

## [NORTHFIELD SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES]

March 22, 2022

Northfield Town Hall  
69 Main St

Select Board Present: Heath Cummings, Chair; Barbara “Bee” Jacque, Vice Chair; Alexander Meisner; Bernard Boudreau, Clerk  
Select Board absent: Mary Sullivan-Bowen

Also Present: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Sandra L. Wood, Town Secretary; Tyler Bourbeau/Otis Wheeler/Ian Bauer, BNCTV

Others Present: Daniel Browning; Stacy Bond, Chair, Mary King, Secretary & Lindsay McCarthy, Treasurer of the 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee; Karen Boudreau, Sewer Commission; Police Chief Jon Hall; Misha Storm, Director, Dickinson Library

- Meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm
- **Scheduled Appointments**
  - Class III Transfer of License Hearing-Dan Browning-opened at 6:00 pm
  - Notice read:
  - Notice is hereby given, under Chapter 140, section 59, of the MGL that a Public Hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 22, 2022, at 6:00 pm, in the Selectboard Meeting room, Northfield Town Hall, 69 Main St., Northfield, MA to consider the transfer of the Class III-Motor Vehicle Junk License of Homer F. Browning III dba Homer F. Browning III to Daniel H. Browning dba Daniel H. Browning, 849 Millers Falls Rd., to buy/sell second hand motor vehicles for the purpose of remodeling, taking apart or rebuilding and selling the same, or the buying or selling of parts of second hand motor vehicles or tires, or the assembling of second hand vehicle parts as defined under Chapter 140, Section 58 of the M.G.L.
  - Browning responded when asked how he intended to uphold the license to keep the business the same as it has been run. D Browning has been in the junk car business most of his life. There will be no changes at this time to the status, location, or configuration of the business or lot. Waste oil and fluids are contained in drums and transported off the property. A tree line precedes the lot. No complaints have been filed. The license will more clearly define the location as it now has its own street number. It did not on the previous license, just a description.
  - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the Class III transfer from Homer F. Browning III to Daniel H. Browning at 849 Millers Falls Rd to buy/sell secondhand motor vehicles for the purpose of remodeling, taking apart or rebuilding and selling the same, or the buying or selling of parts of secondhand motor vehicles or tires, or the assembling of secondhand vehicle parts as defined under Chapter 140, Section 58 of the M.G.L.
  - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque to close the hearing at 6:10 pm. Vote unanimous.
  - 350<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee Update
  - Stacy Bond, Mary King, and Lindsay McCarthy updated the Select Board on the committee’s goal to honor and understand the town’s past, enjoy the present and look forward to the future. The theme is “Reconnecting Northfield” joining the past and the present bring a boost to the town and to have some fun after the past two years. The committee has been meeting since winter of 2020 and has to date 50 volunteers
  - The kickoff will be at Northfield Mountain, Saturday February 18, 2023
  - Pioneer Valley Symphony at the Northfield Golf Club at the end of June 2023
  - Finale weekend September 30, 2023, grand parade, and fireworks at the Northfield Drive In
  - Smaller events will occur in between
  - Website [www.northfield350.org](http://www.northfield350.org). Mailer sent out. Facebook, Instagram presence for information
  - Merchandise for sale including Tom White ceramics commemorating the event
  - Raffle submission to [northfield350news@gmail.com](mailto:northfield350news@gmail.com) by March 30, 2022, for Tom White Pottery
  - Focus groups and heads: historical and religious heritage, Mary King; entertainment, Bruce Kahn; parade, Magda Ponce-Castro; community engagement, Joan & Steve Stoia; children’s’ programming, Pat Shearer & Rhoda Yucavitch
  - Looking for volunteers to do sales
  - Challenges: how to distribute pottery, shipping costs

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- Oral historians (Kleins) working with residents to collect information. Working on photographers and looking into BNCTV. Exploring a way to capture the celebration for access possibly at the library in some format, not just book form. An architecture expert will conduct walks on Main St. and include a documented presentation.
- Jacque expanded on story telling feature. Kleins will teach others how to gather stories. Suggested an on-demand feature on the website for the pictures
- The Select Board thanked the committee for coming in with the update
- Chief Hall: Request to hire Michael Williams as SRO/Patrolman; Body Cams; Co-Response Pilot MOU
- Chief Hall reported Michael Williams has backed out of the position due to a lack of job security. Feeling the school district is not on board. No other candidate. Llamas and Hall will work on re-structuring.
- Time commitment of Memorandum of Understanding seemed to be questioned by the school.
  - What transpired in past month/how to correct
    - Lack of understanding by school administration how School Resource Officer (SRO) is run
    - New superintendent and several new members of school committee. Job entailed more than current SRO could do in part-time position
    - Confusion as to why the position was going from part-time to full-time.
    - Impression from Chief Hall was there are school committee members and employees of the school who don't want to speak up about their views on a SRO. Not looking to force a SRO, would rather have the school want one. Superintendent & school committee at different degrees of wanting a SRO
    - Meisner expressed his opinion of the school committee as a 'house of cards'
    - Chief Hall will approach differently if filling the position by having a contract signed by the school before moving forward. Impression the school committee was confused
    - Jacque offered to attend a school committee meeting to discuss the position in the future
    - Position is part of the budget discussion. Community needs to weigh in.
    - Jacque expressed disappointment on losing the candidate
- Co-Response
  - Chief Hall explained the position is an experiment funded by a grant shared between Erving, Gill, Bernardston, Leverett and Northfield. The Erving police chief is applying for the grant. Hall hopes the position will start in June.
  - The clinician will provide service to victims and police staff
- Body Cameras
  - Hall viewed 4-5 versions and picked the one fitting the department. Once voted by the Select Board, Hall will discuss with the department.
  - Camera will be prominently displayed on the officer
  - Manager of the equipment would be Chief Hall. Bill Kimball handling the set up and town information technology service will be involved in server set up
  - Retention time reviewed. Uploaded footage cannot be altered. Discussion on sections being downloaded without losing the entirety of the recording. Hall to check.
  - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve policy and procedure 4.24 in regard to Body Worn/In-Car cameras from the Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Reference 41.3.8 with an efficacy date of March 22, 2022

- **Review and Approval of Warrants**

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- Motion by Meisner, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 3/24/22 Payroll warrant of \$76,653.49
- Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the 3/24/22 Vendor warrant of \$107,964.58
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
  - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the Selectboard minutes of 3/8/22 as written.
- **Interim Selectboard Meetings- 03/21/22 with Finance Committee re: proposed water district**
- **Meetings/Events attended by Selectboard members**
  - Boudreau: Finance Committee, Caucus
  - Cummings: Caucus, Finance Committee, Town Administrator; Planning Board; Emergency Services Facility Committee
  - Meisner: Caucus, School Committee
  - Jacque: Caucus, Finance Committee meetings, Emergency services Facility Committee
- **Business**
  - Job description approvals: Library Substitute Circulation Assistant Position Job Description; CoA Program Assistant and Wastewater Treatment Full- time Operator
  - Council on Aging Program Assistant
    - Adjustments to better reflect the position
    - No re-classification needed.
    - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the changes to the job description to the Council on Aging Program Assistant effective immediately.
  - Wastewater Treatment Full-Time Operator
    - Karen Boudreau of the Sewer Commission explained background metrics and regulations set by the EPA. The plant should be staffed by two people. The set up of the budget covers two positions currently. The plant is under a consent order and needs addressing to avoid paying fines
    - Changes to the job description reviewed.
    - The general maintenance is done by a part-time employee.
    - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the Wastewater Treatment Plant Operator job description as amended
  - Library Substitute Circulation Assistant
    - Library Director Misha Storm explained the position did not have a job description. Storm would like to hire two to cover vacations and other staff outages
      - Clarification on the purpose of the Library Trustee: to oversee the operation of the library and can through the process hold executive session for disciplinary action and in turn recommend to the Select Board an action. The Select Board is the appointing entity.
    - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the Town of Northfield job description of Substitute Circulation Assistant effective March 22, 2022
  - ARPA Funds and Expenditure Suggestions
  - American Rescue Plan Act funds are being treated as a grant therefore the Select Board has the authorization to spend the funds
  - The town has received \$865,509 and the Select Board created an ARPA Advisory Committee.
  - There are two “paths” to spending ARPA funds. The first, and the easiest is that any community can opt for the “Lost Revenue” provision. The Standard Allowance is any community receiving under \$10M the amount we are receiving is presumed to be lost revenue for the entire period through December 2024. This is a one-time election. Once made, then as a smaller community the funds may be used under the

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basic provision of “government services.” The second path is more complicated and requires a more rigorous reporting requirement in order to use the funding in more complicated ways.

- It is the recommendation of that Committee that the Selectboard vote to take the Standard Allowance and use the funding for “government services.” These services must comply with the acceptable allowable uses which generally include any service traditionally provided by a government, including infrastructure, provision of public safety and other services (including health and safety). There is still a reporting requirement on these expenditures, but it is a less onerous path.
  - If the Town takes all the funds as “lost revenue” then funds can be used for purposes consistent with the federal guidance, as legitimate municipal expenses the Committee is recommending the first three uses:
    - Police Admin Vehicle –for a vehicle up to \$45,000.
      - Jacque expanded on earmarking this item given the uncertainty of the SRO position at this time. The vehicle would not be purchased without the hiring of the SRO. The funds could be spent elsewhere.
    - Police Repeater –for up to \$15,000.
  - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to declare lost revenue under The Standard Allowance in regards to the American Rescue Plan Act funded Projects and Expenses
    - To pay for the short fall in the Senior Center Director line item (from when she was hired) for a total of \$13,300.
  - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend allocating \$13,300 from ARPA funds to pay for the Senior Center Director line item until June 30, 2022
  - Llamas discussed other items that may come forward from other departments
- Emergency Services Caolo Bieniek Associates Designer Fee
    - Currently in phase I: estimate cost, schematic design, estimating service and energy
    - The Emergency Services Facility Committee voted to move forward
    - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to approve the expenditure of \$71,000 as voted on at town meeting to award phase I design services to Caolo Bieniek Associates
  - Process to change Town Clerk position from elected to appointed
    - If passed at town meeting, 60 days must pass before it can be put on an election ballot. The next election (60 days after town meeting) would be the following year. The article would specify the position be appointed after the term expires. Timing will determine if the change happens at the end of the current Town Clerk’s term. If there is a delay, a complete three-year term could go by before the change is made.
      - Pros: labor pool goes beyond town boundaries. Job security.
      - Con: could be voted out of a job
    - Llamas to add to the warrant
  - Rescinded mask mandate review
    - Senior Center is requesting masks continue to be worn in their area. No other concerns raised
  - COVID pay reimbursement
    - The state has closed the program for reimbursement.
    - Select Board agreed to keep the policy until further notice
    - Llamas to check if ARPA funds can be used
  - Selectboard stipend increase review-tabled
  - Selectboard office hours
    - Suggested an hour on the off Select Board meeting night
  - Town Report dedication
    - The Select Board agreed to recognize the food programs in town for the 2021 Annual Report

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- **Town Administrator's update**

- Water District - Discussion with Finance Committee regarding East Northfield Water Co– the Pioneer Valley Regional has confirmed the use of the Auditorium for Wednesday April 6<sup>th</sup> for a Public Forum. Working with Thomas Aquinas College and East Northfield Water Co. to bring additional information regarding the process to the forum.
- Complete Streets Update – Bids were due today for the project. Due to Franklin Regional Council of Government offices at 3:00 pm.
- State Funds for July Storm – Contacted Senator Comerford's Office last week to get the status on the \$7.5M that was passed by the state for storm damage. They told me that they are working with A&F to determine how to distribute the funds. They said they don't think we will have to submit any forms to receive the funding...so I don't know if that means they are using MEMA/FEMA information from the storm? They are supposed to let us know as soon as they do.
- Town Clock – In case you haven't noticed it is now working. The additional funding in the article is going to be used to make some electrical updates – and they are working on the gears and parts that control the bell/chime mechanism.
- Good news on the Efficiency and Regionalization Grant – announcement is official on Thursday
- Applying for the Small Bridge Grant for a rehabilitation of the Bridge on School Street (due April 1<sup>st</sup>)

- **Proposed Agenda Items**

- Recreation Program Director Amy Neil
- 4 town budget meeting

- **Recognition for Service-** Finance Committee thanked

- **EXECUTIVE SESSION** – Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to go into executive session at 9:06 pm for Real Estate negotiation under reason M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21(a) 6 To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate, if the chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body then exit and enter into:
- **EXECUTIVE SESSION**-Contract negotiation under reason M.G. L. c30A, Sec. 21(a) 2 To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for contract negotiations with non-union personnel and adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 10:10 pm

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

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Select Board Clerk

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Date Approved