



NORTHFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING

Minutes of the meeting of December 15, 2020

Present: Selectman Kevin Waldron, Selectman Scott Haskins and Selectman Glen Brown

Also Present: Town Administrator Ken Robichaud, Public Works Director Andy Buteau and Police Chief John Raffaelly.

Zoom Attendance: None

The 2021 Budget meeting was called to order at 3:30 pm by Chairman Waldron.

Discussion began on page one, the Selectmen's section of the 2021 Budget. Discussed salary's for the Selectmen, the hours compared to the salary they receive. The T/A will review other local municipalities for Selectmen's salary levels compared to Northfield's. Discussion also revolved around the Merit Pool Allotment line. This line is for giving town employees a merit raise if appropriate. It was determined to leave it as is in the budget. The T/A reviewed with the Selectmen some key points of the 2021 budget as submitted by Department Heads. It is up 2.18% over 2020 budget or \$76,142.00. Health Insurance is up only 0.08%, no increase to dental, long term disability, or life insurance. NH Retirement is up for group 1- 3.63% and group 2- 5.45%. Outside Agencies request is down \$5,881.00 over last year. Increase in Property and Liability of \$4,523.00 and a decrease in W/C insurance of \$3,122.00. The Selectmen reduced Professional Services line from \$500.00 to \$1.00 a reduction of \$2,999 from 2020, and Miscellaneous line from \$2,000.00 to \$750.00 a reduction of \$1,250.00.

The T/A budget was next and the Selectmen requested that the T/A revamp this budget by putting the AT/A in this budget as well as the Admin. Asst. Currently one half of the AT/A salary is in this budget with the other half being in the Finance Budget. The Finance budget was reduced to zero and all lines were moved into the T/A budget. The Admin. Asst. salary and benefits are currently in 3 different budgets, Highway has 0.375 %, Assessing has 0.50% and planning and zoning has 0.125%. These are all being moved into the T/A budget for better transparency. There was discussion on the Dues and Subscriptions line and the T/A stated that we can remove the ICMA costs of \$580.00, as he doesn't use this organization. It was reduced to \$382.00.

There was discussion on the next budget, Town Meeting. Discussion surrounded the Moderators Salary, and that he should be getting more. No changes were made to this budget.

Town Clerk budget was next, discussion revolved around the salaries. The Town Clerk put in a 3% increase for herself and the Asst. The Selectmen stated that we should put the TC increase in a warrant article. The Asst. should be done through the Merit Pool process. This budget on salaries was reduced to the 2020 level which is the Asst. T/C from \$21,798. to \$23,245. And the T/C salary was reduced from \$31,984 to \$31,502, which is the 2020 budget level. This was the last budget to discuss and the Selectmen shall pick up on the Elections Budget next Tuesday at 3:30 pm.

Chairman Waldron moved into the regular meeting at 5:00 pm with Chief Raffaelly and Public Works Director Andy Buteau joining the meeting.

Chairman Waldron led the Pledge of Allegiance.

There is still no one on zoom or public for any input.

- **Police Department.**

Police Chief Raffaelly stated that the damaged cruiser has been delivered to Hanser's Auto Body and discussion turned to claiming the damage. The Board stated that it needs to be repaired and we should start on getting it repaired. The T/A gave some past ratios of claims and increase to premiums as well as premium decreases. Over the past 12 years the costs have fluctuated with an overall 24.6 % change in the 12 years which broken down would be approx. 2.46% each year or so. It was decided to get the vehicle fixed ASAP. The Chief stated that this vehicle, after it is fixed, will be taken out as a front line cruiser and will be given to a supervisor. And the supervisor's vehicle will be put into front line service. The chief passed out pictures of the cruiser accident to the Selectmen.

The Chief asked to purchase 4 new radios at a cost of \$14,173.80 from this year's budget. The Selectmen discussed if the Chief needs more radios? The Chief stated that he could use 2 more and that would leave him with every officer having a newer radio. One radio is \$3,543.00 so if he gets 2 more it would be at a cost of \$21,258.00. Discussion revolved around how many radios are old and how many are newer and the replacement schedule. The T/A stated that he wants to be cognizant of upcoming expenses and what we are spending here today. It was decided that the chief would purchase the 6 radios at a cost of \$21,258.00.

The Chief updated the Selectmen on a possible applicant for an officer. The applicant is not certified and has never been an officer.

- **Public Works**

Director Buteau stated that he has two requests for tires. One truck needs winter deeps at \$400.00 per tire with new rims. Also needs 6 tires for the Grader for a total of \$5,760.00. The grader tires need to be removed from the vehicle and brought to the garage for mounting.

Sandogardy Pond Road construction is final. The change order was signed by Andy and will be heading to the State for final processing. Selectmen Haskins asked if the joint has been taken care of at the bridge and Andy stated that it is done.

Next was the Casella contract. It was asked if we could do this in nonpublic. The T/A stated that there is no exemption that he could find or heard of for a contract to be done in nonpublic. It is an extension of a current contract that we have which is a public document stated the T/A. Chairman Waldron stated that the only path forward is to do this in public. Director Buteau presented the information to the Selectmen. A one year extension to our current curbside collection cost would be \$180,474.00 year. 2 year extension, 1st year is \$168,027.0, 2nd year is \$175,588.00, a 3 year extension would be Year 1 \$159,315.00, 2nd year is \$166,484.00 and 3rd year is \$173,976.00. Also discussed were roll off costs and hauling fees as well as equipment rental costs.

Selectmen discussed eliminating some services at the transfer station and also to reduce curbside pickup to buildings that have more than 2 units per parcel to help with the rising costs of solid waste. Currently the ordinance is more than 3 units per parcel. The Selectmen will continue to discuss this issue, but have stated that they would like the T/A to set up a Public Hearing on the subject of these changes to the ordinance.

Selectmen Haskins discussed if the Town were to purchase a trash truck and hire part-time staff to operate this operation, would we save costs on this endeavor. Director Buteau stated that the town would probably save over the long term.

Selectmen discussed having compactors at the transfer station and if that would be a savings as well.

Director Buteau asked the Selectmen if they know anyone who might be able to fix the loader cab. It needs to be redone as it has rusted areas and needs some updating. Selectmen Haskins and Selectmen Waldron gave Director Buteau some information.

Director Buteau stated that he had a discussion with Dan Durgin of New Sky Tree Company about the trees at Pines Park. The Selectmen wanted to encumber 2020 budget monies for this project but the Town needs a document from Mr. Durgin in order for this to occur. He will ask if we can get a written document.

Backhoe information is it needs work to keep it running and has issues that need to be repaired. New Hampton has just purchased a new one which they gave us all the information on it for our records if we want to get a new one in the future. The cost for a new one is \$154,000.00 for this backhoe. Questions were asked about how much we have in the Capital Reserve new equipment fund for Highway. The T/A stated that he did not have it on hand at the moment, but would get it for the next meeting.

Questions asked were on the new 550 at Fairfield's, Director Buteau stated that because Fairfield's has had low employee attendance, it will not be ready this month.

- **Administration**

The T/A asked the Selectmen if they would like to address the Employee Handbook update all at one time or continuing to update intermittently as needed. It was decided that all at once would be best. The Selectmen will look at it in January or February.

The T/A received an email from attorneys on the Island transition from Northfield in Merrimack County to Tilton in Belknap County to approve a Boundary Line adjustment as needed.

The T/A updated the Selectmen on the financial health of the town. Currently the Town has 1.9 million in the bank, we issued a check to Merrimack County for \$900,000.00 a check to the Winnisquam school district for \$250,000.00, and the (TAN) Tax Anticipation Note for \$700,000.00, for a total of \$1.85 million. The town still has outstanding Tax Revenue in the amount of \$1.5 million in escrow due to be paid by the 28th of December.

UPS is scheduled to close on their property on South Park Road and will be deeding the road to the town at the end of the month. Discussion revolved around the resolution of the road acceptance.

The T/A submitted 3 quotes for updating the town hall security system of monitoring, CCTV system and a card access reader system for the entrance doors from Total Security from Gilford NH. Also discussed and a side by side comparison analysis done between Total Security and A&B Lock company also of Gilford. By combining all 3 projects into one complete project it appears that A&B Lock at \$10,788.00 to Total Security at \$11,671.00, which A&B Lock is \$883.00 less and A&B Lock is supplying a locking cabinet for the recording device as Total Security is not. The Selectmen will review this again next week.

The Selectmen signed letters to the 3 abutters whose properties abuts the landlocked 80 acres on Stevens Road. The Selectmen are offering this property for sale to the Abutters on a bid process.

Selectmen asked about the windows in the front of Town Hall, the T/A answered that the frames are completed but there is a 6 week wait for the glass, and then they will be installed.

The Selectmen want to get the RSA on Tax Lien property and approach the State Legislatures in helping to change the law to allowing the Towns to keep all the proceeds from the sale of Tax Lien properties.

Questions on the Credit Card machine came up and the T/A stated that the Town Clerk is still working on it.

But we must use our current tax provider for any tax payments made via credit cards.

Haskins/Brown moved to approve the minutes of November 24th, 2020. Roll call vote Selectman Haskins yes, Selectman Brown yes, and Selectman Waldron yes. Motion Passed by unanimous vote.

- **Non-Public Session**

Sel. Waldron made a motion at 7:14 pm to go into nonpublic session under NH RSA 91a 3-II,(a & c) seconded by Sel. Brown, Roll call vote Selectman Brown- Yes, Selectmen Haskins– Yes and Selectman Waldron- Yes. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Waldron/Haskins moved to reconvene the public session at 9:05 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, Selectman Brown- Yes. Motion passed by unanimous roll call vote and the minutes are sealed.

- **Other Business**

The Selectmen revisited the security updates from A&B Lock and Total Security, it was decided that we would revisit this at another meeting.

Selectman Brown left the meeting at 9:07 pm.

The T/A asked if we could close town hall on December 24th at 12:00 noon. The Selectmen agreed.

Budget schedule workshop will be on Tuesday December 22nd at 3:30 pm.

There being no other business the meeting adjourned at 9:11 pm.

Minutes Recorded by T/A Ken Robichaud

Minutes Approved on December 29, 2020