

**TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Board of Selectmen - Minutes for Meeting of July 20, 2020 6:30 pm**  
**Public Hearing and Regular Business Meeting**  
**Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773**  
**Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 869 1645 3721 Password: 513872**  
**+1 (253)215-8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees may apply)**

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**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman; John Hooper II, Barry Connell, Herb Tellor

**SELECTMAN ABSENT:** none

**STAFF PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Cody Morrison, Economic Development Coordinator; *Via Zoom:* Liselle Dufort, Town Clerk

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Bert Spaulding, Sr.; Jenna Darling, School Board member

**OTHER:** *Via Zoom:* Dr. Brendan Minnihan, Newport School Superintendent

**NCTV:** John Lunn

**CALL TO ORDER:** Town Manager Rieseberg called the meeting of the BOS to order at 6:30 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

**BOARD ORGANIZATION:** Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the Board of Selectmen would be electing officers for the upcoming year and asked for a nomination for the position of Chairman. Selectman Fratzel made a motion *to elect Selectman Jeffrey Kessler to the position of Chairman*. It was seconded by Selectman Connell. There were no other nominations. Town Manager Rieseberg called for a vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-1 (Kessler abstained).***

*Chairman Kessler took over the meeting.*

Chairman Kessler asked for a nomination for the position of Vice Chairman. Selectman Connell made a motion *to elect Selectman Fratzel to the position of Vice Chairman*. It was seconded by Selectman Hooper. There were no other nominations. Chairman Kessler called for a vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-1 (Fratzel abstained).***

**PUBLIC HEARING:** Chairman Kessler read aloud the Public Notice into the record:

The Town of Newport will hold two consecutive public hearings on Monday, July 20, 2020 at 6:30 PM at the Newport Town Offices at 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, New Hampshire to hear public comment on a proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). Up to \$500,000 annually is available to municipalities or counties on a competitive basis for economic development projects, housing and public facility projects, and emergency activities. Up to \$25,000 is available for feasibility study grants. All projects must directly benefit a majority of low- and moderate-income persons. The proposal to be heard includes:

1. A proposed CDBG application for up to \$500,000 to replace the rear disability entrance at the Newport Opera House.
2. Adoption of the Town of Newport Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan for the project.

A handout is available.

Chairman Kessler opened Public Hearing # 1 on the grant submission.

Mr. Cody Morrison addressed the Board and explained that the purpose of these public hearings required for CDBG funding is to solicit the view of citizens on community development; furnish the citizens with information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities which may be undertaken under the Community Development Act. The proposal to be considered by the Board of Selectmen is a CDBG grant application for up to \$500,000 in CDBG funds for the replacement of the rear disability entrance at the Newport Opera House.

Addressing the people present, Chairman Kessler stated the Board will now invite comment from the public.

Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. asked for the scope of the work that will be done with \$500,000. Mr. Morrison explained the scope of work proposed.

Chairman Kessler stated that the amount Newport is requesting is up to \$500,000.

There being no further questions, Chairman Kessler closed Public Hearing # 1.

Selectman Connell made a motion: ***to support submission of a CDBG application for up to \$500,000 to replace the rear disability entrance at the Newport Opera House; and, to authorize the Town Manager to sign, submit and execute any documents that may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG application and contract.*** It was seconded by Selectman Fratzel. ***The motion passed 5-0-0.***

Chairman Kessler opened Public Hearing # 2 on the Adoption of the Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan for this project.

Mr. Cody Morrison addressed the Board and stated that if any displacement takes place as a result of this project, the Uniform Relocation Act must be followed, which requires that any displaced household or business in a project using any federal funds must be found comparable housing in a comparable neighborhood at a comparable price. There will be no displacement as a result of this project. Under the certification section of the application, the Town will certify that the Residential Anti-displacement & Relocation (RARA) plan is in place, and in the event that it is discovered that this specific project does displace persons or households, a displacement implementation plan must be submitted to CDFA prior to obligating or expending funds.

Addressing the people present, Chairman Kessler invited comment from the public.

There were no comments or questions from the public.

Chairman Kessler closed Public Hearing # 2.

Selectman Fratzel made a motion: ***To adopt the Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for this project.*** It was seconded by Selectman Hooper. ***The motion passed 5-0-0.***

**AGENDA REVIEW:** Move INFORMATIONAL: Start of School/Town Assistance Update-Superintendent Minnihan to before minutes (Kessler); ADD ACTION ITEM: reappoint Mr. Ben Nelson as a full member to the Zoning Board of Adjustment (Kessler)

**INFORMATIONAL: Start of School/Town Assistance Update- Superintendent Minnihan**

Superintendent Minnihan joined the BOS via ZOOM. Ms. Jenna Darling, School Board Representative was also in attendance for the agenda item in the BOS Room.

There was a lengthy discussion between Superintendent Minnihan, Ms. Darling and Board members concerning a proposed plan for the 2020-2021 school year. The BOS focused on the opening of schools in the fall. For the full discussion visit: [www.nctv-nh.org](http://www.nctv-nh.org).

Among the items discussed were:

1. Options for the reopening of school in the fall.
2. Possible use of Towle Building for the Pre-K students (to allow for social distancing at Richards Elementary).
3. School sports: New Hampshire Interscholastic Athletic Association (NHIAA) will decide if statewide high school sports will be held.
4. Health concerns and requirements for staff, students and visitors in buildings.
5. Improved remote learning procedure and classes. Mandatory attendance.
6. Grant to Claremont/Newport/Fall Mountain for live streaming of lessons
7. Liability to school-coronavirus.
8. Survey to parents
9. Buses

Superintendent Minnihan addressed the Selectmen and stated they were not experts with this novel situation. They were incorporating outlines from other states who have had success, relied on science and guidance from the (Center for Disease Control) CDC, Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and Department of Education (DOE). In addition, the nurses of the school district had weekly meetings with Dr. Benjamin P. Chan, Head Epidemiologist for the State of New Hampshire. They shared information from these meetings with the SAU and its teachers.

The Selectmen voiced their opinions and frustrations with the situation, the effect on student's educational and social growth and the need for schools to reopen in the fall.

Superintendent Minnihan told the BOS the school would be presenting their proposed plan to the School Board next Thursday, July 30, 2020. If approved, the school personnel would have one month to prepare their classes and schools to the mandate voted on by the School Board.

When asked, the BOS was told there would be time for public input at the July 30, 2020 School Board meeting.

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): July 6, 2020** - On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2020 BOS meeting with the following corrections:*

1. *Rewrite the first paragraph under INFORMATIONAL: OHRV Operation-Police Chief Brent Wilmot; was changed to "...Police Chief Brent Wilmot addressed the Board members and explained he was in attendance at the BOS meeting to ask for the Board's permission for Town personnel to ride the Town of Newport Public Safety Off Highway Recreation Vehicle (OHRV) on roads during non-emergency operations. He explained the steps required by NH RSA 215-A:15."*
2. *Under same INFORMATIONAL ITEM, under Selectman Hooper's question change "...was licensed..." to "...was registered".*

Chairman Kessler called for a vote *to approve the minutes of the July 6, 2020 meeting as amended. The motion passed 3-0-2.* (Fratzel and Tellor abstained)

**CONSENT AGENDA:** On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of the July 6, 2020 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

**OPEN FORUM:** Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. stated he had a petition concerning the survey sent by the school to parents and guardians of school age children. He read it into the record. He asked people to sign it; individuals could contact him if it was not available to them. Completed surveys will be presented to the school board at the July 30, 2020 meeting.

Chairman Kessler addressed Mr. Spaulding and questioned the wording of his petition and gave suggested rewording. He explained the rewording being suggested.

Selectman Hooper gave his opinion on the wording of the survey. He also suggested rewording it.

Selectman Connell gave his opinion on the previous year's remote learning. He stated, as a former educator, it was important to get the children back to school. If children were not reading at grade level at grade three; studies have shown they will always be behind. Concluding, he stated they also have to do everything possible to keep it (school) safe.

Selectman Fratzel said that the goal, the job, was to get children back in school.

School Board Representative Darling agreed that the goal was to get children back in school.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Selectman Hooper thanked all the volunteers who worked the polls for Town Meeting on July 14, 2020.

Selectman Connell also thanked the volunteers who worked the polls for Town Meeting voting on July 14, 2020. He stated his concerns on an upcoming Planning Board Case. There was a short discussion between Chairman Kessler and Selectman Connell concerning the Rules of Procedure for the Boards involved.

Selectman Fratzel welcomed Herb Tellor as the Board's new Selectman.

Selectman Tellor had nothing to share at this time.

Chairman Kessler:

- 1) Welcomed Herb Tellor to the Board
- 2) Stated the BOS is trying to maintain social distancing at the BOS meetings now. Newport and Sullivan County have been very fortunate with few cases of coronavirus.
- 3) Thanked those who came out and voted.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

**INFORMATIONAL:** Plans for Selectboard Retreat - Chairman Kessler and Board explained the Selectboard retreat to those viewing as well as new Selectman Tellor. They agreed to hold the retreat on August 10, 2020 at 6 pm in the BOS room. Some proposed topics were:

- Community Center
- Budget (upcoming)

- Warrant Articles
- Capital Improvement Plan (CIP)
- Economic Outlook for Newport
- “White Board” projects

If information is needed, contact Town Manager Rieseberg.

Year End Financial Update - Town Manager Rieseberg informed the Board members that the Town has completed the 2019-2020 fiscal year in the “black”. He would like to do some projects with the leftover money.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. addressed the BOS and informed them the Newport School District has also ended the 2019-2020 fiscal year in the “black”. He praised the new Business Administrator for the job he has done.

Town Voting Review/ Planning for Fall Elections - Chairman Kessler thanked the Newport School District for the use of the high school gym. He has received many compliments on its use for the Town Meeting voting. For the following full discussion visit: [www.nctv-nh.org](http://www.nctv-nh.org).

There was a lengthy discussion among the Selectboard members, Town Clerk Liselle Dufort and School Board member Jenna Darling on where to hold the September primary and November general election voting. Building logistics of the high school gym, Towle building gym, Rec Center and the Opera House were assessed. The group also talked about parking availability at each location.

Town Clerk Liselle Dufort discussed absentee ballots, the way to fill them out, the issues election officials encountered at the Town Meeting voting and the Town Clerk’s communication with the State of NH concerning the issues. The Selectboard members then gave their opinions on the absentee ballot process.

After a discussion on the hours of operation at the polls; on a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted to change the hours of operation at the polls to 7 am-7 pm. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

After further discussion, Town Clerk Liselle Dufort was asked to meet with Newport Town Moderator Virginia Irwin to discuss the logistics for the September and November elections.

**ACTION ITEMS:** Adoption and Approval of Operational Guidelines for the Board of Selectmen - After a short discussion, on a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the Board voted by roll call to adopt the Operational Guidelines for the Board of Selectmen. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

#### Selectmen Appointments to Boards and Committees

The Selectmen volunteered for the following:

<u>Board/Committee</u>	<u>2020-2021</u>
Airport Advisory Committee	Tellor
Budget Advisory Committee	Kessler
Budget Advisory Committee (alternate)	Connell
CIP	Fratzel
Community Center Committee	Fratzel and Connell
Conservation Commission	Connell
ECON	Hooper; alternate Connell
EDC Advisory Board	Fratzel
Facility & Fields Advisory Committee	Tellor and Hooper
Historic District/Heritage Commission	Hooper

“ (alternate)	Tellor
Monuments & Memorials Committee	Tellor
“ (alternate)	Hooper
NCTV	Kessler and Connell
Planning Board	Hooper
Planning Board (alternate)	Tellor
Recreation Advisory Council	Tellor
Recreation Advisory Council (alternate)	Connell
Upper Valley Lake Sunapee Regional	
Planning Commission (2)	Kessler and Tellor
Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA)	Kessler
ZBA (alternate)	Fratzel

**APPOINTMENTS:** On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board reappointed Mr. Ben Nelson as a full member to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire June 30, 2023. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper, *the Board voted unanimously by roll call vote to enter into nonpublic session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3II(e) Litigation at 8:47 pm. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

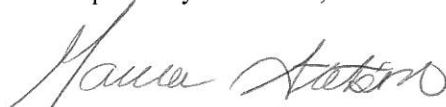
Present were Selectboard members Jeffrey Kessler, Barry Connell, Todd Fratzel, John Hooper and Herb Tellor (in the BOS Room). Town Manager Hunter Rieseberg was also in attendance (in the BOS Room).

*The Board exited NPS at 9:11 pm.*

No action was taken.

*The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:12 pm.*

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for August 3, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

Approved on: August 3, 2020