



NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of December 3, 2019

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

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

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

- **Public Input**

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

- **Police Department**

- **Department Updates**

Chief Raffaelly reported that he was waiting to hear on the polygraph and psych exams on the two conditional offers. In addition, he had a conditional offer that needed to be signed for a third officer.

- **Public Works Department**

- **Department Update**

DPW Director Buteau is back from vacation and has been plowing. Dr. Hutton inquired if the DPW is still having trouble with 145 Park Street. Mr. Buteau responded that the DPW avoids that side of the Town parcel and that it remains an issue. Dr. Hutton was directed to invite the owner to a Selectboard meeting to speak with the Selectmen.

There was an inquiry to Town Hall as to why the Street Opening permit application does not have a prompt about DES approvals when required. Chairman Crowley insisted that mentioning DES approvals is not the Town's responsibility and it should not be on the application.

Dr. Hutton stated that there is a new Motor Carrier regulation that applies to municipal drivers regarding reporting to a drug/alcohol clearinghouse. Dr. Hutton provided copies of the handout from the USDOT website she found when she was prompted by the Town's random testing provided. This will be on the next agenda once the Selectmen and Mr. Buteau have time to review the information.

Sel. Brown asked about the trees the utility left in the ditch when they removed during line clearing. Chairman Crowley reported that Ms. Giovannucci has called the utility at no avail. Dr. Hutton believed Asplundh had done the cutting and she would follow up. If they are not removed, Chief Raffaelly may know someone who would like the wood.

Dr. Hutton asked if it would be ok to store the flag pole the Legion is erecting in the Summer/Park traffic island at the DPW Garage. There were detailed questions from the Board so Dr. Hutton went and got Peggy LaBrecque who is coordinating with the Legion. The pole must be stored until spring when concrete can be poured for the base. Ms. LaBrecque will contact the Legion for specific dimensions and report back to Mr. Buteau.

Mr. Buteau confirmed with the Board that there is no desire to plow the parks. He reported that the crews have salted four times and used less salt than in previous applications. While the budget will still be expended, the spending is predicted to be a lot less than in previous winters.

The new Transfer station worker, Mr. Dalton, is starting on Saturday. Mr. Buteau will be evaluating his fitness in that position over the coming months.

- **Administration**

- **Department Update**

Dr. Hutton asked the Board if the afternoon of the 23rd was an acceptable date for the Town Hall holiday celebration. The board said that it would be fine. A notice will be in the employees' paychecks regarding that date and the informational meeting on Monday with Melcher Prescott on the new health insurance. Dr. Hutton reported that if we move from Group Dynamic right away there may be a delay in getting the employees their prescription debit cards. If this happened, employees may have to pay out of pocket and request reimbursement until the cards arrive. The Selectmen want to make the move and not continue past December 31, 2019, with Group Dynamics. Dr. Hutton will coordinate with Melcher Prescott.

While Mr. Court was repairing the front steps at Town hall he noticed the brick is in need of attention. Dr. Hutton was directed to add this to the capital facilities CIP and obtain pricing for the repairs/maintenance.

Dr. Hutton mentioned that it is the time of year that the Board and the Department Heads need to think about encumbrances into 2020. At a minimum, Dr. Hutton is going to request encumbering funds from Planning/Zoning to purchase a mapping software license.

Dr. Hutton was unaware if the previous Town Administrator has approached the Board on behalf of a company that installs veteran flags for Gold Star families on telephone poles.

Given that NEDC just had signs installed she did not know if the Board wanted to entertain this proposal. Chairman Crowley asked that it be brought to the Board after budget season.

The agreement with PSNH regarding the BLTA case was presented to the Board for signature.

This agreement represents what the Board had discussed in non-public session. It was signed.

Dr. Hutton was asked about the enforcement Order that was in their correspondence. She reported that she had just met with the owners and they agreed to move forward with a ZBA and PB application.

- **Wage and Classification Study Data**

Dr. Hutton has still only received data back from Belmont, Haverhill, Charlestown, and Henniker. This represents ½ of what was attempted. Chairman Crowley stated that he is hesitant to make a decision with so little data. Dr. Hutton will bring back to the board the list of communities examined and the Board will choose a few more to approach. She was also directed to remove Belmont from the analysis.

- **Residential Real Estate not Assessed**

Dr. Hutton presented the Board with the requested list of features not picked-up on the assessments. Chairman Crowley felt that the paving on driveways should be pick-up since it adds value to the property. The Board will review the list.

- **2020 Budget Review**

There was discussion of the health plans to be added for the new and vacant positions. The Board determined there should be one family plan added to the DPW budget and two single and one family added to the PD. The Board requested to see the total amount of people added to the notes for the salary lines. Chairman Crowley asked to see the HRA and Premiums as separate numbers. Dr. Hutton will add this to the notes.

There was a question on the tonnage for commercial waste. Dr. Hutton will check the numbers. In addition, the Board would like to know where the funds were or will be spent on lines that have a large change.

- **Public Hearing - Vine Street - One-way**

Present: Kel Fucgham, Brian Wadleigh, Frank Wadleigh, Melanie Wadleigh, and Karen Fortham

Chief Raffaelly gave a short history of the situation on Vine Street. Vine Street used to be one-way and it was changed at some point. Currently cars are parking up and down Park and Elm Street creating a safety hazard between 7:30-8:30 am and 2:45-3:30 pm.

Mr. Wadleigh expressed concerns about getting into his property at peak times if Vine was one-way. He lives just before the school and thinks this proposal would add, unnecessarily, to the congestion during release hours. Ms. Fortham felt that it would be inconvenient to have the maintenance crew keep going around the block to access the various properties managed on Vine.

Mr. Fucgham inquired why Vine was discontinued as a one-way. Chief Raffaelly was unsure of the answer. Chief Raffaelly did say that it is difficult to get through Elm with the cars parked; there is barely one lane width to navigate. Ms. Fortham commented that it is the left hand turning vehicles from Vine that causes the traffic back-up problems. Perhaps making this intersection right turn only would help.

Mr. Fucgham asked if the School or District had been consulted. Chief Raffaelly had done this and the District has no problems with the proposal. There was extensive discussion on how children are dropped off and picked up at the school. Ms. Wadleigh suggested perhaps staggered release times would be a solution.

Chairman Crowley suggested a meeting with the School District Business Administrator, Ms. Leigh to discuss options. No action will be taken tonight and further research will be conducted.

- **6:30 PM - Joint meeting with Budget Committee**

- **Hall Memorial Library**

Jennifer Davis, Library Director, was present to go over her budget with the Boards. Ms. Davis explained that the library was requesting a \$1,950 increase for Northfield (and Tilton). One of the reasons for the increase is energy costs. There was discussion of the entities that the library could aggregate with to reduce electricity supply costs. There was a long discussion with Mr. Randall of the organization of the Library and why this Trustee managed entity was not a 501(c)(3).

Ms. Davis also told the Board that there was an increase in benefit costs. She has been given the estimate of a 6-10% increase for 2020. Additionally, the small business policy for property liability is expensive. Chairman Crowley asked if they had called PRIMEX³. Dr. Hutton explained that the pool of Primex³ is only open to political subdivisions.

Ms. Davis described many of the programs offered by the library' including; meeting space usage, Tutoring, and a chess night. They have received a grant of free books for children. With only 2 full time employees; they do not have a specific grant writer on staff.

Mr. Randall questioned the bank balances. Sel. Haskins directed Mr. Randall to the handouts. The various funds and their purposes were discussed briefly.

- **Administration**

- **Department Update**

Chairman Crowley asked if Dr. Hutton has connected with Ms. Cunningham; to which she replied she has called and left a message twice with no response. Chairman Crowley and Mr. Buteau will approach her in the morning.

Chairman Crowley wanted to go over the PD budget. Dr. Hutton reminded the Board that she had asked at the last meeting if this would be reviewed tonight since Chief Raffaelly is going on vacation; at that time

Chairman Crowley indicated they would not. There was brief cursory discussion of cruiser gas and retirement costs.

DPW and Town Hall budgets will be reviewed on Thursday. The Clerk/Tax Collector budgets on Tuesday. Dr. Hutton was also directed to begin writing the warrant article language.

- **Review minutes of the meeting of November 19, 2019**

Crowley/Haskins moved to accept the minutes of November 26, 2019, as published with the correction noted at the meeting. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

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

Crowley/Haskins moved to enter into non-public session under the provisions of RSA 91-A3II (a) and (e) at 7:25 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 7:36 pm. **Motion passed by unanimous vote.**

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

- **Adjournment**

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

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 7:39 pm.

Respectfully submitted by:

Dr. Tracey E. Hutton

Minutes Approved December 10, 2019