

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: Dayle Doiron, School District Superintendent; Dianne Salls; David Rainville, The Recorder; Lois Stearns, Finance Committee Chair; Barry Bordner, Chair and Christian Guertin, Town Governance Study; Pat Shearer, School Committee; Brian Brault, ECCTV/WiredWest; Tom Shearer; Geoffrey Rogers, Hampshire Power

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm

Wright

- **Citizens' concerns - none**
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer , seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Payroll warrant of 4/9/13 for \$21,084.01**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer , seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Vendor warrant of 4/9/13 for \$787,750.57 (PVRs assessment)**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer , seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Payroll warrant of 4/16/13 for \$15,750.49**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer , seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Vendor warrant of 4/16/13 for \$32,764.44**
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - On a motion by Gray, seconded by Wright the board VOTED to approve the Selectboard minutes of 03/26/13 as written. Spanbauer abstained.**
 - On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board VOTED to approve the Selectboard minutes of 04/02/13 as written. Gray abstained.**
 - On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to approve the Selectboard minutes of 04/08/13 as written.**
- **Summary of Interim Selectboard Meetings**
 - 04/08/13 joint meeting with the Finance Committee re: Warrant
- **Summary of meetings attended by Selectboard members**
 - Wright
 - Masterplan Steering Committee presentation
 - FRCOG Personnel Committee Meeting
 - MEMA/Vermont Yankee training
 - Spanbauer
 - Site meeting with Tom Walker, Superintendent of Streets & Building Maintenance on So. Mountain Rd
 - FRTA with Hutcheson and Suzanne Travisano, Senior Center Director for service for seniors
- **Old Business**
 - FY 2014 budget discussion
 - Dayle Doiron; PVRSD
 - Doiron explained the problem with the state not having the assessment ready for the budget.
 - Doiron said the school committee passed a 5.79% increase from last year. The past five years the increase has been under 3%. The increase is due to trimming staff, services and not purchasing. Doiron said there was nothing left to trim. Increases to fuel and supplies costs are not reflected in the increases.
 - Doiron explained the reduction in Leyden's contribution from the state due to the Governor adjusting the formula. The reduction in student enrollment to PVRs was a factor.
 - Gray asked what Doiron will do if the towns don't approve the budget. Doiron said \$150,000 could be cut without losing staff or programs. Otherwise staff and programming would be cut.
 - Spanbauer asked about available grants to reduce the request for funds. Doiron said grant options were down \$200,000.

- Hutcheson asked if this was a bump and would the budget request go back to what it was or would it need to be smoothed out over a number of years. Doiron said she did not expect to have this problem next year. They have been using reserves over the past few years and there is nothing left.
 - Doiron hopes to hear from the state on April 25. The Finance Committee would meet on Friday the 26th and the Selectboard would need to meet on Monday the 28th to finalize the warrant for posting.
 - Brian Brault: Wired West update
 - Brault said as a result of the support letter from the Selectboard the support for WiredWest was up to 20%. WiredWest's efforts were noticed on the state level. The Governor is putting forward \$40 million in state funds to wire the "last mile" with MBI building the last mile making this a state project. WiredWest is now trying to determine what their role is in the project.
 - Brault has spoken with an MBI representative who indicated they needed to meet with the town. Brault said MBI will expect a contribution from the town whereas WiredWest did not.
 - Brault came to the Selectboard to look for direction, their feelings on the subject and suggested meeting with Representative Paul Mark and MBI to see how they might work with us and move forward.
 - Wright and Spanbauer agreed to keep going and that a meeting should be arranged. Brault will set up the meeting and contact Hutcheson.
 - Discuss warrant articles, approve final warrant
 - Legal's comments were received and reviewed.
 - The Finance Committee recommended putting the cruiser repair back in the warrant. Gray asked why all the other items were not put back in. Spanbauer said the others would be override articles. Wright explained due to the uncertainty of the school budget the recommendation was made to put the cruiser repair back in.
 - The Selectboard agreed to remove the two articles in regards to the Treasurer/Tax Collector because the wording of the warrant article does not permit qualifications the board wishes to include. Therefore, the change to appointed would happen sooner than desired.
 - A meeting was set for Monday April 29, 2013 to finalize and sign the warrant.
 - Hutcheson will write the motions and get them to legal.
 - Accept the reviewed Personnel Policy, publish, and distribute
 - Gray asked why a staff meeting had not been held previous to the policy being published as agreed in a previous meeting. Hutcheson apologized and acknowledged Gray was correct but he had not called a staff meeting. Hutcheson had given the policy to department heads for comments. Having received no responses the policy was completed. Wright felt any changes to the policy should be done first, and then a meeting to review with personnel could be scheduled. Spanbauer understood the policy would be completed before meeting with staff. Wright asked the staff meeting be scheduled after the Annual Town Meeting due to time constraints.
 - Personnel policy should apply to all Town employees
 - Wright asked the Selectboard in the future to address the option of a general bylaw requiring all town employees to work under the town personnel policy whether appointed by the board or other elected officials. A bylaw must pass town meeting vote.
- **New Business**
 - Geoffrey Rogers, HCOG, Hampshire Power presentation on solar option
 - Rogers explained net metering and the two part program. He explained the billing process between WMECO and they work with the partnership between Hampshire Power and a solar developer called Nexamp. Solar power gets pumped into the grid, WMECO gives Nexamp credit, the credit is shown on the electric bill, Nexamp sells off the credit and the town pays Hampshire Power the discounted price. The town would save 21% in electricity guaranteed.
 - WMECO establishes the value of the credit. If the price goes below \$.05 there would be no credit. Rogers said the price would not go that low. The town would receive the same amount of kilowatt hours because the town is not paying Nexamp to produce electricity.
 - The 20 year contract with Hampshire Solar and Nexamp would need a town vote. Financing requires a 20 year commitment from companies like Nexamp. Gray said he was not comfortable with the 20 year commitment. Rogers said the town would save \$65,000 over 20 years. Spanbauer requested a copy of the contract for review.
 - Wright asked if solar panels installed on the town hall would have an impact. Rogers suggested lowering the total so as to not buy more credits than needed.
 - Wright and Spanbauer requested Hutcheson contact Heather Lemeiux in Barre for feedback. Barre is the only town using the system.
 - Christian Guertin & Barry Bordner: Update from Town Governance Study Committee

- Bordner said the committee is in the research stage and has visited area towns with similar population, land mass and budget as Northfield. They will meet to build an outline and are using a template from MMA. He asked for job descriptions of elected officials and was referred to Hutcheson. Hutcheson stated elected officials are generally covered by a MA General Law which would be considered their job description. Wright said she saw the MMA template and said Northfield would be considered decentralized.
 - Bordner would like to have a forum of elected officials and employees from other towns. He was not clear about the 90 day term. Wright said nothing was indicated in the article so the 90 days started at the Special Town Meeting. The group discussed possibly lengthening the amount of time. Spanbauer suggested during the forum, if needed, explain if more time was needed.
 - Bordner asked if they were supposed to report at Annual Town Meeting. Spanbauer said article 2 allows for reports and to contact the moderator. Spanbauer also suggested they advertise prior to presenting their findings.
 - Exception to advertising policy for hiring seasonal workers
 - Hutcheson said the policy does not specify advertising public notice. He suggested posting be done on the town website and in Town Hall saving the town the cost of advertising in the paper. Spanbauer explained that Tom Walker, Superintendent of Streets & Building Maintenance prefers to hire the same people because they do not need to be trained. Wright said this was a sensitive area but it was the cost of doing business and by doing so ensured the process was transparent. Gray suggested Hutcheson come up with something more logical to cover the town and not have to go through the process of interviewing when Walker knows who he is going to hire. He wished to speak to Walker before discussing anymore and will get back to Hutcheson. Wright said whatever the Selectboard decides should be put in writing. Wright read the draft policy on posting as written by Hutcheson.
 - Consider inviting Counsel for Town Meeting
 - The Selectboard agreed there was no need for counsel to attend.
 - **On a motion by Gray, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously that there was no need for counsel to attend the Annual Town Meeting.**

• **Topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting**

• **Board and Committee Meetings/Announcements**

| Date | Activity | Time | Place |
|---------|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| 4/17/13 | Conservation Commission | 7::30pm | Town Hall |
| 4/17/13 | Master Plan Steering Committee | 7:00 pm | Town Hall |
| 4/18/13 | Council on Aging | 9:30 am | Town Hall |
| 4/23/13 | Recreation Commission | 7:00 pm | Town Hall |
| 4/25/13 | Board of Health | 4:45 pm | Town Hall |
| 4/29/13 | Selectboard | 11:00 am | Town Hall |
| 4/30/13 | Selectboard | 7:00 pm | 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 and on the Town Hall posting board. Current opening for an alternate appointment to the ZBA; regular appointments to Wired West; Cultural Council; Emergency Services Facility Committee; Master Plan Roundtable; Town Hall Master Plan Committee; Council on Aging; Agricultural Commission; Building Use & Planning; Electronic Communication & Cable TV; Emergency Services Committee; Open Space Committee
- Announcements:
 - Primary Election April 30, 2013; Town Hall; 7 am-8pm
- Town Administrator Updates:
- The Town got a letter asking for some Highway Department work to be done near Holton Street, and the work was actually done before we got the letter.

- Jeremy and I will be meeting with the FRCOG’s contracted elevator service April 22 to hear their resolution of complaints, which will help the FRCOG in determining whether to continue their contract or to seek bids from other companies. This will in turn help us decide whether to participate in the FRCOG bid.
- There is an MMPA workshop on Human Resources essential on May 23 that I’m planning to attend. The cost is just \$40 for six hours of training.
- The Personnel Committee needs a replacement for Lisa White, who has served her term of two years and will be moving on. I’d also like to commend her for the reason, clarity, and knowledge that she brought to the committee.
- I hope to be ready by April 30 to move to finish the Four Mile Brook Road takings.(the Kaplan and WMECO parcels).
- I am planning to go to the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust quarterly meeting tomorrow, for information and any new forms.
- Reminder: There will be a ZBA site visit to Mitchell Aggregate on May 4, to which the Selectboard is invited.
- We received just one bid for the job description review. I would like to bid it again and generate a larger pool of possible responders.
- **Appointments:**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Wright the board voted to re-appoint William Kimball to the Northfield Police Department as temporary full time with the term ending August 9, 2013. Spanbauer and Wright yes, Gray no. Vote passed.**
 - **On a motion by Spanbauer, seconded by Gray the board VOTED unanimously to appoint Chief Leighton to the Emergency Services Facility Committee; term expires 12/31/2015.**

Executive Session and Adjourn

On a motion by Wright, seconded by Spanbauer the board VOTED unanimously to go into executive session at 9:17 pm for land consideration under Reason #6: to consider the purchase, exchange, lease or value of real estate, and contract negotiation under Reason #2 to conduct negotiations with non-union personnel and to adjourn. On a roll call vote Wright said yes, Spanbauer said yes and Gray said yes.

- Meeting adjourned at 9:34pm.

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

_____ 04/30/13
 Selectboard Clerk Date Approved