

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen Minutes of January 17, 2022
Regular Business Meeting
Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773
Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 820 4129 0439 Passcode: 406008
+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, *Zoom:* John Hooper II, Vice Chairman

SELECTMAN ABSENT: none

STAFF PRESENT: *BOS Room:* Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; *zoom:* Christine Benner

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Brenda Burns (as community member)

GUEST: Keith Thibault, Southwestern Community Services

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. Because Selectman Hooper was attending the meeting via zoom all votes would be roll call votes.

AGENDA REVIEW: accepted as presented

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): December 6, 2021 - Selectman Tellor *made a motion to table the minutes of the December 6, 2021 in order to revise the verbiage of the three action item motions.* It was seconded by Selectman Sayer. *The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.*

NPS December 6, 2021 - On a motion by Selectman Tellor, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the NPS minutes of the December 6, 2021 BOS meeting. The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.*

December 20, 2021 - On a motion by Selectman Tellor, seconded by Selectman Sayer; *the Board voted to table the minutes of the December 20, 2021 BOS meeting awaiting the inclusion of adjournment information. The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Tellor; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of the January 17, 2022 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.*

OPEN FORUM: Ms. Brenda Burns, Newport addressed the Board and stated she wanted to make people aware that she had recently been a victim of identity theft. It happened due a lack of policies and procedures at the United States Postal Service (USPS). She stated she did not know it had happened until she had received a letter from USPS asking that she confirm the change of address. Ms. Burns stated it was important for people to know that this type of identity theft is occurring. Chairman Kessler thanked Ms. Burns for the information and expressed his sympathy for what she was going through.

COMMUNICATIONS: Selectman Sayer had nothing to share at this time. Selectman Tellor had nothing to share at this time. Selectman Connell had nothing to share at this time.

Selectman Hooper extended his thanks to the plowing crews for the overnight cleanup. They did a good job. Chairman Kessler:

- ❖ Asked Town Manager Rieseberg to relay thanks to the Public Works on behalf of the BOS.
- ❖ He asked people to check their roofs. There had been a lot of heavy snow that had fallen in Newport.
- ❖ Stated that the School Board was holding its budget and bond hearings. He encouraged people to learn about the School's Budget. He also stated that the Bond Hearing was on the CTE Renovation. Chairman Kessler stressed the importance of the CTE Renovation (\$1.5 million bond/\$15 million project) and its investment in the future of Newport.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the Board would be given the proposed Town budget on January 31, 2022 (per state law.) He then passed out a tentative calendar for Budget season 2022. Chairman Kessler read aloud the dates on the proposed calendar:

Budget sessions: February 3; February 10; February 14; February 17; March 7 - Budget and Bond Hearings; April 5th - Deliberative Session; May 10th - Town voting

BAC meetings are planned for February 28, and the first three weeks in March 2022 to review the Warrant Articles. Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the Board and stated the Town would be asking that an additional Warrant Article be added to the ballot. It would be a bond for a grant to study the Dorr Woolen Mill lagoons (100% repaid; no tax impact).

After a brief discussion, on a motion by Selectman Tellor, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board approved the calendar for Budget season 2022. The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.***

INFORMATIONAL: Transportation Funding, Southwestern Community Services; Keith Thibault - Mr. Keith Thibault addressed the Board members and gave a brief history of Southwestern Community Services (SCS), its many programs that assist citizens in Newport and the bus route it is now running for the citizens of Newport and the surrounding area. He requested that the annual Warrant Article request of \$10,000 for SCS transportation be put into the Town Operating Budget and not voted on separately each year. Board members and Mr. Thibault had a lengthy discussion on Southwestern Community Services programs and how they assist Newporters. Mr. Thibault stated that there were two ways to contact SCS for information on service eligibility: www.scshepls.org or by phone: (603)-352-7512. Mr. John Lunn addressed the Board and stated the importance of public transportation in rural areas such as Newport. He was in favor of the Southwestern Program and encouraged the Board to approve their request to be included in the budget. Selectman Connell reiterated for clarification that Mr. Thibault was requesting that the SCS request of \$10,000 be included in the Operating Budget. Mr. Thibault agreed. After a brief discussion, the Board stated it would decide on including the SCS request during the 2022 Budget Sessions.

Community Center Update - Chairman Kessler stated that including the pledge of \$1.5 million, the Community Center has raised almost \$2.4 million. If the Town Bond is not passed in 2022, they will lose \$1.7 million toward the Community Center in a future effort to build. Chairman Kessler explained that the new Community Center was an important Town investment to meet the needs of the community.

There was a discussion by the BOS on the wording for the Community Center Warrant Article. Tentatively it will remain as originally submitted in 2018: *(from the 2018 Town Report: "...this article is contingent upon the receipt, by the Town, of at least Three Million (\$3,000,000) Dollars from non-tax sources as described above, and no bonds or notes shall be issued for this purpose until and unless such funds are obtained...")*.

There was further discussion on the Community Center among the Board and Town Manager Rieseberg.

Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) Membership - Chairman Kessler stated that he wanted the Town Budget to be ready for the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC) before their Deliberative Session in April. There had not

been a meeting of the BAC for the school. He stated that there was a vacancy on the BAC and requested that any individual who is interested in volunteering on the committee contact the Town Moderator, Virginia Irwin.

ACTION ITEMS: Newport Farmers Market-Waiver of Fees for Use of Common - There was a lengthy discussion by the Board members on the use of the Common by the Farmers Market. The issues of parking on the Common, lack of policing of the users by the organization's coordinators, degradation of the Common from neglect, the monetary investment in the Common, its trees and potential barriers around the Common were discussed. Town Manager Rieseberg was asked to update the rental agreement form. The one currently in use was dated March 19, 2018. Selectman Tellor stated he was not against the waiving of fees for qualifying users, but he does not believe the Board should waive fees for those who neglect their duties as stipulated in the Town Common rental agreement (#3 A-E).

Chairman Kessler took a poll of the Selectmen for their input. On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board waived the fees for the use of the Common by the Newport Farmers Market starting Friday, May 27, 2022 through Friday, September 30, 2022 from three pm to six pm. A cover letter will be sent to the organizers:*

- 1. With the rules and regulations for the use of the Common (#3 A-E).*
- 2. The letter will state if the Newport Farmers Market does not adhere to the rules of the agreement in 2022 the waiver of fees will potentially be curtailed in future years.*

The motion passed by roll call vote 5-0-0.

On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Tellor; *the Board voted by roll call vote to adjourn at 7:47 p.m. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for February 7, 2022 at 6:30 p.m.

Approved on: February 7, 2022