



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
January 24, 2023**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Hal Kreider, Vice-Chairman Tim Colby, Select Board Member Jim Guzofski, and Select Board Member Pamela Sanderson. Select Board Member Beth Boudreau will be arriving late.

STAFF PRESENT: Town Administrator Walter Johnson

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

Citizen’s Forum:

The Board received a letter from Frederick James of Ridge Road. Chairman Kreider read the letter into the record. “I recently read the Board of Selectmen Oct 25 minutes where my request was rejected. Based upon these minutes, it is clear that the decision was based on incorrect and incomplete information. None of the reasons as to why this drainpipe was installed were addressed and the information considered was wrong. The description of my request is stated incorrectly. My request was to terminate the entrance, cut off the back pipe one foot, restore the retaining wall. The town’s rejection was based on site inspection by Mr. Colby. He stated that it would be expensive to refill the ditch. My request was not to fill in the ditch. Giving the final authority to Mr. Brown who made the indefensible decision to install the pipe was inappropriate. I provide the supporting details in regard to these points. The ditch serves no purpose. The road is convex. Any road water flows to both sides of the road. The decision to build the ditch was based solely on the fact that a drainage pipe was there many years ago, at least the 40 years. The preexisting pipe was crushed and not functioning for over 40 years. When it was installed, it may have been needed but it is not needed now. When I contacted Chris Brown, he told me he thought there was an easement. He did not discover one. Mr. Brown did not ask me for an easement. Neither did he obtain a replacement in kind. Nor did he consult with a civil engineer. Deferring the decision to Mr. Brown is highly questionable since he is the person who wasted taxpayer money on a totally unnecessary construction cost. As a result of his decision, it is a major reason why my property did not sell. Prospective buyers do not like the unsightly look. I invited a civil engineer to the site. In his opinion, there was no need for the ditch. We all make mistakes. Recognizing a mistake and correcting it is the appropriate action, especially when it is easily corrected. Please ask yourself, given the above, would you have approved proceeding with this construction? One that resulted in a waste of taxpayer funds and a negative impact on a citizen’s property. I look forward to a timely and favorable response. Signed Frederick James. “

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As per the policy, the Board did not respond to this citizen’s forum item at this time.

Minutes of January 10, 2023:

Motion: “To accept the minutes of January 10, 2023 as written.”

Motion: T. Colby

Second: P. Sanderson

Motion carried by vote of 4/0.

Consent Agenda:

Accounts Payable Manifest dated 1-17-23, Batch #95 for \$80,863.57. Items of note include a payment to the IRS for \$14,242.70 for payroll taxes, NH Retirement System for the December retirement contributions for \$ 28,358.89, Pitney Bowes Reserve Account for \$2,500 for postage, Ponderosa Dumpsters for \$5,370.46 for trucking costs for trash and solid waste materials, W.D. Perkins for \$4,734 for diagnostic and repairs to rescue #1.

Accounts Payable Manifest dated 1-18-23, Batch #96 for \$7,484.61

Accounts Payable Manifest dated 1-18-23, Batch #97 for \$7,200.00. This was a reissue of a check made out to the wrong vendor name for the siding repairs at the town hall.

Payroll Manifest dated 1-25-23, Batch 012523 for \$ 49,955.42.

Property Tax Exemptions: Approve or Deny per Assessor’s Recommendations

Abatements: Jennifer Savanelli – 55 Sherburne Rd

Others: Yield Tax on Timber Tax – Map 220, Lot 10 – Rooney

Motion: “To approve the consent agenda as presented.”

Motion: T. Colby

Second: J. Guzofski

Motion carried by vote of 4/0.

TA Report:

Staffing: There are no changes in staffing. There are still vacancies in police for four full-time officers. We have one possible candidate now who is not certified and will have to go through the academy. There is also still one opening for a full-time firefighter.

Dec 23 Storm Damage: TA Johnson and EM Director Bob Young met with FEMA and Homeland Security last Thursday. They were given a tour of the storm damage. Cost estimates will still have to be submitted to see if Rockingham County will qualify for disaster assistance.

2022 and 2023 PW Facilities Projects: The renovation of the town hall lobby is continuing. We are waiting on countertops to complete the project. Replacing the siding on the back and east side of town hall is done. It will be painted in the spring. The electrical work for the message sign is complete. We were unable to use a tunnel under the driveway and had to dig a trench instead. The CEO of Barlo Signs said they will be here tomorrow at 8 a.m. to complete the electrical connections. At that point the sign will then be lit and then the software needs to be loaded on the computer and be formatted. Hopefully, by the end of the week we will be able to use it.

At 6:15, Select Board member Beth Boudreau joined the meeting.

Transfer Station Inspection: We are still waiting on a full report from DES. We are working with the wastewater side of DES regarding the lagoons. A response to their letter is drafted and will be sent out tomorrow.

FY22 Final Budget Update: The Board has received the final budget update for FY22 (pre-audit). All known 2022 expenses are included, and all outstanding purchase orders have been encumbered into 2023 or closed out completely.

91 Meeting Dates: The Deliberative Session will be February 4th at 9:00 a.m. at the Northwood Elementary
92 School. Voting will be on March 14th from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the St. Joseph Parish Hall.

93 2023 Warrant: The warrant will be voted on tonight. The final warrant will be posted by Friday, ahead of
94 the deadline date. After a second review of the articles by legal and the Department of Revenue
95 Administration, there were a few minor, non-substantive wording changes.

96 Housing Opportunities Grant: The grant for \$70,655 was approved. A portion will be used for creating a
97 Housing chapter of the Master Plan. The remainder will be used to create housing updates to the town
98 ordinances. There will be a public hearing on February 14 to accept those funds.

99 Lamprey Regional Cooperative Director's Meeting: TA Johnson attended the meeting on behalf of the
100 Board on January 12. At the meeting, the Board voted to consolidate the operating budget and closure
101 budget into one. This will save money on accounting and audit costs. All the separate reserve funds for
102 operating and closure will be blended into one fund as well. The current contract with Waste
103 Management will expire in 2025. The current contract does not include any escalators built into it except
104 any tipping fees to any other organizations. The Board's goal is to have that included in the next contract.
105 They have started negotiations now to try and build those in a schedule that will be predictable.

106 Candidates Filing Period: The period to file for open positions begins tomorrow and runs through Feb 3.

107 Board Meeting Dates: The next Board meetings will be February 14 and 28.

108 Ridge Road pipe issue: The Board clarified that Chris Brown did not install the culvert pipe originally, as
109 stated in Mr. James' letter. The former Road Agent Jim Wilson had done the work. TA Johnson said if Mr.
110 James could submit the opinion from the civil engineer it might be helpful. H. Kreider suggested
111 submitting it to our engineer for review. The Board tabled the topic until the report can be reviewed by
112 the town engineer and until spring, as nothing can be done with the snow on the ground.

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114 **2022 Encumbrances and Carry Forwards Update:**

115 **Motion: "To approve the final encumbrances as listed."**

116 **Motion: T. Colby**

117 **Second: P. Sanderson**

118 **Motion carried by vote of 5/0.**

119 **2022 Final Budget Report:**

120 Some of the encumbrances were released prior to closing the year, so the delta went up a little bit. H.
121 Kreider stated that we essentially spent every last penny. If not for the encumbrances brought forward
122 from 2021, additions of grants, and vacant positions, the budget would have been overspent by around
123 \$200,000. He stressed that this doesn't bode well for another default budget, especially if any vacant
124 positions are finally filled. The Board agreed that if there is another default budget, there will need to be
125 some serious cuts made to make it work.

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127 **Warrant articles recommendations:**

128 Article 10 – Operating Budget: The Budget Committee increased the Selectmen's budget request slightly.
129 The resulting proposed budget is only a 2% increase over the 2018 default budget (with adjustments).
130 The increase will calculate to about \$12.50 annual increase on the tax bill for an average home. There
131 was discussion around the best way to present the impact of the increase in the town budget so that
132 everyone will understand. There was also discussion around how to let the public know that another
133 year of a default budget will mean cuts across the board in services and hours. J. Guzofski said he wasn't
134 really happy with the Board of Selectmen's original budget. He was not comfortable with the way the
135 Budget Committee increased it either, but he will not vote against the budget just because of that. He
136 added the need to have a budget pass. There was discussion around the changes in a salary line in the
137 Library budget where the Selectmen approved a raise, but not as high a raise as was requested. The Board
138 recommends this article by vote of 5 -0.

- 139 Article 11 – Equipment Trailer: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
140 Article 12 – Road Construction: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
141 Article 13 – Recreation Complex Improvements: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
142 Article 14 – Master Plan Update: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
143 Article 15 – Ambulance Cab & Chassis: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
144 Article 16 – Forestry Vehicle: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
145 Article 17 – Fire Department Tanker Lease Payment: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
146 Article 18 – Ambulance Lease Payment: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
147 Article 19 – Dump Truck Lease Payment: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
148 Article 20 – Backhoe Lease Payment: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
149 Article 21 – Expendable Trust Fund Deposits: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
150 Article 22 – Vested Benefits Time Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
151 Article 23 – Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a
152 vote of 5-0.
153 Article 24 – Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a vote
154 of 5-0.
155 Article 25 – Lagoon Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by
156 a vote of 5-0.
157 Article 26 – Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends
158 this article by a vote of 5-0.
159 Article 27 – Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends
160 this article by a vote of 5-0.
161 Article 28 – Terrestrial Invasive Species Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this
162 article by a vote of 5-0.
163 Article 29 – Facilities Committee Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a
164 vote of 5-0.
165 Article 30 – Road Improvement Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a
166 vote of 5-0.
167 Article 31 – Employee COLA: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
168 Article 32 – Code Compliance Officer Full Time: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
169 Article 33 – Assistant Librarian Full Time: Going from 30 hours a week to 35 hours a week. The Board
170 recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
171 Article 34 – Technology Librarian Full Time: Going from 30 hours a week to 35 hours a week. The Board
172 recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
173 Article 35 – Center School Rehab: The Board does not recommend this article by vote of 3 -2. P. Sanderson
174 and T. Colby were in favor of recommending, H. Kreider, B. Boudreau, and J. Guzofski were not in favor of
175 recommending.
176 Article 36 – Raze the Center School: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 3 – 2. H. Kreider, B.
177 Boudreau, and J. Guzofski were in favor of recommending, T. Colby and P. Sanderson are not in favor of
178 recommending.
179 Article 37 – 250th Expendable Trust Fund Deposit: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5-0.
180 Article 38 – Snowmobile Club Funding: H. Kreider recused himself because he owns land with a trail on
181 it. J.Guzofski said he is concerned with the precedent this article could set and any organization could
182 submit articles for operational funding. T. Colby stated that any group can legally do a petition article
183 such as this. The Board recommends this article by a vote of 3 -1.
184 Article 39 – Elderly Tax Exemption Limits: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5 – 0.
185 Article 40 – Veteran’s Tax Credit: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5 – 0.
186 Article 41 – All Veteran’s Tax Credit: The Board recommends this article by a vote of 5 – 0.

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Board Task Manager:

B. Boudreau asked about installing streetlights at intersections along Route 4. TA Johnson said that issue had been turned over to the Route 4 Safety Committee for discussion. H. Kreider said the work on updating the wage scale should be a high priority.

Board Committee Reports:

P. Sanderson said she attended the Northwood organizations meeting. They had 14 groups attend, including the Rotary, Recreation Department, Crank Pullers, 250th Committee, Bean Whole Bash, Congregational Church, Northwood Lake Watershed Association, the Garden Club, Friends of the Library, Republican Committee, Historical Society, Friends of the Meadows, Friends of Recreation, Fire/Rescue Association, and Lions. They talked about how to coordinate their efforts to not duplicate work, a newsletter, a community calendar, quick links from the town web page, constant contact, and adopt a spot. They will be having quarterly meetings going forward. The next one is on April 18.

T. Colby said that Gary Tasker has some ideas on how to hang the pictures on the tin walls.

At 7:50 pm

Motion: "To go into non-public session under RSA 91a;3 II (c) - reputation."

Motion: P. Sanderson

Second: T. Colby

Motion carried by a roll call vote.

Public Session Resumed at 7:57PM

Motion: "to seal the minutes if the non-public session until February 6th, 2023, as divulging the information will render the decision ineffective".

Motion: P. Sanderson

Second: T. Colby

Motion carried by a roll call vote.

Meeting adjourned at 7:59pm.

Minutes respectfully submitted by
Cheryl Eastman