

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen - Minutes for Meeting of August 30, 2021 6:30 pm
Regular Business Meeting, Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773
Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 882 4985 0686 Passcode: 238689
+1 (253) 215-8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees may apply)

SELECTMEN PRESENT: *BOS Room:* Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Keith Sayer, Herbert Tellor, Jr.; Barry Connell, *Via Zoom:* John Hooper II, Vice Chairman

SELECTMEN ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: *BOS Room:* Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Steve Yannuzzi, Fire Chief; Lt. John Early, Fire Department; Peter Lovely, Recreation Director; Glen West, Buildings and Grounds

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: *BOS Room:* Bert Spaulding, Sr.; Dick Wentzell

NCTV: John Lunn, Executive Director NCTV

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: ADD: under INFORMATIONAL Lease Agreement (Rieseberg/Kessler)

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): August 16, 2021 - Due to a lack of quorum from the August 16, 2021 meeting; the Board voted to move the agenda item to later in the meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Tellor; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of the August 30, 2021 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Dick Wentzell addressed the Selectboard on several concerns he had with the Town. After a general discussion, Mr. Wentzell was told where he could find information to many of his questions. Selectmen asked him to send them copies of additional questions he would like answered.

Selectman Hooper joined the meeting via zoom at 6:38 p.m.

Mr. Glen West addressed the Selectboard and presented them with his resignation from the Town of Newport as of September 13, 2021 at 3:30 p.m. He listed grievances with the municipality (that included projects in Town) which have accumulated over time. Chairman Kessler told Mr. West he was sorry he was leaving and thanked him for his service to the Town.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): August 16, 2021 - On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Tellor; *the Board voted by roll call vote to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 3-0-2 (Kessler and Connell abstained).*

COMMUNICATIONS: Selectman Hooper had nothing to share at this time.
Selectman Sayer had nothing to share at this time.
Selectman Connell had nothing to share at this time.
Selectman Tellor had nothing to share at this time.
Chairman Kessler stated:

- ❖ The Library Arts Center Apple Pie Crafts Fair and Library Festival were very successful. Ms. Christine Benner had been in attendance; she had a booth and showed how much grant money has been awarded to the Town of Newport for various projects.
- ❖ People had two more days to vote for a grant (\$25,000) to build a dog park in Newport. As Ms. Benner had stated at a previous BOS meeting, a Community Garden was being planned (with private funding) adjacent to the park. There would be no cost to the taxpayers for these projects.

INFORMATIONAL: Updated Fire Alarm Ordinance - Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the draft ordinance they had was a “first read”. The BOS was to ask Fire Chief Yannuzzi questions and changes can be made as necessary. At the September 20, 2021 BOS meeting it will be an Action Item. Chairman Kessler asked what the proposed changes in the draft document were. Fire Chief Yannuzzi stated that currently there are no changes to the ordinance document. He wants to standardize the fire alarm code and system in Newport. Fire Chief Yannuzzi addressed the Board and explained the proposed revisions for their review and acceptance. He answered all questions from the Board and public.

Fire Chief Yannuzzi asked to speak on two additional items.

- 1) Fire Department received two Federal Grants.
 - a. \$26,000 with 5% Town match to expand the 9-11 address sign (red placard) program in Newport
 - b. \$119,000 for power lifts for the stretchers in the ambulances

Town Manager Rieseberg stated the office would be compiling a list of all grants awarded to Newport for the Selectboard’s review. When asked, Fire Chief Yannuzzi stated the EMS did not have power lifts in their ambulances, only hydraulic stretchers. The \$119,000 includes the power lifts and installation. The fire truck grant for \$600,000-\$700,000 is a very competitive grant. He has not heard from them. The SAFER (Staffing for Adequate Fire and Emergency Response) Grant Program through FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) is also a very competitive 1.2 million dollars grant. He has not heard from them.

Chairman Kessler stated that the management and acquiring the grants was the job of Economic Developer Christine Benner. She has done an excellent job researching, writing and getting the grants for Newport. Town Manager Rieseberg also congratulated department heads for their input.

Agenda Item was taken out of Order:

ACTION ITEM: Cold River Fire Chiefs Association/Newport Fire Department: Request for Waiver for Use of the Common on September 11, 2021 - Fire Chief Yannuzzi addressed the Board members and requested a waiver for the use of the Common on the morning of September 11, 2021 for a twentieth anniversary event of the day. Lt. Early gave a synopsis of the program and explained that the association felt that the Newport Common would provide an excellent venue for social distancing and logistics. On a motion by Selectman Tellor, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted by roll call vote to waive all fees on the Common for the Cold River Fire Chiefs Association for the program honoring the twentieth anniversary of 9-11. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

INFORMATIONAL: RSA 674:39-aa Restoration of Involuntarily Merged Lots-Susan Leavitt/Clement - Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the Board and explained the RSA 674:39-aa case. The Planning Board’s approval was contingent upon the approval of the BOS. Town Manager Rieseberg then stated that Town Counsel had requested that the Board not take a position for or against the case. He stated it was his understanding that action was not in the purview of the BOS. There was a general discussion between Chairman Kessler and Town Manager Rieseberg. Chairman Kessler asked for clarification that the Town counsel had said the Planning Board had completed everything for the case; additional action by the BOS was not needed. Town Manager Rieseberg stated he was correct. Mr. Spaulding, Sr. (Planning Board alternate) explained the case to the Selectmen. He addressed the Town Manager and stated he disagreed with the counsel. NH Statute was clear and stated that BOS approval was needed.

After a brief discussion, the Board members did not act on the agenda item. The Planning Board's approval of Case #2021-SDFP-002 would stand. From the Planning Board minutes of 2021.08.10: (On a motion by Mr. Kibbey, seconded by Mr. Tellor; ***the Board voted to accept Case 2021-SDFP-002 subject to:***

1. ***A voluntary merger by the BOS***
2. ***The R1 District is verified***

The motion passed 5-0-1(Merrow abstained)).

High School Coach of the Year-PJ Lovely - Chairman Kessler and Selectboard members congratulated PJ Lovely on his 2021 USTFCCA High School Track & Field Coach of the Year award. Mr. Lovely thanked the Board, commending the excellent team players and coaching staff that assisted the team that had made it all possible.

Community Center Update - Chairman Kessler addressed the reestablishment of the Community Center Committee and potential voting on the project at Town Meeting 2022. Chairman Kessler gave a history of the current Rec Center. He stated Town Manager Rieseberg was in the process of getting updated costs for the Center. He wanted to call for a meeting to bring something forward. Chairman Kessler asked the Board members their thoughts on going forward with the plan.

- Selectman Tellor gave his support.
- Selectman Hooper stated he was a believer in a new Community Center, it was needed. His business and family have pledged to its construction. He was nervous about the timing of the project. Being in the construction supply business, he gave a full picture of the financial volatility of the construction market at the present time. He stated that good contractors were booked; as to pricing materials, contractors would have to bid high in order to ensure covering the cost of materials. He encouraged invigorating discussion and options; Selectman Hooper recommended a change in the pledging formula for the Community Center. The previous task of raising three million dollars in one year was too ambitious.
- Selectmen Sayer said he did not like the location of the proposed Community Center. He did not believe there was enough room for the building. He was not happy about the logistics in changing the ballfield, the banks around the area restrict room for growth and there wasn't enough space for parking. Mr. Lovely agreed with Selectman Sayer about the tight parking. Selectman Sayer then asked about the other locations that had been considered in 2018. Chairman Kessler recommended that Selectman Sayer read the Feasibility Study and other BreadLoaf documents on the Community Center.

When asked, Mr. Lovely stated with moving field hockey to the school complex, the youth soccer games will be moved to Meadow Park. There will be more parking needed at Meadow Park because of it. After further general discussion on the Community Center Project, Selectman Connell asked Mr. Lovely what his thoughts were on potential alternative sites for his programs if another bond failed. He said:

- A. Convince the School to allow them to utilize the Towle gymnasium floor; have the Rec operate out of the bottom floor of the Towle Building.
- B. Build a new gym at the high school (benefit the school and the Town).

Selectman Connell said that these were hard times. He was a great believer in youth. The more done for the youth the better we (Town) will be. Chairman Kessler said the Town had already looked at using the Towle Building. Mr. Lovely explained they had looked into redoing the whole Towle building. He proposed using only the gymnasium floor of the building said how he would put the areas to use.

Mr. Lovely listed the improvements of using the bottom floor of Towle:

- 1 Gym with spectator seating
- 2 Lockers Rooms
- 3 Two classrooms to use for afterschool programs/fitness room
- 4 Give the Rec a little more space than currently has; increase capacity slightly

It would not fix everything; it would be an improvement.

Selectman Connell asked when the school was going to bid and vote on the CTE Renovation. He was told voting was in March 2022. Chairman Kessler stated the school was looking at a \$10,000,000 Renovation. The state would pay for 75% of the costs; Business Administrator Ed Emond believed he could acquire \$2,000,000 more in grants. Chairman Kessler explained the school almost did not need to bond the CTE project.

Selectman Connell said that the BOS/Town needed to work with the school. We didn't want an "us versus you". Chairman Kessler agreed that both projects are critical. There are grants available to the schools that are not available to the Town. Mr. John Lunn, Director NCTV; informed the BOS that the CTE Renovation numbers are:

\$19.5 million: the original proposal with large areas; \$13 million: the scaled down proposal; \$10 million: bare bones proposal; The \$13 million option might be as low as \$500,000 for taxpayers (if they get the additional grants).

There was a general discussion on both construction projects among the Board members. Chairman Kessler said he would like to have a meeting on September 13, 2021 at 6:30 p.m. in the BOS Room to officially form a Community Center committee with new and old members.

Selectmen Board Retreat (date) - After discussion among the Board members on dates, times and the need of a facilitator; the Board members scheduled their Board Retreat for Tuesday, September 28, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. in the BOS Room. The Board requested that Ms. Benner be invited for part of the retreat.

Communications Lease - Chairman Kessler addressed the Board and Town Manager Rieseberg and discussed whether the agenda item should be tabled. Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the Board members and explained the Motorola Communication Lease Agreement he was asking the BOS to sign. For clarification for the Board and public; Chairman Kessler read aloud the resolution to adopt the lease. Town Manager Rieseberg stated they could adopt the resolution and he would not act on the lease until the next meeting (September 20, 2021) or they could put off discussing and signing until the September 20, 2021 meeting. After a general discussion, warrantee and financial explanation of the lease, on a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted by roll call vote to adopt the Resolution to enter into a lease agreement with Motorola Solutions, Inc. and to authorize Town Manager Hunter F. Rieseberg to sign any and all documents pertaining to it. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

APPOINTMENTS: none

Selectman Hooper addressed the BOS and stated that at the last meeting there were community members that attended that stated they had difficulty using the Town website and emailing the Selectmen. He stated that the site was not user friendly for everyone. It was not the first time this has been brought to the BOS attention. After a short discussion, Town Manager Rieseberg was directed to create a more user-friendly webpage for communication between community members and Selectmen.

On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Tellor; ***the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:13 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for September 20, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

Approved on: September 20, 2021