

**TOWN/VILLAGE OF NORTHFIELD  
JOINT BOARD MEETING  
BOARD OF TOWN SELECTMEN  
BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES  
Minutes of April 28, 2014**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair John Quinn III, Selectmen Brad Denny (absent), Lynn Doney, Matthew Gadbois, and Kenneth W. Goslant. Trustee Chair Dennis Donahue, Trustees Kevin T. Beal, K. David Maxwell (absent), and James R. Wilson (absent). Also present were Town Manager Robert Lewis, Acting Village Manager Stephen Fitzhugh, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Art Supplee (Board of Listers), Chris Bradley (Board of Listers), Will Dickinson (STAR Program student), Judy Knapp (STAR Program teacher), Eric Moore (STAR Program student), Judy Hewett (Northfield Farmers Market), Ian Blackmer (Northfield Farmers Market), Charles Morse (Northfield Farmers Market), Susan Popowski, Ken Johnson, Sonya Bourne, and Kathleen Lott (*Northfield News*).

Select Board Chair Quinn called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

- II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE.** The Board members and the public were asked to rise and recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

- III. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** Trustee Chair Donahue noted that since the Village Trustees do not have a quorum tonight, approval of the April 15, 2014 regular meeting minutes will have to be tabled. Warrant #21-14 and the Annual Village Meeting Warning will be approved by signature and these actions will be validated at the next regular meeting. Chair Quinn added that Nanci Allard had been scheduled under "Public Participation" to discuss her concerns regarding merger, etc. but she has chosen to postpone her appearance due to this lack of quorum.

**IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- a. Northfield High School STAR Program Students: Trail System repairs.** Will Dickinson takes part in the STAR program, which allows students to attend school outside of the regular classroom. The Star Program students are looking to repair the trail system located around the Northfield Middle/High School along Garvey Hill Road. The goal is to apply for grant funds in order to repair this trail system, bring it back into use, and then unite it with other existing Northfield trail systems. Now that the trail system has been identified and reviewed, the next step is to seek volunteers (especially those with special skills to help survey and repair the trails. Eric Moore, another STAR Program student, added that some grant money (\$500) already has been received and that once a sufficient number of volunteers have come forward, work dates can be set. Norwich University students have helped out in the past. He hopes that the work can begin in May. He is willing to perform some work himself over the summer while preparing for the resumption of classes at the Middle/School and Norwich University this fall. Chair Quinn suggested that the local Boy Scout troop might be another labor source. Town Manager Lewis asked what the proposed budget for this project was. Mr. Moore stated that the total budget is \$1500, which includes the \$500 in grant money already received. Manager Lewis suggested that the Northfield Rotarians might be willing to donate their time and money to this cause. Mr. Dickinson added that once it has been repaired, the trail system could be used for a number of purposes including hiking, dog walking, etc. The trail system now is about one and a half (1½) miles but they are looking to expand it to three (3) miles when the project is completed. Manager Lewis asked where cash donations should be sent. Judy Knapp, who is a teacher in the STAR Program, suggested sending them to the Northfield School Superintendent's Office. She added that the students mainly are seeking donations of material, skills, and manpower. It remains uncertain when the trail work can begin because the area is still too wet from the spring melt-off, etc. One long-term hope is that the trails could be used by the local cross country team and that perhaps multi-school meets could be hosted. Mr. Dickinson stated that he and his fellow STAR Program students would like the Board members' assistance in publicizing their need for volunteers. He promised to keep the Board members informed of any new developments. Chair Quinn thanked the STAR Program students for their presentation tonight and for their interest in improving Northfield's trail system.

- b. Ian Blackmer, Northfield Farmers Market: Request to hold Farmers Market on Village Common.** Mr. Blackmer stated that Northfield Farmers Market, Inc. would like the Boards' permission to hold their market on the Village Common on Tuesday afternoons from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. starting on May 13, 2014 and ending on October 7, 2014. Chair Donahue noted that while the current rehabilitation project on Depot Square will not affect the grassy area where the markets are held, it will result in limited access and parking until its scheduled completion at the end of June 2014. Charles Morse stated that the Northfield Farmer Market has asked for permission to set up by the Northfield Fire Station until the Village Common can be used again. Trustee Beal heard some complaints last year that the vendors were taking up a lot of the available parking spots on market days. Mr. Morse stated that the vendors will be encouraged this year to park off site (i.e., Holland Park) as much as possible. Trustee Beal stated that he really appreciated the great effort that it took to organize the market each week; it is a true benefit to Northfield. Mr. Morse stated that the vendors who come from other towns find this a very accommodating community to sell their wares. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to allow Northfield Farmers, Inc. to hold their weekly markets by the Northfield Fire Station and then relocate to the Village Common once the rehabilitation project construction has concluded. **Motion passed 6-0-0.**
- c. Art Supplee, Board of Listers: Town-Wide Reappraisal Update.** Mr. Supplee reported that since he last reported the progress of the reappraisal to the Boards (01/28/14), there have been some challenges but all are being met and the process remains on schedule. 1220 parcels have been inspected and Mr. Supplee expects that the data from these inspections will be entered into the database and the information verified before July 1, 2014. When this has been done, the data collection for the remaining seven hundred (700) parcels will be commenced. Mr. Supplee will next address the Boards at the end of July 2014 and he is very hopeful that the timeline for data entry and inspections will be met by then. Manager Lewis added that he met with Mr. Supplee and the contracted appraisers today. The owner of the appraisal company was very complimentary of Mr. Supplee and his efforts. He stated that Mr. Supplee has been very diligent in his work and because of his great attention to detail matters that might have been neglected are getting done. It now is likely that when the completed town-wide reappraisal is completed, it will be as accurate as possible. Manager Lewis also complemented Mr. Supplee for his diligence in this matter. Chair Quinn then thanked Mr. Supplee for his update tonight and for his good work.

## **V. JOINT DISCUSSION**

- a. Northfield Observances Coin Drop Request: Monday, September 1, 2014.** Selectman Gadbois noted that this coin drop has been held the past two (2) years and there have not been any problems. Northfield Observances uses this coin drop to help fund its operation of the annual Labor Day Weekend Festivities on and around the Village Common. Trustee Beal has no objections provided that the committee coordinates with the Northfield Emergency Services and Highway Department so that coin drops are conducted in a safe and efficient manner with little or no inconvenience to the travelling public. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to permit Northfield Observances to hold a coin drop on the morning of the Labor Day Parade (09/01/14) provided that the normal safety precautions are taken. **Motion passed 6-0-0.**
- b. Village Common Rehabilitation Project.** Manager Fitzhugh reported that the construction crew (Don Weston Excavating, Inc.) is moving even faster than had been expected. The telecommunications cable on the Village Common's west side has been buried, the sidewalk installed on the north side, etc. The one problem that has developed is that the pedestrian "bulb out" constructed at the northeast corner has made the traffic opening too narrow for the long flatbed trucks that Gillespie Fuels & Propane employs to make fuel deliveries at night. The opening was designed to accommodate trucks up to forty feet (40') in length but these fuel delivery trucks are seventy feet (70') long. To remedy this some curbing will have to be reduced, either by removing some of the new construction or by reducing the pedestrian island on the other side (i.e., the flagpole location). Manager Fitzhugh stated that the Village Trustees held a special meeting on Friday, April 25, 2014, on this matter and expressed their preference for cutting back on the new curbing. More discussion will be needed before a final decision is made. Trustee Beal is disappointed that the Project Engineer did not spot this problem earlier.

Chair Quinn was that meeting and he is concerned that this will result in additional project costs. Trustee Beal does not feel that the Village should be held financially liable for faulty engineering design. Selectman Goslant thought it might be unavoidable if the Village Trustees approved the engineering plans as presented. Manager Fitzhugh now is more focused on getting the problem resolved and then fixing responsibility later. Kathleen Lott asked if the State of Vermont is aware of the proposed change. Chair Donahue said that someone from the State has been attending all the construction meetings. He added that it appeared to be the consensus of those present tonight to have the new curbing cut back rather than reduce the pedestrian island. Manager Fitzhugh would like the proposed new dimensions of the reduced bulb out tested before the work is finalized. He also will inform the contractor of the municipality's preference.

- c. Possible Expansion of Depot Square Two-Hour Parking Restrictions.** Chair Donahue has been approached by Depot Square merchants who would like the number of weekday two-hour parking spaces increased. At present, the parking restrictions are limited to storefront parking spaces on the north and west sides of the Village Common. The suggestion has been to expand this to include the parking spaces on the north side on the interior island (i.e. the Village Common). Trustee Beal has no objection. It was suggested that this change could be incorporated when the current Town and Village Traffic Ordinances are consolidated prior to municipal merger. Manager Lewis felt that it also would be good to encourage people to use the Holland Park spaces through improved signage, etc. Manager Fitzhugh believes that it will be necessary to review the property deeds for the area behind the buildings on the north side. He added that there are plans to build some retention ponds at that location in order to address stormwater runoff problems around the Village Common. Chair Quinn would like to expand the two-hour parking area to include those spaces on the south side of the internal island. There was no objection to this. Manager Fitzhugh also has been in contact with the owners of the property on which Merchant Bank is situated about that parking lot north of the Bank. That area is being renovated and additional parking spaces will be created there.
- d. Proposed Sale of Former Police Station (52 East Street).** Manager Fitzhugh reported that the bid opening was held last Friday. Four (4) bid proposals were received and the high bid was from William C. Lyon in the amount of \$35,000 for both the properties for sale. Since the Village Trustees lack a quorum, they cannot take further action on this tonight. The proposed sale also needs to be posted for thirty (30) days to allow Village residents the opportunity to circulate a petition that would request a Special Village Meeting on this matter. Manager Lewis asked what was Mr. Lyon's proposed use for the properties. Manager Fitzhugh said that part of the property would be used for a by-hand car wash facility and the rest used for storage, etc. Mr. Lyon does express concern regarding the current utility lines on the property and this will need to be addressed with Green Mountain Power (GMP).
- e. LED Streetlight Replacement Project Update.** Manager Fitzhugh stated that the bid documents for the lighting fixtures and installation labor have been prepared and should be sent out soon.
- f. Town Manager Search Process Update.** Trustee Beal stated that the Manager Search Committee met twice last week in order to conduct telephone interviews with seven (7) short-listed candidates. The interviews went well as standardized questions were asked and the candidates were allowed to ask questions about Northfield, etc. The committee then agreed on three (3) finalists who would be brought to Northfield. VLCT now is scheduling these visits for the middle of the month. While here, the candidates would tour the municipal facilities, meet with the employees, etc. Trustee Beal hopes that a decision can be made soon afterwards so that the successful candidate can be in place for a proper transition period before he/she becomes manager of the merged community on July 1, 2014.
- g. Economic Development Committee Meeting: Wednesday, April 30, 2014.** The meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. in the Municipal Building. Interested members of the public are encouraged to attend.

- h. Green Up Day: Saturday, May 3, 2014.** Green Up Day volunteers are asked to meet at the Northfield Fire Station (128 Wall Street) at 9:00 a.m. and bring “gloves, warm clothing, rain gear, work boots, and (if possible) [a] pickup truck.” All work should be completed by noon.

**VI. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION**

- a. Liquor License Application (New): Falls General Store.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the liquor license application. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- b. Tobacco License Renewal Application: Norwich University Bookstore.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the tobacco license renewal application. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**

**VII. BOARD OF TOWN SELECTMEN**

- a. Approval of Minutes: April 14, 2014 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 3-0-1, with Selectman Quinn abstaining.**
- b. Approval of Bills: Warrant #21-14.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Doney, to approve Warrant #21-14 in the amount of \$55,427.91. Selectman Goslant asked if a replacement grader alternator really cost \$927.15. Manager Lewis confirmed that it was an expensive part. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- c. Approval of Bi-Weekly Payroll through April 13, 2014.** Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Doney, to approve the bi-weekly payroll in the amount of \$51,921.85. Selectman Gadbois asked about the exact savings in Police Department overtime costs since the new work schedule came into effect. Manager Lewis will try to get an actual figure. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- d. Approval of Recommended Combined Facility Consultant.** As Manager Lewis explained in his Manager’s Report, the Town received four (4) bid proposals to develop options for the co-location of the Northfield Fire Department (NFD) and Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) at the current Fire Station on Wall Street. Manager Lewis reviewed the submissions with Ambulance Supervisor Lawton Rutter and it is their recommendation that the bid be awarded to E.H. Danson Associates. This decision was based upon cost, understanding of the project scope, and prior work experience. Manager Lewis added that E.H. Danson were the low bidders at \$8500. Chair Quinn asked if their references have been checked. Manager Lewis will do this if the Town Selectmen will authorize him to proceed in this matter. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve the recommendation to hire E.H. Danson Associates for consulting services for proposed combined facilities following a positive reference check. Manager Lewis added that all the submissions received were well-written and professional but that the one prepared by E.H. Danson Associates was preferable. Chair Quinn asked if more than one option would be presented in the final report. Manager Lewis stated that there was a requirement in the RFP specifications that multiple options be presented in the final report. Selectman Doney would like any plan to provide for possible future expansion of NFD and NAS. Chair Quinn agreed with this. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- e. Approval of Special Town Meeting Warning: June 3, 2014.** Chair Quinn noted that the purpose of this Australian Ballot election is to elect the new Water/Wastewater and Electric Utility Commissioners before municipal merger goes into effect on July 1, 2014. Motion by Selectman Gadbois, seconded by Selectman Goslant, to approve and sign the Special Town Meeting Warning. Trustee Beal noted that this election will choose two (2) of the three (3) member commissions. The remaining commissioners will be serving Town Selectmen. **Motion passed 4-0-0.**
- f. Status Report: Various Projects.**
  - 1. Aseltine Road.** Selectman Gadbois felt that the Highway crew has done a very good job this past winter and spring in maintaining our roads. He does question why Aseltine Road remains closed for “Mud Season.” Manager Lewis said that he spoke to Road Foreman Ramon Hudson on this matter today. Mr. Hudson feels that the road is still too soft for through traffic but he will be monitoring the situation daily. Manager Lewis added that minor work is being done on Lovers Lane and that road also should be reopened soon.

**VIII. BOARD OF VILLAGE TRUSTEES**

- a. **Approval of Minutes: April 15, 2014 (Regular Meeting).** Due to the lack of quorum, approval of the minutes will be tabled until the next regular meeting (05/13/14).
- b. **Approval of Bills: Warrant #21-14.** Due to the lack of quorum, approval of the warrant will be done by signature and this action validated at the next regular meeting.
- c. **Approval of Annual Village Meeting Warning: June 3, 2014.** Due to the lack of quorum, approval of the warning will be done by signature and this action validated at the next regular meeting.
- d. **Water System Improvements Project.** Chair Donahue noted that the project engineers had been present at the last Village Trustees meeting (04/15/14) and they had revealed the State's preference that this project be split into two (2) separate components: Central Street and King Street. Manager Fitzhugh added that bond votes would need to be held to authorize the financing of these projects. Since the engineering for the Central Street work is very advanced, Utility Superintendent Patrick DeMasi would like its bond vote held this summer so that there is the possibility that the construction phase of the project could begin this fall. Since the King Street Project is relatively new, much work still needs to be done so the bond vote could be held in conjunction with the general election this November (11/04/14) with construction beginning in spring 2015. Finance Director Laurie Baroffio contacted Paul Giuliani, who is an attorney expert on all matters related to bond votes, regarding whether it would be preferable to hold the Central Street bond vote before or after the municipality merges. The answer to this question remains uncertain. Chair Donahue felt that given this confusion, it probably would be better not to rush a vote and wait until at least this July. After some discussion, it was the consensus of the Board members present that the bond vote should be held after the effective date of merger.
- e. **Status Reports: Various Projects.** The Village Trustees had nothing further to add.

**IX. MANAGERS' REPORTS**

- a. **Village Manager Fitzhugh.** Manager Fitzhugh had nothing to add.
- b. **Town Manager Lewis.** Manager Lewis added some information on his written report.
  - 1. **New Soccer Field.** Manager Lewis stated that he has not had an update from the Recreation Committee regarding their proposal to build a new soccer field at Memorial Park based on plans developed by Norwich University students. Chair Quinn noted that Selectman Denny is the Board's liaison with the Recreation Committee and he is absent tonight. He added that the Select Board would have to give its approval before any work is done.
  - 2. **Fairground Road Bridge.** Chair Quinn stated that he has not been too happy with the performance of the engineering contractor on this project. Manager Lewis agreed that the scope of the project seemed to change somewhat over the past three (3) months. Construction of the new bridge will begin this summer and should be completed by early fall. Northfield has applied to the State for Hazard Mitigation grant funds. If this application is successful, the funds received should cover Northfield's local match obligation (5%) for this project. At least two (2) bridge contractors have indicated their interest in bidding on this project.

**X. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: Non-agenda items.** None.

**XI. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Selectman Doney, seconded by Trustee Donahue, to adjourn.  
**Motion passed 6-0-0.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:47 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kenneth L. McCann*

Kenneth L. McCann, Acting Clerk

An audio recording of this meeting is available in the Town Manager's Office.

These minutes were approved at the regular meeting of the Town Selectmen held on May 12, 2014.