



NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of January 12, 2021

Present: Selectman Kevin Waldron, Selectman Scott Haskins and Selectman Glen Brown

Also Present: Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, Interim Public Works Director Justin Bernier, Police Chief John Raffaely, Youth Assistance Program Director Dawn Shimberg, and Resident Chris Hunt.

Zoom Attendance: Jennifer Adams, Chairman; Board of Directors for Youth Assistance Program.

The 2021 Budget meeting was called to order at 3:00 pm by Chairman Waldron.

The Selectmen reviewed changes to the budget from last week's meeting -

The T/A revisited the Police Department budget and began with wages. The Police Chief discussed the overtime line and would like to raise that line from \$20,000.00 to \$22,000.00. The Chief informed the Selectmen that they utilized most of their office supply line for 2020. The Chief informed the Selectmen that they have an officer involved with the Belknap County SWAT team. The Chiefs budget is up 1% from 2020 due to an increase in NH Retirement for 2021 and an increase of \$10,000.00 in the dispatch line.

The Selectmen discussed in great length police cruisers and the Chief states that he will need 2 new cruisers next year because of high mileage of over 100,000 miles on 4 cruisers, and he did not purchase any new cruisers in 2020. New cruisers cost approx. \$60,000.00 outfitted and road ready. Discussion revolved around choices, to buy outright or lease. It is imperative that the Town continue to put in the \$30,000 into the cruiser fund regardless if we purchase cruisers or not. This will probably be discussed at Thursday's Budget Committee meeting.

Review of fire budget, TNFD Mutual Dispatch Aid line- The selectmen removed \$42,999 from this line two weeks ago. It was discussed last week that the T/A would get clarification from Town Counsel on withdrawing from LRMFA. It was discovered that we must continue to remain in this organization until the Town can find a suitable replacement for dispatching services. Selectmen Waldron discussed the possibility of having the TNFD absorb this cost into the Fire budget. The Selectmen will work on this in 2021.

Code Enforcement budget was discussed. A question was asked on why the salary line is overspent. The T/A stated that when the budget was put together it was not calculated that there were 53 pay weeks in 2020. There are only 52 weeks in 2021. A question was asked why the office supply line was overspent, it was determined that an ICC Code book was purchased for \$337.00 and put into the office supply line.

Public Works Department was discussed next. There is money in the new equipment line for a line painting machine. Discussion was had on this machine and how it operates. Discussion on contract street sweeping, catch basin clearing, crack sealing and roadside work and costs associated with this work. A cost for line painting for a year was 1,545.00. The line painting machine would pay for itself in 3 years if the Town did the same amount and spent the \$1,545.00.

The Selectmen went back and reviewed the part-time salary of \$1,500 for part-time plow operators. The Selectmen increased that line to \$3,000.00 instead of the \$1,500.00.

Discussion proceeded to street lights. The T/A stated that in 2019 the AT/A did a report on replacing the current street lights to LED light. Eversource has a program on changing these lights over to LED. The town currently has 93 active street lights that are not LED, and discussion revolved on can we reduce the street lights that are currently active and turn them off. The T/A will do more research and report back to the Selectmen at another meeting.

Carbide blades for the DPW plows came up for discussion as the Interim DPW Director stated that he needs to replace two on current plows and he needs to put it on the new truck that will be coming in late January or early February. The Selectmen reduced that line in the budget from \$8,000.00 to \$6,000.

Solid Waste budget was next for discussion. Discussion revolved around what we currently pay for trash removal and hauling fees. The Selectmen also spoke to the current contract that expires in March and what we need to do moving forward. According to our current trash provider Casella, who stated costs will be going up April 1st, with a new contract and the Town needs to either enter into a new contract or extend our current contract another year. Selectmen are looking at all options including, having the Town pick up curbside service. This will mean that the Town would have their own Solid Waste truck and staff, and would provide all solid waste removal in Town. The Selectmen instructed the T/A to conduct research on what those cost might be. Next week the Selectmen will look at the Solid Waste budget again.

Dawn Shimberg; Director of the Youth Assistance Program (YAP), was present to provide answers to questions from the Selectmen on the town funding of her program. The Youth Assistance Program or (YAP) provides support to youths, in the towns of Northfield and Tilton. Northfield has approx. 160 youths in the YAP program. YAP has requested \$57,439.00 in funding for budget year 2021. YAP provides court diversion for juveniles, drug and alcohol early intervention, anger management/violence programs, along with positive decision making exercises for youths. The current rate of recidivism for YAP is 12.1% for 2020. Ms. Shimberg stated that they do not charge a fee to the parents of the youths. YAP only charges fees for programming to youth's from outside the towns of Tilton and Northfield. The Selectmen stated that if parents would pay some sort of a monetary payment they would have more "skin in the game" and believe that the youth would not reoffend as often and parents would make sure that the youth finished the program. Ms. Shimberg stated that she could see how many people would think that way, and YAP tries to treat all involved the "same" and therefore do not charge for the service, as many families may not be able to afford the program.

The Selectmen will pick up next week with the remaining budgets left to review.

Chairman Waldron moved into the regular meeting at 5:02 pm

Chairman Waldron led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Public Input

Christopher Hunt discussed with the Selectmen issues with the Zoning Board minutes again. Mr. Hunt states that the letter from the Attorney General's Office regarding the status of the Spaulding Youth Center and zoning requirements in the Town of Northfield was not included in the minutes of September 28, 2020, as was stated in the minutes of that meeting. The T/A asked the AT/A Giovannucci, if she recalls that meeting and if the minutes were included. The AT/A stated that she will review and if needed she will provide that letter and attach it to the minutes as requested. It was just an oversight of that meeting.

- **Police Department**

The Chief stated that according to the Selectmen's policy, after every accident an alcohol and drug test will be done. The Chief stated that they did follow the policy, but Franklin Hospital would not release to the Town any information. The T/A stated that this medical information is covered under HIPAA and we would not receive any of this information as it is a privacy rule, but we could have the employee sign a release form and the town would get some information as either a positive or negative response to either illegal drugs or alcohol in the system. What event would trigger an alcohol/drug test. Recommendation to suspend this particular requirement would need a vote of the Selectmen. Selectman **Waldron/Haskins moved to suspend this requirement until a further review could be done, all in favor, motion passed unanimously.**

The Chief asked the Selectmen to approve two people out on bereavement leave to receive bereavement pay for in-laws', Selectmen agreed to allow this bereavement pay.

The Selectmen discussed with the chief about the Police Department will need two new cruisers. Three of the current cruisers have over 100,000 miles on them and repair costs will start to be more of an expense that the vehicle is worth. We now have a cruiser that was involved in a recent accident, which may be totaled. The Selectmen and the Chief will bring this up at the next Budget Committee meeting on Thursday night.

- **Public Works Department**

Hot water at the DPW Department is no longer working. Justin asked the Selectmen if he could get a hot water heater and replace the one that is currently not in service. The Selectmen stated that he could go ahead and research that.

The new truck is still at Fairfield's being outfitted. Justin went down to review some of the controls to make sure that they are in a position compatible to our DPW specifications. Justin made some suggestions/corrections to the locations of some of the controls.

Justin commented that we have a few people interested in the Assistant DPW Director position. He will review the resumes and speak to the Selectmen next week.

- **Administration Department**

The Town Administrator informed the Selectmen that he has received a reimbursement check from the Diana Road resident whose private water line the DPW repaired in October. The private water line was leaking due to the PVC piping having a crack in the line, which caused water to run down the road uncontrollably and started eroding the embankment and if left unchecked could have caused major problems for the Towns road.

The T/A informed the Selectmen that the American Legion Hall submitted an application to hold a raffle on the American Legion premises. Under RSA 287-A and also under the Northfield Board of Selectmen rules & regulations, the Selectmen signed the Application giving permission.

The T/A informed the Selectmen that he attended the Budget Committee meeting last Thursday, and there will be another meeting Thursday the 14th of January at 6:30. There was some discussion on dates and when the budget must be posted to the public.

The Selectmen discussed the Youth Assistance Program and the budget amount that the Selectmen will fund this outside agency for 2021 will be \$24,212.00, which is half of the amount they were given in 2020.

Other items discussed briefly were moving town meeting date, ordinances and a five year revenue projection sheet as well as 2020 revenue.

Selectmen reviewed an updated list on vehicles which are located at the DPW for 2020 through 2033. The Selectmen removed a 10 ton tracked excavator from the list to purchase in 2021 and replaced it with a backhoe which moved it from year 2026 to year 2021.

Selectmen Haskins has a few questions that he would like answered if possible for next week.

How many curbside stops are there with Casella trash pickups?

Total tonnage of curbside pickup?

How much does commercial trash cans cost a municipality?

Explain what the revenue is for commercial pickup?

- **Non-Public Session**

Sel. Waldron made a motion at 6:09 pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a:3-II, (a &c) seconded by Sel. Brown, Roll call vote Selectman Brown- Yes, Selectmen Haskins– Yes and Selectman Waldron- Yes. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Waldron/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 6:50 pm. Roll Call Vote, Selectman Haskins –Yes, Selectman Waldron-Yes, **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Waldron/Haskins moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session because divulgence of the information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the board, or render the proposed action of the board ineffective.

Roll call vote, Selectman Haskins-Yes, Selectman Waldron-Yes, Selectman Brown- Yes. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote and the minutes are sealed.**

Waldron/Brown motioned to accept the minutes of January 5th, 2021 as printed. Motion passes 2-1 with 1 abstention.

- **Other Business**

The T/A asked what budgets he should give the Budget Committee on Thursday. The Selectmen stated to give them the budgets that we have completed thus far, that's all that we can give them.

No other business to come before the Selectmen, the meeting adjourned at 6:56 pm.

Minutes Recorded by T/A Ken Robichaud

Minutes approved on January 19, 2020.