

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
Minutes of February 24, 2015**

- I. **ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair John Quinn III, Selectmen Kevin T. Beal, Brad Denny, Dennis Donahue, Lynn Doney, Matthew Gadbois (8:12 p.m.), Kenneth W. Goslant (absent), K. David Maxwell, and James R. Wilson. Also present were Town Manager Jeffrey Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Road Foreman Ray Hudson, Fire Chief Peter J. DeMasi, Marilyn Peace, Warren Hagy (Northfield Senior Center), Dan Pudvah (Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice), Megan Leonard Cicio (Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice), Sara Nevin (Good Beginnings of Central Vermont), Anita Kelman (Capstone Community Action), Gail Igo (Northfield Senior Center), Mike Charron (Vermont Center for Independent Living), Ben Gauthier (Vermont Department of Environmental Conservation), Dan Groberg (Montpelier Senior Activity Center), Kreig Pinkham (Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club), Nick Connor (Washington County Youth Services Bureau/Boys & Girls Club), James Secor (Northfield Boys & Girls Club), Brian Elwell (Northfield Fire Department), Tim Davis (Northfield Fire Department), and John Cruickshank (DeWitt Clinton Mason Temple and *Northfield News*).

A Public Hearing for the purpose of providing written or oral views on the warned Town Articles to be voted upon by Australian Ballot at the Annual Town Meeting on March 3, 2015 was warned to immediately precede the Select Board's regular meeting. Select Board Chair Quinn called the Public Hearing to order at 7:03 p.m. He then opened the floor to any member of the public who wished to discuss the Australian Ballot articles (listed below).

**Article 6. Effective July 1, 2015, shall the Town of Northfield withdraw from its agreement for membership in the union municipal district known as the Mad River Resource Management Alliance (MRRMA)? (Australian Ballot).** Ben Gauthier is a Northfield resident who works for the State of Vermont regarding solid waste disposal issues. He was curious about why this article is on the warning and wanted to know what would happen if Northfield left MRRMA. Chair Quinn stated that the Select Board put this article on the warning when it learned that MRRMA was planning to double its per capita charge to member communities from \$2.00 to \$4.00 in the next fiscal year. He and the other Select Board members believe that there are less expensive alternatives to MRRMA membership, such as joining the Tri-Town Alliance, which consists of Braintree, Brookfield and Randolph. There have been some discussions regarding Northfield joining the Tri-Town Alliance. However, since nothing was confirmed by the time the warning had to be approved (01/27/15), this was not specified in the article wording. If an agreement cannot be made with the Tri-Town Alliance, Northfield does have other options, including forming its own solid waste management district. Mr. Gauthier noted that the Tri-Town Alliance does not have sufficient staff to provide the recycling programs that soon will be required by the State. Chair Quinn stated that Casella Waste Systems has been working with Tri-Town Alliance on this and also would assist Northfield. Casella Waste Systems already is helping Norwich University with its recycling programs. John Cruickshank asked when it would be decided whether or not Northfield would join the Tri-Town Alliance. Selectman Donahue noted that even if Article 6 does pass, Northfield would remain a MRRMA member until the current fiscal year ends (06/30/15). This should provide sufficient time to decide what course would be best.

**Article 7. Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to enter into tax stabilization contracts fixing and maintaining the valuation of certain grand list properties, fixing and maintaining the rates of tax applicable to such properties, fixing the amount of money which shall be paid as an annual tax upon such properties, and/or fixing the tax applicable to such property at a percentage of the annual tax, as authorized by 24 VSA §2741, provided that the term of any such contracts shall not exceed seven (7) years? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 8. Shall the voters authorize the Town to exempt from local property taxation, to the extent of 40% of the appraised value, the land and premises of the DeWitt Clinton Masonic Temple, located at 151 South Main Street, which has 501(c) status, for a period of three (3) years, beginning July 1, 2015? (Australian Ballot).** John Cruickshank is the current Master of the DeWitt Clinton Masonic Temple and he urged Northfield voters to approve this request. He stated that the Masonic Temple does much to support various non-profits groups and charitable activities in the Northfield community, such as hosting the local Boy Scout troop, providing scholarship funds for local youth, holding a Halloween celebration each year, supporting programs that assist at-risk youth, etc. Also, even though Northfield currently does not have a Girl Scout troop, the Masons would like to help reestablish one here. As owner/editor of the *Northfield News*, Mr. Cruickshank recently published an article that provided a full picture of all the services the Masonic Temple provides.

**Article 9. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$12,400 for the Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice? (Australian Ballot).** Megan Leonard Cicio is the CVHHH Committee Chair and she stated that due to a recent expansion in the services CVHHH provides to area residents, it is asking for an additional \$900 this year. Chair Quinn asked if Ms. Cicio was aware that the local expenditure for CVHHH had been included in the Town General budget in recent years. Ms. Cicio stated that the need for additional funds led to CVHHH's decision to petition to be put on the warning this year.

**Article 10. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$6,000 for the Boys & Girls Club of Northfield under the leadership of the Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club? (Australian Ballot).** Kreig Pinkham is the Executive Director of the Washington County Youth Service Bureau and James Secor is the Director of the Northfield Teen Center. They are asking Northfield voters to support this request because of the numerous services provided to local youth. Mr. Secor stated that over the past year, seventy-six (76) Northfield youths made repeated use of the Teen Center with 1127 total visits. The award of a three-year grant from the Vermont Children's Trust Foundation will be used to support local daily programs, which include academic support, gardening activities, physical fitness programs, artistic endeavors, and "open kitchen" policy, etc. Chair Quinn asked what was the Northfield Boys & Girls Club's total annual budget. Mr. Pinkham stated that it was about \$100,000, which includes about \$30,000 in federal funding. He added that even with these funds, there has been an operational deficit the past few years.

**Article 11. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 for the Washington County Diversion Program? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 12. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,500 for the Central Vermont Council on Aging? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 13. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,500 for the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 14. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,250 for the People's Health and Wellness Clinic? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 15. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 for the Central Vermont Adult Basic Education? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 16. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 for the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 17. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for the Capstone Community Action, Inc. (formerly Central Vermont Community Action Council)? (Australian Ballot).** Anita Kelman from Capstone Community Action stated that her organization has been serving low income Central Vermont residents since 1965. In the past year, 172 Northfield households were assisted by Capstone Community Action, which included accessing nutritious meals at their food shelf; receiving home weatherization and/or fuel assistance; help finding affordable housing, etc. Ms. Kelman is asking that Northfield voters continue their past support for Capstone Community Action so that these programs can continue.

**Article 18. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Circle (formerly Battered Women's Services and Shelter)? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 19. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Good Beginnings of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot).** Sara Nevin was one of Good Beginnings' founders and she noted that this is the twenty-third (23<sup>rd</sup>) year that it has been helping new parents with volunteer assistance. This includes providing free home cleaning services (dishes, laundry, etc.); helping provide information and training on better bonding with children; how to cope with postpartum depression; providing low-cost baby carriers; etc. Ms. Nevin noted that Good Beginnings assisted over 150 Central Vermont families over the past year and half of these families were low income. She thanked Northfield voters for their past support and asked for their continued support.

**Article 20. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for the Vermont Center for Independent Living? (Australian Ballot).** Mike Charron stated that the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL) works to help individuals with disabilities while also working with local governments to ensure that their particular needs are accommodated. VCIL also has an active meals on wheels program, helps with home renovations that increase mobility for disabled residents, conducts youth education programs, etc. Mr. Charron stated that VCIL assisted eight (8) Northfield residents and he asked that voters approve their request for funds, which is for the same amount as last year.

**Article 21. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 for the Family Center of Washington County? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 22. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 for Home Share Now? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 23. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 for the Montpelier Senior Activity Center? (Australian Ballot).** Warren Hagy serves as Treasurer for the Northfield Senior Center and he has a number of concerns regarding this request. He noted that the Montpelier Senior Activity Center (MSAC) is directly funded and operated by the City of Montpelier with an annual budget of over \$360,000. Forty percent (40%) of this budget covers personnel expenses. MSAC has about one thousand (1000) members and one-fourth (1/4) of them live outside Montpelier. MSAC charges for use of its facilities and for programs and non-Montpelier residents are charged an additional fifty percent (50%). Mr. Hagy noted that this additional cost for Northfield residents would continue even if this request for funds was successful. Mr. Hagy feels that MSAC is a well-funded municipal operation that should not be seeking additional funds on Town Meeting Day from non-Montpelier residents. He felt the request is both unprofessional and unethical.

Gail Igo serves as a Board Member for the Northfield Senior Center and she agrees with Mr. Hagy that this request is inappropriate. She does take part in MSAC programs and is willing to pay the extra charge but does not feel that Northfield taxpayers should be subsidizing its operation.

Dan Groberg is a coordinator for the Montpelier Senior Activity Center. He confirmed that non-Montpelier residents are charged more to access MSAC programs. However, the amounts charged do not cover the whole cost of the programs provided as there is every effort to make them accessible and affordable for all Central Vermont residents. For example, a twelve-week yoga class costs participants an average of twenty dollars (\$20). There also are MSAC programs that are free of charge and open to everyone. The City of Montpelier does provide the bulk of MSAC funding but the city government also has a policy of encouraging such organizations to seek outside funding to cover the expense of services provided to non-Montpelier residents. This is why MSAC petitioned to be put on the Northfield Town Warning. Mr. Groberg acknowledged that representatives of the Northfield Senior Center have actively voiced their opposition to this article. However, he feels that the Northfield Senior Center and MSAC really are not competitors but instead should be seen as complementary as each provide unique services to local senior citizens.

**Article 24. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$600 for Prevent Child Abuse Vermont? (Australian Ballot).**  
There was no discussion.

**Article 25. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$500 for Arts Bus, Inc.? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 26. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$400 for the Friends of the Winooski River? (Australian Ballot).**  
There was no discussion.

**Article 27. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$350 for the Sexual Assault Crisis Team of Washington County? (Australian Ballot).** There was no discussion.

**Article 28. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$250 for OUR House of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot).**  
There was no discussion.

There being no other questions or comments, the Public Hearing adjourned at 7:50 p.m. The regular Select Board Meeting began immediately.

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

**III. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** Manager Schulz stated that there were no changes to the posted agenda. He also confirmed that an executive session would be held to discuss a contract matter.

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.

**V. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORT**

- a. Ray Hudson, Highway Foreman.** Mr. Hudson had provided the Select Board members with a written report a few weeks ago and now has additional information. He noted that the Town Highway Department crew has moved a lot of snow in recent weeks. As a result, about \$1,800 in overtime funds remained in the budget at the beginning of the current bi-weekly payroll period. Mr. Hudson fears that the latest snowstorm has exhausted those funds. In addition, there was about \$2,100 remaining in the road salt account before the most recent delivery. There probably now only is few hundred dollars left. He will try to make do with what is on hand. Chair Quinn asked if road salt was spread on the roads when the temperature dipped below minus ten degrees (-10°). Mr. Hudson said that it was not since the road salt is ineffective at that temperature and this would be just wasteful. He added that about seven hundred (700) yards of sand remained out of the five thousand (5000) that was purchased earlier. About one thousand (1000) additional yards had been purchased at the beginning of the winter season because of the low cost. Mr. Hudson had hoped to stockpile the excess for next winter but due to the severity of this winter, this now seems unlikely. Chair Quinn asked if there were any backup plans should the most affected Highway budgets be exhausted. Mr. Hudson has spoken to Manager Schulz regarding this possibility. The current plan is to limit overtime expenses to the heavy equipment operators and focus sand/salt use on problem area such as steep hills, sharp corners, etc. Chair Quinn thanked Mr. Hudson for his report and commended the Town Highway crew for their outstanding efforts during this difficult winter.

**VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

- a. February 10, 2015 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 6-0-1, with Selectman Doney abstaining.**

**VII. APPROVAL OF BILLS**

- a. Warrant #17-15.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve Warrant #17-15 in the amount of \$907,949.25. Selectman Donahue noted that the Town General amount is high on this warrant due to a large payment for construction of the replacement bridge on Fairground Road. Most of this expense will be reimbursed by federal and state funding. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- b. Bi-Weekly Payroll through February 15, 2015.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the bi-weekly payroll in the amount of \$87,855.14. Selectman Doney asked about the level of Police Department overtime expenses. Manager Schulz stated that the bulk of this was back pay for holiday season coverage. This should not reoccur again until next winter. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**

**VIII. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION**

**a. Liquor License Renewal Applications**

- 1. Cumberland Farms.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- 2. Depot Square Pizzeria.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- 3. Norwich University.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- 4. Tops Market.** Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**

**IX. SELECT BOARD**

- a. **Approval of Ordinance Regulating All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV) Use on Town Highways.** Manager Schulz stated that the DRAFT ordinance provided by Lost Nation ATV Club at the last meeting (02/10/15) had been slightly modified and prepared for approval tonight. He had the relevant Department Heads review the document and they had no concerns. Motion by Selectman Wilson, seconded by Selectman Donahue, to approve and sign the ordinance. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- b. **Fire Department – Air Pack Purchase.** Fire Chief Peter J. DeMasi stated that the purchase of three (3) new air packs had been discussed and approved during the budget process. The three (3) current air packs in the worst condition have been identified and set aside for replacement. Bid proposals were solicited and a quote was received from Reynolds & Sons (Barre, VT) in the amount of \$22,898.40. There is a slightly lower quote (\$20,478.30) from an out-of state company but Chief DeMasi recommends purchasing from the local dealer. Chair Quinn asked how much had been budgeted for the purchase. Chief DeMasi said about \$24,000. In that case, Chair Quinn did not have a problem buying locally. Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Wilson, to accept Chief DeMasi's recommendation to purchase three (3) air packs from Reynolds & Son for \$22,898.40. **Motion passed 7-0-0.**
- c. **Certification of Compliance for Town Road and Bridge Standards.** Manager Schulz stated that the Vermont Agency of Transportation (AOT) is asking that each municipal government certify that they have adopted proper road and bridge standards that conform to AOT requirements. Northfield did adopt standards in July 2014 that meet the criteria. In addition, AOT is asking municipalities to confirm that they have conducted a proper road inventory. Northfield did this through its RSMS (Road Surface Management System) program.

*Selectman Gadbois arrived at this time.*

Selectman Denny asked if all Town bridges were in good condition. Manager Schulz said that, unfortunately, there are some bridges with problems that need to be addressed in the near future. He will be discussing how to proceed on this matter with Road Foreman Hudson. Motion by Selectman Donahue, seconded by Selectman Denny, to approve and sign the certification form. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

- d. **Northfield Annual Town Meeting.** Chair Quinn noted that the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Tuesday, March 3, 2015. Voting on Australian Ballot Articles will take place in the Northfield Middle/High School Cafeteria from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Open Session will begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Mary Granai Corrigan Auditorium (also at the Northfield Middle/High School).

**X. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS**

- a. **Departing Select Board Members.** Chair Quinn wanted to thank the three (3) former Village Trustees (Selectmen Beal, Donahue, and Wilson) who will be leaving the Select Board after next week's Town Meeting when the Select Board reverts back to five (5) members. He also thanked Selectman Denny, who has served on the Town Select Board for several years but has chosen not to run for reelection.

**XI. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT.** Manager Schulz had nothing to add to his written report.

**XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED).** There was none.

**XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Motion by Selectman Beal, seconded by Selectman Donahue, to go into executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1), in order to discuss a contract matter with Manager Schulz present. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

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

Motion by Selectman Denny, seconded by Selectman Donahue, to come out of executive session. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 8:35 p.m. No action was taken.

**XIV. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Doney, to adjourn. **Motion passed 8-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 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 regular Select Board meeting of March 10, 2015.