



## **NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting of February 23, 2021

**Present:** Selectman Kevin Waldron, and Selectman Scott Haskins.

**Not Present:** Selectman Glen Brown

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, Interim Public Works Director Justin Bernier, and Police Chief John Raffaely. Resident attending this meeting in person was David Bacon.

**Selectmen Waldron opened the meeting for the Selectmen's work session at 5 pm.**

- **Police Department Update**

The Chief brought up an issue on a class VI road off of Shaker Road in which 4 wheel drive vehicles are driving on that road and causing a reduction in the stability of the road. The Road has been posted by the Selectmen in past years but individuals are not following the signs direction. The sign states that no wheeled traffic is allowed on the road from December to June. A discussion about blocking the road with a mound of snow should deter the wheeled vehicles until the snow melts in May.

The Chief presented the Selectmen with a (PAR) Personnel Action Report for their signature in which the hours of the Administrative Assistant at the Police Department is officially reduced from full time to part time. The Selectmen signed the document.

The Chief updated the Selectmen on an applicant for the open position of Police Officer. The applicant is a certified officer from Vermont and will not need to go through the academy as Vermont is a reciprocal state with NH. The applicant will only need to do a law package at the NH Police Academy.

- **Public Works Update**

Director Bernier updated the Selectmen on the International truck that was having issues last week they have been resolved.

Director Bernier also updated the Selectmen on his purchase of an automotive code reader so that the DPW can now plug in the code reader to the vehicle to read disablement codes and will also be able to diagnosis and repair issues on site as opposed to sending the truck out for service which will save the DPW dollars over time.

Director Bernier presented the Selectmen with grinding and asphalt reclaiming quotes from R&D Paving for projects this summer on Shaker Road from Fiske to Bay Hill Extension as planned by the Selectmen from the 2021-2022 Roads Capital Improvement Plan. The 2021 cost is approximately \$88,468.85.

A quote from JCB to replace the backhoe came in and was presented to the Selectmen at a cost of \$140,000 for model 4CX-14HFCA and \$126,076 for model 3CX-15HFCA.

Director Bernier asked about posting weight limits on the road for the spring season. The Selectmen stated that it's up to the DPW Director how and when to post.

- **Administration Update**

The Town Administrator, updated the Selectmen on a meeting he had with the Town Moderator, Scott McGuffin on the layout of Southwick School for Town Meeting day, Saturday March 13, 2021 at 9 am. It will consist of two separate areas, one section for residents who wear masks and another separate section for residents who do not wear masks.

Solid Waste came up for discussion as the contract is up for renewal at the end of March. The Selectmen discussed ways on how to proceed. Casella submitted a one year agreement as well as a three year agreement. The Selectmen discussed having our own trash compacting at the transfer station and eliminating curbside pickup, which will be a big savings after the initial upfront costs of buying and installing compactors. Although; residents will have to bring their own trash to the transfer station and no curbside. The Selectmen discussed having our own truck and hire employees to do curbside pickup, but that is costly. The Selectmen asked the T/A to get a cost for having Casella start an automated system and allowing only one 96 gallon container per household. The big cost is disposal / tonnage and transportation costs.

The T/A asked for support from the Selectmen on some bills that are making their way through the House and Senate. The First bill is Senate Bill 99 (SB-99). This bill repeals the RSA that places a limit on the year to year increase on the distribution of Meals and Rooms revenue back to municipalities allowing the full 40 percent of the net income. Northfield has over the last 10 years lost over 1.8 million dollars of revenue from the state not giving municipalities the full 40 percent. This bill is fully supported by the Selectmen.

House Bill 274 (HB-274) provides that the State will contribute 5% of the NH Retirement costs for Teachers and Police and Firefighters. In 2012 when the State of NH stopped contributing to the retirement costs of Cities, Towns and Counties, the State passed down those costs to the municipalities. This bill would help the Town of Northfield collect a portion of the funding for these retirement costs. The Selectmen were in favor of this bill.

CACR 9 which would amend the NH Constitution to prohibit any municipality from raising property taxes more than 2% per year based on the actual tax of the previous year. If a town through a combination of good budgeting, frugal spending and good luck reduces its taxes by say 5% one year will have set an artificial low ceiling for the next year. It does not create an incentive to reduce taxes. Most municipalities cannot control the increase of costs due to downshifting or new State mandates or loss of state aid or meals and room taxes. Because this is a constitutional change it must pass by 60% in both chambers of the House and Senate. The Selectmen were not in favor of this bill.

The T/A suggested to the Selectmen a change to our current Flex Time. Selectmen Waldron suggested that the Selectmen give flextime at the current overtime rate. The employee will receive one and one half time, (1 ½) times rate for every hour the employee works over 8 hours. Selectmen were in favor of this change.

The T/A informed the Selectmen that the New Hampshire Municipal Association (NHMA) is having two trainings for newly elected Selectmen on April 6<sup>th</sup> from 9-4, and May 18<sup>th</sup>, 9-4. The Selectmen will address this after the March elections.

Employee Handbook review has been changed to March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4pm. The Selectmen will put aside one hour prior to the regular meeting start time to devote to the review of the handbook.

**Selectmen Haskins/Waldron motioned to approve the minutes from February 16, 2021 meeting. All in favor, motion passed.**

- **Nonpublic Session:**

**Sel. Waldron made a motion at 6:29pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a;3-II, (B&C) 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 7:19 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:**

The T/A will be leaving early on Thursday and off on Friday. The Selectmen will be meeting at 4 pm on Tuesday to review the employee handbook.

Nothing else to come before the Selectmen at this time, this meeting is adjourned at 7:30 pm.

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

**Minutes were voted on, corrected and approved on March 2, 2021.**