

**TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT**  
**SELECT BOARD MEETING**  
**Minutes of February 27, 2018**

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair Kenneth W. Goslant, Board members Lynn Doney, Julie H. Goodrich, Kenneth Johnson, and K. David Maxwell. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, William Jennings (Police Chief), Lawton Rutter (Ambulance Chief), Ryan Parkman (Principal, Northfield Middle/High School), Chris Loyer (Green Mountain Transit), Devereaux Simon (Capstone Community Action), Mike Charron (Vermont Center for Independent Living), Allison Levin (Community Harvest of Central Vermont), Sally Davidson (Recreation Committee), John D. Condon, Lorna Doney, Steve Davis, Josh Sanders, Christine Barnes, Gordon Perkinson, Elaine Stehel, Jeanne Bright, Pam Hepburn, Ken Hepburn, Will Eberle, Dan Morris, and Elroy C. Hill.

Chair Goslant 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. PUBLIC HEARING**

- a. 2018 Northfield Town Meeting Australian Ballot Articles.** Manager Schulz said there is a state law requirement that the Select Board hold a public hearing prior to Town Meeting so members of the public can discuss or ask questions about the articles to be voted upon by Australian Ballot. Most of these involve funding requests from regional non-profit organizations and each were invited by mail to attend this public hearing. Manager Schulz then went through the list of Australian Ballot articles to see if there were any questions or comments.

**Article 10. Shall the Town of Northfield enter into a communications union district to be known as Central Vermont Internet under provisions of 30 V.S.A. Ch. 82? (Australian Ballot)** Sally Davidson asked what the purpose of this article was. Board member Maxwell said this article was the result of a petition to see if there is public interest in forming a communications union district to provide high-speed internet to rural areas now underserved. As he stated at a previous meeting (01/30/18), Chair Goslant doubts the need for this as he feels the existing internet providers in Northfield (i.e. Trans-Video, TDS Telecom, etc.) already would have expanded into these areas if it were economically feasible.

**Article 11. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$25,000 for the purpose of the possible purchase, at a total cost of \$35,000, of the 48.9-acre parcel at the summit of Paine Mountain and adding it to the Town Forest, the remaining \$10,000 of the total cost to be obtained through fundraising and donation? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 12. Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to use not more than \$15,000 of existing economic development funds to remove and replace the Welcome signs in Northfield? (Australian Ballot)** Ken Hepburn, along with Leslie Striebe, has spearheaded the effort to seek donations and public funds in order to replace the existing "Welcome to Northfield" signs located on the north and south sections of Vermont Route 12 leading into Northfield. Mr. Hepburn distributed depictions of how the new signs would appear. He added petitions were circulated to get this article on the warning and he is hopeful voters will authorize the expenditure of economic development funds to purchase and install the new signs. The current signs, which are over twenty-five (25) years old, would be relocated to the town borders on Cox Brook Road and Vermont Route 12A. The new signs would cost about \$4,000 each so the public funds would fill the gap between total purchase/installation costs and the funds still be collected through fundraising efforts. Ms. Davidson asked who would maintain the flowers to be planted around the new signs. Mr. Hepburn hoped local gardeners would donate their time to maintain the perennials.

**Article 13. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of an amount not to exceed twenty-one thousand dollars (\$21,000) for FY19 towards the Northfield Commuter year-round commuter with service between Northfield and Montpelier? (Australian Ballot)** Chris Loyer is the Public Affairs Coordinator for Green Mountain Transit. He attended a Select Board meeting last month (01/09/18) to answer any questions the Select Board members had about this request and is back tonight to address any other concerns. Lorna Doney asked what was the total ridership for this commuter service. Mr. Loyer said there were 7006 riders in FY 2016/2017, which was a five percent (5%) increase over the previous fiscal year.

**Article 14. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$12,400 for the Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 15. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$3,000 for the Central Vermont Council on Aging? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 16. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,800 for the Good Samaritan Haven? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 17. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 for the Washington County Diversion Program? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 18. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 for Washington County Mental Health Services? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 19. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,250 for the People's Health and Wellness Clinic? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 20. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 for Central Vermont Adult Basic Education? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 21. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 for the Vermont Association for the Blind and Visually Impaired? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 22. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Capstone Community Action, Inc. (formerly Central Vermont Community Action Council)? (Australian Ballot).** Devereaux Simon said Capstone has its physical location in Barre but provides services for all of Washington County. This includes food shelves, emergency heating assistance, tax preparation assistance, workforce training, home weatherization, etc. Ms. Davidson asked how many Central Vermont communities have this funding request on their Town Meeting ballots. Ms. Simon did not have the exact amount but noted Capstone tries to get on as many as possible.

**Article 23. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Circle (formerly Battered Women's Services and Shelter)? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 24. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Good Beginnings of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 25. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for the Vermont Center for Independent Living? (Australian Ballot)** Northfield resident Mike Charron serves as the Civil Right Specialist for the Vermont Center for Independent Living (VCIL). He said VCIL was established in 1979 and since then it has worked to help people with disabilities to gain more control over their lives while also mainstreaming into their communities. In its last completed fiscal year, VCIL responded to over 3,000 requests for assistance from individuals, agencies, and community groups. VCIL works with individuals in their homes to make their bathrooms more accessible, install adaptive communications devices, etc. VCIL's central office is located in Montpelier and during the last fiscal year ten (10) Northfield residents received direct assistance from VCIL with such programs as Meals on Wheels, Information Referral and Assistance, etc.

**Article 26. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 for the Family Center of Washington County? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 27. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$600 for Home Share Now? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 28. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$400 for Community Harvest of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot)** Allison Levin is the Founder and Director of Community Harvest of Central Vermont (CHCV). CHCV was founded in 2014 and its volunteers recover surplus foodstuffs produced in the area that otherwise would go to waste. CHCV relies heavily on its volunteer workforce, which averages between 200 and 300 individuals, to glean the excess from local farms and then distribute the recovered foodstuffs to regional food shelves and senior meal programs, including the Northfield Senior Center. CHCV serves all of Washington County and in 2017 distributed over 5,000 servings of produce to Northfield sites alone.

**Article 29. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$400 for the Friends of the Winooski River? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 30. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$350 for the Sexual Assault Crisis Team of Washington County? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 31. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$300 for the Green Up Vermont? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

**Article 32. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$250 for O.U.R. House of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot)** There was no discussion.

There being no other comments or questions, this public hearing closed at 7:22 p.m.

**IV. SET/ADJUST AGENDA.** There were no changes to the posted agenda.

**V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED):** None.

**VI. DEPARTMENT HEAD REPORTS**

- a. William Jennings, Police Chief.** In light of last week's mass shooting at a Florida high school, Chief Jennings was asked by Chair Goslant to attend tonight's meeting in order to provide local residents with information on how the local emergency services are working with Northfield schools to prevent and/or respond to such threats. Chief Jennings said his officers have ongoing training with Vermont Homeland Security for such situations and also conduct active shooter drills alongside members of the Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS). Two (2) Northfield Police Department (NPD) officers were sent to the National Guard facility in Colchester for training in how to develop local active shooter plans. NAS Chief Lawton said he hosted the Franklin County Response Team last Wednesday (02/21/18) for information on how to properly integrate NPD and NAS in an active shooter situation in order to hasten medical treatment of those injured. Chief Jennings said NPD officers would establish a secure location and then bring in NAS responders in order to evacuate the wounded, etc. Such an operation requires close support between the emergency services and Northfield is among the first Vermont communities to develop these plans. Chief Jennings said the emergency services also work on such plans with school representatives. This includes Northfield Middle/High School Principal Ryan Parkman, who is here tonight to answer any questions. They also work together in scheduling drills, simulated evacuations, etc. Chief Jennings believes the relationship between the local emergency services and the school is exceptional as they interact on such matters on a daily basis.

Mr. Hepburn noted NAS now has a drone intended to assist with search and rescue operations. He asked if this could be used in an active shooter situation. Chief Rutter said this still is fairly new equipment so its usage remains in the developmental stage. It is intended to be used for aerial reconnaissance of otherwise inaccessible areas so it is possible it could be used to gain an overhead view of a crisis situation. Board member Johnson said we have all heard about possible threats to local schools, credible or not. He asked if all threats are directed to NPD. Chief Jennings believes all threats or communications from concerned citizens directed to the school are forwarded to NPD as soon as possible. All threats or warnings are taken seriously and fully investigated.

Will Eberle is a local parent and he feels these mass school shootings occur when disgruntled youth have access to high-capacity weapons. This might be a good time to talk about the possibility of restricting the availability of such weapons. He also is concerned about public access to our local schools and whether additional restrictions should be put in place to prevent weapons entering the schools. Chief Jennings said he makes every effort to have a NPD officer on hand at school opening and closing times. Mr. Parkman said staff members monitor the school entrances and exits at the beginning and end of the school day. The school doors are locked the rest of the time and any visitors have to be buzzed in. Chief Jennings said students are encouraged to keep aware of any possible safety concerns and notify appropriate authorities as soon as possible. This is also known as "see something, say something."

Steve Davis asked if students take part in active shooter drills. Chief Jennings said they did not. Principal Parkman said the schools do have regular "clear the halls" training during which all doors are locked and staff and students are instructed to go into hiding. The effectiveness of these drills is evaluated afterwards and corrections made if needed. Mr. Davis asked if there was any thought of arming teachers. Principal Parkman did not like the idea as there was too much a chance of accidents occurring. Chief Jennings also did not see the need as any response from the NPD would take five (5) minutes or less.

Dan Morris is a parent of three (3) and he is grateful for this type of conversation on school safety as the number of dead and wounded seems to escalate with every such event. He asked if the teachers themselves have been asked whether they should be armed. Chair Goslant felt any such consideration probably would be developed at the state level and probably is outside the scope of tonight's discussion. Mr. Morris would like to make sure the teachers are directly consulted before any such plans are contemplated.

Mr. Eberle has worked at community mental health centers in the past with frequent walk-in patients, including those who were possibly violent. He felt the main deterrent to threatening situations was for everyone to keep an eye out for anyone in possible distress and to take appropriate action. Mr. Eberle believes such vigilance would help to address similar concerns in the larger community. Chief Jennings said Northfield was fortunate the mental health professionals available to our community are both exceptionally well-trained and readily accessible when needed. He added his officers are out in the community as much as possible so our residents can feel free to approach them with any concerns they might have. Mr. Eberle is appreciative of the level of community policing here in Northfield.

Chair Goslant asked if there were any concerns about any possible incidents on the Norwich University (NU) campus. Chief Jennings said the relationship between NPD and NU Security is very good with daily interaction and open dialogue regarding specific and general staff/student safety concerns. Chair Goslant then thanked Chief Jennings and Principal Parkman for the valuable information provided tonight, which he hopes has addressed community concerns regarding Northfield youth safety in these anxious times.

- b. Lawton Rutter, Ambulance Chief.** Before beginning his presentation, Chief Rutter noted both he and Chief Jennings serve on the NU Safety Committee. He then stated during the first seven (7) months of fiscal year 2017/2018, NAS has had an average of ninety (90) calls for service each month. This is an increase from the previous fiscal year, which averaged about seventy-five (75) calls each month. Chief Rutter said he will be applying to the Assistance to Firefighters Grant Program in order to update their current heart monitors, which go out of date very quickly. He also is applying for grant funds for the purchase of a PowerLoad system, which allows for patient-bearing stretchers to be power lifted in and out of an ambulance unit. Chief Rutter is hoping these applications will be successful but nothing is certain. Chair Goslant is grateful for the effort.

Chief Rutter said in his role as Emergency Management Coordinator (EMC), he has been working with local businesses to help update Northfield's local emergency response plan. As Northfield's E-911 Coordinator, Chief Rutter has been working to properly address some new subdivisions. He also encourages residents to display their street address visibly so there will be no delays in an emergency response situation.

As Town Health Officer, Chief Rutter has been working with Deputy Health Officer Meggan McCusker on inputting all requests for assistance into a database for easier tracking in the future. This includes health and/or safety complaints, animal bites, tenant/landlord disputes, etc. Chief Rutter feels better tracking will make sure all these issues are addressed and properly resolved.

Chief Rutter is still working to make Northfield a HEART Safe Community by having publically-accessible defibrillators placed throughout the community. This will include the Municipal Building, Brown Public Library, the Municipal Pool, etc. He noted NU is very good in having at least one in most of its major buildings, including three (3) in Kreitzberg Arena. Board member Maxwell asked if NAS would train the pool lifeguards in their use. Chief Rutter said such training is a part of the certification all lifeguards are required to hold. He added NAS would train the staff at other locations. Chair Goslant thanked Chief Rutter for his presentation tonight and all his good work.

## VII. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. February 13, 2018 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Johnson, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-1, with Board member Doney abstaining.**

## VIII. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. Warrant #17-18.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Johnson, to approve Warrant #17-18 in the amount of \$127,857.38. Board member Goodrich asked about a \$1,000 payment for "Flood Tenant Relocation." Manager Schulz said renters in FEMA buyout properties were provided moving expenses. FEMA will reimburse all such expenses so there is no cost to the municipality. Board member Goodrich then asked about a \$2,082.69 payment for the "Crosswalk Flasher." Manager Schulz said the flashing light above the crosswalk on Depot Square was out of service for some time. It now has been repaired but the involved work on the pole, to the wiring, etc. was much more extensive than first thought. Chair Goslant noted over \$15,000 in tree trimming expenses. He asked if all these costs would be paid by the Northfield Electric Department (NED). Manager Schulz confirmed they would. He added there has been a very active tree trimming program over the past month, mainly along Cox Brook Road. This area hasn't been properly trimmed for several years. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. Approval of Biweekly Payroll through February 11, 2018.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Johnson, to approve the biweekly payroll in the amount of \$90,740.33. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**IX. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION**

**a. Liquor License Renewals**

- 1. Cumberland Farms.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- 2. Dollar General.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- 3. Good Measure Brewing.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- 4. O'Maddi's Deli & Café.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**b. Outside Consumption Permit**

- 1. O'Maddi's Deli & Café.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Goodrich, to approve the outside consumption permit. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

**X. SELECT BOARD**

- a. Warn Public Hearing - Ordinance Regulating Use of Town Parks.** As requested by the Select Board members, Manager Schulz has drafted an ordinance setting down a list of rules for those using our public parks. There have been several drafts and he has sought and received feedback from the Select Board, Recreation Committee, etc. Now that it is nearly finalized, Manager Schulz would like to set and publicize the required public hearing tentatively scheduled for Tuesday, March 27, 2018. Copies of the proposed ordinance will be distributed to park neighbors, especially those living near the new Water Street Park. Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to schedule the public hearing for Tuesday, March 27, 2018, and authorize Manager Schulz to advertise it. Board member Goodrich asked if the NPD would be the enforcing agency when rules are broken. Manager Schulz confirmed it would. Board member Doney suggested a couple minor changes to the ordinance wording. Manager Schulz will make the changes. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. Norwich Commons Drainage Issue.** Manager Schulz noted this ongoing matter involves legal issues so any discussion should be held later in the meeting in executive session. There was no objection.

**XI. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS**

- a. Slate Avenue Drainage Project.** Board member Goodrich asked if any bids had been received for this project's engineering services. Manager Schulz said two (2) were received by the deadline. The engineering firm Dufresne-Henry was awarded the project based on its expertise in such matters. Their engineers now are working on the state grant application to reimburse Northfield for fifty percent (50%) of the project's engineering costs. The engineering part of the project should be completed in a few months but actual construction probably won't start until next year.
- b. Mayo Block Sidewalk Project.** Board member Maxwell asked about the status of this project. Manager Schulz said he has prepared the RFP for the sidewalk construction and it should be sent out by the end of the week. The deadline for submissions will be by the end of March. Manager Schulz also is applying for a grant to cover fifty percent (50%) of the construction costs. Northfield Savings Bank already has paid for all of the engineering costs.
- c. Union Brook Stormwater Project.** Chair Goslant has spoken to a Pearl Street property owner who is interested in helping expand this project to include Pearl Street storm runoff. Manager Schulz has been working with Dan Currier from the Central Vermont Regional Planning Commission (CVRPC) on this project and Mr. Currier now believes the project area can be expanded to include Pearl Street without too much additional expense.
- d. CERV Clothing and Food Shelves.** Chair Goslant said efforts are continuing to upgrade the Municipal Building basement and the Kent Street storage building for the CERV clothing and food shelves respectively. This will free up space in the Town Garage for NAS operations, general storage space for the municipality, etc.
- e. Planning Commission Survey.** Chair Goslant asked about the survey form in the Select Board packets. Manager Schulz said Planning Commission members were going to distribute the survey at Town Meeting Day and other venues in order to obtain public feedback on proposed revisions to the Town Plan.

- f. Local Economic Development.** Chair Goslant noted Cabot Hosiery’s previously proposed expansion plans now seems to be underway. In addition, the business that moved into the former Chouinard facility (Village Cannery of Vermont) also is looking to expand its operations. Chair Goslant felt these are good signs for local economic development. Board member Johnson felt this might be a good time to develop a policy that would allow NED discounts to local businesses. Board member Maxwell said any such policy would have to be approved by the Public Utility Commission (PUC). In any case, NED rates already are lower than those of other electric companies in the region. Board member Johnson still would like the possibility explored. Chair Goslant felt it is equally important to promote the benefits of having Village Designation status for Northfield’s downtown area and for Northfield Falls. In addition, there now is the option of reaching tax stabilization agreements with new or expanding businesses.
- g. 2018 Northfield Annual Town Meeting.** Board member Maxwell encourages all residents to attend the Open Session, which will be held at 6:30 p.m. on Monday, March 5, 2018, in the Mary Granai Corrigan Auditorium located in the Northfield Middle/High School (NMHS). Voting on all Australian Ballot articles will be held in the NMHS Lobby from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, March 6, 2018.
- h. Select Board Chair Comments.** As this is the last Select Board meeting prior to next week’s Town Meeting, Chair Goslant would like to thank his Select Board colleagues for their efforts over the last twelve (12) months while he served as Chair. Chair Goslant has served on the Select Board for eight (8) years and said he never worked with more dedicated individuals who really worked together to improve the Northfield community. He thanked Board member Johnson for bringing in his experience since he was appointed on an interim basis last September; Board member Doney for his enthusiasm and expertise regarding matters related to the emergency services; and Board member Goodrich for her thorough professionalism, adding she was a real joy to serve with. Chair Goslant then thanked Board member Maxwell, who previously served on the Board of Village Trustees and thus was able to provide his colleagues with valuable information regarding former Village-exclusive matters. This included the operation of Northfield’s utility departments. Chair Goslant also thanked Manager Schulz for his assistance over the past year. He also was grateful to the greater community, including all the local non-profit organizations, municipal boards, businesses, etc., who have worked together in a positive manner to improve Northfield in many ways. He closed by thanking frequent Select Board meeting attendees Elroy Hill, Steve Davis, and Sally Davidson for all they respectively do for the community.

**XII. TOWN MANAGER’S REPORT**

- a. Better Roads Grant Awards, etc.** Manager Schulz noted Northfield received two (2) grants to address drainage problems on Dole Hill Road (\$23,100) and Barrows Road (\$20,000). Chair Goslant is glad the problems on Barrows Road can finally be addressed. Manager Schulz will next be applying to the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) for a Class 2 Road Grant that, if successful, would be used to pave Cox Brook Road.

**XIII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED)**

- a. Elroy Hill: Select Board Appreciation.** Mr. Hill has attended nearly all of the Select Board meetings over the past year and he would like to thank the current members on their hard work in preparing the FY 2018/2019 Town Budget, etc.

**XIV. EXECUTIVE SESSION.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Maxwell, to go into executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1), in order to discuss a legal matter and potential contract with Manager Schulz present. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board went into executive session at 9:00 p.m.

Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Johnson, to come out of executive session.  
**Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board came out of executive session at 9:25 p.m. No action was taken.

**XV. ADJOURNMENT.** Motion by Board member Maxwell, seconded by Board member Doney, to adjourn.  
**Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board adjourned at 9:25 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 Select Board meeting of March 13, 2018.