



## NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of November 4, 2020

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

**Also Present:** Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, Police Chief John Raffaely, and DPW Director Andy Buteau,

**Excused:** Selectman Glen Brown

**Zoom Attendance:** None

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

Chairman Waldron led the pledge of allegiance.

- **Public Input:** None

Selectman Waldron asked if Conservation Commission members were here this evening. The T/A answered that he reached out to two members of the Commission and got no response from them.

- **Police Department**

The Chief updated the Selectmen on the cruiser that is being repaired and stated that it is almost ready for the road, Hanser Auto is waiting on a few clips for the door and then it should be ready.

There have been complaints about kids riding up and down Park Street, popping wheelies and causing problems in the road. The Chief responded but did not find anyone. The Lieutenant found the kids near Johnson Road and the transfer station, and spoke to them about the issues.

- **Public Works Department**

### **Department update**

Mr. Buteau told the Selectmen that he has marked the trees that need to come down at Pines Park due to the poor health of the trees. Discussion ensued about which trees need to come down, what condition the others are in and more trees may need to come down than that is currently marked. Selectman Haskins will meet Mr. Buteau Thursday morning to mark more trees if needed, and they will come down.

Road closure will occur on Shaker Road above Twin Bridge Road on Thursday morning to replace a cross culvert. The road will be closed for approximately half of the day, for vehicle traffic. Discussion on what activity closes a road and what activity does not. Mr. Buteau answered that the work involved in this cross culvert is not as in depth as another project and the amount of traffic as well.

Diana Drive water leak was repaired by the DPW department. Although the water line is a private line, water had been leaking for over two years into the road and it was decided to finally fix it. Discussion was on who is receiving the water, are paying for the water, is it being tested, and is it required to be tested prior to leaving the distribution well. The owner of the water line will be sent an invoice for the repair of the water line. New

Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) has been contacted for information on this water distribution center, and NHDES will contact the Town on what they discover.

Mr. Buteau handed out a letter on what the town is responsible for while plowing and removing snow and mailboxes, also for the maintenance of culverts, ditches and downed trees. The Selectmen would like to include this letter in the tax bills sent out by the town. The T/A advised the Selectmen that we will be sending out tax bills within the next week to ten days. So if any corrections need to be done they should be done as soon as possible.

Mr. Buteau brought up the Casella waste removal contract. The contract will be coming up for renewal in April of 2021. Discussion ensued on the current service with Casella, what we could do between now and that time. The cost for hauling is \$72.00 per container. That rate will be going up between \$100.00 to \$115.00 per container in April. Ideas discussed was to eliminate household trash at the transfer station, purchase compactors and lease or buy containers which would reduce the number of trips and containers coming out of the transfer station. Casella has offered the Town a one or three year extension to our contract. There will be an increase of 15% on the one year extension. Mr. Buteau suggested that if we go with the 3 year extension maybe Casella would extend the increase to 5% per year over the three years. Selectman Waldron stated that we could also negotiate another rate with Casella. Either way we will keep curbside service as is for now, but will do something different at the transfer station. Also; Selectmen discussed possibly further restricting household trash at the transfer station.

- **Administration**

The T/A asked the Selectmen to review and sign the MS-565, so that he can submit the form to DRA to get the towns tax rate set, and we can get our tax money into the town. Questions were asked by the Selectmen on where the numbers come from on the form. The T/A answered from our financial software.

The T/A passed on to the Selectmen the Town employee's health insurance premiums increase for 2021. This year there is a slight increase of 0.8% of one percent, which is unheard of. Other municipalities are anywhere between 9-21% increase in health insurance premiums. The town employees should be commended on their use of benefits and their utilizing of health care.

The T/A stated that he received an email from the cleaning company that due to staffing issues they cannot fulfill their commitment of starting janitorial services on November 19<sup>th</sup>. The T/A stated that he has another company coming for a walkthrough on Monday and hopefully will submit a proposal.

The Selectmen discussed the Paid time Off (PTO) accrual that is currently in place. Discussion was on capped time, how much time employees get, and what can we do moving forward. In the past employees would earn accrued time when they were on vacation, suspension, disability and military reserves. The Selectmen stated that whatever new PTO we do, all employees will start at zero. All PTO time will be bought out prior to implementing a new PTO to bring everyone down to zero. The Selectmen discussed all new hired employees as of 1/1/2021 will receive different PTO accrual time. Years 1,2,3 new employees shall receive 80 hours, years 4,5 receive 120 hours, years 6,7,8,9 receive 160 hours. Years 10,11,12,13 and 14 receives 200 hours. At 15 years you receive 200 hours and a bonus of \$1,500.00. Years 16, 17, 18, and 19 you receive 200 hours. Year 20 you receive 200 hours and a bonus of \$2,000.00.

Selectmen discussed new employees and their probation length. Each department has different probation lengths and times. The Selectmen agreed to have all new employees on a 365 day probation period. Department Heads probation shall be approved by the Selectmen on each hire.

- **Minutes Review**

**Waldron/Haskins** moved to approve the minutes of October 20th, 2020 as printed. **Motion Passed** by unanimous vote.

- **Other Business**

The T/A lost connection with the monitor at this point in time in the meeting.

Selectman Waldron stated that we need another screen for our meetings. Discussion turned to the Selectmen having laptops, the T/A said that he has put funds in the 2021 budget for laptops for each Selectman which would save on paper and printing costs. Andy asked that his Assistant get a town cell phone, the T/A said that he has an Android phone that is available for him; he just needs to get a new number.

- **Non-Public Session**

Sel. Waldron made a motion at 8:15 pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a 3-II, (a) (c) seconded by Sel. Haskins, Roll call vote Selectman Haskins- Yes, Selectman Waldron- Yes. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Also present- T/A Ken Robichaud, and Andy Buteau

Waldron/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 9:58 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 Continued**

Discussion turned to Tuesday November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020 voting. Selectman Haskins said that he was thankful for all of the resident volunteers who came out to help this election. Cindy Caveney and her team did a great job. Selectman Waldron also gave accolades to everyone who came out to help and to vote.

Selectman Waldron asked if we can look into an automated time keeping system for next year. The T/A stated yes we can.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 10:04 pm.

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

**Minutes approved November 17, 2020**