



NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of November 5, 2019

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

Also Present: Dr. Tracey Hutton, Town Administrator, Police Chief John Raffaelly, and DPW Director Andy Buteau

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

- **Public Input**

Joseph Hass, Gilmanton, discussed RSA 76:11-a, III with the Board. This law allows the Board to insert an information statement in the tax bills. However, the tax bills had gone out that day. This is a suggestion Mr. Hass would like to Board to consider in the future.

Adam Burton, Plymouth Regional High School sophomore, was in attendance for a Civics Class assignment.

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

Chief Raffaelly presented a Purchase Requisition for his 21 year old vehicle radio to be replaced. The radio will cost \$4,522.45. He also presented that Belknap County has devised a solution to the communications issue between dispatch and the officers in the field. For \$10,950 a card can be installed with Belknap's existing equipment, however, this is not in their current budget. If Northfield pays the upfront cost, they will reduce the 2020 dispatch fee by the same amount. Belknap County will assume ownership and responsibility for the equipment. It was the consensus of the Board to move forward with this option and obtain a draft contract from Belknap County.

A proposal for traffic movement changes on Vine Street was projected for the Board. Chief Raffaelly proposed that Vine Street be one way from Oak Street to Elm Street in the northerly direction. Traffic would circulate around the school's driveway in the opposite direction as usual to avoid vehicular conflicts at the intersection.

Chairman Crowley was concerned that the passenger door is on the opposite side as the building in this scenario. Chief Raffaelly explained that most of the children are escorted to the vehicles and only pass one at a time. Sel. Haskins furthered that most children of this age sit in the back seat.

Chief Raffaelly has spoken to the Union Sanborn School Principal who is in favor of the proposal. Chairman Crowley directed the Chief to speak to the District administration about the proposal and directed Dr. Hutton to schedule the requisite public hearing.

- **Public Works Department**
 - **Department Update**

Mr. Buteau informed the Board that he has received an application from a High School student to work Saturdays at the Transfer Station. He had prepared a PAR at \$12.00/hour to be effective November 16, 2019. The PAR is conditioned on parental consent and a passing drug test. The Board had discussed the drug test and decided it was necessary since there is equipment operation as part of the job duties. He will spend two Saturdays training with Mr. Palmer prior to Mr. Palmer returning to a regular Monday - Friday work week.

Also at the Transfer Station, there has been a gentleman “dumpster diving” to take metals and other materials. In the past he had been given permission to take used bicycles to repair for donation to less fortunate children. He was requested to leave by the attendants, who have now been trained to call the Police Department when someone refuses to take direction or becomes overly aggressive or argumentative. The gentleman may continue to take bicycles, but only at the direction and supervision of the attendants.

Mr. Buteau reported he had options for a call-in part-time plow driver. As the Board saw at the last meeting, Mr. Waldron, who had done this in the past, offered to do it again. There was discussion of a drug test requirement; it was decided Dr. Hutton should see about just having Mr. Waldron added to the random test pool since he has been an employee in the past.

There was an update given by Mr. Buteau on the fall paving projects. Bay Hill should have pavement soon. Memorial and Watson should have base coat laid end of the week. Since Mr. Buteau will be on vacation, R&D Paving has been instructed to hold off till spring on the wearing course if the conditions are not conducive to a good final result. Also reported by Mr. Buteau was that the sink hole at Oak and Memorial has been repaired.

Mr. Buteau asked if he could add 75' of pavement to the end of Watson to assist in plowing. This distance extends to the end of the sewer infrastructure. The Board agreed as long as it is the road being paved and not an individual driveway.

- **Administration**
 - **Atkinson Park Island Legal Fee and Tree Removal Authorization**

The Island is currently closed due to a dangerous tree. The Selectmen had in their packets a letter from the Tilton Town Administrator regarding estimates to have the tree removed. The lowest one is \$1,800, a \$900 Northfield share. The Board agreed to this expense.

Also in regards to the Island, the Selectmen received a letter from the Town of Tilton with estimates from attorneys to research the Tilton heirs to get approval for the island transfer. This is something that, while Northfield's counsel did not think was necessary, the Tilton Board of Selectmen is insisting be done. The Board agreed to the \$3,000 cost with a \$1,500 Northfield share to be paid on completion. Chairman Crowley suggested \$2,500 in the 2020 budget to cover this cost and associate legal costs for the transfer.

○ **Household Hazardous Waste Collection Commitment**

The Board agreed to have Chairman Crowley sign the letter of commitment for the Household Hazardous Waste Collection with the Lakes Region Planning Commission. He reported that 40-50 household participate in the program and it is an important service.

○ **Employee Health Insurance -2020 rate comparison discussion**

There was a great deal of discussion on the options for health insurance for the employees in 2020. Dr. Hutton provided the raw data sheets from NEEBCo, Melcher & Prescott, and the HealthTrust. The reports are mostly based on our current census. Dr. Hutton and Ms. Giovannucci are recommending four changes:

- Moving from Tufts to Anthem;
- Moving from NEEBCo to Melcher & Prescott;
- Switching from an HRA to a HSA;
- Offering a Buy-up Plan.

Staff is proposing funding the HSA at \$2,500/single and \$5,000/spouse+ and family. Dr. Hutton explained that a Buy-Up plan provides increased coverage to the high frequency users, at their option and expense. It does not cost the Town additional funds for premiums or HSA, and does not have any additional fees associated with plan administration. She had been requested by employees to provide this option and those employees like the buy-up plan being recommended.

Sel. Haskins expressed a positive opinion of HSAs; Chairman Crowley sees them merely as a Town funded savings plan. Dr. Hutton explained that the funds can only be used on IRS allowable medical expenses. Sel. Brown seemed to agree with both opinions.

Chairman Crowley asked about the costs if everyone was on the buy-up. After repeated calculations of options the Selectmen directed Dr. Hutton to bring the digital spreadsheet to the next so they can manipulate contributions in real time.

○ **Department Update**

Mr. Corliss, Budget Committee Chairman, agreed with the Board that it makes sense for the Boards to meet together to hear the outside agency funding requests. Agencies requesting in excess of \$10,000 or greater that the 2019 approved amount with a CPI escalator. There will be two agencies per evening on November 19 and December 3 at 7:00pm. Dr. Hutton will make sure information will be available to the public ahead of time.

○ **Wage and Classification Study - update on data collection**

Dr. Hutton is still missing data for the wage and classification study; she was asked to present to the Board what she has at the next meeting.

- **Department Update**

Dr. Hutton reported back on her mailbox placement research. The local Postmaster requires mailboxes to be six to eight inches from the edge of pavement. Chairman Crowley asserted that this differs from Town Policy. This also presents a problem when plowing snow. Chairman Crowley stated that Mr. Buteau reports replacing 25-30 mailboxes a year, which is not required by law. Dr. Hutton was told to go no further with this task.

Cash flow was discussed; there is a school payment coming up that presents a challenge. Tax bills are not due until December 6, 2019, and the school payment is due well before that time.

Crowley/Haskins moved draw \$500,000 from the line of credit to cover cash flow until tax revenue comes in. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

Dr. Hutton reported on her research into Tax Anticipation Notes (TAN), different from the current line of credit. Interest rates have been running at 2.5% as opposed to the 3.25% the town is paying on the line of credit. She explained that a TAN is more traditional for municipal finance. Dr. Hutton was directed to double check on early payment and partial withdrawal options with a TAN.

HEB Engineering and NH DOT have been in communication with Dr. Hutton regarding Sandogardy Pond Road. It appears from DOT that the additional funds to be added to the project funding cap may no longer be available in contrast to previous discussion n with DOT. If this is the case, the Town is at risk of not being able to complete the railroad drainage work. Dr. Hutton was directed to get an anticipated estimate form HEB on final pavement balance and excess.

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

Crowley/Brown moved to enter into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A: 3, II (a), (c), and (e) at 6:17 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.**

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

Crowley/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 8:45 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

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

- **Review minutes of the meeting of October 29, 2019**

Crowley/Brown moved to accept the minutes of October 29, 2019, as written. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

- **Adjournment**

The board agreed, by consensus, after reviewing the 2019 budget expenditures, the Town needs to closely monitor spending; LEGAL FEES are way over budget. Therefore the Board wants to limit all communication to paid town attorney(s), the Town Administrator will need to have approval of the chair, (or vice chair in his absence), for legal paid communication. This is effective now thru 2019. NHMA is always available at no cost to the town.

The next meeting is at 5:00 pm on the 12th of November.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 8:48 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:
Dr. Tracey E. Hutton

Minutes approved November 12, 2019