



## NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of August 20, 2019

**Present:** Chairman Wayne Crowley, Sel. Brown, Sel. Haskins

**Also Present:** Dr. Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator, Andy Buteau, DPW Director, Police Chief John Raffaelly, and 13 members of the public.

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 pm by Chairman Crowley.

- **General Business**
  - Review accounts payable, payroll manifests and general correspondence
- **Public Input**
  - **Shaker Road Culvert Replacement**

Chairman Crowley started the discussion with a synopsis of the events to date. The culvert has been deteriorating and was deemed unsafe by the Board of Selectmen at a previous meeting. There was a section that collapsed at the end of April and was temporarily solved by a steel plate. The Town sought prices on an “in-kind” replacement as well as alternatives. Both of those scenarios require engineering to obtain permits from NH DES. A slip lining would reduce the area inside of the culvert by 20% and require a permit. Lisa Martin, Northfield resident and engineer, recommended that the Town place a pre-cast bridge and not touch the culvert at this time. This bridge would be a 75-100 year fix to the problem and a DES wetlands permit would not be required if the work was within the existing roadway. This solution is the same in approximate price as in-kind replacement or slip lining without the added expense of engineering.

Jared Herbert inquired about the cost of the bridge placement. Chairman Crowley responded that the cost of the project is \$145,000 plus the Town will have the added cost of paving which the Town will have done when the other roads in Town are done.

Ted Woodard verified that no DES permits are required to cover the existing culvert. Chairman Crowley explained that the culvert would not be disturbed. Frank Tilton asked if it was a “not to exceed” contract amount and if there was a “latent condition” provision. Mr. Tilton also asked if borings or test pits had been done to determine the bearing capacity of the sub-straight. Scott Polish inquired what would happen if the culvert were to fail. Mr. Polish explained that the culvert is rusted and that the culvert will fail at some point and will then have to be removed.

Karen Woodward asked again about slip lining and whether this could be done as an emergency repair. Dr. Hutton explained that emergency repairs are only allowed within five days of the occurrence of the deficiency. In addition, emergency measures are only allowed for temporary solutions, permanent fixes still require full permitting.

Mr. Tilton asserted that infrastructure has been a problem in Northfield for 40 years and that the Selectmen's solution does not make sense. The movement of water will compromise the culvert further causing failure, there will need to be armoring on the banks. Mr. Polish suggested opening the road with smaller lanes and a weight limit. Discussion ensued about the various options for partial road opening; Selectman Brown reminded the attendees that the NH DOT had stated the culvert was deficient and that it was a dangerous situation. As a result, the Selectmen chose to close the road. Christopher Hunt said that he had been in the culvert and that the overhead portions were in decent shape, but that it is distorted from the inflow. He also mentioned that there is a high pressure gas line present at the culvert. Chairman Crowley asked Dr. Hutton to explore the cost for removing the culvert at this time. Mr. Hunt commented that if you slip line, failure is irrelevant because it stays in place.

Chairman Crowley explained that the town did not seek out a contractor, but that Lisa Martin, who was assisting the Town, thought this might be a viable solution and brought M.A. Bean Associates LLC to present to Town officials. Mr. Haskins was adamant that the selectmen had voted to close the road for safety reasons to prevent any tragedy at that location.

Mr. Buteau explained that when the hole was found in April that they knew the dirt had to have gone somewhere, but that the project could be put in the CIP for 2020. That being said, they put in the steel plate and waited. Then the NH DOT bridge engineers looked at it and determined that it was a problem.

There was extensive back and forth between the Board/Officials and the public. While the concerns of the public were heard, the Selectmen indicated that staff would research the comments made and get back to people.

- **Public Works Department**

Brian O'Connor and Bob Murdock wanted to discuss Glines Park Road. The road to the dock, by the beach, is washing out and eroding with the rain. On the left hand side there is a plastic pipe showing, Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Murdock also inquired about the status of the Sandogardy Pond Road project. Chairman Crowley explained that the utility poles have finally been removed and that there are three outstanding drainage issues; the Rail Road crossing at Lambert Road, the Union Church area, and an overflow for the detention pond. On the Rail Road crossing, NH DOT has approved the contract amendment with HEB and the engineering has commenced. The Union Church area is waiting NH DOT approval.

Mr. Murdock inquired about a speed limit sign. It was commented that the signs were removed in the construction and Mr. Buteau said that the stop sign at Glines Park road also needed to go back up.

Next, Mr. Murdock asked about trapping beavers. The beavers are causing water to back up on Cross Brook as well as causing property erosion. Mr. Murdock will engage a legally licensed trapper if the Town grants permission to trap, there will be no cost to the Town.

**Crowley/Brown** moved to authorize the Town Administrator to sign the Landowner Consent form from NH Fish and Game for trapping in the Sandogardy area. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Mr. O'Connor asked about a controlled burn of the brush north of the bridge by the Tilton-Northfield Fire District.

- **Street Opening Rules**

With no public present for the discussion, the Public Hearing was opened and closed at 6:35 pm.

**Crowley/Brown** moved to approve the Street Opening Rules, adopted in accordance with NH RSA 236:9-12, as presented. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- **Truck Repairs**

Mr. Buteau explained that apparatus HT-15 has a broken spring. It is \$300 more for the heavier duty spring; making it a \$1,600 repair, inclusive of labor. It was replaced once before with a stock part, the Selectmen agreed to have Mr. Buteau bring a PO to the next meeting.

- **Department Update**

Mr. Buteau reported that he is having difficulty with scheduling R&D Paving. He will keep trying.

There has been trash on the sides of the road that the DPW and Police have been working on removal and tracking down the dumpers. In addition, someone tried to bring a Freon containing refrigerator to the transfer station and was belligerent since it was not accepted by the attendants.

Dan's last day is October 29<sup>th</sup>. The transfer station needs an additional attendant for Saturdays. Mr. Buteau asked if the Board would object to a High School Senior taking the position with permission of the parents (a 17-year old). The Board expressed that as long as they were supervised by an adult employee they were fine with it.

- **Police Department**
  - **Department Updates**

The Police Department needs to spend \$1,030 on a replacement fiberglass outside entrance door for the garage. The funds are in the budget.

- **Swearing in of New Officer**

Cindy Caveney swore in Laurent Cotnoir at 6:55 pm.

- **Administration**
  - **Adoption of Hazard Mitigation Plan**

A paper copy of the hazard mitigation plan was presented to the Board. The Board had received the e-mail copy immediately following the Town Administrator's receipt of the document yesterday. The committee that met numerous times on this project has not seen the final draft, and at over 70 pages, no one has had time to review it. The Selectmen were uncomfortable approving something they had not yet read. They agreed to sign the approval next week, outside of a meeting, if Dr. Hutton received no comments by Tuesday. Dr. Hutton will also review it and send comments to LRPC for inclusion in the document if necessary. Signature is required by the funding mechanism to be complete by August 30<sup>th</sup>.

- **Authorization to Auction Oak Hill Tax Deed property**

The Selectmen set the auction for September 21<sup>st</sup> at 11:00 am. The minimum bid required will be \$15,000 since they had a verbal offer for that amount. This will cover Town expenses and back taxes and any remaining proceeds will be returned to the owners.

- **Employment Verification and Reference Policy**

There was discussion of when the policy would be needed. In the police realm, generally speaking, individuals have to sign a similar release when they apply for a position. The release with this policy would apply when there is not another release on file. Requests would still go to the Town Administrator's Office, unless otherwise authorized, since that is where the personnel files are located. The Board liked the policy in general terms, but wanted to see what the hold harmless clause would look like on a release form.

- **Town Administrator's Goals - Concurrence**

The Board agreed that that the Town Administrator should be the Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Officer's back-up, but that Dr. Hutton did not need an intimate knowledge of the financial software to be part of her goals. In addition, the website management and social media management that is part of the Assistant Town Administrator/Finance Officer's position was stricken from the draft. All other items were in agreement, as such, the evaluation form was agreed upon by the Board and Dr. Hutton.

- **Department Update**

The Board requested that the maps that used to be on the back of the partition wall be hung and the presentation screen moved to the other wall.

- **Non-Public - RSA 91A-3 II (a), (c), and (d)**

Crowley/Haskins moved to enter into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A3II (a), (c), and (d) at 7:12 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Also Present: Dr. Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator and Police Chief John Raffaelly

Crowley/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 7:42 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

Crowley/Brown moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- **Review minutes of the meeting of August 5, 6, and 15, 2019**

Brown/Crowley moved to accept the minutes of August 5, 2019, as written. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Brown/Crowley moved to accept the minutes of August 6, 2019, as written. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Crowley/Haskins moved to accept the minutes of August 15, 2019, with the date corrections for “next meeting.” **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

The next meeting is tomorrow morning at 7:30 am to meet at the DPW garage. A tour of the municipal structures will be conducted followed by discussion potential capital expenditures/planning.

Chairman Crowley has spoken with Nina Gardner about the School Aid issue. The four percent of school aid in question was lost along with the budget; there is not enough support to override the Governor’s budget veto. However, it appears as though the Governor is in favor of restoring the school aid. August 29, 2019, at 10am at the Capital there will be a hearing. A municipal presence will be helpful. All officials are encouraged to attend.

Selectmen Haskins mentioned the School board walk throughs that are taking place in the schools. The School Board will discuss this at a future meeting with an open public forum. This is important to Northfield because of the deteriorating infrastructure at the Union Sanborn School.

Dr. Hutton was directed to contact Lisa Martin and/or Mike Bean about the process and cost to remove the culvert from under the bridge if it fails. In addition, the status of the shop drawings should be determined. A meeting should be set-up with DES to discuss alternatives such as a slip lining the culvert.

- **Adjournment**

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 7:59 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:  
Dr. Tracey E. Hutton

**Minutes approved September 3, 2019**