

[NORTHFIELD SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES]

March 21, 2023

Northfield Town Hall
69 Main St

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

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

Others Present: Cooper Bullock; Matt DiLuzio, Chair Open Space Committee; Mark DePonte; Karen Boudreau, Sewer Commission; Isaac Golding, Supervisor, Sewer Dept.; Todd Czernick, Brendon Brault, Ryan Betters, Northfield EMS; Phil Wonkka; Sarah Kerns, Highland Ave

- Meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm
- **Scheduled Appointments**
 - Open Space Stewardship Award
 - Cooper Bullock was presented as the recipient of the 2022 Annual Stewardship Award for his work on the trail system at Pioneer Valley Regional School and community service
 - Bullock has a background in organizing a land membership club and has worked with the Conservation Commission
 - His leadership and community engagement were cited by Senator Comerford
 - He traveled to Costa Rica and engaged with the community on environmental improvement
 - He has worked with 2016 recipient John Lepore
 - Worked on a grant to raise and release trout
 - The Select Board congratulated Bullock for his award and thanked him for the work he has done
 - Sewer Department: Meet Mark DePonte
 - Isaac Golding, Supervisor of the Sewer Department and Karen Boudreau of the Sewer Commission introduced their newest employee Mark DePonte
 - DePonte holds a 6C license and is a retired sewer operator originally in Vermont. He will work for the town up to three days a week
 - EMS appointment & meet: Phil Wonkka (appointment), Ryan Betters & Brandon Breault
 - Phil Wonkka
 - Background in National Guard and is the Fire Chief in Erving
 - Wants to see the EMS grow
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to appoint Phil Wonkka to Northfield EMS; term expires 12/31/23
 - Betters and Breault were introduced to the Select Board and were appointed at a previous meeting
 - Discussion on the changes in the EMS department from five years ago
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Select Board voted to approve the 3/22/23 Payroll warrant of \$73,135.84
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Select Board voted to approve the 3/22/23 Vendor warrant of \$813,178.47
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of 3/7/21 as written
- **Meetings/Events attended by Selectboard members**
 - Boudreau: sewer pipe filming; Sewer Commission meeting; town caucus; Friends of Northfield Seniors
 - Bowen: Franklin Regional Transit Auth
 - Cummings: Emergency Services Facility Committee
 - Jacque: Emergency Services Facility Committee; Finance Committee

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- **Town Administrator's update**

- Budget - Town Meeting Warrants being reviewed by Attorney
- Classification project will start interviews – most position questionnaires are in
- Working with Grant Developer on potential Highway grants – culvert/small bridge, reviewing store front improvement requests, One Stop grant applications

- **Business**

- Campus Center Community Collaborative Committee update
 - Cummings discussed the withdrawal of the Moody Center from the collaborative and proposed the committee pause until after the reorganization of the Select Board in May to discuss the future of the committee.
- Emergency Services Facility Update
 - Cummings reported the project progress and the budget coming in at or below projection
 - Conservation Commission DRAFT Order of Resource Area Delineation (ORAD) for the Study Area portion of the proposed Northfield Public Safety Complex property at 0 Highland Avenue was approved during their public meeting of March 15, 2023. Dates need to be finalized and for the ORAD to be signed.
 - Planning Board Site Review is March 22.
 - ZBA Variance hearing is March 28th.
 - General Contractor Bids are out and due back on April 12th
 - Council on Aging is having a coffee hour with the Operations Project Manager and Chief Dunnell on April 4th at 10:30.
 - Special Town Meeting is on April 19th. There will be an information session prior to the vote.
 - Llamas suggested the Select Board meet with the Finance Committee to discuss debt exclusion and other options
- Review of draft Special Town Meeting Warrant
 - The meeting will be opened, adjourn for a recess and do a presentation on the project, funding, etc. before reconvening to vote on the articles
 - Article 1 – to pay for continuing contracts with OPM, designer, temporary borrowing costs if the project is approved.
 - Article 2 – to approve funding of the project – this will have a real number as the General Contractor bids will be opened the week prior.
 - A 2/3 vote will be required
 - Warrant to be finalized at next Select Board meeting
- FY 24 Budget update
 - Currently the budget stands at \$11,079,662.
 - This is \$973,741 less than last year
 - Adding in revenue sources, includes enterprise revenue. Those costs only go to the respective user fees. The total amount to be raised is estimated at \$8,613,477. This is \$230,960 less on the tax rate than last year.
 - Revenue sources are estimated at this time:
 - Unrestricted General Government Funding – the only budget out is the Governors – usually the lowest of any funding received.
 - Local receipts are estimated each year. This is money taken in for excise taxes, fees, etc. Estimates are conservatively to take in more than estimated. Estimating \$425,000. Last year received \$654,000. Estimated tax rate is always slightly higher until actual numbers are received.
- Review of draft Town Meeting warrant
 - Articles voted to recommend

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- Motion by Meisner, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 4
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 6
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 7
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 8
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend article 9
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 10
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend article 11
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend article 12
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 13
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 14
 - Motion by Jacques, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend article 15
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 16
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Select Board voted to recommend article 18
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 19
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Select Board voted to recommend article 21
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 22
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 23
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to recommend article 24
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded Boudreau the Select Board voted to recommend article 25
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded Meisner the Select Board voted to recommend article 26
 - Articles 5(omnibus), 17, 20 to be addressed at next meeting
- **Citizens' Concerns**
 - Sarah Kerns/39 Highland Ave: questions regarding the proposed emergency services facility, and if the town had a credit limit; the effect of the sewer & water districts on taxes. Advised to inquire about sewer and water at respective businesses as they are not in the town budget as part of the tax base. Also advised to make appointment with Town Administrator for municipal budgeting discussion
 - **Committee/Board Appointments**
 - Resignation: Judie Tate from Council on Aging
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to accept with regret the resignation of Judie Tate from the Council on Aging
 - **Proposed Agenda Items**
 - Omnibus
 - Ongoing list
 - **Recognition for Service:** Finance Committee; Stacy Bond
 - Motion by Jacques, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to adjourn at 8:45 pm

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

Select Board Clerk

Date Approved