



## **NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING**

Minutes of the meeting of December 13th, 2022

**Present:** Selectman Mark Hubbell, Selectman Jason Durgin and Selectman Kevin Waldron.

**Town Staff Present:** Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, and DPW Director Justin Bernier.

**Selectmen Hubbell opened the Selectmen's Work Session at 5:00 pm.**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Payroll for this week is \$21,276.00 and A/P is \$1,441,587.00

### **Department of Public Works**

Director Bernier asked that the boot reimbursement policy be signed this week. The Town Administrator put together the policy and combined the DPW as well as the Police Department. Selectmen Hubbell made a statement to the boot reimbursement increase. Over the many years our Town employees have been overlooked and we are trying to hire and retain employees, and this equates to less than .10 cents per taxpayer. Selectmen Hubbell and Durgin signed the policy.

Bernier presented the Selectmen with a purchase order to be signed for a new sander. Bernier has been asking for a sander for the F-350 for many months now, and he really needs the sander for him to do the job he needs to do. He has a truck to plow with, but then he has to call someone to come over to sand, which is not utilizing time wisely. Bernier has 3 quotes and the lowest one is from HP Fairfield for \$5,441.00. This quote is only valid for 30 days and will expire on January 11<sup>th</sup> 2023 and we have been told by the vendor that this price will increase by several hundred dollars. Town Administrator Robichaud stated that this is in the Town's best interest to purchase this before the end of the year. It is in the budget for 2023, only for the \$5,441.00 amount. If we purchase this equipment with remaining funds from 2022 we can eliminate it in the 2023 budget which will reduce the tax burden. Robichaud stated that he wants to inform the budget committee of this plan to keep them apprised before we make the purchase. The Selectmen reviewed the current budget and remaining funds.

### **Administration**

The Town Administrator presented the Selectmen with the addition of the Boot Reimbursement Policy in the Employee Personnel Manual. They were okay with the addition of this to the manual. Also, some language for PTO time policy change for 2023 can be reviewed before next week's meeting.

The Administrator reported that he received information from the Merrimack County Administrator Ross Cunningham, on what services are provided to residents of Merrimack County. The Selectmen discussed some of these services and they wondered if some of these might be a "duplication of services" to what the Town currently provides funding for in our community. The Town sends \$1.2 million dollars to Merrimack County as its contribution to these services, but also support some local agencies for similar services.

Robichaud announced that Northfield was awarded a grant from the State of NH Emergency Management Division. This grant is for a Generator for the Northfield Emergency Shelter, which will be established at the Pines Community Center. This grant is a 50/50 matching grant in which the State of NH will match up to

\$50,600.00 for the purchase/installation of an emergency generator. Selectmen discussed the location of the Shelter and a possible change of location, but that may be disallowed under the grant agreement. More questions were raised as to who, how and when we will proceed on this as the grant is valid until September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024. The matching money is currently in the proposed 2023 budget but could be removed and put on a warrant article which would reduce the amount to raise in taxes, especially if we do not know the cost to install a generator currently. Selectman Waldron asked for this to be discussed at the Budget Committee Meeting on Thursday night.

The Police Department needs to upgrade their backup system and the Administrator brought up for discussion to purchase a Barracuda backup system that was recommended by the Town's IT contractor. The way these systems are done now is Barracuda will provide the device and the Town will pay \$2,900.00 per year for 4 years and will receive 24/7 service as well as up to 2 TB of memory in the cloud. There was much discussion on the cloud versus the physical saving of data on site. Selectman Hubbell stated that we should buy our own server and it should be on site, then we can download the information and keep it in a fire safe that would be free. It was decided that they would wait until Chief Raffaelli returned to talk about this again.

Selectman Waldron brought up a question on the PILOT for a solar field on Forrest Ave. Where is the project at this point in time. Selectman Durgin gave some of the information, as he is the Selectmen's Representative to the Planning Board. The applicant hopes to be breaking ground early next year.

### **Review Minutes**

**Waldron/Hubbell motioned to accept the minutes of December 6th, 2022, all in favor, motioned passed.**

### **Other Business**

Selectman Durgin brought up Facebook. Durgin stated that he chooses not to comment on Facebook as an elected official. He also believes that no Town Official should use Facebook as a platform for Town Business. He stated that his name was recently brought up on a page discussion and stated that there was misinformation on this Facebook post, as well as mistruths, half-truths, untrue things, and it is bringing discord and separation to our Town. I also want to point out that if a town official has an issue with another town official it should be brought to this table and discussed. Selectman Hubbell stated that he has noticed that some groups just want to spread hate and negativity. Durgin stated again that he feels that this post was not even close to being true and he ran to be a Selectman to help his Town, and he spends a lot of time doing it and he was accused of not spending any time in his duties which he stated was a lie. He said that he is disgusted with the way things were stated in that post, and that he felt that he had to bring it up for discussion, and he would like it to stop.

Selectman Hubbell opened up Public Input at 6:02 pm

### **Public Input**

**Scott Beliveau-** spoke to the trash survey and curbside collection.

**Jason Gerhard-** spoke to the Selectmen about Facebook and benefit to public discord.

Selectman Hubbell adjourned the meeting at 6:05pm

**Sel. Hubbell made a motion at 6:10 pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a; 3-II, (A,C) seconded by Sel. Durgin. Roll call vote–Selectman Waldron–Yes, Selectman Hubbell- Yes. Selectman Durgin – Yes. Motion passed by a 3-0 vote.**

**Hubbell/Waldron motioned to reconvene the public session at 7:24 pm. Roll Call Vote, Selectman Waldron-Yes, and Selectman Hubbell-Yes, Selectman Durgin – Yes. Motion passed by a 3-0 roll call vote.**

**Hubbell/Durgin 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 Waldron–Yes, Selectman Durgin – Yes, and Selectman Hubbell -Yes. Motion passed by a 3-0 roll call vote and the minutes are hereby sealed.**

Selectman Hubbell adjourned the meeting at 7:25 pm

**Minutes Recorded by Town Administrator-Ken Robichaud**

**Minutes were voted and approved on December 20<sup>th</sup>, 2022.**