

May 3, 2023

Northfield Town Hall
69 Main St

Select Board Present Prior to Reorganization: Barbara “Bee” Jacque, Chair; Heath Cummings, Vice Chair; Bernard Boudreau, Clerk; Alexander Meisner; Sarah Kerns

Select Board after Reorganization: Alexander Meisner, Chair; Bernard Boudreau, Vice Chair; Sarah Kerns, Clerk; Barbara “Bee” Jacque; Heath Cummings

Also Present: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Sandra L. Wood, Town Secretary; Angela Renaud & Tyler Bourbeau, BNCTV

Others Present: Austin Jenkins; Tom Walker Superintendent of Streets; Deb Lanoue, Council on Aging; Colleen Letourneau, Senior Center Director; Shelby Hasanbasic, Northfield Golf Club

- Meeting was called to order at 6:01 pm

- **Reorganization**

- Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to appoint as discussed for Fiscal Year 2024
- Officers
 - Chair, Alexander Meisner
 - Vice Chair, Bernard Boudreau
 - Clerk, Sarah Kerns
- Regional Organizations
 - Franklin Regional Council of Government Comprehensive economic Development Committee (CEDS)/Nomination only, Barbara Jacque
 - Franklin Regional Council of Government, Barbara Jacque; Alternate, Alexander Meisner
 - Franklin Regional Council of Government Planning Board, Sarah Kerns
 - Franklin Regional Transit Authority, Bernard Boudreau
 - Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Services, Denis Brennan
 - Community Emergency Response Coordinator, Floyd “Skip” Dunnell
 - Housing & Redevelopment Authority Citizen Advisory Committee, Alexander Meisner
 - Regional Emergency Planning Committee, Sarah Kerns
- Subcommittees/Special Projects/Liaison
 - Emergency Services Facility Committee, Heath Cummings
 - 350th Anniversary Committee, Alexander Meisner
 - Town Hall Master Planning Committee, Alexander Meisner
 - American Rescue Plan Act Committee, Barbara Jacque; at large appointee Tori Lucksha
 - Street Repair Liaison, Heath Cummings
 - School Committee Liaison, Barbara Jacque

- **Scheduled Appointments**

- Appoint Austin Jenkins – Highway Maintenance/Driver/Laborer position
 - Highway Superintendent Tom Walker introduced Austin Jenkins
 - Jenkins formerly worked for the Keene, New Hampshire department of public works and has experience in landscaping and irrigation
 - Boudreau and Meisner were part of the hiring team and recommended Jenkins to the position
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to offer Austin Jenkins the position of Building Maintenance to the Highway department effective on completion of conditions at grade 8 step 1, \$24.22/hour
- Shelby Hasanbasic; Northfield Golf Club; Seasonal event permit application
 - Hasanbasic explained many of the events are private events with some community events throughout the season

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- Music events end at 9:00 pm and decibel levels are measured. Disc Jockeys are advised by the club that no base equipment is to be used. The manager is on site during events and addresses sound levels as necessary.
 - The club hosts approximately 10 events including music events occurring in June, July and August
 - The 350th Anniversary Harvest Festival will be held in the fall. The Friends of Seniors will not hold their music event this year
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to approve the seasonal event application as presented.
 - Kerns reconfirmed the decibel limit will be no greater than 100 decibels and measured within the tent during events.
- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to approve the 5/3/23 Payroll warrant of \$65,561.82
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to approve the 5/3/23 Vendor warrant of \$150,838.21
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of 4/18/2023 as amended. Meisner abstained
- **Interim Selectboard Meetings**
 - Annual Town Meeting May 1
- **Meetings/Events attended by Select Board members**
 - Boudreau: Reclassification of job description meeting; Special Town Meeting; Annual Town Meeting
 - Cummings: Special Town Meeting; Annual Town Meeting; Emergency Services Facility Committee; site visit; with Jacque, meeting with resident
 - Meisner: Special Town Meeting; Annual Town Meeting; Highway department job interviews
 - Jacque: Special Town Meeting; Annual Town Meeting; Franklin Regional Council of Government; Federal Energy Regulatory Commission/FirstLight negotiations; Emergency Services Facility Committee; Historical Commission
- **Town Administrator's update**
 - Complete Streets Project for sidewalks on Highland has been submitted.
 - This will not do all sidewalks Project stopping before the culvert.
 - Submitting a OneStop- MassWorks grant for the culvert and the remaining sidewalk work. Due June 2.
 - Grant Developer Mallory Sullivan will attend the next meeting to discuss the OneStop Grant applications she has been working on:
 - Mass Downtown Initiative – Parking Management Plan
 - Commonwealth Places – Placemaking Workshop Series (for a Streetscape)
 - MassWorks Infrastructure – Highland Ave Culvert and sidewalk
 - Community Planning Grant – Business Park Feasibility Study
 - To get professional help to develop a business park
 - ARPA Update:
 - Federal Report due April 30th was submitted
 - StoreFront Program applications have been coming in.
 - First awards by the appointed subcommittee have been made totaling: \$36,600
 - Meeting on Monday to consider 2 more applications
 - Meisner explained the funding does not come from the town tax base
 - Electrical Aggregation Program – the Town has a 3-year bid ending at the end of this year. Bids for pricing starts 1/1/2024

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- Due to volatile market conditions
 - Bids in market are for 2 years
 - Prices have increased for everyone
 - Worked with the Energy Committee to review 3 products the Town chose in the past and decided to stay with those options:
 - A standard product all eligible customers are automatically enrolled in
 - Meets MA state minimum requirements for Green Energy
 - Two optional products with higher “Green Energy” supply requirements – these must be opted into by the consumer and have slightly higher rates:
 - Option 1 – Mass Class 1 Recs +5%
 - Option 2 – Mass Class 1 Recs +25%
- 2023 SRO Memorandum of Understanding was updated per Select Board vote and forwarded to Superintendent Patricia Kinsella on April 24th – who acknowledged receipt. Kinsella forwarding to the personnel subcommittee and the Chair of the School Committee.
- Post Town Meeting we begin the end of the year budget review process. Transfer requests go to the Finance Committee, along with Reserve Fund requests. The Select Board will receive departmental transfer requests.
- Town Meeting – Town Election results
 - The article passed at Town Meeting for the Fire Chief position extension and has been forwarded to the State Representative and State Senator’s offices for filing
 - Town Clerk – Appointed vs. Elected. Passed the Town Meeting vote last year and the ballot vote this year. Town Counsel says the statutory obligations are met and the position is officially and legally an appointed position.
- **Business**
 - Council on Aging/Senior Center Program Assistant Job Description and Classification
 - Senior Center Director Colleen Letourneau and Council on Aging Chair Deb Lanou addressed the Select board
 - Llamas gave background information leading to the request. The employee currently working with the Senior Center director will be leaving the position and assisted with proposing an updated description, title change and increased hours for the job needed going forward.
 - Grade change and increase in hours proposed were approved by the review team
 - Letourneau supported the changes and explained the need for an assistant with a skill set more advanced than the current job description provides
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to change the job description for the Council on Aging Senior Center Program Assistant job
 - Clarification on removal of Criminal Offender Record Information (CORI): position not required to perform CORI checks
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to reclassify the Northfield Senior Center Administrative Program Assistant classification from a grade 4 to a grade 6
 - Benefits and Hourly Change
 - Hours for the position being advertised as 24 hours per week
 - Llamas explained the town budgets for an unforeseen benefits change making this change benefit neutral if the applicant takes the benefits offered. Review of the grade/step salary overlap. Funding could be requested from the American Recovery Program Act (ARPA) if needed
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to change the hours from 19 to up to 24 hours a week at a benefited position
 - Clarification: any position over 20 hours is benefited

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- Screening Committee and Hiring Committee will consist of a non-quorum of Council on Aging members and others selected at a later date
- Emergency Services Building Update /next steps/ possible special town meeting
 - Next steps will be discussed at a meeting of the Emergency Services Committee
 - If there is an alternate plan, funding needs to be moved to finance engineering and other expenditures requiring a Town Meeting vote. This includes the cell tower funds and funds requested in article 2, stabilization, of the Special Town Meeting.
 - Llamas explained having a Special Town Meeting before June 30th would put the funding on this year's tax rate. After July 1, it may take months before funds are available to be moved.
 - Cummings plans to meet with Fire Department staff to get a sense of their perspective, meet with the Emergency Services Facility Committee and come back to the Select Board to move forward
 - Jacque clarified the project was not shot down; the 2/3 affirmative vote was not met required for borrowing and was concerned about liability to the town with departments in substandard working conditions. Hiring professional help will be required by Massachusetts General Law.
 - Kerns suggested moving the meetings out of the workday.
 - Boudreau commented voters he spoke to after the Special Town Meeting supported the project but felt they did not have enough time to process the dollar figures
 - Meisner suggested two meetings next time separating information from the vote
 - Cummings would like to have the Collins Center Study for EMS regionalization information to evaluate
 - Kerns suggested individual members hold community discussion groups for optional ideas
 - Cummings will report after the Emergency Services Facility Committee meets
- Review/Vote FirstLight Recreation Settlement Agreement
 - Jacque presented the sections of the agreement that pertained to Northfield's interests.
 - The Flows & Fish agreement has been filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)
 - Northfield is working with Montague, Gill, Erving and the Franklin Regional Council of Government as the agreement affects these areas
 - The Select Board will review the information and the topic will be discussed at the next meeting and require a vote.
- Franklin Regional Council of Government (FRCOG) Legal Request for Funds for next steps with regards to FirstLight in state and federal processes
 - The request is for an additional \$2,500 if needed for legal services for further negotiations on items other than recreation including water and erosion
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to approve the expenditure of up to \$2,500 for legal funds with the Franklin Regional Council of Government
- Basketball Court Hours of Operation
 - The basketball court at Northfield Elementary School belongs to the Town
 - There are no posted hours of operation and there have been complaints about late night/loud users
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Meisner the Select Board voted to direct the Town Administrator to create the appropriate wording and consult with the police on the signage to indicate the hours of operation should not be after dark and not during school
- **Topics not reasonably anticipated by the chair 48 hours in advance of the meeting**
 - Cummings announced he is resigning from the Campus/Center Community Collaborative Committee
- **Committee/Board Appointments**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to appoint William Kimball – EMT, to the Northfield EMS; term expires 12/31/23
 - Will Chuch – Open Space Committee; term expires 6/30/25- due to bylaw requirement the appointment was passed over

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- **Proposed Agenda Items**
 - Campus/Center Community Collaborative Committee
 - Election posting
 - Moving Citizens Concerns
- **Announcements**
 - Franklin County Solid Waste Management Clean Sweep Event May 13, 9am-noon at the Highway Garage
- **Recognition for Service**
 - Election Officers, Constables, and the Assistant Town Clerk for service during the Special Town Meeting, Annual Town Meeting, and election
- Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to into Executive Session at 8:21 pm to discuss Emergency Services Facility real estate options under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec. 21 (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 and to adjourn and not return to open session. On a roll call vote, Kerns said yes, Boudreau said yes, Cummings said yes, Meisner said yes and Jacque said yes.

Meeting adjourned at 9:02 pm

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

Select Board Clerk

5/16/23
Date Approved