

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Board of Selectmen Minutes of July 10, 2023 - Regular Business Meeting

Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773

Meeting ID: 810 7960 4568

Passcode: 651400

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81079604568?pwd=S2Y0WnpJS25xT3l3SDRYSDNkaEM0QT09>

+1 (253) 215 8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees apply)

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Barry Connell, Chairman; James Burroughs, Vice Chairman; Jeffrey Kessler, Keith Sayer, and Jeffrey North

SELECTMAN ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Paul Brown, Finance Director; Lee Dufort, Town Clerk

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Bert Spaulding Sr., Ed Carr, Jack Franks, Jenna Darling, Theresa Lavoie, Wayne Boardman, Mary Boardman

NCTV: NCTV

CALL TO ORDER: Barry Connell called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m., followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel: *The Board of Selectman voted unanimously to enter a non-public session: RSA 91-A:3, II (a) Personnel on a motion made by Selectman Keith Sayer, seconded by Selectman Jeff North, including Paul Brown.*

The Board voted to exit the non-public session at 7:11 p.m.

Chairman Connell relays to the public the Board voted to accept Hunter Rieseberg's resignation as of January 1, 2024. They have entered into a separation from employment agreement with Town Manager Rieseberg, effective July 10, 2023. Selectman Burroughs added by thanking Mr. Rieseberg on behalf of the Board for his hard work and diligence.

On a motion made by Selectman Burroughs, seconded by Selectman Kessler, the Board voted unanimously to appoint Paul Brown as Interim Town Manager. 5-0-0.

Connell adds the Board will be actively looking to fill the position. He states there will be a committee to help with the search which is ideally composed of (2) Selectmen, the Interim Town Manager, one (1) department head, one (1) employee below the supervisor level, one (1) member of the Chamber of Commerce, and three (3) at-large citizens. The Board suggested the employees of the Town be residents of Newport. The committee will be appointed during the next Board of Selectmen meeting, July 17, 2023. *Mr. Paul brown is sworn in by Lee Dufort.*

Bert Spaulding Sr. uses 91-A law to request all the information in the severance package.

AGENDA REVIEW: Selectman Kessler requests there be a decision made whether to move forward with the Community Center shop drawings. Interim Town Manager Brown states this will be addressed at the next meeting.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS: Minutes from June 19, 2023 were accepted by the Board on a *motion made by Selectman Burroughs, seconded by Selectman North, the Board voted unanimously. 5-0-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA: *Selectman Kessler made a motion to accept the Consent Agenda, seconded by Selectman Burroughs. The Board voted unanimously. 5-0-0.*

INFORMATIONAL: Dog Licensing – Mrs. Dufort, Town Clerk, presents the Board with revisions on the warrant regarding dog licensing. Revisions included the addition of Town Ordinance 18 and the RSA 466. The wording was also amended to make unlicensed dog penalties enforceable. *On a motion made by Selectman Kessler to acknowledge the notification of unregistered dogs under RSA 466 and Town Ordinance 18, Selectman Burroughs seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously. 5-0-0.*

Main Street Striping - Selectman Jeff North presents the Board with some information about Main Street Striping. Selectman North has spoken with the company that striped the school zones. They recommend thermoplastic painting as it lasts longer than regular paint. Selectman North communicates he is in touch with the gentleman in charge of project.

ACTION ITEMS: Airport ARPA Rescue Grant - Accept and Authorize Town Manager to Sign All Related Documents - Interim Town Manager Brown, states they have applied for this grant and ready to move forward. *On a motion made by Selectman Kessler to authorize the Interim Town Manager to sign all related documents related to the ARPA Airport Rescue grant, seconded by Selectman Burroughs. The Board voted unanimously, 5-0-0.*

Accept State of NH Office of Highway Safety Grant and Authorize the Town Manager to Sign All Related Documents - Interim Town Manager Brown updates the Board about the various police grants for highway safety. The grant total is \$16,793, with \$10,700 being for enforcement patrols, and \$6,093 for cruiser radar equipment. *On a motion made by Selectman Burroughs to accept and authorize the Interim Town Manager to sign all related documents, Seconded by Selectman North. The Board voted unanimously, 5-0-0.*

Enter Into an ARPA and DWGTF Grant Agreement with the State of NHDES and Authorize the Town Manager to Sign All Related Document - Interim Town Manager Brown informs the Board this is for the North Newport Well. Interim Town Manager Brown states American Rescue Plan Act is the program the Town has received all the funding from, and Drinking Water Ground Water Trust Fund is state money. *On a motion made by Selectman Burroughs, to allow the Interim Town Manager to sign all grant agreements between ARPA and DWGTF grant, between Town of Newport and NHDES, seconded by Selectman Kessler, the Board voted unanimously, 5-0-0.*

OPEN FORUM: Ed Karr raises concern about the lack of enforcement surrounding dog owners properly disposing of their dog's waste. Mr. Karr would like to see some consequences regarding this issue. Additionally, he asks the Board for clarification on Hunter Rieseberg's status, whether he was terminated, or if he retired. Mr. Carr questions the price difference between the two options. Chairman Connell responds by saying the termination will cost the town less than a retirement. He adds there will be more information regarding the Town Manager's termination in the near future.

Burt Spaulding Sr., is questioning if the Board is working to solve the dilemma involving the June 8, 2023 letter. Selectman Connell responds by saying it is a legal case in which they have directed the towns lawyer in terms of negotiations. He states the town has not been served yet. Connell says he would expect the letter to come to him yet has not received anything from the Sullivan County's office.?

Theresa Lavoie speaks out about how it is been her pleasure working with Hunter Rieseberg. She communicates that he has done a lot of great things for this community.

Jack Franks, Avanru Development Group President/CEO (Spring Street Housing), expresses his intent to continue to work with the Town of Newport on furthering well thought out development projects. Mr. Franks reiterates they share common goals of providing people with housing and want to be clear they are here to help and want to work with the town. Chairman Connell responds to Mr. Franks by stating the towns lawyer will be reaching out, and they both look forward to coming to a resolution regarding the rates.

Wayne Boardman addressed the Board about the Pine Street Cemetery and how he feels as though it needs to be maintained more frequently.

Jenna Darling asked the status of the Town signing the MOU for the SRO within the schools. Ms. Darling questioned if Interim Town Manager will be able to move forward and sign the documents.

A concern was raised regarding the visibility of the Pine Street and Elm Street intersection. Selectman Burroughs responds to the concern by saying the overgrow is in the road Right-of-Way. He adds they will put it on the list of road maintenance; however, the town is sort personnel.

COMMUNICATIONS: **Selectman North** talks about the amount of work they have ahead of them and the Board members are here because they love this community. He thanks Mr. Brown, and offers him their support. **Selectman Sayer** addresses the management agreement the town has with local television. He states this agreement expired June 30, 2023. Selectman Sayer says NCTV is willing to renew the agreement, and asked for that to be put on the next agenda. **Selectman Kessler** relays to the Board he has been questioned about a possible gravel pit on Route 10 in Newport. Chairman Connell says he does not believe the property owners do not have all the permits needed to sell materials. The town is aware of this and is going to do some more research on if the owners are using it for personal use. Additionally, Selectman Kessler addresses the concern during the June 19, 2023 meeting surrounding building permits for the CTE Center. He states how it was implied the town was holding up or not issues the necessary permits for proceed with the construction. Selectman Kessler comments that the Town Manager, at the time, sent out an email asking about said permit and the building inspector reported that he had not received nor seen a building permit application from the school. The school has since then, sent in an application for the CTE building permit. Interim Town Manager Brown met with the school and the state last week; the permit request has been received and it is under review. **Selectman Burroughs** gives an update on roads due to the heavy amounts of rain. He states that John Stark Highway, Blaisdell Road, Old Goshen Road, Sand Hill Road, Aspen Road, and Reeds Mills Roads are impassible. He notes that many other roads are compromised. He thanks the employees and service workers for their help. Selectman Burroughs also thanked Josh Stevens for his help for the repairs on Aspen Road. Selectman Kessler adds Paul Brown is tracking the storm damage to later apply to FEMA with a grant to recover. The Governor has to declare a State Emergency in order for FEMA to be awarded to county, and then would be awarded to towns. Selectman Keith Sayer questions if there is a tractor trailer route in place when routes are compromised due to downtown flooding. Selectman Burroughs responds by saying the detour route has too many sharp dangerous turns for them to be able to have a set route. He adds in the past they would often do a controlled release of the tractor trailer trucks. **Chairman Connell** reiterates they are looking for people to serve on the committee to hire a new Town Manager. Chairman Connell thanked Mr. Rieseberg for what he has contributed to the town and wishes him well. He also thanks Mr. Brown for his willingness to help and step in. **Interim Town Manager Brown** states at the next meeting they will be discussing sewer fees. Next, he requests a 91-A II:3, II (e) Litigation.

The Board of Selectmen enter into Non-Public Session at 8:19 p.m. voted unanimously through a roll call vote.

The Board voted unanimously, by roll call vote, on a motion by Selectman Burroughs and seconded by Selectman Kessler, to exit Non-Public Session at 8:35 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: *The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:36 p.m.*

Respectfully submitted,



Riely Skarin
Recording Secretary

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for **August 14, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.**

Approved On: July 17, 2023