

TOWN OF NORTHFIELD, VERMONT
TOWN SELECT BOARD REGULAR MEETING
Minutes of February 25, 2020

- I. ROLL CALL.** Select Board Chair K. David Maxwell, Board members Lynn Doney, Julie H. Goodrich, Kenneth W. Goslant, and Nathaniel Miller. Also present were Town Manager Jeff Schulz, Acting Clerk Kenneth McCann, Yvonne Lory (Capstone Community Action), Tanya Crawford-Stempel (Good Samaritan Haven), Ellie Stubbs (Community Harvest of Central Vermont), Mary Hayden (Central Vermont Council on Aging), Jill Donahue (Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice), Kreig Pinkham (Washington County Youth Services Bureau), Beth Wallace (Everybody Wins! Vermont), Michele Braun (Friends of the Winooski River), Carolyn Stevens (Northfield Community Development Network), Gretchen Elias (Good Beginnings), Gail Hall (Northfield Energy Committee), Eleanor D'Aponte (Norwich University), Connor Lessard (Norwich University), Park Laflin (Norwich University), Bekah Chabot (Norwich University), Wendy Rea (Community Emergency Relief Volunteers), Zachary Kozimor (Norwich University), Laura Hill-Eubanks (Planning Commission), David Feinauer (Northfield Community Development Network), Jean Kerner (Northfield Community Development Network), Denise MacMartin (Northfield Energy Committee), Brian Baker (The Dufresne Group), Richard Wobby, John Stevens, Gerard LaVarnway, and Elroy Hill.

Chair Maxwell 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. Australian Ballot Town Meeting Articles.** State law requires the Select Board to hold a public hearing prior to Town Meeting so members of the public can discuss or ask questions regarding the articles to be voted upon by Australian Ballot. Most involve funding requests from regional non-profit organizations and all were invited by mail to attend this public hearing. Chair Maxwell then went through the list of Australian Ballot articles to see if there were any comments or questions.

Article 6. Shall the voters authorize the Select Board to borrow an amount not to exceed one hundred and eighty-two thousand dollars (\$182,000) for a period not to exceed ten (10) years for the purchase of a Fire Tanker Truck? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 7. Shall the voters authorize the Town to exempt from local property taxation, to the extent of 50% of the appraised value, the land and premises of Mayo Healthcare, Inc., located at 71 Richardson Street, for a period of three (3) years beginning July 1, 2020? (For informational purposes only, the FY 2019/2020 property taxes total is \$88,709.69.) (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 8. Shall the voters of the Town of Northfield authorize the Select Board to hire a part-time Economic Development Director for the Town of Northfield using \$10,488 from local tax revenue and any balance to be paid by the Economic Development Fund? (For informational purposes only, the estimated cost of wages for this part-time position is \$31,464.) (Australian Ballot) David Feinauer is a member of the Northfield Community Development Network (NCDN), which is encouraging Northfield voters to support the creation of the Economic Development Director position. Mr. Feinauer said the person hired would focus on helping existing local businesses thrive and expand; assist new businesses get started; and reach out to out-of-town businesses regarding the possibility of relocating all or some of their operations to Northfield. He felt having a dedicated and experienced person in this position would reap more benefits than merely relying on well-meaning but perhaps not fully effective volunteers. This would be a pro-active measure that would address some of the local economic uncertainty. The proposal forwarded by the NCDN would see two-thirds of the part-time position's first year salary covered by existing economic development funds. This would drop to one-third the second year and in subsequent years the position would be fully funded by taxpayer dollars.

Article 9. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of an amount not to exceed twenty-one thousand dollars (\$21,000) for FY21 towards the Northfield Commuter year-round commuter with service between Northfield and Montpelier? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 10. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$13,600 for the Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice? (Australian Ballot) Jill Donahue is the owner/operator of Northfield Pharmacy and she was requested to represent Central Vermont Home Health and Hospice (CVHHH) tonight. Ms. Donahue said CVHHH provides tremendous services to Northfield and other Central Vermont communities by giving health assistance to residents regardless of their ability to pay. She added CVHHH helps residents of all ages (not just the aged and/or terminally ill) confront their medical concerns in their own homes. Ms. Donahue noted about twenty percent (20%) of Vermonters are sixty-five (65) or older and with this number is increasing each year, the real need for CVHHH's services also grows annually. She hopes Northfield voters will support CVHHH on Town Meeting Day as they have done in past years.

Article 11. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$3,000 for the Central Vermont Council on Aging? (Australian Ballot) Mary Hayden is the Director of Development and Communications for the Central Vermont Council on Aging (CVCOA). Her organization provides assistance to local elders so they can remain independent in their own homes. 270 Northfield residents were helped by CVCOA in the last year through nutrition programs, seasonal fuel assistance, caretaker support, etc. CVCOA also operates a hotline that assists seniors in obtaining all the government benefits to which they are legally entitled, such as Medicare. Through grant funds and other support, CVCOA help provide meals at the Northfield Senior Center as well as providing home delivery through their "Meals on Wheels" program. Ms. Hayden then thanked Northfield residents for their past support.

Article 12 Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,800 for the Good Samaritan Haven? (Australian Ballot) Tanya Crawford-Stempel is a Northfield resident who works for the Vermont Department of Health. She said the Good Samaritan Haven was founded in 1982 by local clergy and other community leaders in order to address homelessness in Central Vermont. It operates the only homeless shelter in this area and in addition to emergency shelter also provides assistance to those seeking long-term housing. They also help provide personal care supplies, employment assistance, etc. Ms. Crawford-Stempel thanked Northfield voters for their past support and asked for it again this year.

Article 13. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 for the Washington County Diversion Program? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 14. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$2,500 for Washington County Mental Health Services, Inc.? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 15. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,250 for the People's Health and Wellness Clinic? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 16. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,200 for Central Vermont Adult Basic Education? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 17. 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 18. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Capstone Community Action, Inc.? (Australian Ballot) Yvonne Lory has worked with Capstone for more than seven (7) years. She said Capstone focuses on helping people who are having trouble making ends meet. This includes food and fuel assistance; helping find affordable housing; assisting budding entrepreneurs with economic opportunities; etc. In the past year, 490 Northfield residents benefited from Capstone programs and services. Ms. Lory then showed a short video with testimonials from Central Vermont residents who had been assisted by Capstone in various ways, such as finding housing, starting a business, going through rough patches as single parents, etc. Chair Maxwell then thanked Ms. Lory for the valuable information.

Article 19. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Circle? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 20. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for Good Beginnings of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot) Gretchen Elias has been the Executive Director of Good Beginnings for the past four (4) years. She said this organization has a special connection to Northfield as it was founded here almost thirty (30) years ago in order to provide assistance to new mothers and fathers. Good Beginnings grew to encompass all of Washington County. Among the services provided include helping new mothers who may be suffering from postpartum depression; assisting new parents who may be struggling to care for their newborns and infants; providing a supportive drop-in space for new mothers who might otherwise be housebound; helping parents get their young children into playgroups; etc.

Article 21. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$1,000 for the Vermont Center for Independent Living? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 22. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$800 for the Family Center of Washington County? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 23. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$750 for the Sexual Assault Crisis Team of Washington County? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 24. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$600 for the Washington County Youth Service Bureau/Boys & Girls Club? (Australian Ballot) Krieg Pinkham is the Executive Director for the Washington County Youth Services Bureau. He said his organization provides numerous services to “emerging adults” as they deal with traditional youth problems as well as more current concerns such as economic uncertainty, homelessness, etc. Mr. Pinkham said thirty-six (36) Northfield youth were assisted by the Washington County Youth Services Bureau in the past year and this included some who have had past legal problems. Housing uncertainty has become a growing concern in this area so Mr. Pinkham said his organization is reaching out to landlords who might be willing to work with them on rehousing youths currently between homes.

Article 25. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$500 for Everybody Wins! Vermont? (Australian Ballot) Beth Wallace is the Executive Director for Everybody Wins! Vermont, which is the largest literacy mentoring organization in the state. It currently has about six hundred (600) adult volunteers statewide who assist elementary school students by reading with them during their lunch periods. Although Everybody Wins! Vermont was founded in 2000, the program only reached Northfield Elementary School a couple years ago with eleven (11) mentors the first year and twenty (20) the next. Ms. Wallace hopes to see this increase to thirty (30) in the near future. She said although Vermont’s illiteracy rate is rather low this doesn’t differentiate between those with basic or advanced reading comprehension skills. Ms. Wallace said this program tries to get children reading at a more advanced level as well as instill a love of reading that will last their lifetimes. Therefore, Ms. Wallace hopes that not only will Northfield residents provide their support for Everybody Wins! Vermont on Town Meeting Day but that they also consider volunteering their own time as reading mentors.

Article 26. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$400 for Community Harvest of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot) Ellie Stubbs serves on Community Harvest of Central Vermont’s Board of Directors and said this is a fairly new organization that started in 2014. The purpose is to help glean foodstuffs that would otherwise would have been left in the field, bringing them to local food banks, etc. As a result of their efforts, 69,000 pounds of produce have been made available to Central Vermont residents who might otherwise not have access to fresh fruit and vegetables. Ms. Stubbs herself recently helped glean blueberries that otherwise would have been wasted. Community Harvest works with Northfield farmers and gets volunteer assistance from the local schools, Norwich University, and other sources. Ms. Stubbs thanked Northfield voters for their past support and hopes this will continue.

Article 27. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$400 for the Friends of the Winooski River? (Australian Ballot) Michele Braun is the Executive Director for Friends of the Winooski River, which serves the entire Winooski watershed including the Dog River. She said in recent years her organization helped Northfield obtain \$250,000 in grant funds that resulted in the flood mitigation project along Water Street as well as the creation of the Dog River Park. Future projects include the proposed removal of the Camp Wihakowi and the Cross Brothers dams in order to restore natural fish migration, address potential flood hazards, etc. The Friends of the Winooski River also is looking for other programs that would promote the health of the Dog River. A recent effort has been made to assist landowners in planting trees on their properties in order to lessen stormwater runoff into local brooks, streams, rivers, etc.

Article 28. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$300 for Green Up Vermont? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

Article 29. Shall the voters authorize the expenditure of \$250 for OUR House of Central Vermont? (Australian Ballot) There was no discussion.

There being no other comments or questions, the public hearing closed at 7:55 p.m.

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

V. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (SCHEDULED)

- a. Gail Hall: Informational Kiosk Update.** At the previous meeting (02/11/20), Norwich University (NU) students from the School of Architecture and Art presented two (2) design concepts for the informational kiosk to be sited on the southwest corner of Depot Square near the Community Bank. The design and construction of the kiosk is their senior project. One design was more traditional with a covered bridge motif and the other was more modern with triangular panels, etc. The Select Board members were asked then to provide their feedback before the end of the week so the students could settle on a final design concept based on one of the proposed designs or a combination of the most popular features of both. Gail Hall said the NU students would like the Select Board members to provide their authorization to continue with this project so they can start constructing the kiosk, expand fundraising efforts, etc. NU student Park Laflin showed the final design concept on large poster boards as well as a scale model. The kiosk would have two (2) solid concrete-based walls and a third with hard glass like a windshield. The interior of the solid walls would be used for the posting of such information as bus schedules, local history, advertisements for project sponsors, etc. There would be wooden lattices installed on one side of the structure that would reach up to the ceiling and mimic the interior of Northfield's covered bridges.

Board member Goodrich asked why the solid walls would be concrete. Mr. Laflin said they wanted walls that would be durable for all four seasons and thus withstand rain, snow, wind, etc. NU student Becca Chabot said the panels on these walls would have an outward natural appearance. Board member Goslant asked why the structure would have steel supports instead of less expensive aluminum. Mr. Laflin said the added structural strength of steel beams was needed. There still are plans to site a solar panel on the roof to provide lighting (when funding allows). Ms. Chabot said the glass side would have to be done by Portland Glass in order to be custom fitted. The current project budget is \$16,000 and \$5,750 will be allocated for the custom glass wall. Another \$5,750 will be set aside for kiosk foundation, which will be elevated six inches (6") for easier maintenance. Chair Maxwell wanted confirmation that there would be no direct cost to the municipality. Ms. Hall said there would not other than basic maintenance expenses. Chair Maxwell asked what would happen if the interior lattice work was vandalized. Mr. Laflin said he would create extra lattices that could be fitted in to repair any damaged sections. If vandalism becomes a persistent problem, other solutions could be found. Ms. Hall noted the structure should be covered by the municipality's property insurance policy. As for financing the project, NU Professor Eleanor D'Aponte said \$8,000 already has been received from a number of sources, including Ben & Jerry's. Ms. Hall said the Vermont Agency of Transportation (VTrans) has pledged an additional \$500. The students can start the construction phase of this project with the funds already on hand while she and others reach out to local businesses for donations in return for advertising space on the structure. This fundraising had been put on hold until the Select Board members provided their approval.

Board member Goodrich doesn't remember the use of concrete walls being brought up before. Ms. Hall said the structure materials weren't discussed at earlier presentations as the previous focus had been on the best location, optimal design, etc. Mr. Laflin said concrete is very versatile material that will enhance structural integrity. Richard Wobby doesn't think the proposed design blends in well with the surrounding structures, which are mainly red brick. He also would like to have seen more of the covered bridge motif in the final design. Mr. Laflin said the object was not to recreate a covered bridge but show their inspiration through the wooden lattices. The structure is designed to be forward-looking while also respecting Northfield's past. In addition, since one of the functions of the kiosk is to serve as a Green Mountain transit (GMT) bus stop, one project goal was to make it visible from Main Street and thus not blend into its surroundings. Ms. Hall said in addition to being a bus stop this also will be an information center that will include representations of Northfield's history, including a timeline. Professor D'Aponte said due to the structure's small footprint, it will need to stand out to be visible from a distance. She also felt the structure will somewhat fit in with its surroundings, such as the steel lampposts situated around Depot Square. In addition, the students tried to use materials that were both durable and economical. Chair Maxwell asked how the Select Board members would like to proceed. Board member Goslant likes the concept but has concerns about possible vandalism and future maintenance costs. Motion by Board member Doney, seconded by Board member Miller, to approve the informational kiosk project design as presented tonight and further authorize the project with the condition that the final structure's outside finish be provided to the Town Manager for approval. Captain Zachary Kozimor (NU ROTC) suggested this approval should require a project charter that would specify each kiosk feature and clearly state the project's intended results so it will be evident whether the completed project has met them all. This also would prevent "project creep" that might result in budget overruns. Ms. Chabot said a complete project work breakdown has been prepared and it can be provided to the Select Board members if they wish. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

- b. Wendy Rea, Community Emergency Relief Volunteers (CERV) President: CERV Update.** Ms. Rea said she mainly wanted to thank the municipality for all its assistance over the past year. The Clothing Shelf previously located at a site inaccessible during winter months was relocated to the Municipal Building basement last year. As a result, the number of residents served increased from 1,577 in 2018 to 3,016 in 2019. The Food Shelf is housed in the Northfield Ambulance section of the Town Garage but there are future plans to relocate to a new building on Kent Street municipal property. Ms. Rea noted the Food Shelf is open three (3) days a week and served 640 residents in 2019. CERV's service area is Northfield, Roxbury, and Riverton but sometimes residents from other communities seek assistance. She added operating a food bank requires much preparation and paperwork to meet state and federal standards. Ms. Rea wanted people to know good things are happening in Northfield due to the efforts of dedicated volunteers and again thanked the municipality for its assistance. Chair Maxwell thanked Ms. Rea and the CERV volunteers for all they do for the community.
- c. Captain Zachary J. Kozimor, Norwich University: ROTC Commander's Challenge.** Captain Kozimor is asking the Select Board members for permission to use Depot Square for a ROTC sporting competition on Saturday, April 11, 2020. There will be four (4) separate races centered around Depot Square: a 4.2 mile 'Buddy Run' up and down Turkey Hill; a 6 mile "Ruck March" through the downtown area starting and ending at the Garvey Hill soccer field; a 1.5 mile river run with teams of racers carrying five (5) gallon jugs; and a "Buddy Team" sprint-drag-carry event on the Common. The ROTC Cadets will compete in teams and will be trying to win the Commander's Cup. Captain Kozimor has been in contact with Northfield Police Chief (NPD) Chief John Helfant regarding traffic control during the 3-6 hour event and NU Cadets will assist. Depot Square will remain open throughout the event and traffic will be stopped only when the competitors are going by. The event registration also will be held on the Common. Captain Kozimor would like Northfield Ambulance Service (NAS) personnel on standby in case of any injuries, accidents, etc. He has reached out to NAS Chief Lawton Rutter but they have been playing "phone tag" so far.

Given the size of the expected crowd, Board member Goslant recommended putting least two (2) port-o-lets on Depot Square. Board member Goodrich asked if the competition would go forward even if there was snow on the ground. Captain Kozimor said it would but there might be an alternative route for the river run if the Dog River is too high, too cold, etc. The competitions probably won't begin before 10:30 a.m. Motion by Board member Doney, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve Captain Kozimor's request to hold the Commander's Challenge event on Depot Square on Saturday, April 11, 2020. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VI. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- a. **February 11, 2020 (Regular Meeting).** Motion by Board member Goodrich, second by Board member Doney, to approve the minutes. **Motion passed 4-0-1, with Board member Miller abstaining.**

VII. APPROVAL OF BILLS

- a. **Approval of Warrant #16-20.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to approve Warrant #16-20 in the amount of \$134,930.17. Board member Goodrich asked about "refund advances" paid to a local contractor. Manager Schulz said there was a prepay for scheduled electrical work that turned out to be an overpayment. Board member Goodrich inquired about a \$6,840 payment for a new blower motor at the Northfield Wastewater Treatment Facility (WWTF). Manager Schulz said a state inspector identified a problem and this was the fix. Chair Maxwell asked why part of the expense for printing the Town Report was charged to the utility departments. Manager Schulz said in response to a request at Town Meeting last year, budget information for the utility departments was included in the report this year. The utility departments will split the cost of these extra pages. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
- b. **Approval of Biweekly Payroll through February 9, 2020.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the biweekly payroll in the amount of \$98,372.90. Chair Maxwell noted of the \$30,000 budgeted for NPD overtime in FY 2019/2020, less than \$200 remains with four (4) months to go in the fiscal year. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

VIII. LIQUOR CONTROL COMMISSION

a. Liquor License Renewals

1. **American Legion (1st Class).** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
2. **American Legion (3rd Class).** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
3. **Champlain Farms.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
4. **Convenience Plus.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
5. **Norwich University.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
6. **O'Maddi's Deli & Café.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**
7. **Tops Market.** Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to approve the liquor license renewal. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

b. Outside Consumption Permits

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

IX. SELECT BOARD

- a. Northfield Town Plan.** Based on the feedback received from the public and Select Board members during the recent public hearings (01/14/20 & 02/11/20) and other public meetings, Manager Schulz has worked with Planning Commission (PC) Chair Laura Hill-Eubanks to incorporate suggested revisions into the Town Plan. The proposed changes have been discussed numerous times throughout the process and a five (5) page document listing the changes was put on the municipal website and also mailed to public hearing participants. Resident Matthew Wheaton also sent an email to Manager Schulz and the Select Board members over the weekend with additional suggestions, such as exempting the Slate Avenue, Elm Street, and Prospect Street area from any high density classifications. If the Select Board members decide to accept these suggested changes, the Town Plan draft will be revised to reflect the alterations and returned to the PC members for further action. Since these changes probably can be considered "substantive," an additional Select Board public hearing will be held at least thirty (30) days after the PC receives the revised draft. Select Board members Miller, Doney, and Goslant indicated their acceptance of the suggested revisions. Board member Goodrich still has a problem with the "Vision Statement" on the first page that recognized the right of property owners to "reasonably develop and subdivide property in the rural areas of the community." She would like to remove the qualifier "reasonably." There was no objection. Board member Goodrich also asked if such terms as medium density should be defined. Manager Schulz said this is usually done when the local zoning regulations are updated to reflect new language in the approved Town Plan. He added the revision of the Northfield Zoning Regulations would follow the same process as the Town Plan with numerous warned public meetings, hearings, etc.

Dick Wobby still has a number of concerns with the draft Town Plan even with the suggested changes. He thinks it is misleading people to say any remaining problems will be ironed out when the zoning regulations are revised. Mr. Wobby believes the maps in the document are not always consistent with the accompanying text. Also, some of the suggested changes will result in conflicts with language in other sections of the document. Ms. Hill-Eubanks said the PC hired (with grant money) a professional planner in order to ensure consistency throughout the document. She added the Town Plan is a vision of how this community could develop in future years so precise definitions and specific regulations (i.e. minimum lot sizes) have been removed to allow for more flexibility when the zoning regulations are revised. Given the questions raised tonight, Chair Maxwell would like this matter discussed again at the next regular meeting (03/10/20), at which time the Select Board members might approve the suggested changes and forward the revised document to the PC for further action.

- b. South Main Street Drainage Improvements and CSO Abatement Project.** Brian Baker from the Dufresne Group has returned with the thirty percent (30%) project plan submitted to the State of Vermont. Unless the Select Board members have any objections, he next will proceed to the sixty percent (60%) plan. The current plan calls for new pipes and stormwater collection devices along the west side of South Main Street from Depot Square to South Street. The intent is to pipe stormwater into the filtering system behind the American Legion so the stormwater can be collected and treated before being released into the Dog River. Manager Schulz said this is the initial stage of a multi-part project that (when funding allows) will be expanded to include the side streets (i.e. Slate Avenue, Elm Street, and Prospect Street) along South Main Street. Mr. Baker noted the collection areas are almost all on municipal property. There is one on Elm Street that might require an easement from the private property owner but he needs to investigate this further.

Board member Goslant is concerned about the impact the pipe crossings below South Main Street will have on the road. He doesn't want a repeat of the situation on Central Street where new waterline installation resulted in a number of cutouts on the road surface. If the project proceeds as planned, Board member Goslant feels considerable money will need to be set aside for repaving the street. Chair Maxwell noted the reduction in scope for the initial phase of the project has lowered the estimated cost from about \$1,800,000 to \$300,000. Mr. Baker said the Utility and Highway crews might be able to perform some ancillary work to further cut costs. Manager Schulz said the proposed work would fulfill a major goal of eliminating the last remaining CSO (combined sewer overflow) remaining in Northfield. The Vermont Agency of Natural Resources has ordered its elimination as soon as possible. Manager Schulz then asked about the project timeline. Mr. Baker said he should have the 60% plans mostly completed in the next couple weeks. However, some on-site testing will have to wait until spring. It was agreed Mr. Baker will return with a project update at one of the April 2020 meetings. Chair Maxwell thanked him for the good work performed to date.

- c. **Appointment of Deputy Health Officer.** Manager Schulz said the municipality received a letter last month from the Vermont Department of Health stating the three-year term of Deputy Health Officer Meggan McCusker will expire on March 31, 2020. Since the letter was received, Ms. McCusker decided to resign from the position effective March 1, 2020. NAS Chief Rutter inquired if any other NAS EMT was interested in serving in the position and Christopher Golder has submitted a letter of interest. Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Goslant, to recommend to the Vermont Department of Health the appointment of Christopher Golder as Northfield Deputy Health Officer. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

X. BOARD MEMBERS' COMMENTS, CONCERNS, QUESTIONS

- a. **Salt and Sand Budgets.** Board member Goslant asked about the status of the road salt and winter sand budgets. Manager Schulz said updated financial statements will be distributed at the next meeting. At this time, both budgets appear healthy.
- b. **WWTF Sludge Disposal.** Board member Goslant asked about the status of sludge disposal. Manager Schulz said the sludge still is being transported to Barre City where it is mixed with its sludge and then shipped to Canada. Board member Goslant asked if we have reached out to Casella to see if the new sludge processing method has reduced the odor to an acceptable level. Manager Schulz said he would like state inspectors to observe the new process first to ensure it meets their own standards. He noted the odor has been improved but it is unsure if it will meet Casella's smell test.
- c. **Department Head Reports.** Board member Goodrich asked if there will be in-person reports from the various department heads at Select Board regular meetings in the near future. Manager Schulz is planning to have Financial Director Laurie Baroffio on hand at the next meeting when the latest financial statements are discussed. An additional department head report might be added based on relevancy, availability, etc.
- d. **Household Food Scrap Recycling.** Board member Goslant asked if the municipality had procedures in place for when the new state law requiring the recycling or composting of all food waste comes into effect on July 1, 2020. Manager Schulz said he has been working to find a storage area that (hopefully) will be in proximity to the Northfield Transfer Station where the food scraps can be kept.
- e. **Farewell to Select Board Member Goslant.** As this will be his last regular meeting, Chair Maxwell wanted to thank Select Board member Kenneth Goslant for his ten (10) years of service on the Northfield Select Board. He said working with Board member Goslant has been challenging on occasion but always a pleasure. Chair Maxwell and the other Select Board members then wished Board member Goslant the very best in his future endeavors. Board member Goslant said despite the hard work involved, he will carry with him many good memories from his time on the Select Board.

XI. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- a. NAS Billing Services.** As authorized by the Select Board members at the last meeting, Manager Schulz has been in contact with Medical Business Services (Essex, VT) on finalizing a service contract. He has set up a meeting with their representative(s) with Finance Director Baroffio and NAS Chief Rutter present to ensure the best possible contract can be negotiated. He hopes the agreement will be signed and MBS will start processing our ambulance billing within the next thirty (30) days.
- b. South Main Street Sidewalk Project.** Manager Schulz noted the current plan is to replace the sidewalk on the west side of South Main Street this summer. The project area now is from Depot Square to South Street but this could be extended to Norwich University if additional grant funds become available. VTrans recently inspected the site and found the project would have no adverse effect on historical artifacts or the environment. Manager Schulz hopes to have a draft project RFP ready for Select Board review at the next meeting. He hopes to circulate and advertise the RFP as soon as possible so there will be no project delays.
- c. Cross Brothers Dam.** Manager Schulz received an email last week from Brian Fitzgerald from the Vermont Dam Removal Task Force. Mr. Fitzgerald addressed the Select Board members at their last regular meeting regarding the status of this dam removal process. Since the Select Board members authorized him to continue with the initial phases of this project, Mr. Fitzgerald will continue to seek additional outside funding and start outreach to neighboring property owners. He also will look into identifying potential disposal areas for the concrete and dredged riverbed material that will be removed during the project.

XII. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (UNSCHEDULED)

- a. John Stevens: Response to Intemperate Posting.** Mr. Stevens is competing with Board member Doney for the three-year Select Board seat that will be voted on Town Meeting Day. Recently, one of his supporters posted a message on Front Porch Forum that not only stated support for Mr. Stevens but also included what many consider derogatory language directed at Board member Doney. Mr. Stevens was aghast and angry when he first read the posting and although he cannot control what other people write, he would like to apologize to Board member Doney. Mr. Stevens would like this to be a positive contest based on the issues and does not condone any personal attacks.

XIII. EXECUTIVE SESSION Motion by Board member Goodrich, seconded by Board member Doney, to go into executive session, in accordance with 1 VSA 313 (a)(1), in order to discuss a contract negotiation with Manager Schulz present. **Motion passed 5-0-0.**

The Board went into executive session at 10:10 p.m.

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

The Board came out of executive session at 10:40 p.m. No action was taken.

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

The Board adjourned at 10:40 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 10, 2020.