

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
SELECT BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes of December 17, 2015**

- I. **ROLL CALL.** Chair John Quinn III, Select Board members, Lynn Doney, Matthew Gadbois, Kenneth W. Goslant, and K. David Maxwell. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz; and Finance Director, Laurie Baroffio.

Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 6:10 p.m.

- II. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Scheduled):** Andrew Bachand, Kittell, Branagan & Sargent.

Andrew Bachand CPA, an accountant with the firm of Kittell, Branagan & Sargent stated that he has completed the Town of Northfield's annual audit. This is his firm's first year doing the audit for Northfield and the first town audit since the Town and Village merged. He noted that the audit went well, however, as with most towns, the audit was delayed for a few months because of a modification in the Government Accounting Rules (GASB 68) requiring that Town's include information on the municipalities pension liability. Mr. Bachand is pleased to report that the audit does not include any negative findings or issues, and he can provide a clean opinion regarding the Town's financials. Next, he discussed the audit in more detail and noted that the Town General fund surplus is \$149,623, and the Highway fund surplus is: \$177,860, for a total surplus of \$327,483. He concluded the discussion by stating that the Town of Northfield is in a good financial position.

- III. **FY 16/17 Budget**

Police Chief James Dziobek discussed the draft Police Department budget. The Chief noted that his original draft budget included funding for a sixth officer; however, he is comfortable with the revised budget as put forth by the Town Manager which funds five officers. The Board discussed the over-time and part-time budgets and how the Chief plans to keep these line items from going over budget. The Chief noted that he plans to use a combination of comp time and working with the budget he is provided.

Next, resident Chris Bradley asked about the decision to not fund the sixth officer and whether that decision was based upon statistics or budgetary reasons. The Board stated that it is due in part to budget reasons as the general feeling is that the Town of Northfield cannot sustain the current budget funding levels over the next few years. Also, the Board noted that public safety in the community does not appear to be in jeopardy with the current staffing levels. Mr. Bradley asked for current statistics on crime and calls volumes in Northfield. The Chief stated that he would provide the statistics.

Next, the Chief stated that he is requesting approximately \$5,000 be added to the budget to fund a special investigations unit program. Over the past several years, law enforcement in Washington County has been attempting to create a Special Investigations Unit (SIU) to handle Domestic Violence cases as well as specific crimes against children and adults. The specific crimes are those that tend to be the most difficult to investigate due to the sensitivity, embarrassment and fear. Those crimes are difficult and time consuming to investigate. A very limited amount of funding has been allocated by the legislature to set up these SIU's across the State of Vermont in each county. Barre City will provide two detectives for this effort and is asking Towns to help fund these positions. The Chief will provide the Board additional information on this program and request.

The next budget meeting was scheduled for Tuesday, December 22, 2015.

- IV. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Unscheduled).** There was none.

- V. **ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Select Board member Gadbois, seconded by Select Board member Goslant to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 7:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Schulz

Jeff Schulz, Clerk

These minutes were approved at the regular Select Board meeting of January 12, 2016.