

**Northport Village Corporation
Board of Overseers Meeting Minutes
Sunday, March 12, 2023**

Overseers, Officers and Staff present: Celine Bewsher; Brady Brim-DeForest; Fred Lincoln; Vicky Matthews; Judy Metcalf; Michael Tirrell (via Zoom); and Jeffrey Wilt (via Zoom); President, Janae Novotny; Clerk, Maureen (Beanie) Einstein (via Zoom), Village Agent, Bill Paige.

Public Comments:

Rachel Rosa (7 Auditorium Park) requested that the Utilities Committee include that the complete breakdown of the rate increase for the sewer department in the March mailing.

Basil Littlefield asked the Board the procedure for permission for access over Village property to repair/replace private property seawalls. President Janae Novotny directed him to a “Draft” copy of “License and Indemnification Agreement” among the agenda materials that was prepared by the Governance Committee that homeowners will need to sign, and the “Application for Use of Village Public Land for Construction Activity”, for contractors. These procedures have been in place for several years. The Governance Committee is in the process of finalizing the drafts and they will be presented for approval at the April Overseers’ meeting.

Business Meeting called to order at 9:06 a.m.

Agenda Review

Approval of the GWI (Great Works Internet) Service Agreement was added to the Agenda.

Minutes

Janae N. asked if there were any questions or comments on the minutes of the February 12 meeting of the Overseers. Hearing none she recommended the Board approve the minutes.

Brady Brim-Deforest moved, seconded by Vicky Matthews to approve the minutes of the February 12, 2023 meeting. Voted: Unanimous.

Village Agent Report – Bill Paige

The Village continues to need a plan, money and new signage for any planned future use of Cradle Row/Grove Street. It has not been in the budget but should be placed in the 2024 Budget. Suggest that we continue to not allow any storage in Cradle Row which will give the Infrastructure Committee time to address the future of this area in the off season. He suggested, in the future, if the Village allows private boat storage, the Village should charge a storage fee. Presently, there is not office staff to handle paperwork, etc.

As stated on the Agenda, Janae N. made the recommendation to suspend Waterfront Ordinance ~10 (referring to Cradle Row) until further notice and affirm the use of Cradle Row only for summer season vehicle parking (no boats, boat trailers, boat cradles, etc.)

Judy M. moved, seconded by Brady B., to adopt the recommendation as written on the Agenda.

Voted: Unanimous.

The December storm caused significant damage with loss of shoreline embankment and erosion at the bottom of Auditorium Park and some damage at the bottom of Bayview Park, which the Infrastructure Committee will have to address very soon. It presents a high risk for losing the bottom of Auditorium Park.

The December storm also caused visible damage to the wharf composite fender pilings. The Marine Engineer will have to physically inspect the wharf and known damage before the Village knows approximate costs of repair or replacement.

Continues to address lighting in the downstairs of the Community Hall that needs to be upgraded and also upgrading all lighting to LED.

The storage garage for the police cruiser, sander, plow, etc. presently has no lighting. The lack of lighting needs to be addressed and corrected. Both of these garages are fully utilized without room for any NVC storage of mandatory files. Perhaps, an addition of a 10' x 20' space would be a solution. Any addition will need both heat and lighting. Jeffrey W. will speak with the Town of Northport to perhaps partner with them for a storage area after the construction of a new Town Hall, which will have a fireproof storage area.

It appears the construction for a new seawall at the bottom of Bayview Park on Judy Rohweder's property is not proceeding with Farley this spring.

Treasurer's Report – Wendy Huntoon

Wendy H. referred the Overseers to her Treasurer's Report circulated prior to the meeting. We are trying to move forward on the 2021 audit. Philbrook & Associates is behind on the clean up they need to do. After the 2021 audit is completed, we will proceed with the 2022 and 2023 Audits. The monthly statements of activity are incorrect; Philbrook & Associates has not properly categorized the "unspecified" amounts. We are planning to separate the departments' QuickBooks accounts when we understand the impact of the change on the 2021 and 2022 audits.

Copies of the final 2020 audit have been distributed to the Overseers' and placed on the NVC website. Also circulated, prior to the meeting, was the NVC Management Response to the 2020 Audit, written by Wendy H., and requested by the Loan Officer for the USDA. The audit for General is "clean;" the audit for the Sewer and Water Departments is not.

Jeffrey Wilt, moved, seconded by Fred Lincoln, that the Overseers approve the “Management Response” as drafted by Wendy Huntoon. Voted: Unanimous.

Working with the Finance Committee on putting together items for the 2024 Budget. They will need to have an idea on any infrastructure and “nonusual” items that need to be addressed in planning the 2024 Budget.

President’s Report – Janae Novotny

Community Hall

Changes to the “Community Hall Use Information” were circulated to the Overseers prior to the meeting. The revision included the Hall use by Northport Residents along with Bayside residents. Judy M. thanked and endorsed Janae’s revision but felt priority should be given to owners and Bayside residents for an asset that they support with their tax dollars. Thorough discussion ensued.

Vicky M., made a motion, seconded by Fred L. that the Overseers approve the new Community Hall Use Information rules and Application adding that the President of the Corporation has the authority to approve requests between regularly scheduled Overseers meeting in the event a decision is required. Voted: Unanimous.

Plowing Invoices

Two plowing invoices need approval for payment: 1) Basil Littlefield has an invoice for plowing (during Bill’s hospitalization) for \$3670.00 (8 hours of plowing and 10 hours of sanding). Janae spoke with Basil about the exorbitant amount of the invoice, and he agreed to reduce the bill by \$1,000.00. 2) An invoice was submitted from Drexel Bailey for \$1180.00 who was then hired by the Village to do plowing in Bill’s absence. The Overseers were in agreement the bill from Basil was excessive.

Judy M., moved, seconded by Michael T., that the Overseers propose to Basil, in exchange for a full release, that the village will pay him \$1180.00 in full compensation for services reflected on his invoice presented to the Village. Voted: Unanimous.

GWI Service Agreement

The Service Agreement with GWI for a monthly fee of \$139.00 and a contract term of one year was presented for Overseer approval.

Brady B. moved, seconded by Judy M., to approve the GWI (Great Works Internet) 12 month Service Agreement Voted: Unanimous.

Janae N. noted that the GWI cost of \$139.00/month is cheaper (for faster internet connectivity) than the Consolidated Communications bills for \$204.00/month.

Finance – Fred Lincoln

Fred L. referred the Overseers to his written report circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee met on March 2, and Wendy H. provided the committee with the next steps of the working draft for the 2024 Budget. There were several areas where they need input from NVC committee chairs and Village officials to facilitate development of the 2024 Budget.

The Committee proposes to have a set “fee” for the Utilities Department to pay General to cover shared expenses. The Committee would work with the Treasurer to identify areas of “shared expenses.” The Overseers concurred, and the Finance Committee and Treasurer will move forward to investigate the matter.

Michael T. noted that Budget Workshops are central to the process and very important. Last year they were scheduled for Saturday mornings for one hour and a big success. Janae N. will put together a schedule for Saturday mornings. Wendy H. suggested having an “in person” workshop on Memorial Day weekend to give the villagers the opportunity to sit and listen (without community input) to items discussed regarding the Budget. Fred L. reminded everyone that 2023 budget numbers are available to everyone and would be helpful in forecasting their needs for the 2024 budget.

Governance – Judy Metcalf

Judy M. referred the Overseers to her written report with attachments circulated prior to the meeting. The Committee addressed the three topics at the Overseers’ request.

Zoning

The Committee will present modified and clarifying language in the Zoning Ordinance as requested by Toupie Rooney, Northport’s CEO, regarding how we define pervious surface versus impervious surface in the context of parking spaces regarding grass area or gravel driveways. The Committee wants “to assure that the goal to encourage parking on private property is advanced by a clearer definition of impervious surface.” After Toupie’s review and comments, the Committee will present to the Overseers for approval and then hold public hearings on just the proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance.

Access to Public Property

The Committee reviewed the existing policy and procedures in place for evaluating requests for access to Village property: the “License and Indemnification Agreement” and “Application for Use of Village Public Land for Construction Activity”. The Committee will continue their review, with input from Bill Paige regarding construction timelines, policies and procedures and present the final draft to the Overseers at their April meeting. Homeowners must establish that they have no reasonable alternative to access or storage on public property.

Parking Ordinance

The Governance Committee recommended that the police officer and others should continue to educate the community regarding the Parking Ordinance and issue warnings as needed. Repeat offenders would be subject to fines as set forth in the Ordinance.

Utilities – Jeffrey Wilt

The Utilities Trustees met on Friday, March 10, 2023. There were no exceedances during February 2023. There were some “big flow” days resulting from rain and snow. We are waiting on the delivery and installation of the new flow meter which is a device that helps us understand how much flow we are seeing, and we expect delivery in the next month or so.

The Utility Trustees voted to authorize our Utilities Superintendent, Chuck Applebee, to actively go after two grants offered by the DEP: 1) A \$20,000 grant for Climate Adaptation Planning with stressors for climate change (requiring no match) and 2) \$20,000 for a Fiscal Sustainability Planning Grant. This is a grant that would help us develop an asset management plan to include looking at the useful life of all of our equipment as well as cost and replacement. This grant does have a one for one match. We will be asking for \$20,000; if we are funded we will have to match that with \$20,000. If funded, we would use Dirigo Engineering as our Project Manager. Chuck Applebee, our new Superintendent, has the experience and capacity to write these grants.

The Committee and Utility Superintendent are putting finishing touches on the PUC Report for 2020.

There will be no water meter readings in March due to all the remaining snow. The bills going out later this month will reflect just the base water rate without additional usage. First trimester usage will be reflected in the second trimester billing.

Consistent with the Overseers’ approved terms, the Committee is developing a formal Loan Agreement between the Sewer Department and the Water Department for the \$94,000 in funds that will be borrowed from Water Reserves. This will be a five-year note at 4% interest.

Infrastructure – Celine Bewsher

The Committee has not met. She will be meeting and conferring with Bill Paige for his crucial input to set priorities prior to a Committee Meeting.

Parks & Trees/Tree Warden Report – Vicky Matthews – No report.

Safety – Michael Tirrell

We have two lifeguards, with required certification, in place: Ronin Dechamps will be working Wednesday, Thursday & Friday and Peyton Ward will be covering the weekends, Saturday & Sunday. The Personnel Committee will draft letters, etc. to them.

Celine B. stated that her daughter had recently experienced a disturbing incident walking to Edna Drinkwater School where someone appeared to be following her, and they have talked with the Sheriff's Department. Perhaps, the community should be aware that children should travel in groups. Judy M. stated, "Bayside is idyllic but it is still part of the world." Michael Tirrell will draft an awareness message to be posted on the website and send to Dan Webster for his website as well.

Waterfront – Brady Brim-Deforest

The Committee will be meeting in the next few weeks with their focus on Small Watercraft policies changes & implementation.

Communications – Michael Tirrell

He has circulated a proposed personal services agreement for the Website Service Maintenance. Janae N. requested a motion for the Overseers to approve the substance of the proposed Agreement and document it in a better form. Brady B. recommends requiring advance written approval for work performed outside the scope of the basic \$50 per hour work. Brady B. will draft a better format for additional language and forward this language to Michael T. and Judy M. prior to adoption. All meeting updates and calendar items will still be sent to Michael T.

Michael T. made a motion seconded by Judy M., to approve the substance of the Agreement not to exceed the budgeted amount. Voted: Unanimous.

All Annual Reports will be due on July 1, 2023 with no exceptions. The Overseers will receive a memo shortly defining what the process is and how it works and what is expected of every Overseer. A Chairperson of any committee is responsible for writing their section of the Annual Report. Again, that deadline, without exception, is July 1, 2023.

Personnel – Janae Novotny

Office Manager Search

Janae N. thanked Celine B. for managing the publicity and telephone and interview screening process. There are a handful of potential candidates who will be followed up with personal interviews.

Personnel Policies

Janae N. made a recommendation from the Committee to revise personnel policies to pay full-time employees 8 hours of pay for approved holidays and PTO. (Current policy: 4 hours/day for part-time employees and 7 hours/day for full-time employees).

Judy M. made a motion, seconded by Brady B., to adopt the revision to Personnel Policies as stated above and on the Agenda. Voted: Unanimous.

Technology – Brady Brim-Deforest

Progress continues on technology policies drafting. The first two documents, the NVC Privacy Policy and NVC TOS, are complete and have been submitted for review.

Training of NVC office staff on the shared drive system will take place this week.

Town Liaison – Janae Novotny

Jeffrey W. has been away and she has been attending the town meetings.

The Town has entered into an agreement with Drinkwater School to provide a warming center as needed for Northport residents during the winter. At the Town’s next meeting, they will be opening up bids for a recycling contract. The Town Select Board has started their budget workshops. Janae N. will attend, as she did last year, all the Budget Workshops.

Public Comments

Rachel Rosa (7 Auditorium Park) stated it was great to see Bill Paige back and on the mend. When opening the NVC Calendar on the Village website it does not give permission to view the dates of future meetings. Michael T. thanked Rosa for bringing the subject up. Brady B. will work with Michael to regroup and remedy the problem.

Brady Brim-Deforest, recommended that, given the instability in the banking ecosystem, the Village should verify its FDIC deposit insurance coverage with Bangor Savings Bank. Wendy H., Treasurer, will verify this coverage with Bangor Savings Bank.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/

Maureen (Beanie) Einstein, Clerk

and

/s/

Janae Novotny, President