



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Town of Northwood 818 First NH Turnpike Northwood NH 03261
(603) 942-5586**

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
September 26, 2023**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Hal Kreider, Vice-Chairman Tim Colby, Select Board Member Beth Boudreau, and Select Board Member Pam Sanderson.

STAFF PRESENT: Town Administrator Neil Irvine and Attorney Joseph Driscoll.

6:00 P.M. Chairman Kreider opened the Northwood Board of Selectmen meeting with a roll call and led the pledge of allegiance.

Approve Minutes:

September 12, 2023:

Motion: "To approve the minutes of September 12, 2023 as presented."

Motion: P. Sanderson

Second: T. Colby

Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.

September 19, 2023:

Motion: "To approve the minutes of September 19, 2023 as presented."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: B. Boudreau

Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.

Consent Agenda:

Payroll Manifest dated September 20, 2023, Batch #092023 for \$59,359.86.

Accounts Payable Manifest dated September 20, 2023, Batch #132 for \$611.32. This was a paper check to correct a processing error in payroll. The employee hadn't notified the town of a change in bank information for his direct deposit.

Accounts Payable Manifest dated September 27, 2023, Batch #133 for \$168,728.23. Items of note include \$14,000 in emergency repairs to the town hall roof, to be taken out of the Building Maintenance ETF, \$4,157 for legal representation for the Fire CBU discussions, \$7,520 for an excavator and hammerhead rental for the highway department, \$30,363 for Healthtrust for employee insurances, \$13,699 to the IRS

42 for payroll taxes, \$5,735 to set up the new cruiser with lights, and \$59,500 for the 50% deposit on the
43 generator for the school, to come from ARPA funds.

44 Abatements: Camp Yavneh, Map 125, Lot 15. This was previously approved by the Board of Selectmen.

45 **Motion: “To approve the consent agenda as presented”**

46 **Motion: T. Colby**

47 **Second: B. Boudreau**

48 **Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.**

49

50 **Appointments:**

51 **Dan Tatem** of 143 Upper Deerfield Road said that for over two years, his neighbor, Robbin Kline of 141
52 Upper Deerfield Road has had excessive outdoor lighting on her property that impacts his property, and
53 has structures within the 20-foot setbacks in violation of the town zoning ordinances. This is the 3rd or 4th
54 time he has attended a Board of Selectmen meeting regarding this issue. He also requested to be heard
55 in front of the Selectmen and was denied by the TA on 1/13/23. The Board at that time decided they
56 would not allow him to speak at a public meeting. He wanted to bring new information to the board. The
57 town issued a notice of violations to Robbin Kline dated Feb 22, 2022, signed by then Building Inspector
58 Jared Sheheen, again on June 30, 2022, signed by Jared Shaheen, again on July 26, 2022 signed by all of
59 the Board of Selectmen. Another notice of violation was sent Jan 12, 2023, signed by Will Dinsmore, the
60 then Building Inspector. Another one on June 8, 2023, also signed by Will Dinsmore. In addition to all
61 those, he has an email dated 7/20/23 from Will stating he spoke to Robbin asking for the status of her
62 compliance or any measures taken to bring the property into compliance with town ordinances. Dan read
63 the town’s ordinances relating to the definition of structures and lighting nuisances.

64 He has submitted many photos of his neighbor’s property taken from his front porch. He lives on 35 acres
65 on a dead end road in town. What he sees is a nuisance and distraction. The town issued five letters of
66 violation with no action being taken. The Building Inspector told Dan that he is only a part-time position
67 and can’t be down there every day. The issue is affecting his sleeping and quality of life in a town he pays
68 taxes to. About a year ago, the town counsel told the Board to “let them fight it out in court.” Several
69 different Selectmen have said to Dan that this is clearly in violation of the ordinances. Dan is now
70 requesting action be taken and asking for the Board’s plan of action. Recently many animals were
71 removed from the Kline property, she was arrested and charged with animal neglect, and her children
72 removed from the property by DCYF. She has said the lights on her property were to protect her animals.
73 The animals are gone, but the lights remain. Dan is disappointed in the town for not enforcing the
74 regulations. He is asking for a formal written response to what the Board is going to do to enforce the
75 regulations that were voted on by the town’s taxpayers. Attorney Joseph Driscoll said enforcement is a
76 discretionary action of any municipal government. There is a civil action that exists between the two
77 parties in question. There are several nuisance complaints filed by Mr. Tatem and that case is still pending.
78 He added that Building Inspector Jared Sheheen ruled that the fencing was determined to not be
79 structures encroaching on setbacks. There is an appeal procedure in place for that that has not been
80 utilized by Mr. Tatem as of now. There is an outstanding electrical permit for the Kline property that is
81 waiting to be inspected and closed out. He stated again that enforcement is up to the discretion of the
82 Board. Mr. Tatem asked if it was legal for the TA to deny his request to speak to the Board. Attorney
83 Driscoll stated that the Board decides what items will be taken up during a meeting. H. Kreider asked if
84 the court is already working on something, such as the lighting, what would be the basis for the Board to
85 do anything else until the court decides whatever it decides? Attorney Driscoll said the court has not
86 heard the case yet and has not provided a ruling on it yet. They discussed a preliminary injunction that
87 said Ms. Kline needed to stop certain things. He went on to say if the court issues an injunctive order and
88 it is violated, the other party can file with the court regarding the violation. Anyone in violation has to be
89 allowed to come into compliance. The town staff had been told the lights were for safety and security

90 reasons. Attorney Driscoll is not aware of the status of the current electrical work under the current
91 permit that is valid through December 8, 2023. He added that there is no basis for the Board to take any
92 action right now. Mr. Tatem stated that Will Dinsmore’s letter dated June 8, 2023 gave specific deadlines
93 saying the town will take legal action against Kline. But then nothing was done. TA Irvine recommended
94 to the Board that he be given some time to review all the information and get up to speed on these issues.
95 He will then draft a written response to Mr. Tatem. T. Colby also asked for a list of the dates that Will
96 Dinsmore was actually on the property.
97

98 **6:30 Amy Lindsay:**

99 Shelley Frost, 401 Jenness Pond Road, and Amy Lindsay, 265 Long Pond Road, both members of the
100 Congregational Church addressed the Board. Shelley read the following letter: “We, authorized
101 representatives of Northwood Congregational Church (UCC) request your consideration of, comments on,
102 and support for the lease of certain facilities at the Church to fulfill a need in Northwood for meeting
103 space that is centralized in town for the use of seniors and the Northwood community. We intend to
104 submit a warrant article for this purpose. Use of such space is expected for a wide variety of non-profit
105 purposes for the betterment of Northwood citizens: health clinics, knitting, quilting, and other arts and
106 crafts, musical ensembles, martial arts, yoga, meditation, and dance classes, theater and improv, debates,
107 gaming such as chess, cosplay, poker, and trivia, business groups, education-based groups, other groups
108 such as scouting groups, End 68 Hours of Hunger, Weight Watchers, young children play groups,
109 DestiNation Imagination, SpeechCrafters, etc. The Church has such a space available: a light-filled
110 function hall overlooking Harvey Lake, and a fully equipped kitchen, several handicapped-accessible hall
111 entrances and two handicapped-accessible bathrooms. The hall can accommodate approximately 150
112 persons. Also, available for daily rental in the same building is an assembly room with seating for at least
113 200 persons for concerts, films, theater, etc for civic, social, recreational, and religious functions. This
114 space would be available through a non-exclusionary lease. We anticipate a base cost to the town of
115 \$30,000 annually with an annual cost for utilities, maintenance, and repair of \$15,000 subject to fuel and
116 electricity rate hikes. The \$45,000 annual cost equates to an average cost per Northwood household of
117 approximately \$26 annually. Facility usage is likely to be primarily by small groups in the day and early
118 evening. We expect that attendees may avail themselves of deeded parking space behind the church and,
119 if needed for larger gatherings, parking space authorized by and schedule with Coe Brown Northwood
120 Academy. Such use has not presented problems in the past because certain use dates such as graduation
121 are blocked out for availability, leaving most of the year available for Church use. We anticipate that
122 scheduling of hall and kitchen space will be arranged by addition to the town calendar, if possible. Thank
123 you for your consideration.” Chairman Kreider offered TA Irvine’s help with drafting a warrant article. B.
124 Boudreau said we already have a community hall and what would it cost us every year to maintain this?
125 Also, how would the Recreation Department access the center? P. Sanderson said the church needs to
126 consider how leasing the property might affect their tax-exempt status. The church has voted to get an
127 attorney’s advice on this issue. T. Colby asked about the number of people – is that a Fire Department
128 ruling, or just an estimate? The church will have to confirm those numbers for assembly. H. Kreider also
129 wants to know the square footage of the space and the number of parking spaces available, both with and
130 without CBNA. He added that if we offer this as a public facility, it will have to be open to any kind of
131 group, regardless of the group’s beliefs or purposes. TA Irvine will provide the church with the town’s use
132 of facilities policy to give to their attorney for review. P. Sanderson asked about the insurance liability if
133 this is to be used as a public facility. She feels the proposal is a wonderful, heartfelt proposal. Many
134 organizations are looking desperately for places to meet. Amy Lindsay said the town does have a
135 community hall, but the church facility is very different. They can fit a lot more people and they offer an
136 industrial kitchen. The Community Hall doesn’t meet the needs of larger groups in Northwood. The Board
137 will schedule the church back for the details when they are ready.

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Town Administrator's Report:

Staffing: The full-time patrol officer position is still open. We will be getting our officers back from the academy on Friday. Will Dinsmore completed the hand-over of the building inspection/code enforcement office to the interim help. Interviews are scheduled for later this week for a permanent, part-time replacement.

The election on 9/19 was well attended. Everyone associated with the election should be commended for their work. During the election, a leak in the town hall roof was detected. A new roof was installed on 9/21/23.

Center school has been completely removed within the required 30 days timeframe. The surety bond has been released.

Town Hall Message Sign: Dan has excavated the area around the sign and continues to stockpile materials to construct the wall. Work should start this coming Saturday.

Safety Facility Seminar: TA Irvine, BOS Chair Krieder, Chief Drolet, and Chief Tetreault attended a seminar in Dover regarding planning for and building a safety facility.

Town Seal policy: TA Irvine reached an amicable agreement to settle the matter of the use of the town seal on shirts for sale. The town will purchase the shirts and then the town can do whatever they want with them. Going forward, the town seal will only be used for official purposes. The vendor has 123 shirts left that the town will purchase.

AV Upgrade: All equipment has been received and the installation is underway. It should be completed in early October.

Paving: R&D Paving has begun the 2023 paving projects.

Tax Deeding: The NH Housing Authority has made a payment on behalf of one of the properties that was available for deeding. All back taxes, interest, and costs have been paid. The remaining list of 10 properties that are available for tax deeding will be discussed later tonight. TA Irvine will recommend the town not take any of them.

Tax Auction Sale in 2018: There was a question raised by a title company associated with the sale of a piece of property that the town sold at auction in 2018. They stated that the town did not give required notice to the prior owners before the auction. Copies were found to prove all required notices were provided.

B. Boudreau asked to have the ceiling in the town hall meeting room fixed and the paint touched up where the damage from the leak is. TA Irvine said it will be done after the AV installation is completed. Both new screens will be mounted on rolling dollies instead of trying to attach them to the tin walls.

Emergency Expenditure Facilities ETF:

During the recent election, a leak in the town hall roof was discovered. There are funds available in the Facilities Maintenance ETF and a contractor was available to do the work immediately.

Motion: "To use \$14,000 out of the Building Maintenance ETF for the emergency repairs to the town hall roof."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: B. Boudreau

Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.

Hannaford Conservation Easement – Volunteer:

There is a conservation easement as part of the Hannaford development and the responsibility to monitor it is under the Board of Selectmen. The Northwood Conservation Commission has offered to do the work and report back to the Board of Selectmen. There are some concerns regarding debris and trash

186 accumulating on the property. The Conservation Commission invited the Board members to join them on
187 the property walk. No date has been set yet.

188

189 **Request for Support – Snowmobile Club:**

190 Chairman Kreider read the following letter from Tom Johnson: “I saw the note below from the official BOS
191 July minutes. I feel I should ask the following question. Our Snowmobile Club’s original request for ARPA
192 funds was for minimum of \$3,500 and possibly up to \$10,000. We were granted \$3,500 and we thank you
193 again for that. Our participation in the Recreation Department Food Truck and Music Jam, although fun
194 community events, were not income producing for the Club. Based on the Minutes note below, I would
195 respectfully ask you to consider a second grant so our Club can continue providing improvements and
196 maintenance of the Northwood Trail System. I understand you have many items to consider for these
197 funds, so thank you for further consideration of this request.” Chairman Kreider stated that the Board
198 had granted the Snowmobile club \$3,500 in ARPA funds, but the Club also submitted a petition warrant
199 article in 2023 to get funding through the town vote. B. Boudreau said the ARPA funds are dwindling and
200 she would prefer they do another warrant article. The current balance of the ARPA funds was discussed.
201 P. Sanderson feels they do wonderful work but isn’t sure another request for funds would go through.
202 She suggested tabling the topic until TA Irvine can bring updated ARPA figures to the next meeting. T.
203 Colby asked about P. Sanderson needing to recuse herself from any of this discussion since she is a
204 member of the Snowmobile Club. P. Sanderson agreed that she should recuse herself. TA Irvine cautioned
205 that if the town distributed ARPA funds to any organization, the town is still responsible for the reporting
206 of those expenses back to the Treasury. He recommends getting info from the club on how they spent
207 the ARPA funds given already.

208

209 **Request for Support – NLWA:**

210 Chairman Kreider read the following letter from Kristine Mooso, Vice President of the NLWA: “The
211 Northwood Lake Watershed Association (NLWA) would like to thank you again for the \$2,000 from the
212 Town of Northwood approved Warrant Article 26 “Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Expendable Trust
213 Fund”, which allowed the NLWA to increase the number of boats inspected at the Town of Northwood
214 boat ramp. As you know, the NLWA, in conjunction with NH Lakes, employs Lake Hosts to conduct boat
215 inspections. In 2022, our lake Hosts conducted 749 inspections, capturing 9 potential invasive species,
216 working Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. To date for 2023, our Lake Hosts have conducted 2,225
217 inspections, capturing 5 potential invasive species, working Fridays, Saturdays, Sundays, and Mondays.
218 With much success in finding paid employees to staff the boat launch more frequently, we more than
219 doubled our estimate, and to date in 2023, NLWA has had expenditures of over \$10,000 in payroll
220 expenses for our Lake Hosts. This \$10,000 does include the \$2,000 from Warrant Article 26, the \$2,010
221 payroll award from NH Lakes, leaving NLWA \$5,00 in expenses so far with 2 full pay periods remaining.
222 As you all know, NLWA is a nonprofit with income only coming from donations and limited fundraising.
223 NLWA is requesting any additional funds the Town of Northwood has remaining in Warrant Article 26 to
224 help offset the past 2023 and upcoming 2023 salary expenses, allowing us to continue having full coverage
225 of Lake Hosts, and more boat inspections accomplished keeping our NH waters healthy. Thank you for
226 your consideration and I look forward to hearing from you. The Board discussed how the funds in article
227 26 were for all the lakes, not just Northwood Lake, and if there are currently any remaining funds available.
228 The available balance will be brought to the next meeting.

229

230 **Tax Deeding:**

231 The Tax Collector previously presented a list of 10 properties facing tax deeding this week, per statute.
232 All owners have been contacted and 6 of the names were removed when they paid all amounts owed in

233 full. TA Irvine recommends that the Board decline the remaining deeds, signing deed waivers as it is not
234 in the public interest to deed these properties.

235
236 Hitchcock, Map 210, Lot 46 is a private road system. If the town were to accept the deed, the private road
237 will become the responsibility of the town. This type of property should have been tax exempt from day
238 one. TA Irvine recommends waiving this deed and changing this property to tax exempt status to prevent
239 a recurrence with future tax bills being generated.

240 **Motion: “To decline deeding on Randy Hitchcock property, Map 210, Lot 46, as stated, and include
241 future tax-exempt status as it is a private road.”**

242 **Motion: P. Sanderson**

243 **Second: T. Colby**

244 **Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.**

245
246 Mountain View Mobile Homes, Map 230, Lot 82-50. This is a mobile home in a park with no land included.
247 The owner of the unit sold it to Mountain View Mobile Home Park, who wants to demolish it and bring in
248 a new unit. TA Irvine recommends the Board waive the deed so that the town isn’t responsible for the
249 park rent and demolition and removal expenses. Even if the Board waives the deed the lien will remain
250 in place so there is no risk to the town. The only exposure is incurring the park fees and demolition fees
251 if the deed is taken.

252 **Motion: “To waive the deed to Map 230, Lot 82-50, even though the unit is still a taxable building leaving
253 the responsibility for demo it and removal with the park.”**

254 **Motion: P. Sanderson**

255 **Second: B. Boudreau**

256 **Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.**

257
258 Owner Unknown, Map 212, Lot 70. This parcel is a piece of backland. TA Irvine recommends waiving the
259 deed because pursuant to statute the town must notify the owner of its intention to take the property. If
260 we don’t know who the owner is, we can’t notify anyone. Any unknown owner property should carry a
261 zero value, so no tax bill is created. At some future point, a survey of surrounding lots may show that this
262 parcel belongs to someone.

263 **Motion: “To waive the deed for Map 212, Lot 70, and reduce the value to zero, until such time as
264 ownership is confirmed.”**

265 **Motion: P. Sanderson**

266 **Second: T. Colby**

267 **Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.**

268
269 98 Blakes Hill Rd, Map 224, Lot 25 owned by Paul Vrusho. This property is protected by the bankruptcy
270 court and cannot be deeded. There are a lot of taxes due, but the town is first in line for payment.

271 **Motion: “To waive the deeding on Map 224, Lot 25 at this point due to bank status.”**

272 **Motion: P. Sanderson**

273 **Second: B. Boudreau**

274 **Motion carried by vote of 4 to 0.**

275
276 With help from the NH Home Financing Authority, one property that was deeded last year has been
277 repurchased by the former owner. All costs and fees have been paid. TA Irvine asked the Board to sign
278 the deed with no covenants. It was the consensus of the Board to do so.

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281 **Recognition Certificate:**

282 The town has two officers graduating from the Police Standards and Training Academy this Friday. TA
283 Irvine would like to present them with a certificate of recognition signed by the Selectboard. The
284 certificate will say “Be it known to all, that the Selectboard of Northwood NH, offers it sincerest
285 congratulations to {the individual}, in recognition of his graduation from Class 193 of NH Police Standards
286 and Training Academy and for his commitment to uphold the highest traditions of the Northwood Police
287 Department in service to the residents and visitors to the Town of Northwood.” The Board concurred.
288

289 **Board Committee Reports:**

290 P. Sanderson said the Zoning Board is expressing its deepest appreciation of the service of Ted Wilkinson,
291 who has resigned as a full member. He has requested to remain as an alternate. MaryEllen Brown will
292 step up from an alternate position to a full position. Ted is also going to step back from his role on the
293 Budget Committee before the start of the 2024 budget process so a new person can come in for the entire
294 process. The boards are waiting on official letters from Ted and MaryEllen to create the new appointment
295 slips.
296

297 H. Kreider said the Planning Board met last week and discussed zoning changes to propose to the town.
298 The Planner will work those up and refine them. The Master Plan Subcommittee has been meeting
299 regularly and work is going well. They feel there may be some survey fatigue in town and have decided
300 the Recreation, Natural Resources, and Community Facilities chapters survey will not go out until January.
301 Dave Copeland did a great job Chairing the CIP Committee. Bob Strobel did a great job on the spreadsheet.
302 It will go to the Planning Board this Thursday.

303 The Facilities Planning Safety seminar in Dover had some very good information. He added that it was
304 somewhat discouraging to learn that cost estimates the committee was using, such as \$200 per square
305 foot, are actually around \$350. Projects of this type should also expect 7% compound interest each year
306 going forward. They also learned that the town has liability issues when we take someone into custody
307 and detain them in inadequate facilities, the amount of a settlement would be much more than the cost
308 of a new facility in a potential lawsuit. The last two listening sessions provided a lot of good input. The
309 Committee now needs to deliberate and come up with a plan or decide to not have a plan. When the
310 Committee reaches a recommendation, it will be live streamed.
311

312 The Recreation Commission was supposed to be at tonight’s meeting with an update, but they were not
313 in attendance, except for Matt Frye.
314

315 **Citizen’s Forum:**

316 Matt Frye, Strafford Road said he is excited at some of the thoughts from the Congregational Church.
317 Public/Private Partnerships have become very much up and coming in municipalities recently. This
318 agreement would be outlined in an MOU with terms for everyone involved. The cost of \$30,000 per year
319 for the use of the building could be a mutually beneficial relationship if the Board decides to pursue it.
320 The Community Hall has some significant limitations with ADA issues. He suggested the Board could look
321 at a one-year Beta test with funds coming from the ARPA funds as a test, with no real liability to the
322 taxpayer.

323 The Board discussed needing to look at using taxpayer money and having the permitted uses from the
324 church and ask if they are sufficiently broad enough to cover the Northwood Community.
325

326 **At 7:53 p.m.**

327 **Motion: “To adjourn.”**

328 **Motion: P. Sanderson**

DRAFT

329 **Second: T. Colby**
330 **Motion carried by a roll call vote of 4 to 0.**
331
332 Minutes respectfully submitted by
333 Cheryl Eastman
334