

[NORTHFIELD SELECT BOARD MEETING MINUTES]

February 20, 2024

Northfield Town Hall
69 Main St

Select Board Present: Alexander Meisner, Chair; Bernard Boudreau, Vice Chair; Sarah Kerns, Clerk; Barbara “Bee” Jacque; Heath Cummings

Also Present: Andrea Llamas, Town Administrator; Sandra L. Wood, Town Secretary; Tyler Bourbeau, BNCTV

Others Present: Members representing the 350th Anniversary Committee: Stacy Bond, Chair, Martha Morse, Bruce Kahn, Mary King, Pat Shearer; Officer Oleg Cobileanschi, Officer Curtis Weaver, Dale Brown; John Buxton

- Meeting called to order at 6:00 pm
- **Scheduled Appointments**
 - 6:00 pm Officer Oleg Cobileanschi – Appointment of Part-Time Officer: Dale Brown & meet Officer Weaver
 - Cobileanschi conveyed Chief Hall’s request to appoint Dale Brown as a part-time officer
 - Works as Director of public safety at Holyoke Community College and as Patrol Officer in Sunderland
 - Background in the military and corrections
 - Employment goal is to become Chief of a small town
 - Goal in Northfield is to gain municipal experience
 - Community Policing- approaches policing as an educator
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to appoint Dale Brown as a part-time officer of the Town of Northfield pending conditions as listed at \$23.85/hr effective immediately
 - Meeting Curtis Weaver
 - Enjoying his role in Northfield
 - Grew up in Bernardston and graduated from Pioneer Valley Regional School
 - Worked in corrections
 - Looks forward to joining community events
 - 6:15 pm 350th Committee Final Report – Recognition for Volunteers
 - Stacy Bond, Chair, Martha Morse, Bruce Kahn, Mary King, Pat Shearer joined the Select Board
 - Bond is working organizing photos from the events of the anniversary year with plans to store them at the Dickinson Library
 - Discussion on keeping a few events from the past year going forward, possibly a block party, and working with the Recreation Commission to hold events
 - The library plans to continue historical events and will incorporate the 350th website into their own
 - Discussion on a possible physical recognition and a suggested short synopsis of what the Committee learned to pass on to others
 - The 350th Committee wished to recognize Norman Eggers for his photography service
 - The Select Board formally recognized the committee for the time, effort, patience and planning involved for the yearlong celebration
 - 7:00 pm Grant Development Director Appointment - Tabled
 - 8:30 pm Executive Session: M.G.L.c.30A, Sec.21(a)(1)– To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of an individual, or discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges against, a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual.- See Executive Session below
- **Citizens’ Concerns (limit 3 minutes per speaker)**
 - John Buxton, Cross Rd- concern about proposed solar installation in neighbourhood. Stacy Bond also voiced her concern on the project

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- **Review and Approval of Warrants**
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to approve the 2/21/24 Payroll warrant of \$77,613.75
 - Motion by Kerns, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the 2/21/24 Vendor warrant of \$139,069.78
- **Review and Approval of Minutes**
 - Motion by Cummings, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the minutes of 2/6/24 as amended
- **Meetings/Events attended by Selectboard members**
 - Boudreau: Friends of Northfield Seniors
 - Kerns: met with Town Administrator on Dog/Bicycle hearing follow up; met with Chief Hall; screening and interviews for Grant Development Coordinator; Bird Club; Sewer Commission
 - Cummings: PVRs (Pioneer Valley Regional School) budget hearing and vote;
 - Jacque: screening and interviews for Grant Development Coordinator; Finance Committee; Emergency Services Facility Committee; met with a member of Leyden Select Board
 - Meisner: celebrated the birth of his daughter, born Thursday, February 15
- **Town Administrator's update**
 - Small Town Administrators Legislative Priorities
 - Small-Town Communities are having their Select Boards vote to sign the priorities and the legislative committee from STAM is taking it to Boston
 - Changes to Chapter 90 formula for road projects to better benefit small towns
 - Education funding formulas to provide more support for regional school districts
 - Sustainable pathways for declining enrollments
 - Changes for procurement
 - Reforms of state-owned land; state payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT). Discussion on different formulas for different areas, non-profits, education
 - Staffing for Rural Affairs
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to support the 2024 legislative priorities as offered by the Small-Town Administrators Legislative
 - Emergency Services Facility Committee update
 - The Committee met last Thursday and decided on a scope of work to get pricing on potential site evaluation for the current Fire Station building
 - ARPA Update
 - Update on expenditures: a few haven't started yet but are in the works and others are finishing up
 - Review of expenditures by department
 - There are a few things closing out that aren't 100% spent and so will pull together the ARPA committee to look at the use of remaining funds, currently around \$2,800. They can be closed out to the general fund if not needed for anything by June 30th.
- **Business**
 - Vote & Sign Primary Election Warrant
 - Primary election being held March 5, 2024, at Northfield Town Hall, 69 Main St., 7am-8pm
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to approve and sign the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Warrant for Presidential Preference Primary
 - Vote to sign Franklin Regional Council of Government Plumbing & Gas and Wiring Inspection Professional Services Agreement
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Kerns the Select Board voted to approve and sign the Franklin Regional Council of Government Plumbing & Gas and Wiring Inspection Professional Services Agreement

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- Reschedule March 5 Select Board meeting (State primary election)
 - Rescheduled for Wednesday, March 6, 2024 6pm
- Fire Department Succession Planning: Fire Chief hiring packet/Screening Committee appointments
 - Discussion to research the Town of Whately process to use as a template before making a decision
- Six Town Regionalization – Regional Agreement Representative Appointments
 - The Six Town Regionalization Committee is looking for Select Boards to recommend 2 representatives from each town to work on the regional agreement. They do not have to be Select Board members
 - Discussion on options to comply or not comply with the request from the Six Town Regionalization Committee. Concerns the committee will move forward without Northfield's representation.
 - The committee's goal is to finish by February 2025
 - A request for volunteers interested in being recommended to the Six Town Regionalization Agreement subcommittee to be posted on the town website. Candidate requests will be reviewed at the next meeting
- Pioneer Regional School District (PVRs) – Regional Agreement
 - Review of the original yearlong 2022-2023 schedule for the regional agreement posted on the PVRs website
 - Schedule has been reduced and towns will receive a draft in March for inclusion on the annual town meeting warrant
 - This is not enough time to review and to include on annual town meeting warrant
 - Legal counsel has not responded to Llamas's questions on obligation to include on the warrant
 - Discussion on the process of approval of the agreement and clarification that it is the three towns' regional agreement, not PVRs
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to request the Chair send an email to the Superintendent and Chair of the District Agreement Sub-Committee as time line expressed in the Superintendent's email is not achievable for this town meeting; and send copies to Leyden and Bernardston Select Board Chairs.
- School Resource Officer Select Board Statement
 - Cummings read the statement to be sent to the PVRSD School Committee
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Jacque the Select Board voted to accept Cumming's statement on behalf of the Select Board and approved Meisner to sign the letter
- Town Clerk Code Red Request – Election Information
 - To notify residents on the Code Red system of upcoming town meetings and elections
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Boudreau the Select Board voted to approve the Town Clerk's Code Red request
- Time Off Request
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to approve the time of request
- **Committee/Board Appointments**
 - Motion by Boudreau, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to appoint Oleg Cobileanschi to the Emergency Services Facility Building Committee; term expires 12/31/24
 - Motion by Jacque, seconded by Cummings the Select Board voted to appoint E. Peter Vearling as an Election Officer; term expires 8/15/24
- **Proposed Agenda Items**
 - First Light Relicensing update
 - Regional Agreement
 - Town Moderator
 - Fire Department succession
- **Announcements**

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- Select Board looking for 2 residents to be recommended as Regional Agreement Representatives to work on the Six Town Regionalization agreement
- **Recognition for Service:** to Chief Dunnell from the Bernardston Police Dept.-letter read
- **Executive Session:** Motion by Kerns, seconded by Jacque the Select Board went into Executive Session at 8:21 pm under: M.G.L.c.30A, Sec.21(a)(1)– To discuss the reputation, character, physical condition, or mental health, rather than the professional competence, of an individual, or discuss the discipline or dismissal of, or complaints or charges against, a public officer, employee, staff member, or individual. AND
- under M.G.L. c.30A, Sec.21(a)(6) Emergency Services Location - Real Estate: To consider the purchase, exchange, lease, or value of real estate; the Chair declares that an open meeting may have a detrimental effect on the negotiating position of the public body and will not return to open session. Roll call vote: Jacque yes, Meisner yes, Boudreau yes, Cummings yes and Kerns yes.
- Meeting adjourned at 9:32 pm

Recorded by Sandra L. Wood, Secretary

Select Board Clerk

3/6/24
Date Approved