

[NORTHFIELD SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES]

March 6, 2024

Northfield Town Hall
69 Main St

Select Board Present: Alexander Meisner, Chair; Bernard Boudreau, Vice Chair; Sarah Kerns, Clerk; Barbara “Bee” Jacque(6:01pm)

Select Board absent: Heath Cummings

Also Present: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator(remote); Sandra L. Wood, Town Secretary; Tyler Bourbeau, BNCTV

Others Present: Chief Jon Hall, Officer Curtis Weaver, Officer John Cowan; John Buxton; Jon Hall(as resident)

- Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm
- **Scheduled Appointments**
 - **6:00 pm** Chief Hall - Department update and accolades
 - Chief gave an update on the assistance of the State Police and thanked them for their service
 - Accolades:
 - Officer Cobileanski
 - For his work on a drug arrest and intervention; a stalking and domestic situation; a larceny, destructive behavior and animal issue assisting Animal Control Officer Dragon
 - Officer Shoemaker
 - A medical, CPR assist with EMS member Carolyn Warger; de-escalated a suicidal veteran with assistance of Clinical Support Solutions personnel
 - Officer Weaver
 - Response to car crash entrapment, obtaining an injury; investigation of car break-ins on Mt. Hermon Station Rd resulting in a five-year sentence of the perpetrator
 - Officer Welcome – part-time officer
 - Helped close a case by researching log entries leading to a pattern
 - Officer Cowan
 - 20 years with Northfield
 - Has received compliments from people he has assisted who were not comfortable with the police
 - Assisted getting a non-compliant individual to the hospital for needed treatment
 - Mental health case involving stolen property, attempted suicide. Individual thanked Cowan for his help
 - Chief Hall’s leadership and positive reinforcement was recognized
 - Discussion on the proven benefit of clinical health services and the need to incorporate into the budget when grant funding is no longer an option
 - See Donated Vehicle topic below
- **Citizens’ Concerns (limit 3 minutes per speaker)**
 - John Buxton, Cross Rd- read a statement of concern with the recent industrial solar installation and possible future installations on farmland. Requesting the Planning Board put in place a 15-month moratorium. Buxton stated he was not against farming or solar
 - Jon Hall-stated he’s not against solar but the newest proposal Buxton referred to was along the river
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 3/6/24 Payroll warrant of \$74,548.39
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 3/6/24 Vendor warrant of \$100,858.10
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 2/20/24 minutes as written
 - Motion by Kerns seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 01/23/24 Executive Session as written
 - Motion by Boudreau seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the 02/06/24 Executive Session as written
- **Meetings/Events attended by Selectboard members**
 - Meisner: Pancake Breakfast; Primary voting
 - Jacque: Finance Committee; Business Park of Western Massachusetts; Grant Development Director Hiring team
 - Kerns: Conservation Commission; Open Space Committee; Grant Development Director Hiring team; Pancake Breakfast; Pioneer Valley Regional nurse; Franklin Regional Counsel of Government (FRCOG) Community Development Representative; Business Park of Western Massachusetts; Economic Development Advisory; Primary voting; Town Clerk & Assistant Town Clerk
 - Boudreau: Friends of Northfield Seniors; Sewer Commission; Primary voting
- **Town Administrator Updates**
 - Home Rule Petition – Wastewater Commission Members

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- Notified by Senator Comerford's office the home rule petition was filed by Representative Whipps office and assigned House bill # (H4404) *An Act increasing the Town of Northfield Board of Sewer Commissioners from three to five members* and is currently in the Joint Committee on Municipalities and Regional Government.
 - Discussion on home rule petition regarding solar installations and if Comerford was filing an amendment. No amendment known at this time. The town could put one forward
 - Llamas to look into water main break update on culvert work on Highland
- Massworks – Highland Avenue Culvert and Sidewalks
 - Met with Highway Superintendent Walker and the Engineer on site on Highland Ave last week to begin the project.
 - They have the survey work begun
 - beginning the wetlands work immediately
 - Plan to begin the borings around March 12th
 - The design phase will take a while
 - Most of the time will be going through the permitting – as this work takes place in a brook there is a large amount of wetlands permitting to do. Construction may not start until next year
- **Business**
 - Vote to accept donated police vehicle
 - The unmarked vehicle will be used for administrative and task force duties
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to accept the 2009 GMC Acadia, red, to be accepted as town property
 - Fire Chief Succession Committee
 - Brief review of the Town of Whately process
 - Discussion on order of process
 - Schedule a community forum for input
 - Create a scope of work
 - Form screening committee to review candidates to forward finalists to the Select Board
 - Select Board is the hiring committee
 - The current Fire Chief has not filed for extension
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Kerns the Select Board voted to form a Fire Chief Succession Screening Committee with 2 fire department personnel, 1 public safety personnel, 2 citizens and 2 Select Board members
 - Discussion: prefer citizen members to have past public safety background but not currently active in a town department. Include emergency medical training for the public safety member. One citizen should have fire technology background
 - Motion by Kerns to amend the committee to 2 fire departments personnel, 1 to have EMT certification, 1 Select Board member, 2 citizens, 1 with fire technology background, 1 public safety personnel. No second. Motion to amend withdrawn by Kerns
 - Motion by Kerns, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to amend the Fire Chief Succession Screening Committee to 2 fire personnel, 2 citizens, 1 Select Board member, 1 police department member and 1 EMS member
 - Discussion of possible dates and locations for a community forum around April 23 at 6pm. Llamas to check for availability of the Kiva or gymnasium at Pioneer Valley Regional School
 - Six Town Regional Agreement Representative Recommendations
 - Letter of interest from Chris Hinkle read
 - Jacque and Kerns to combine data to forward to representative
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Kerns the Select Board voted to appoint Chris Hinkle as a 6 Town Regionalization Agreement Subcommittee representative recommendation
 - Conservation Commission Administrative Assistant Compensation
 - The Conservation Commission would like to request Robin Conley, former member, to be paid for approximately 16 hours per month to do clerical work for the Conservation Commission including at the state level
 - An updated job description needs to be reviewed by the Conservation Commission outlining the duties required for the position. Previous job description is out of date
 - After job description is complete, next step is classification and approval for funding at Town Meeting
 - Kerns to bring job description review and budget update to the Conservation Commission

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- Town Organizational Chart
 - Discussion on color coding for clarity
 - Kerns to supply suggestions to Llamas to forward to consultants on the project
- **Committee/Board Appointments**
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to re-appoint Kathleen O'Shea as a Substitute Librarian; Grade 1, step 1 at \$15.71/hr
- **Proposed Agenda Items**
 - Kristin Elechko, Western Massachusetts Director Office of the Governor
 - Solar for future discussion
- **Announcements**
 - Condolences to the family of Lois Stearns who passed away March 5. Lois was a foundational member of the community and served two terms as a Select Board member (1990-1996) and the Finance Committee from 1997-2022
 - School Committee meeting and 3 Town Forum of Select Boards and Finance Committees @ 20 Church St. Bernardston
 - Looking for candidates for the Fire Chief Succession Screening Committee. Possible public forum on April 23
 - Music event on March 16 @ Cameron's Winery
 - Lyme's Disease talk on April 4
 - Turners Falls to Northfield Bike Ride
 - Federal Energy Regulatory Commission website for public comments submissions on the Connecticut River
- **Recognition for Service**
 - Braydon Thayer's 1,000th point accomplishment on the PVRs Basketball Team

Motion by Jacque, seconded by Kerns the Select Board voted to adjourn at 8:09 pm

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

Select Board Clerk

4/16/24
Date Approved