget shortfall. This authorization is contingent on the similar approval of the Village Trustees at their regular meeting of April 15, 2014. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION (2). Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to re-enter executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1), in order to discuss a legal matter with Manager Lewis present. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board went back into executive session at 10:04 p.m.

Motion by Selectman Goslant, seconded by Selectman Denny, to come out of executive session. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 10:25 p.m. No action was taken.

XIV. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to adjourn. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 10:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kenneth L. McCann

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were approved at the Joint Board Meeting of April 28, 2014.