

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for Meeting of February 3, 2020 6:30 pm
Public Hearing and Regular Business Meeting, Municipal Building
15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Barry Connell, William Wilmot, Jr.; John Hooper II

SELECTMAN ABSENT: Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Cody Morrison, Economic Development Coordinator; Paul J. Brown, Finance Director

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Bert Spaulding, Sr.; Christy Whipple

NCTV: John Lunn

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Kessler called the meeting of the BOS to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW: Accepted as presented.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): January 23, 2020 - On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the January 23, 2020 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA: none

Selectman Wilmot asked to confirm the date for the School District vote. Mr. Mountain (reporter for the Argus Champion and the Eagle Times) stated it would be on Tuesday, March 10, 2020. Voting would be held 8am to 7pm at the Newport Opera House.

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Spaulding, Sr. stated that there was excellent attendance for the School Deliberative Session. It was a good meeting. He gave his opinion of the meeting and his and the voters reactions at the session.

Chairman Kessler thanked the citizens who came out; there were over 200 people in attendance. Many stayed for the 4 ½ hours it was held. He gave his opinion of the reduction in the school budget and how it is affecting the school administration.

Mr. John Lunn, NCTV; stated that the Deliberative Session was broadcast wireless. He stated it will be running continuously all week on channel 8 along with some of the budget hearings. Anyone can watch it on TV or on their computer. He agreed that it was nice so many were in attendance.

Selectman Wilmot had a report about the February 3, 2020 BOS meeting. The audio was not great. Mr. Lunn would try to improve it during the meeting. He thanked Selectman Wilmot.

COMMUNICATIONS: Selectman Wilmot had nothing to share at this time.

Selectman Hooper stated Newport's well-loved police chief; Mr. Jim Burroughs, retired in January 2020. There was a thank you "roast" in his honor. Mr. Jim Burroughs is not leaving town, is working for a business in town and has agreed to continue to support Town Rec events, future shooting leagues, etc. Selectman Hooper wished him the best.

Selectman Connell concurred with Selectman Hooper's sentiments and thanked Mr. Burroughs for his years of service to the Town.

Chairman Kessler concurred with the other Selectmen's sentiments on Mr. Burroughs retirement and the new Police Chief (Brent Wilmot) coming in.

- Next Tuesday, February 11, 2020 is primary voting. Voting would be held 8am to 7pm at the Newport Opera House.
- On Tuesday night, the Community Center Committee will be meeting at the Rec Center.
- On Wednesday, January 29, 2020 the CTE (Career and Technical Education) had an Open House. He was impressed with staff and programs and had asked Jennifer Opalinski, CTE Director; to attend one of the BOS meetings in March 2020. She will talk about the programs at the CTE; what they are looking going forward with the CTE renovations. The CTE is queued to get a 75%/25% matching grant for renovations from the State.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

INFORMATIONAL: Development Incentive and Grant Program Presentation-Cody Morrison: Mr. Cody Morrison addressed the Board and stated he wanted to make people aware of the tax incentives and grant programs in Newport. He gave a PowerPoint presentation to the Board, those in attendance and the viewing public (for full presentation go to the NCTV website) reviewing the five development incentives and the seven grant programs. Mr. Morrison was asked the following questions:

How many applicants has Newport had for a 79-E incentive since 2018? It was stated none.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. stated that the 79-E proposal was brought to Town Meeting. It has not been used in the two years it has been available. He suggested that Mr. Morrison personally approach the people that it could positively affect. Otherwise it would never be used. Mr. Spaulding, Sr. gave an idea of one way to do this and why it needed to be done.

Chairman Kessler addressed Mr. Morrison and asked how Newport could market the tax incentive and whether it needed to be more "visible" (on website, etc.). When asked, Mr. Morrison stated that it was out of the purview of ECON.

Mr. Morrison was asked to check other cities and towns to see if they have had good response to the use of 79-E in their communities.

Selectman Hooper suggested a direct mailer to everyone in the 79-E zone.

Selectman Connell stated that it needed to be done soon; spring is when people begin to think of items they want to improve at their home. He concurred with the suggestion of a good mailing. Selectman Connell asked if the contact person to apply for a 79-E was Mr. Morrison. He was told the Zoning Office.

Chairman Kessler asked that more be done for the 72:81(local Industrial Property Tax Incentive) as well.

Mr. Morrison stated that a direct mailer could be sent to the companies that are included in the 72:81.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. suggested concentrating with the 79-E and branching out after its canvassing.

Mrs. Christy Whipple asked Mr. Morrison about representation from Newport for the Senate Ways and Means Committee (for Job Creation Tax Credit).

Selectman Hooper explained that many people in Town would take advantage of tax incentives if they understood what they were and how to apply (in simplistic steps). He asked that any mailers be simple to understand and tax money will stay local.

There was a history of the instigation of 79-E in Newport. Further examples and a lengthy discussion of how individuals could use RSA 79-E were given.

Mr. John Lunn asked for a short recess of the meeting to correct the audio recording of NCTV. The Chair agreed.

Introduction of Budget and Review Schedule:

January 10: Start in-depth review of budget

January 13: budget meeting

January 17: BOS/budget meeting

March 2: BOS/budget meeting

Town Manager Rieseberg spoke on the Town's taxable base, increased infrastructure needs, needs of service and the budget's tax increase for the 2020-2021 fiscal year, and tax rate. He emphasized and explained:

- ❖ The increase in the gross budget (General Fund from last year to this fiscal year).
- ❖ The Default Budget
- ❖ No reductions in fulltime staff
- ❖ New debt service including two bridges
- ❖ Salary adjustments

Budget also includes:

- \$250,000 for road paving
- \$130,000 for sidewalk repairs
- \$ 86,500 to repair and maintain the Oak Street Bridge
- \$130,000 for engineering of the Sand Hill Bridge
- \$ 15,000 for the DPW Building Repairs
- \$ 73,478 for DPW 1 Ton Dump Truck
- \$ 36,983 for PD cruiser replacement
- \$ 6,200 for FD Mobile Data Terminal (first responder)
- \$ 50,000 for Building Repairs (Old Courthouse, Fire Station, District Court roof)

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that after 3-5 years of aggressive work on infrastructure the BOS could back off a bit and redirect funds into long term Capital projects.

Chairman Kessler addressed Town Manager Rieseberg and asked if the Fire Department has gotten repeaters for their trucks. Town Manager Rieseberg stated they were in the process of getting them in. He explained the money and grant that they had been awarded and did not know if there had been enough money to fund as many as they needed.

One bright point was that the health insurance was an increase of 1.4%. The norm is approximately 7%. It is an anomaly fiscal year 2020-2021.

Finance Director Brown reviewed the 2020 Bonds, Operating Budget and Warrant Articles for the Selectmen.

After more discussion, Town Manager Rieseberg said the schedule of departments to be reviewed at the budget meetings will be made available to the Selectmen and the BAC members.

Winter Road Maintenance Update: Town Manager Rieseberg was pleased to report the following from the Public Works Department:

- There is ample sand and salt in stock for the budget year.
- The sidewalk plow is operating and is stored in Town.
- There are new PWD drivers, they are becoming acclimating to the routes and the department
- There have been no major breaks of equipment

ACTION ITEMS: none

APPOINTMENTS: Fire Chief Steve Yannuzzi as Newport Health Officer : On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board appointed Fire Chief Steve Yannuzzi as Newport Health Officer. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Town Manager Rieseberg made the Selectmen and public aware that the Town would be looking for a Deputy Health Officer.

Kate Niboli-Luppold- Memorial and Monuments Committee: On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board appointed Mrs. Kate Niboli-Luppold as a full member of the Memorial and Monuments Committee. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into NPS pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation at 8:25 p.m. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Present at the NPS were Selectboard members Jeffrey Kessler, William Wilmot, John Hooper and Barry Connell. Town Manager Hunter Rieseberg was not in attendance for the beginning of the NPS.

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board exited the non-public session at 8:38 p.m.*

No action was taken.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:38 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, February 10, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for February 17, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.

Approved on: February 10, 2020