

**Selectboard present:** Kathleen Wright Chair; Dan Gray; Jack Spanbauer

**Also present:** Town Administrator, Tom Hutcheson; Sandra L. Wood, Town Secretary; Tyler Bourbeau, BNCTV

**Others present:** Tom Shearer, Chair, Bob MacEwen Assessors & Bethany Walker, Clerk; Joanne McGee; Bill McGee; Barb Richardson; Sam Richardson; Nate Tufts; Chief Leighton; Officer Minckler; David Rainville, The Recorder; Don Campbell; Bonnie Tucker L'Etoile; Rosalind Tufts; John McDougal; Homer Stavely; Brian Brault

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

- Tax Classification Hearing: Joint Meeting with Board of Assessors
  - Tom Shearer, Chair and Bob MacEwen of the Board of Assessors along with clerk Bethany Walker conducted a joint meeting with the Selectboard to discuss recommendations and to set the tax rate for fiscal year 2014.
  - Shearer explained the recommendation of a flat tax rate of \$15.04. He said the rate was raised 6% but that valuations had gone down 6% making it a wash.
  - Wright asked if there had been any comments from residents. Walker said she had received calls requesting clarification.
  - Spanbauer asked if the campus was taxable from last year. Shearer answered yes. MacEwen clarified that the campus had been sold after January 1, 2013.
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED unanimously to approve the single tax rate of \$15.04.**
- **Citizens' concerns-** none
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Payroll warrant of \$25,420.63**
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Vendor warrant of \$76,578.05**
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Selectboard minutes of 01/15/13 as amended.**
- **Summary of Interim Selectboard Meetings**
  - Executive session 1/18/13- union negotiations
- **Old Business**
  - Budget items:
    - 7:30 Fire Department- Chief Dunnell not able to attend. To be rescheduled.
    - 8:00 EMS- Chief Fortier not able to attend. To be rescheduled.
- **New Business**
  - Sign Union Contract
    - Wright addressed an omission in the contract brought to the Selectboard's attention by Officer Minckler. She asked the board if they would approve adding the item or would they rather meet in executive session to discuss further. The Selectboard decided to discuss the matter further in executive session at the end of the regular meeting.
  - Acting Chief Leighton Request to Promote Officer Minckler to Acting Sergeant
    - Leighton requested Minckler be promoted to Acting Sergeant for the duration of the acting Chief's contract. He would be promoted to grade 9 step 1. His duties have increased outside of his patrolman duties.
    - Spanbauer agreed with the request. Gray was concerned it would affect the pay with the union contract. Leighton said the contract covers promotions and the budget would cover the pay increase.
    - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED to appoint Scott Minckler to Acting Sergeant at step 1 grade 9. Spanbauer and Wright yes, Gray no. Vote passed.**
  - Don Campbell; Sam Richardson; Jon McDougal; Homer Stavely: Warrant article to be proposed regarding Town Government

- Campbell, Richardson, McDougal and Stavelly representing the Town Government Ad Hoc Group addressed the Selectboard with the request to include an article for the Special Town Meeting warrant. The article would request a study be done on government structure and management.
- Wright and Spanbauer felt the article was vague and asked if they could be more specific. Spanbauer also asked if they had a motion prepared. Campbell said they were advised by the Moderator to keep the article as open as possible and they would make the motion on the floor at town meeting.
- Wright asked why the rush to put it on the Special Town Meeting warrant which is usually used for emergency items. Richardson said the group has been meeting since last October and people have shown interest. They are asking people to say yes or no to a study.
- McDougal said if the article passes a committee will be formed to study structure, assessment and to distribute information. Richardson added they had no agenda; they were trying to solve a problem of too much work for a three member Selectboard. Richardson said the DOR recommended a policy handbook that the town does not currently have to help solve problems. The future of the campus was also a concern.
- Gray asked if the other warrants were written. Hutcheson said he had not completed them. Gray suggested the ad hoc group be allowed to write and refine the article for the special town meeting and said it was just as important as the police union contract.
- Spanbauer said there is usually a rough idea what the motion would be and was still not clear who would appoint the committee. Campbell explained the committee would create a report about structures of town government with or without recommendations. McDougal said the Moderator would be the primary appointer. Richardson explained the Moderator's advice that the article not be specific so motions can be made outside of the article.
- Gray said if the Moderator was not uncomfortable with it he would make the motion to allow the article to go to special town meeting to be presented at special town meeting in that form. After further discussion there was no second to Gray's motion. Motion failed.
- Stavelly said that the Moderator gave them advice how to proceed but doesn't necessarily endorse it.
- Campbell explained the Moderator would appoint a member of the Selectboard and a member of the ad hoc group along with others to total about nine to meet quorum. Spanbauer said in the past there was a town committee consisting of an Accountant, Selectboard member, the Moderator, Administrative Assistant and a citizen at large. Spanbauer was not comfortable with one person appointing to town government.
- After further discussion and the failed motion the ad hoc group stated they would file by petition.
- Open STM warrant, close on Tuesday, January 29
  - Hutcheson said the warrant would close on Tuesday January 29 for Selectboard review. If the draft was approved it would be sent to legal then ready for signature on February 5.
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to close the warrant on Tuesday January 29, 2013**
- Approve Direct Local Technical Assistance grant proposal re First Light relicensing
  - Hutcheson said the town of Gill is interested in having the FRCOG monitor the re-licensing of First Light and sent letters to area towns to ask for their support.
  - **On a motion by Wright, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED to support the town of Gill's request to the FRCOG for funding to monitor the re-licensing of the pump storage facility.**
- Report from Wired West and request for mailing funds
  - Brian Brault explained to the Selectboard that he would like to send a letter on town letterhead explaining and requesting support for Wired West. If 50% of the town does not show support to Wired West the town will not be included in running fiber optics through town. About 40% of the town has no access or poor access to the internet. The request has been posted at Mim's, IGA, Town Hall and the Library. Brault asked for funds to do a mass mailing. He spoke with the post office about a onetime bulk rate. The cost would be approximately \$200 plus the letter head and envelopes. He hoped it would be under \$500. Hutcheson said funds could be used from the Selectboard budget.
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED unanimously to support the Wired West letter at the less cost alternative to send.**

- **Board and Committee Meetings/Announcements**

Date	Activity	Time	Place
1/24/13	Board of Health	4:45pm	Town Hall
1/28/13	Finance Committee	7pm	Town Hall
1/29/13	Selectboard	7pm	Town Hall

- Openings: A number of committees and boards have openings. A list is available for viewing on the Current Openings page of [www.northfield.ma.us](http://www.northfield.ma.us) and on the Town Hall posting board. Current opening for an alternate appointment to the ZBA; Wired West; Cultural Council; Emergency Services Facility Committee; Master Plan Committee; Town Hall Master Plan Committee
- Town Administrator Updates:
  - When Tom Newton was in last, he mentioned that MEMA was requesting the Town's register of people with special needs in an emergency. I spoke with Patrick Carnevale (Regional Manager, MEMA Region III/IV) at a tabletop exercise in Montague on Saturday, who explained the MEMA policy on maintaining disability registers. They would be in sealed envelopes from the communities, and would not to be opened unless Northfield needed State help (in other words, if the Compensatory Plan goes into effect). One of the evaluators said that she recommended letting everyone on the list have the choice as to whether they would agree to that information being sent to MEMA. I have communicated this to Kathy, who would like to discuss this with the Selectboard, so I've given myself a reminder for an agenda spot.
  - There is an updated Comprehensive Emergency Management Plan for the Emergency Operations Center here in Town Hall. I have put it with the other emergency management binders.
- **Appointments:**
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED to appoint John Richardson as Reserve Police Officer; term expiring 12/31/13. Wright and Spanbauer yes, Gray no. Vote passed.**
  - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED to appoint Leonard Crossman as Auxiliary Officer; term expiring 12/31/13. Wright and Spanbauer yes, Gray no. Vote passed.** Leighton said Crossman would continue with the DARE program at the elementary school. Gray questioned why it would be necessary for Crossman to be in uniform. He did not agree with Leighton's explanation. Gray felt if Crossman was in uniform he would appear to be able to respond to calls. Leighton said the DARE officer teaches the class in uniform.
- **Request for Use:**
  - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the request from Ruth Gallagher of Loaves and Fishes for reimbursement of \$369.90 for emergency fuel assistance.**
  - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the request for \$199.16 approved by the Trust Fund to use for emergency assistance.**
  - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the request from Ruth Gallagher of Loaves and Fishes for reimbursement of \$359.90 for emergency fuel assistance.**
  - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the request from Jeanette Tessier of North County Quilters to use the Dining Hall on Sat. January 26, 2013 from 9am-2pm**
- **Request for One-Day Temporary Liquor License:**
  - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the request from Steve Stoia of the Northfield Kiwanis for a one day temporary liquor license on Feb. 4, 11 and 25; Town Hall; 5:30pm-8pm**
- **Proposed Agenda Items**
  - Gray asked for a complete list and discussion of articles on the warrant. Hutcheson explained the Selectboard would be reviewing and approving the articles at their next meeting before they were submitted to Town Counsel.
  - Wright asked that the EMS and Fire Dept. budget discussion be rescheduled for next week.

**On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously at 8:25 pm to go into executive session to discuss union contract negotiations under reason #3 To discuss strategy with respect to collective bargaining or litigation if an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the bargaining or litigating position of the public body and the chair so declares and adjourn. On a roll call vote Wright said yes, Gray said yes and Spanbauer said yes.**

**Meeting adjourned at 8:47 pm.**

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

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Selectboard Clerk

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Date Approved