

[NORTHFIELD SELECTBOARD MEETING MINUTES]

February 8, 2022

Northfield Town Hall
69 Main St

Selectboard Present: Heath Cummings, Chair(7:04pm); Barbara “Bee” Jacque, Vice Chair; Alexander Meisner; Bernard Boudreau(remote), Clerk; Mary Sullivan-Bowen

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

Others Present: Colleen Letourneau, Senior Center Director; Nour Elkhattby Strauch, LifePath; Debby Wiesen Kelly; Jon Hall, Police Chief; Mark Fortier, EMS Chief, Camron Kennedy, Asst. EMS Chief, Carolyn Warger Czernich, Dan Momaney, Joseph Reed Jr., Yvonne Moreno(remote); Floyd “Skip” Dunnell, Fire Chief, Derek Worden, Shane Duclos, Thomas Jackson, Tim Momaney

Meeting called to order by Vice Chair Jacque at 6:00 pm. Cummings joined the meeting at 7:04 pm

• **Scheduled Appointments**

- Colleen Letourneau – Northfield Senior Center Director, Potential new CoA Board member, Nour Elkhattby Strauch Program Manager from Life Path
 - Appoint new member Debby Wiesen Kelly to Council on Aging; term expires 12/31/23
 - Background education, personal and work experience combined to work with seniors and bring a different view
 - Experience with programs and grant writing
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to appoint Debby Wiesen Kelly to the Council on Aging; term expires 12/31/23
 - Age Friendly Survey update- Nour Elkhattby Strauch, LifePath
 - Online survey has had close to one thousand responses to date
 - Survey questions on dementia were modified to reflect the local area.
 - Data collected will help with outreach. Source information is confidential
 - Survey deadline is March 11. Results should be ready by summer 2022
- Police Chief Hall – Police Department updates, Body Cameras, Mental Health Services
 - Body Cameras
 - Cameras have been purchased. Policy being developed
 - Will consult with Chief Redmond in Gill. Gill has cameras in use
 - Footage recorded during EMS call responses would be redacted
 - Believes cameras strengthens accountability of officers
 - Plans to come back in two months with completed policy and procedure; work with IT for storage needs
 - Mental Health Services
 - Town of Erving has applied for a grant and requests a letter of support from Town of Northfield
 - Services would pair a mental health responder with officers to mental health-based calls; will include follow up on issue
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Boudreau the Selectboard voted to endorse and support the Town of Northfield to sign a letter in conjunction with the Town of Erving to apply for a grant for mental health/substance abuse services and motion by Meisner, seconded by Boudreau to amend the motion for Selectboard Chair Cummings to sign the letter. Unanimous on both motions
 - School Resource Officer
 - Five applicants, reviewed down to one candidate to move forward to screening panel
 - Will consult with Llamas about vehicle for SRO; IT and communications equipment are kept in the vehicle. American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for vehicle available. Vehicle will not be a regular police cruiser. Off school season vehicle would be used for administrative purposes, traveling to training

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- Renewal Agreement for Providing Public Safety Dispatch Services between the Massachusetts State Police and the Town of Northfield
 - 5- year agreement at no cost
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to enter into agreement for providing public safety dispatch services between the Massachusetts State Police and the Town of Northfield, Franklin County, Massachusetts with an efficacy date of January 1, 2022
- Cummings joined the session at 7:20 pm
- Chief Dunnell New Firefighter appointments
 - 12 weeks recruit training completed; monthly training continues education
 - Recruits introduced themselves and gave a brief comment on why they volunteered for service
 - Jackson's grandfather and uncles served
 - T. Momaney served as a Junior firefighter for Erving
 - Worden is community driven
 - Duclos coming from Chicopee likes Northfield's family feeling
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Jacque the Selectboard voted to appoint Derek Worden, Shane Duclos, Thomas Jackson, Jr. Tim Momaney to the Northfield Fire Department; Motion by Bowen, seconded by Jacque to amend for terms expiring 1/31/23. Unanimous to both motions
- Chief Fortier New EMS appointments
 - Kennedy notified the Selectboard the ambulance yearly state inspection passed with no deficiencies
 - Candidates were introduced and current level EMS status:
 - Moreno-Basic and attending paramedic training
 - Reed-Basic
 - Warger Czernich- Basic. Has worked on the Northfield squad previously
 - D.Momaney- Basic. Member of the Fire Department and Northfield Dive Team
 - Chief Fortier clarified help is available for traumatic stress situations. Candidates explained how they personally dealt with stress.
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Selectboard voted to appoint Carolyn Warger-Czernich, Dan Momaney, Joseph Reed Jr., Yvonne Moreno to the Northfield EMS; terms expire 12/31/22
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to approve the 1/27/22 Payroll warrant of \$62,960.46
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to approve the 1/27/22 Vendor warrant of \$108,262.95
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to approve the 2/10/22 Payroll warrant of \$60,615.22
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to approve the 2/10/22 Vendor warrant of \$76,486.27
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to approve the 12/28/21 Executive Session minutes as written.
 - Motion by Bowen, seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to approve the minutes of 01/11/22 as written
- **Meetings/Events attended by Selectboard members**
 - Boudreau: Friends of Northfield Seniors
 - Cummings: Pioneer Valley Regional School negotiations and Emergency Services Facility Committee
 - Meisner: 350th Parade subcommittee
 - Jacque: Finance Committee and Emergency Services Facility Committee

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- **Business**

- Re-affirm Special Town Employees
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Selectboard voted to designate the members of the Board of Health, Board of Assessors and the Conservation Commission's contract consultant as "Special Municipal Town Employees" pursuant to the state policy of the Selectboard adopted October 6, 2015.
- Firstlight FERC filing Agreement in Principle
 - Jacque summarized the process leading to the recreational agreement explaining the Selectboard's responsibility to execute contracts in executive session and when moving to public session, to seek public input
 - The Open Space 2021 plan was used in the negotiations
 - Signing the recreational agreement gives the town an opportunity to engage on a yearly basis and at the 10-year mark with First Light which were not part of the current licensing agreement. The town can informally engage with First Light anytime
 - Review of points brought up at the public input forum
 - Looking into Durkee's Point. May interfere with the distance goals from the Vernon, VT site
 - Silt run-off at boat ramp is likely a state agency responsibility
 - Conservation Easement- state worked with First Light on the riverbank corridor does not preclude trails
 - The agreement in principle does not include the topic of erosion which will be addressed later this year
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Bowen the Selectboard voted to sign the Agreement in Principle to develop a relicensing settlement agreement to include the Turners Falls Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project No. 1889 and Northfield Mountain Pumped Storage Project, FERC Project No. 2485
- Selectboard Budget
 - Llamas reviewed the Selectboard budget touching on increases for advertising and IT
 - Cummings proposed increasing the Selectboard stipends. \$3,500 for Chair and \$3,200 each member
 - Cummings and Meisner cited increased workload and creating a favorable incentive for serving
- Bowen briefly exited and returned at 8:30 pm
 - Jacque suggested when the last increase was done and checking with comparable towns
 - FRCOG data consulted
 - Boudreau's opinion asking for a raise with Emergency Services project coming up is fiscally irresponsible and uncomfortable asking for the increase
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Bowen for FY2023 the Chair of the Selectboard make \$3500 and other four members \$3200 for a total line of \$16300
 - Discussion:
 - Jacque needed more time to think about the percentage increase and what happens with stipends across the town. Not comfortable with increase
 - Llamas to present to Finance Committee with current numbers noting increase being discussed
 - Meisner withdrew the motion. No vote taken
- Sidewalk Snow Removal
 - Llamas put in for Shared Streets Grant. Could help pay for equipment
 - Highway Superintendent Tom Walker submitted a letter to the Selectboard with calculations for sidewalk snow removal
 - All sidewalks would be included
 - May need to include as an article at annual town meeting for purchase

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- No additional liability because they are not private sidewalks
- MassDot – Response to Truck Noise/Speed Limit Concerns
 - Response from MassDOT: use of braking system is a safety and fuel economy state mandated law and the town cannot enforce a restriction.
 - Speed study to be done. Proposing if speed reduced along Main St. braking may not be necessary
- Town Administrator Contract Update – Choose members to negotiate
 - Boudreau and Meisner to do negotiations
- Time off request
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to approve the time of request as submitted.
- Boudreau left the meeting at 9:17pm
- **Town Administrator's update**
 - NMH Quit Claim deed received for cemetery property
 - Schell Bridge-project not canceled, bid failed
 - Certified Town Meeting vote on mosquito district sent to Pioneer Valley Mosquito Control District Director
- **Committee/Board Appointments**
 - Motion by Meisner, seconded by Jacque the Selectboard voted to re-appoint Emergency Management Director Floyd Dunnell and Asst. Director Amanda Dunnell; terms expire 1/30/23
 - Motion by Jacque seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to appoint Seth Hansell to Energy Committee; term expires 12/31/23
- **Proposed Agenda Items**
 - Schell Bridge
 - COVID
 - North Lane infrastructure and Alexander Hill discussion with Highway Dept.
 - Chief Fortier EMS update
- **Announcements**
 - **From the website:**
 - Go to the Front page of the Town Website to link to the Emergency Services Facility – current conditions YouTube video
 - Go to the Useful Links tab on the homepage to sign up to receive free at home COVID test kits.
 - Go to the News & Announcements section of the homepage to sign up for the FRCOG mobile winter vaccine clinic
- **Recognition for Service:** Fire Department and all departments, including Llamas responding to a house fire during extreme conditions a few weeks ago
- **Motion by Cummings, seconded by Meisner the Selectboard voted to adjourn at 9:25 pm.**

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

Selectboard Clerk

2/22/22
Date Approved