

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
TOWN SELECT BOARD
SPECIAL MEETING
Minutes of December 14, 2019

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Lynn Doney, Julie H. Goodrich, Kenneth W. Goslant, and Nathaniel Miller. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Laurie Baroffio (Finance Director), Thomas Alsheimer (Chair, Board of Listers), Peter J. DeMasi (Chief, Northfield Fire Department), Trent Tucker (Foreman, Highway Department), Carolyn Stevens (Northfield Community Development Network), John Stevens (Northfield Community Development Network), Scott Neun, Steve Davis, Charles Morse, and Elroy Hill.

Chair Maxwell called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m.

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

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

IV. BUDGET WORK SESSION

- a. Board of Listers.** Lister Chair Thomas Alsheimer said the Listers budget will see a 9.8% reduction in "Personnel Services" based on previous years' actuals. He is the only Lister who puts in regular hours each week (16-20) as the other two Listers (Susan Popowski and David Ritzer) provide most of their work hours in the late spring and early summer when property inspections are done. Therefore, the budget for "Elected" was reduced from \$20,000 to \$18,000, which Mr. Alsheimer feels is appropriate. The "Part-time" budget reflects the salary of Charlene Lathrop, who provides technical support by updating Grand List and Current Use information; recording property transfers; etc. The budgeted amount for Ms. Lathrop's compensation has been reduced from \$24,910 to \$22,510 based on previous years' actuals. Mr. Alsheimer noted Ms. Lathrop has missed a considerable amount of work over the past couple months due to illness and the actuals for the current fiscal year will reflect this. Ms. Lathrop now is back on a reduced schedule of two days per week. Fortunately, her absence coincided with the department's slow period.

Manager Schulz asked when the busy time was for the Listers Office. Mr. Alsheimer said this usually starts in the late spring when the Listers perform on-site inspections looking for changes in appraisal values due to home renovations, etc. Board member Goodrich asked about Ms. Lathrop's regular work schedule. Mr. Alsheimer said she usually works every weekday from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon. She will remain on a reduced schedule as she regains her strength. There will be a time when we will have to plan for her inevitable retirement. Chair Maxwell suggested generating a job description in case this happens sooner than expected. Mr. Alsheimer said Ms. Lathrop was a contract employee until a couple years ago. The job description could be based on her old contract.

Mr. Alsheimer said the "Contract Services" used to be where Ms. Lathrop's compensation was budgeted but now is used only for the Listers' maintenance contracts with software distributors, etc. This budget will decrease from \$1,670 to \$1,600 based on past actuals. The "Administrative" budget, which includes such expenses as telephone, postage, office supplies, etc., will remain about the same. An additional \$200 was put into the budget for the purchase of a new office chair. The plan is to replace one this year and another next year. Overall, the Listers' operations and maintenance (O&M) budget will decrease 9.2% mainly due to lower personnel costs.

In the Listers' Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget, \$18,000 will be added to the current balance of \$119,658 for the next town-wide reappraisal. These usually occur every ten (10) years and since the last one was completed in 2013, Mr. Alsheimer expects the next one will be required in the next three (3) to five (5) years. He believes there will be more than sufficient funds in this account when this happens.

The "Tax Maps" budget has a \$2,497 balance with an additional \$2,500 to be added in FY 2020/2021. Mr. Alsheimer said the tax maps are updated annually with both digital and paper copies. He noted many communities have discontinued having printed copies in favor of digital only. Northfield might move in that direction someday as members of public increasingly prefer the digital maps. Eliminating the paper copies could lead to significant budget savings in the future. Chair Maxwell then thanked Mr. Alsheimer for coming to this special weekend meeting and for providing this valuable information.

- b. Northfield Fire Department (NFD).** Fire Chief Peter J. DeMasi said he tried to keep the NFD's O&M budget as level-funded as possible because he prefers any additional department funding to go towards the purchase of a new tanker truck in the coming fiscal year (see below). The "Personnel Services" remains exactly the same at \$30,270 and there is only a slight increase (1.7%) in the "Contract Services" budget. This is due to small increases in the costs of firefighter recertification and dispatching services. Chief DeMasi noted the cost of dispatching through Capital West has risen steadily in recent years. Although he has looked, he hasn't been able to find any cost-effective alternatives. The "Administrative" budget will increase 0.1% with the only change a \$10 increase in the telephone line item (\$760 to \$770). The "Materials/Supply" budget will have a seven percent (7%) increase with increases in the electric, heating fuel, vehicle maintenance, and department supplies line items based on past actuals.

In the NPD CIP budget, Finance Director Laurie Baroffio noted the "Building Improvements" budget now has a \$9,668 deficit due to work done on the Fire Station over the past year. The \$10,000 that would be added to this budget in FY 2020/2021 only would cover this shortfall. Chief DeMasi said some work still needs to be done on the second floor sprinkler system, the downstairs bathroom, etc. but nothing is urgent. The recent work done included window replacement, new heating units, etc. In addition, a new roof was installed and the cost was less than originally expected. Chief DeMasi did note a recent snowstorm did dump some snow by the Police Station so snow guards probably will be needed on the roof's east side. A large anticipated expenditure in a couple years will be the required purchase of a new professional washer and dryer to meet new fire service regulations. He estimated the cost of both items in the \$10,000 range. Ms. Baroffio thought it might be best to adjust the NFD CIP budgets beyond FY 2020/2021 to accommodate this expected expense.

Chief DeMasi then turned to the NFD Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) budget. There is a \$4,261 balance in the "Equipment/Hose/Pump" budget with an additional \$4,000 budgeted for FY 2020/2021. Chief DeMasi said this budget was used to replace over time the 1950s valves still on our fire hydrants. Chair Maxwell asked if this was a safety concern. Chief DeMasi said the impact was more on the viability of the municipal water system because old valves sometime draw water out too quickly, which can cause "water hammering" on the system that might lead to broken pipes, etc.

Chief DeMasi said the NFD maintains a "Pager" budget because there still are areas in the community where cell phone coverage is spotty. The "Radio Replacement" budget has a \$6,535 balance with \$1,000 to be added in FY 2020/2021. The portable units cost about \$1,300 apiece and are replaced only when they fail. Given the quality of the current radios, Chief DeMasi is comfortable with the amounts budgeted for this. The "Air Pacs" budget has a \$13,744 balance with an additional \$9,000 in FY 2020/2021. The air pacs cost about \$9,000 each, last about ten (10) years, and it is expected only one (at most) will need to be replaced each year. There is a \$10,001 balance in the "Thermal Imaging Camera" budget with an additional \$1,000 to be added in the next fiscal year. The NFD has two (2) of these cameras, which cost about \$10,000 each. They usually are replaced when new pumper trucks are purchased and this is not scheduled until FY 2028/2029.

The 1999 Brush Truck is not scheduled for replacement until FY 2027/2028 and Chief DeMasi has suggested moving funds out of this budget (\$10,000 balance) in order to hasten purchase of a replacement Tanker Truck. Chief DeMasi said the Brush Truck does have some problems but these might be resolved by installing a lighter truck bed. Ms. Baroffio asked if the \$70,000 estimated replacement cost for this vehicle was accurate. Chief DeMasi thought it was. We might also be able to transfer some of the current equipment to the new chassis.

The 2000 Aerial Truck now is scheduled for replacement in FY 2027/2028. There is an \$117,213 balance in the replacement account and as part of its current agreement with the municipality, Norwich University (NU) will provide \$20,000 each year into this fund. The municipality also will add \$11,500 in FY 2020/2021. The estimated replacement cost is about \$300,000 for a good used aerial truck. With such heavy equipment purchases the normal practice is for the municipality to budget half the cost and borrow the rest. Chief DeMasi said the Aerial Truck has only minor problems at the moment. One uncorrectable problem is it only reaches seventy feet (70') high, which is not high enough for some of the newer NU buildings. The replacement truck should be able to reach no less than ninety-five feet (95'). Chair Maxwell suggested it might be good to start looking out for good used truck right away. Chief DeMasi said he does keep an eye out as they seem to be snapped up quickly. The ones he has seen recently have cost between \$300,000 and \$500,000. Board member Goodrich asked if the current one would have any resale value. Chief DeMasi said no one seems have much interest in used-up fire truck. We might be able to get \$25,000 from a private collector.

As for the 1993 Tanker Truck, Chief DeMasi said this is the third straight year he has requested its replacement within the next fiscal year. The vehicle is in poor condition with overheating problems, rust on the frame, and the water tank itself is rusting from the inside out. The estimated cost of a new tanker truck is about \$340,000, which is the budget figure he has been given by manufacturers. Due to the size of the Fire Station, the tanker truck can only be at most twenty-six feet (26') long. Unfortunately, most used tanker trucks on the market are at least thirty feet (30') long. Carolyn Stevens asked if it were possible to extend the building to avoid such size restrictions. Chief DeMasi said it was but it probably would be cost prohibitive. Chief DeMasi said the \$340,000 would be for a four-wheel drive vehicle, as this usually adds about \$15,000 to the vehicle cost. The current balance in the vehicle replacement account is \$158,153 with an additional \$40,000 to be added in FY 2020/2021. This should be enough to finance half of the purchase price of a new vehicle with the rest to be borrowed. He added good used tanker trucks are very hard to find.

Board member Goodrich asked if the current tanker truck is usable. Chief DeMasi said it was but with the internal rust problem he is concerned that it might break down each time it is used. He noted the tanker goes out for every structure and chimney fire. It also goes out for every automobile accident outside the range of the municipal water system. Chair Maxwell asked what would happen if the tanker truck failed within the next month or so. Chief DeMasi said he would have to find a replacement vehicle as soon as possible, which might require an emergency bond vote. The Williamstown and Roxbury fire departments have their own tanker trucks so we might have to rely on them for Mutual Aid assistance for a while.

Board member Miller noted NU paid the entire cost of the last aerial truck purchase and asked if it were possible it might do so again. If so, then funds in the aerial truck CEP account could be transferred to the tanker truck account. Chair Maxwell said it was possible and this possibility could be discussed at a future meeting with NU administrators. He added NU will have a leadership change soon and the new administration might want to work with the municipality on this. Ms. Baroffio noted the last time she interacted with NU employees on this subject, they wanted confirmation the municipality was still appropriating funds for the aerial truck replacement and not relying solely on NU funding. Chair Maxwell said nothing can be known for sure until the next meeting with NU administrators is held.

Chief DeMasi noted the aerial truck is not just for calls to the NU campus as there are a number of downtown buildings that would need its service. Chair Maxwell said under the old agreement NU provided the municipality with a gift of about \$75,000 per year that would be dedicated to supporting the emergency services. Under the current agreement, NU provides about \$200,000 per year with the only earmark being the \$20,000 set aside each year for the aerial truck replacement. Perhaps it might be time to start negotiating the next agreement. In the meantime, Chair Maxwell said the municipality should still budget for the replacement of the aerial truck and the tanker. As for the availability of grant funds, Chief DeMasi said they were out there but usually came with strict stipulations regarding an equipment replacement schedule, etc. Manager Schulz added Northfield would be competing against much larger fire departments located in major cities. Chief DeMasi has applied for three (3) grants for tanker truck funding and all these attempts were unsuccessful.

Board member Goodrich felt the Select Board should take action on tanker truck replacement this year. Elroy Hill agrees since about half the replacement cost already has been budgeted. He felt a ten-year bond would not affect taxpayers too badly. Board member Doney also doesn't want to push this purchase back for another year. He doesn't want the possibility of having to finance buying two (2) NFD heavy trucks in one year due to sudden breakdown, etc. Chief DeMasi noted it would take about a year for the tanker truck to be put together. Therefore, even if ordered at the start of the next fiscal year (07/01/20), the new tanker truck wouldn't be in service until June 2021. The specs alone are about sixty (60) pages and should take two (2) to three (3) months to draft. Chair Maxwell asked if the new tanker truck was purchased, would Northfield then have a first-class firefighting operation. Chief DeMasi said it would. He added the scheduled replacement planning for NFD equipment has been well run for several years. Chair Maxwell said he has been impressed each time he has visited the Fire Station as the building and the equipment housed there are always in gleaming condition.

The Select Board consensus was for Ms. Baroffio to start the process of preparing for a bond vote on Town Meeting Day to fund half of purchase price of the tanker truck. This decision will be revisited later in the budget process as this information is collected. Chair Maxwell then thanked Chief DeMasi for his presentation and for his good work throughout the year.

The Select Board members took a fifteen-minute break at this time.

- c. **Highway Department.** Manager Schulz noted in the "Personnel Services" budget, the wages of the full-time employees are pretty much set by union contract. In keeping with the contract recently approved, the "Technical" line item will increase from \$324,720 to \$343,490 in the next fiscal year. Also in keeping with the new contract, full-time employees will be paid an extra \$1 per hour during the winter months as compensation for being on call for snowstorms. The "Stand-By" line item is thus eliminated. The "Part-Time" line item will be reduced from \$9,450 to \$7,500 based on past actuals. This budget is for hiring part-time drivers to help plow snow during the worst storms. One has already been hired for this winter and perhaps a second might be added later. The "Overtime" budget will increase from \$45,000 to \$52,000 based on past actuals. There will be a reduction in the line item for health insurance coverage (\$88,490 to \$71,760) as the municipality will be switching to a less expensive provider in the next calendar year and an additional employee will be taking a buyout due to coverage elsewhere.

Manager Schulz said the "Contract Services" budget will see a 12.9% increase due to slightly higher budgets for contracted street sweeping, line marking, and permit fees. Board member Goslant would like thicker paint used when the crosswalks, etc. are marked so they last longer. Manager Schulz said there also was discussion of using different paint colors for crosswalks at major intersections. Highway Foreman Trent Tucker will look into this possibility next spring. Manager Schulz said the permit fees budget mainly will rise due to new state stormwater requirements.

The "Administration" budget will remain almost the same as in the current fiscal year. The only change is a \$20 increase (from \$1,650 to \$1,670) in the "Telephone" line item. The "Materials/Supply" budget will increase 5.4% in the next fiscal year. The budget for "Gravel/Stone" was doubled last year to address problems on certain backroads so this budget will remain about the same in the next fiscal year. Among the roads that had large amounts of gravel and stone put down this year were Colson Road, Dole Hill Road, Stony Brook Road, and Berlin Pond Road. Based on the RSMS (Road Surface Management System) program and Mr. Tucker's observations, among the roads on next year's priority list will be Stony Brook Road, Loop Road, Bailey Road, West Hill Road, and Little Northfield Road. This list is subject to change based on Mr. Tucker's post-Mud Season inspections of the backroads.

The Select Board members had some questions about which sections of the priority list roads are in the worst condition. Mr. Tucker answered based on his most recent observations and the RSMS data. Chair Maxwell doesn't want to put off any work on the current priority list in case new problems are found in the interim. Any additional work should be considered supplemental to the priority list. Board member Miller suggested it might be time to create a separate Highway Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) budget dedicated to long-term plans to address deficiencies on the backroads, i.e. road resurfacing, etc. This would be distinct from the Highway O&M budget that focuses on regular road maintenance.

Ms. Baroffio noted before the RSMS program was instituted there used to be separate CIP accounts for paving and mat & gravel. Based on the recommendation of the Town Manager at the time, when the RSMS program was started all the long-term road plans were combined into one "RSMS" budget. In recent years, the RSMS budget has been used almost entirely for paving projects. If the Select Board members choose, it is possible to split this account again in order to specify how much will be spent on paved and how much unpaved roads. Mr. Tucker noted of the \$87,350 budgeted in FY 2019/2020 for non-Mud Season gravel and stone, about \$60,000 was spent addressing problems on the worst of the backroads. He also is pleased that starting with the current fiscal year's budget, there is a separate line item for Mud Season gravel and stone. Now there is no chance an especially bad winter could deplete the entire stockpile and leave nothing for when the backroads soften up in the spring.

Chair Maxwell believes the municipality is in a much better position for long-term highway infrastructure planning due to the budget decisions made last year. He felt the Select Board members need create priority lists for special work but also try to avoid taking Highway employees away from their regular road maintenance duties during the summer months. Board member Goodrich asked if it might be time to reevaluate the size of the Highway crew. Board member Miller thought one reason for dealing with the worst sections of backroad was to decrease the amount of maintenance they would require in future years. Mr. Tucker said the current level of staffing is adequate during the summer months but having the part-time winter drivers was very helpful. He added having a second person grading backroads during the summer months would help get a lot of work done. Chair Maxwell would prefer to rent another grader rather than purchase one. This was done this past summer for a couple weeks to great effect. He felt renting additional equipment when needed allowed for better budget flexibility.

The Select Board members took a twenty-minute break at this time.

When the meeting resumed, there appeared to be consensus that that some of the current funding for gravel and stone be put in a separate Highway CIP budget for long-term gravel road resurfacing, etc. A separate CIP account for road paving also will be created. Mr. Tucker felt this was a good idea. Board member Miller suggested leaving the \$35,000 budgeted for Mud Season stone and gravel as is and taking some (if not all) of the \$90,000 now budgeted in the "Stone/Gravel" line item and moving it to CIP. Charles Morse said the main advantage of creating a CIP account would be funds unused at end of the fiscal year would be rolled into the next one. After further discussion, it was decided to leave \$40,000 in the "Stone/Gravel" O&M budget and put \$90,000 into the new CIP account. These figures may be revisited later in the budget process.

Chair Maxwell asked why there is a new line item for electricity in the Town Highway budget. The cost of Town Garage electricity is in a separate budget. Ms. Baroffio said that was a loading machine at one of the Town's pits needs power. Manager Schulz said the "Gasoline/Diesel" budget currently is level funded at \$57,000. Based on past actuals, Chair Maxwell recommended raising this to \$60,000. There was no objection.

Manager Schulz said the amount for winter road sand would be increased in the next budget from \$55,000 to \$60,000 based on past actuals. Board member Miller proposed as an economy measure the municipality should attempt to lower the amount of sand and salt put on the roads. As a result, residents would be expected to drive slower, purchase appropriate winter tires, etc. Chair Maxwell said this would generate a lot of complaint calls the first year. Board member Miller felt some people just did not have realistic viewpoints regarding rural living.

Scott Neun lives on Dickinson Drive and he feels the Highway Department wastes a lot of road material by salting the road when making the first plowing pass on his road. When the plow returns for a second time, the old salt is pushed to the side of the road before it can have any impact on the road. Chair Maxwell suggested the municipality should develop a new policy that will explain the new restraint in the use of sand and salt during the winter months. Board member Miller noted in some Western states, the backroads aren't salted at all so that firm snow packs can develop on the road surface.

Board member Goodrich feels Northfield residents probably won't accept this new philosophy after growing up with the expectation that the roads will be plowed, sanded, and salted after every snowstorm. Steve Davis would like to see a reduction in the amount of salt used on paved roads. Board member Goslant thinks it would be difficult for Northfield residents to lower their expectations when VTrans trucks will continue to scrape off all the snow on the sections of Vermont Route 12 that go through the center of town. He felt this encouraged drivers with bad tires to step on the gas but they would still complain if there were different standards for state highways and town roads.

Chair Maxwell asked if an experiment that involved reduced use of winter sand and salt on the backroads was something the Select Board members would like to try in the next fiscal year. Board member Miller would like to try anything that could help reduce the sand and salt budgets. Board member Goslant noted there usually is an annual calculated reduction in sand and salt use by February and March when the stockpiles start to dwindle. By that time there usually are fewer complaints about snow on the roads because residents have gone through the bulk of winter and Mud Season is approaching. Board member Goodrich felt Northfield residents would not accept such a change in winter road maintenance. She felt the theory behind the idea is perhaps sound but she would never want to compromise on road safety. After further discussion, the proposed budget for winter sand was increased in FY 2020/2021 from \$70,000 from \$55,000 on Mr. Tucker's recommendation. The salt budget was tentatively set at \$70,000. Chair Maxwell said both figures could be revisited later in the budget process.

Manager Schulz said the proposed budget level funds the budgets for "Chemicals/Chloride," "Road Culverts," "Hot Mix/Cold Patch," "Mechanic's Fee," "Department Supplies," "Uniforms," and "Safety & Compliance.". The budget for tires and chains will increase from \$22,000 to \$26,000 based on past actuals and expected price increases. The line item for "Equipment Rental" will increase from \$3,100 to \$8,000 based on expected additional use of rented equipment, i.e. graders and rollers, on the backroads next summer. Board member Miller felt this figure should be increased further. Manager Schulz suggested a raise to \$14,000. There was no objection. The line item for "Pit Lot Rent" will be set at \$3,000. This is the cost of renting a storage pit near the Northfield Country Club from R.E. Tucker so municipal road material can be kept there. This eliminates the need for Highway employees working on the southern backroads from having to travel all the way back to the Falls Pit to reload. The line item for Small Tools/Equipment will be increased from \$1,000 to \$2,500. Recent past actuals are higher but that was due to unexpected tool replacements that are unlikely to reoccur.

Turning to the Highway CIP budget. Manager Schulz noted the "Building Improvements" account had a \$69,774 balance with \$2,500 to be added in FY 2020/2021. Some work was done this past year in the Town Highway section of the Town Garage but no major projects are envisioned for the near future. The balance in the "Guard Rails" CIP account is \$24,066 with \$3,000 to be added in the next fiscal year. Manager Schulz noted there have been a number of public requests for additional guard rails to be installed around the community, i.e. Dole Hill Road, Little Northfield Road, Bull Run Road, etc. Mr. Tucker said Cox Brook Road needs some as well. He estimated this cost at \$12,000. Board member Goslant would like to see more on Lovers Lane. Mr. Tucker suggested transferring the \$2,196 balance in the "Paving-Town Garage" CIP account, which he felt was unneeded, into the "Guard Rails" CIP account to accommodate this.

Manager Schulz noted there is a \$163,780 balance in the "Bridges" CIP account with an additional \$15,000 to be added in the next fiscal year. He added there are several local bridges with problems that need to be addressed in the near future. Stony Brook Bridge and Pleasant Street Bridge are at the top of the priority list as both have major abutment problems. The repairs costs for Stony Brook Bridge are estimated at \$285,000 and Manager Schulz plans to apply for a VTrans structure grant that would cover about \$175,000 of this. He felt Northfield should have a good chance of being awarded this grant as we haven't received much from this program in recent years. Board member Goslant felt additional attention should be paid to our covered bridges. Ms. Baroffio noted a CIP special account designated as "Cox Brook Bridge" was created because of a \$920 insurance payment received after a driver damaged one of the covered bridges. Chair Maxwell agreed the Cox Brook Road covered bridges are looking rather shabby so these funds will be well-used. Manager Schulz said the Select Board members also will have to consider the future need to budget for the local match amount when the Main Street Bridge is either rehabilitated or replaced in the next decade. He doesn't think any bridge construction will take place for at least four (4) years so it probably is best to hold off any budgeting for this until a firm timeline has been established.

The CIP account for "Ledge Removal" has a \$12,475 balance with \$4,000 to be added in FY 2020/2021. Manager Schulz doesn't anticipate any major projects in the next year so this amount should be sufficient. The "Sign and Post" CIP account has an \$8,700 deficit, which is mainly due to the purchase of new "Welcome to Northfield" signs at the north and south ends of town. An additional \$12,000 will be added in FY 2020/2021 to replenish the account. The "Retaining Wall" CIP account has a \$45,302 balance with \$10,000 to be added in the next fiscal year. The main focus for this account would be addressing the deteriorating wall on Elm Street. Project costs will depend on the approach taken, i.e. driven sheeting or total reconstruction. The Select Board members hope a less expensive option will be possible. Action on this account will be delayed until more information becomes available.

Manager Schulz noted there is a \$34,904 balance in the "Sidewalks" CIP budget with an additional \$70,000 budgeted in FY 2020/2021. He said this total amount added to the \$75,000 VTrans sidewalk paving grant would cover the cost of installing new sidewalk on the west side of South Main Street from the Common to Washington Avenue. Chair Maxwell suggested some money could be saved by keeping old curbing in place where it is still viable. There are some areas where the curbing will need to be reset or completely replaced. Board member Miller would like to see some budget numbers on this. Manager Schulz said this project will be going out to bid soon. He could add an option of reusing old curbing and perhaps any project savings could be used to extend the new sidewalk to Norwich University as originally intended. Mr. Tucker felt some of the good old curbing could be reused to better purpose by being installed on the sections of Central Street where the sidewalk is damaged or missing. Just having curbing in place could help divert stormwater from lawns, driveways, etc. Ms. Baroffio said that would mean the South Main Street sidewalk project would have all-new curbing. Mr. Tucker didn't think much money could be saved by having old curbing reused or reset. A curbing subcontractor would be able to install new curbing rather quickly if not slowed down by having to deal with fixing old problems. Chair Maxwell suggested adding this option to the bid documents.

Manager Schulz said there was a \$22,392 balance in the "Drainage" CIP account with an additional \$15,000 to be added in FY 2020/2021. These funds are used to pay for the Town Highway's share of stormwater diversion/treatment projects. This includes the upcoming project on South Main Street that would eliminate the CSO (Combined Sewer Overflow) on East Street.

The RSMS budget now has a balance of \$83,089 with \$156,000 to be added in the next fiscal year. Manager Schulz said the current paving priority list now includes Central Street, Slate Avenue, Summer Street, Winter Street, and Western Avenue. As requested earlier in the meeting, this account will be renamed as "Paving" and a separate account for the backroads will be established. This account will have a \$90,000 initial balance and named "Gravel Resurfacing."

Given this meeting was now long past its anticipated four (4) hour length, Chair Maxwell asked if the Board members wished to continue with a discussion of the Highway Department Capital Equipment Plan (CEP) budget or hold off for another time. Mr. Tucker felt there were no major issues with the CEP budget so the discussion should be rather brief. Mr. Tucker did have a concern that the 2009 International dump truck, which is scheduled for replacement in FY 2021/2022, might not last that long if kept in regular usage. He would like this truck retained as a backup vehicle (for which it should have several years of additional service) but also purchase a new dump truck a year early. The current balance in the replacement budget is \$117,156 with \$32,000 to be added in both FY 2020/2021 and FY 2021/2022. After further discussion, the Select Board members thought it best to keep to the original replacement schedule.

The 2005 Mack dump truck also is scheduled for replacement in FY 2021/2022. Mr. Tucker said it might be preferable to replace this vehicle with a larger one that would be able to haul bigger loads of gravel, sand, etc. This would cut down the delivery costs of such materials by having the Northfield Highway employees themselves pick up less expensive out-of-town road supplies. The Select Board members appreciated the forewarning and this matter will be discussed fully at next year's budget meetings.

Manager Schulz noted the 2004 John Deere Grader is scheduled for replacement in FY 2027/2028. The current balance in this account is \$80,646 and the annual contribution will be raised from \$11,120 to \$27,420 in future years. The estimated replacement cost is \$300,000 so the municipality probably will borrow for half of this purchase and pay the rest from cash on hand. The Sidewalk Machine is scheduled for replacement in FY 2024/2025. Mr. Tucker said the machine was in good shape so that shouldn't be a problem. The "Traffic Light" CEP account has an \$11,900 balance with \$10,000 to be added in FY 2020/2021. It would cost about \$50,000 to replace it. Chair Maxwell hoped this wouldn't be necessary for a few years. Manager Schulz said the traffic light is not malfunctioning but does need periodic maintenance.

Manager Schulz said a new Highway CEP account has been created for a "Sign Post Driver" in case the grant application he is planning to submit to VLCT is successful. Since Highway employees can be injured if they try to install sign posts without the proper equipment, Manager Schulz considered this purchase a safety measure.

Chair Maxwell then thanked Mr. Tucker for attending this special weekend meeting. The next budget meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 17, 2019. The meeting will be held in the Municipal Building and start at 6:00 p.m. The agenda items will include the proposed budgets for the Town Clerk's Office, the Board of Civil Authority, Cemetery, Town Garage, Debt, etc.

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (Unscheduled). There was none.

VI. ADJOURNMENT. Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Miller, to adjourn. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 2:51 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 January 14, 2020