

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Board of Selectmen

Minutes for Meeting of January 7, 2019 6:30 pm

Regular Business Meeting, Municipal Building

15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman; Barry Connell

SELECTMEN ABSENT: William Wilmot, Jr.; John Hooper, II

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul Brown, Finance Director

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Bert Spaulding, Sr.; Christopher Jacobs, NOHA Co-President; Christopher Gardner, NOHA Treasurer and Patricia DiPadova, NOHA Strategic Planning Coordinator

NCTV: Louis Cassorla

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Kessler called the regular meeting of the BOS to order at 6:32 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW: Accepted as presented. Chairman Kessler stated members of the Newport Opera House Association would speak during Open Forum.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): Minutes of December 17, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Fratzel; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the December 17, 2018 Board of Selectmen meeting as presented. The motion passed 3-0-0.*

NPS Minutes of December 17, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Fratzel; *the Board voted to approve the NPS minutes of the December 17, 2018 Board of Selectmen meeting as presented. The motion passed 3-0-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of January 7, 2019 as presented. The motion passed 3-0-0.*

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Chris Gardner, Mr. Chris Jacobs and Mrs. Patricia DiPadova addressed the BOS. Mr. Chris Gardner, acting Treasurer of the NOHA introduced himself and the other officers to the Board and stated he wanted to “get faces to names of the Board members”.

Addressing the BOS, he stated that they are working to make a better relationship with the Town. He stated that he had concerns, that the draft contract between the Town and NOHA was being reviewed by their attorney. Mr. Gardner hoped to have open, smoother communications between the two entities (Town/NOHA) moving forward.

Chairman Kessler stated that he had spoken to Mr. Gardner, invited him to come to the BOS meeting and to voice any concerns NOHA had. The BOS could in turn voice any concerns they had. Chairman Kessler stated that the Opera House Association plays a vital role in the Newport community. He wanted to see it thrive and provide quality entertainment to those who attend performances. He asked Mr. Gardner to voice any concerns he has.

Mr. Gardner's concerns were (through the rumor mill):

- The draft contract was set to fail.
- He wanted to make sure there was an open relationship going forward.

Chairman Kessler addressed Town Manager Rieseberg and asked if the Town had any concerns.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated there was only a draft contract. He had not received a response to the contract so he did not know of any concerns. It was a boilerplate contract; a starting point.

Mrs. DiPadova addressed the BOS and stated NOHA wanted clarification of intent (in the contract).

The goal of the new contract was to make it a streamlined process. He gave a synopsis of the contract to the NOHA and Board members. The Town would be happy to review any concerns NOHA had. The BOS goal is to support NOHA and to make it a success.

Mrs. DiPadova stated they had completed their strategic plan and were concentrating on five goals for the Opera House.

Mr. Jacobs stated the challenge with the NOHA Board was that they were all new board members. There have been major changes recently. NOHA's goal is to mend fences and build better bridges between the Opera House, Town and BOS. He asked that future conversations be direct between the Town and NOHA.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that he was not aware of any issues.

Chairman Kessler stated that the point of contact for the Town should be the Town Manager. If a NOHA representative preferred to contact a BOS member that was fine as well.

Selectman Connell asked for more details about the rumor that the contract was set to fail. He was concerned about that statement. Selectman Connell was told that the rumor mill stated that it (the contract) was one way to get NOHA out of the Opera House (building).

Town Manager Rieseberg informed the NOHA representatives that if that was the Town's intent they would not give NOHA a contract.

Mr. Gardner addressed Town Manager Rieseberg and the BOS and stated he was at the BOS meeting on a good faith effort for the Opera House/NOHA.

Selectman Connell concurred with Chairman Kessler's statement that the Board wanted NOHA to succeed; they were a vital part of the Town.

Mrs. DiPadova stated the NOHA mission statement and listed the goals NOHA had set to involve the Town, its children, adults and community members to meet Newport's needs.

Town Manager Rieseberg informed the NOHA Board members of the grant that was awarded for an assessment of the building and the renovations to be undertaken. He listed some of the items scheduled for renovation and how the renovations will affect NOHA.

After further discussion, the NOHA representatives were asked to call Town Manager Rieseberg at 603-863-1877 if they had any future questions.

Chairman Kessler requested that when NOHA was completed with their strategic plan to print a copy for the BOS members so they could see what their plans are. Mr. Jacobs agreed to his request.

Chairman Kessler thanked the NOHA members for attending the meeting. He invited them to come back any time.

COMMUNICATIONS: Selectman Connell said he had been given many compliments on where the Town was headed.

Selectman Fratzel had nothing to share at this time.

Chairman Kessler stated at a Sunshine Initiative meeting he had met a family who had chose to move to Newport.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

INFORMATIONAL: Community Center Fundraising Update: Selectman Fratzel stated the Friends of Rec have taken on the fundraising aspect of the project. They had hosted a Rally for Friends of Rec on Sunday, January 6, 2018 at the Rec Center. He listed ongoing fundraising that will take place for the building. BreadLoaf will be working toward finalizing their guaranteed maximum price. It will be ready for the beginning of the Town 2019 budget.

During the next few meetings they would be talking about the displacement of the Ambulance garage and Building and Grounds storage shed as well as what to do with the old Rec Center if the Warrant Article passes. Chairman Kessler stated that the BOS needed to have those discussions.

When asked about fund raising, Town Manager Rieseberg stated the current amount raised was now \$1.315 million dollars. There are three alternative sites and different cost estimates for storage. They will finalize it soon. Mr. Louis Cassorla asked if the \$1.315 million included the unanimous matching donation. Town Manager Rieseberg stated yes. Mrs. Maura Stetson stated the Friends of the Rec were in charge of fundraising. She asked Selectman Fratzel about any grants the Friends of the Rec had applied for. Town Manager Rieseberg stated the Friends of Rec were working on individual donations. The Town offices are managing the grant program and applications. The Town was looking into grants that were applicable to the effort and meeting with various grant agency representatives weekly. Mrs. Stetson thanked Town Manager Rieseberg.

The Community Center Committee will be meeting on the third floor of the Town Offices on Wednesday, January 9, 2019 at 6:30 pm. It will be a design meeting with Bread Loaf.

Update on Progress of First, Second, Third, Fourth and Knoll Streets Project: Town Manager Rieseberg stated that things are going well in the project area. There have been no complaints or phone calls from the residents or the Public Works Director. When asked, he stated that United Construction would be doing snow removal from First and Second Streets, the Town would be plowing Third and Fourth Streets and that plowing of Knoll Street would be a joint effort between the Town and United Construction.

Review and Prioritize Town Manager's Project List: Town Manager Rieseberg passed out the project list to the BOS. The Board members and Town Manager Rieseberg discussed past prioritized projects and projects they would like to have worked on in the year 2019. Among them were:

- 1) The sidewalk tractor
- 2) Regionalizing items-dispatch
- 3) CIP
- 4) Tax Map Maintenance
- 5) Preventative Maintenance (Water)

Each Board member would email their individual requests of top three priorities to the Town Manager.

Software Conversion: Chairman Kessler asked for an update on the new Finance Software. Finance Director Brown stated that the contract had been signed, conversion is partially completed, and the first training for the two employees in the Finance Department is online on Friday (1/11/19) and Monday (1/14/19). Conversion is scheduled to be completed by February 2019. Chairman Kessler requested that staff be properly trained, and be cross trained. Finance Director Brown stated they were and they will be.

Development of new layout of the BOS Budget Presentation Book 2019: Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the BOS and stated that Finance Director Brown had made up a simulated budget presentation book for the BOS to review and comment on. The Board members, Town Manager Rieseberg and Finance Director Brown reviewed the proposed layout, asked questions, commented and agreed to the format as presented. There will be less data in the new format. There was further explanation about data that had been in previous years but not in the proposed one. There was some concern about this. When asked if the new format required less time to make and copy, Finance Director Brown stated it required more time but less paper.

Chairman Kessler asked what Town Manager Rieseberg's goal for the 2019 budget was. He was told a 2% increase or less (the impact of inflation). There was a discussion on the budget between Town Manager Rieseberg and Mr. Spaulding, Sr.

Chairman Kessler asked Mrs. Stetson if the NSO had upcoming news. She informed Chairman Kessler that there would be an agenda item on the January 21, 2019 meeting. She and Finance Director Brown would explain at that time.

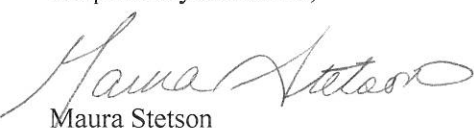
ACTION ITEMS: none

APPOINTMENTS: none

NON-PUBLIC SESSION (NPS): none

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to adjourn at 7:37 p.m. The motion passed 3-0-0.*

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson
Scribe

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for January 21, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Approved on: February 4, 2019