



## NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of January 26, 2021

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

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, Interim Public Works Director Justin Bernier, Casella Representatives Peter Burnham, and Brian Groshon, T/N Recreation Director Brittini Stewart, and Resident Carl Bartlett.

**Zoom Attendance:** Debbie Phillips, Shyla Hazen and Christine Ambrose.

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

Representatives from Casella Waste Services discussed some options the Town of Northfield can look into doing which will save money and reduce waste tonnage. The Town current contract is set to expire on March 31, 2021, and currently utilize a more labor intensive solid waste removal program. By switching to an automated system the town will realize cost savings, whereby residents will receive a 96 gallon tote to put at curbside, an automated truck will scan the tote for identification prior to dumping and will automatically dump the tote saving the town money as it only requires one driver. Our current system has two to three laborers and one driver which is a more labor intensive program. Also; savings can be realized by extending the contract out five years enabling Casella to better plan far enough ahead to receive savings to the town. The Selectmen discussed many options and programs available which the Selectmen will plan and decide to move to at a later date. The T/A will expect pricing in the next day or two to put into the budget for Solid Waste.

Next Budget was Tilton Northfield Recreation. Brittini Stewart appeared before the Selectmen to discuss the Recreation Program. Because of COVID over the last year, T/N Rec had to shut down in March and reopened in mid-June with a 50 percent reduction in children attending the program, which was due to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) - COVID guidelines. This also saw a reduction in T/N Recreation revenue as well.

The Program applied for and received a \$56,000.00 grant from the Child Care Recovery Program as well as a \$35,555.00 payroll protection program loan. The T/N Rec requested the same amount of funds from the towns of Tilton and Northfield. Year-end revenue came in at \$35,627.00 over the projection due to the Payroll Protection Loan being forgiven. Expenses were reduced by the T/N Rec program by \$22,659.00 for an apparent overall savings to the program of \$58,286.00. The Selectmen discussed because of the so called fund balance or amount in savings in budget year 2020, that T/N Recreation look at a possible reduction in the 2021 request from the Towns.

The next budget revisited was Supervisors of the Checklist. There was a request made that this department receives another laptop as the laptop that is currently being used is old and a second laptop was requested. The Selectmen discussed requesting that an additional \$500.00 be put into the warrant article for computer replacements. The T/A told the Selectmen that later in the meeting we will be reviewing the different articles for wording and amounts to put in the warrants. We can address this request then.

Selectmen reviewed the Tax Anticipation Note (TAN) expense budget line. The T/A advised the Selectmen that in 2020 the interest for the TAN note was set at 2.38%. The bank informed the T/A last week that in 2021 the interest rate for the TAN will be 1%. Therefore it is recommended that the amount budgeted be reduced to \$10,000.00. Selectmen agreed to \$10,000.00.

Next budget line for discussion was the Planning and Zoning Budget. Wages from this budget was moved into the T/A budget for transparency reasons, and lines 120-230 were zeroed out from the Planning and Zoning Budget. Professional services line was reduced to \$3,500.00 from \$6,000.00 because of a one-time need in 2020. Legal line was increased from \$2,000.00 to \$3,000.00, Education and Seminars was increased from \$500.00 to \$1,000.00 due to sending an employee to training on land use, which will benefit the Town in the long run. The Budget was approved at \$14,564.00 down from \$22,063.00 request.

The Selectmen discussed at great length the Lakes Region Planning Commission or LRPC. What value does the LRPC give the town or employees? Is it worth the \$4,000.00 the Town pays in dues plus the \$81.00 per hour the town pays for the Circuit Rider agreement? It was discussed that we should spend more on training our own staff on Land Use Laws and maybe cut out the LRPC possibly next year.

The last line to review was the Legal Budget for the Town. In 2020 this budget was approved at \$20,000.00, spending in 2020 was down to \$8,000.00. The T/A suggested \$10,000.00, but the Selectmen suggested \$11,000.00 due to the times we live in.

**Selectmen Waldron moved the meeting into the regular Selectmen's work session meeting at 5:19 pm.**

**The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Selectmen Waldron.**

The T/A suggested that we open the tax lien property bids that were advertised on 80 acres of property located on Northfield tax map R02-0002-000 or Stevens Road. Selectmen Waldron announced that we received two bids for this property. The property is a parcel that has no public road access and is only accessible through an abutter's property. This property was only advertised to the abutters of this parcel.

The Town received a bid of \$42,500.00 from Emile Bussiere Jr. and a bank check in the amount of \$4,250.00 or 10 % of the bid.

The Town received a bid of \$35,100.00 from Neil Chadwick and Deborah Phillips and a bank check in the amount of \$3,510.00 or 10% of the bid.

**The Selectmen discussed the property at great length. Selectmen Haskins/Brown motioned to award the bid of \$42,500.00 to Emile Bussiere for a tax lien property on Town of Northfield Tax Map R02-0002-000, also known as Stevens Road, Northfield, NH. All in Favor, motion passed.**

The successful bidder shall be required to submit another 10% of the bid price (bank check, certified check or money order) within 10 days after the bid is formally awarded. The remaining balance in the form of (bank check, certified check or money order) shall be due at closing within 45 days after the bid is awarded. All deposits received from unsuccessful bids shall be returned after the public bid opening. Closing shall be at an agreeable date and time between the buyer and the Northfield Board of Selectmen. All submitted bids were opened in a public meeting.

The T/A reviewed the warrant articles for the 2021 Town Meeting. The Selectmen changed some of the amounts in the articles and reviewed the roads to be repaired in 2021.

The Selectmen finalized the following road improvement plan for 2021 season-  
Bay Hill Road from Box 222 to the 4 corners.  
Shaker Road from Bay ext. to Fiske Road.  
Shaker Road from Bay Hill ext. to Twin Bridge Road.

There will be some engineering work on drainage and culverts as well as grinding the old road and applying a base coat to the road. Approx. costs will be around \$516,000.00 for those projects listed.

**Selectmen Brown left the meeting for vacation at 6:45 pm.**

The Selectmen discussed the purchasing of a police cruiser after town meeting, with the proceeds of the Stevens Road Tax Lien sale to offset a large cost of the new cruiser. The Town will put those proceeds in the 2021 revenue projections so that it can be used for that purpose. The Town will still need \$18,000.00 to come from a warrant article for the remainder of the cruiser cost. Utilizing this revenue will not require any tax appropriations.

- **Police Department Update**

The Police Chief stated that he picked up a new police cruiser on Monday to replace the cruiser that was totaled by Primex a few weeks ago due to an accident. The new vehicle is a 2021 Ford police interceptor, utility vehicle.

The Chief informed the Selectmen that he has had three applications for the open position of officer and none of the three applicants are full time certified.

- **Public Works Update**

Selectmen Waldron stated that he is not that happy with the new Ford F-550 that came back from Fairfield's after being outfitted with a plow package. He stated that next time we need to have a list of what we want done and where it makes sense to us to put after-market levers and knobs and such.

The Interim DPW Director approached the Selectmen about uniforms. Currently the Town uses a uniform service that washes and replaces pants as needed. Interim Director Bernier would like to have a policy of giving his staff an allowance for uniforms and having them buy and maintain their own pants and shirts, as well as laundering them, for a savings to the town and also getting a better quality of pants. The Selectmen asked Mr. Bernier to submit a plan to them so that they could review it.

The Selectmen requested that the sign at Pines Park be changed to reflect activities that are occurring in town in a more relevant time manner than has been maintained in the past. The sign still states that voting is occurring on November 3rd. The Town Administrator said that he will handle it.

The T/A answered the Selectmen's question on who has signed up to run as a Northfield Selectmen in 2021.

- **NON PUBLIC SESSION**

Sel. Waldron made a motion at 7:22 pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a;3-II, (b) seconded by Sel. Haskins, Roll call vote Selectmen Haskins–Yes and Selectman Waldron- Yes.

**Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Waldron/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 7:51 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. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote and the minutes are sealed.**

- **Other Business**

There was a discussion on the Tilton- Northfield Recreation budget request and no action was taken at this time on this budget.

Discussion was had on the Town Treasurers salary and what that should be. No action was taken on this budget.

The T/A informed the Selectmen that the Budget Committee has restored all of the outside agencies' budgets to the 2020 level after the Selectmen had reduced them accordingly.

No other business to come before the Selectmen, the meeting adjourned at 8:03 pm.

**Minutes Recorded by T/A Ken Robichaud**

**Minutes were approved on February 4, 2021.**