

**Town of Newport, New Hampshire  
Board of Selectmen  
Minutes for Meeting of October 2, 2017  
6:30 pm Regular Business Meeting  
Municipal Building**

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul J. Brown, Finance Director; Larry Wiggins, Director of Public Works; James Burroughs, Chief of Police

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** Russell Fowler, Frank Delorier, Gloria and David Kibbey, Bert Spaulding, Sr.

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

**AGENDA REVIEW:** Postpone INFORMATIONAL: Discussion of Lil' Red Baron to a future meeting

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (S):** August 28, 2017 Regular Minutes and NPS minutes; September 18, 2017

Regular and NPS Minutes of August 28, 2017:

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the Regular and NPS minutes of August 28, 2017 with the following corrections:*

1. *Page one, end of NPS should be: 'come out of NPS' not 'adjourn'.*

*The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Regular and NPS Minutes of September 18, 2017:

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the Regular and NPS minutes of September 18, 2017 with the following correction:*

1. *In header: 'September 19, 2017' should be 'September 18, 2017'*

*The motion passed 4-0-0.*

**CONSENT AGENDA:** On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of October 2, 2017 as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

**OPEN FORUM:** Residents Mr. David Kibbey, Mr. Russell Fowler, Mr. Frank Delorier and Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. all addressed the Board members and expressed their disappointment, frustration and the lack of communication they had had with Avitar representatives after recent reassessment. For the full discussion go to: <https://vimeo.com/channels/newportnhselectmen>

Mr. Kibbey explained his case, informing the BOS that he had questions with the process which Avitar used to make their assessments. He stated the Town and Mrs. Kaara Gonyo have done an excellent job assisting him. In initial conversations the Avitar Representative was polite and courteous; but he had not received a full explanation to his questions on how the company had determined the reassessment of his properties.

Mr. Fowler and Mr. Delorier also expressed their disappointment in not receiving an explanation on how Avitar had acquired their reassessments. Mr. Fowler had asked about his assessment and was not treated

courteously or given an explanation. Mr. Fowler stated a new charge had been added to his assessment. It had not been there in the three years he had lived in Newport. Mr. Delorier expressed that his experience revealed that Avitar was not user-friendly. He thanked the BOS for hearing him.

Mr. Kibbey stated in Mr. Fowler's and Mr. Delorier's defense (they lived in his Park) the assessments did not reflect the true Market Value of their properties.

The Board members asked questions (for clarification) of each individual and their case. Addressing Finance Director Brown the Board asked if he was aware of the complaints. Finance Director Brown stated it was the first he had heard of them. He was concerned with the lack of response by the Avitar Company. He was hesitant to give explanations for the company.

Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. explained his case, informing the BOS that Ms. Magnuson in the TOPAZ office had quickly found answers to some of his questions; he had asked an Avitar representative the same questions and had not received answers or full explanations to his questions.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. made the following Right to Know requests:

1. Assessments of all properties in the Town of Newport with river assessments.
2. All comparables that they (Avitar) used for the waterfront and river frontage.
3. View (have access to) their manual which explained the abbreviations used by Avitar.
4. List of every assessed property with RF, XS and WF on their tax assessment.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. also spoke to the Selectmen on behalf of Elaine McMann and her property. He presented her case to the BOS. Mr. Spaulding made the following Right to Know request for Ms. McMann:

1. The statute he (Mr. George Hildum) relies on in order to say on paper what someone's acreage is.

The Board members all expressed concern with the cases. Town Manager Rieseberg and the Board would look into them. The BOS thanked Mr. Kibbey, Mr. Fowler, Mr. Delorier and Mr. Spaulding, Sr. for coming in and bringing their concerns to the BOS attention. The BOS said Avitar would be contacted for answers.

### **COMMUNICATIONS:**

Selectman Hooper stated that Homecoming was a success. The Newport football team beat Fall Mountain 43-0. The Rec. Center fall activities are in progress. There are dedicated seasoned volunteers and some new ones as well.

Selectman Fratzel had nothing to share at this time.

Selectman Connell had received a letter from a resident on Chandlers Mill Road. It would be discussed later in the meeting.

Chairman Kessler stated that he was disappointed there was not a large crowd for the Homecoming spaghetti dinner as there has been in the past.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

### **INFORMATIONAL:**

#### Radio Expenditure

Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the BOS and stated there was an expenditure that the BOS needed to approve. He acknowledged Police Chief James Burroughs.

Police Chief Burroughs addressed the Board and explained the communication system in Newport serviced the police and fire departments as well as the EMS (ambulance). One component, the Digital interface unit (DIU), is now obsolete. Maintenance and serviceability of the DIU will soon be unavailable. Newport had two options: replace the base station with a new one or buy another DIU as a backup replacement unit. A DIU would cost \$4,000. It supports Newport's \$400,000 radio system. Without a working DIU the communication system is inoperable. Police Chief Burroughs asked for permission to purchase the \$4,000 unit while there are still some on the market. After a short discussion between the Board and Police Chief Burroughs; on a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the Board authorized the withdrawal of \$4,000 from the Communication System Capital Reserve fund for the purchase of the DIU (Digital interface unit) part for future use or sale.*** For clarification for the viewing public, Selectman Fratzel read aloud Warrant Article 11. from Town Meeting 2014 that established the Communication System Capital Reserve Fund and which gave its permitted uses. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

#### DPW Project Overview

Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the BOS and stated that Public Works Director Larry Wiggins was in attendance to give project overviews to the Board. Mr. Wiggins read aloud a prepared statement concerning the projects being done in Newport. Among those cited were:

- 2017 Pavement Projects and Sidewalk Projects
- Phosphorous removal plan at the WWTF
- Oak Street Bridge Project
- Coon Brook Bridge
- Well Project
- Gilman Pond
- 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> Street Project
- Knoll Street Project

Selectman Fratzel asked if there could be a presentation on the Phosphorous Removal Process. Mr. Wiggins stated yes. There was a short discussion about the project, timeframe of the presentation and the importance of sharing information about it.

The Board asked general questions on the DPW projects. Mr. Wiggins answered them all.

Mr. Wiggins was asked about the road situation on Chandlers Mill Road. Mr. Wiggins explained reasons for the problem stemmed from the dry weather Newport is now experiencing and the fact that the PWD was down its one grader for the last few months. Selectman Fratzel stressed that the resident's complaint was not dust, but rather ruts in the road and multiple calls had been made to the Town and nothing had been done.

There was further discussion between Selectman Fratzel and Mr. Wiggins concerning the problem on Chandlers Mill Road and the difficulties presented by the PWD in acquiring machinery needed and communication with citizens.

#### Knoll Street-Breakdown of Estimated Project Cost

The Finance Department and the Public Works Department put together a current outline of cost estimates for the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and Knoll Streets Project. The BOS held a general discussion with Finance Director Brown and Mr. Wiggins concerning the overall project, monetary aspects, easements and going to the Townspeople concerning adding Knoll Street to the Project as a Phase II. The Board thanked Mr. Wiggins for his presentation and information.

When asked, Mr. Wiggins stated that a work order was out for the culvert at the Karr's property.

#### Skateboard Park

Selectman Hooper addressed the Board and public and stated that the Rec Advisory Committee had met about the skateboard park. A skateboard committee had been put together to plan for a future park. Areas for establishing a new park were being looked into. There are a number of people trying to make a new skateboard park a reality. Selectman Hooper stated that if anyone had an interest in assisting, to contact P.J. Lovely at the Rec Department.

#### Selectboard Representative-School's Strategic Plan

A Selectman representative for the School's Strategic Plan meeting to be held in the Lou Thompson Room on October 3, 2017 from 5 pm to 7:30 pm was needed. Selectman Connell volunteered to represent the Town at the meeting.

#### **ACTION ITEM:**

##### Conservation Commission-Kenneth Dennis-Term to expire 2019

On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Fratzel; *the Board voted to appoint Mr. Kenneth Dennis as a full member to the Conservation Commission with a term to expire in June 2019. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

#### **NON-PUBLIC SESSION:**

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into non-public session pursuant to RSA 91-A:3, II (d) Real Estate-Tax Deeded Properties at 8:58 p.m. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

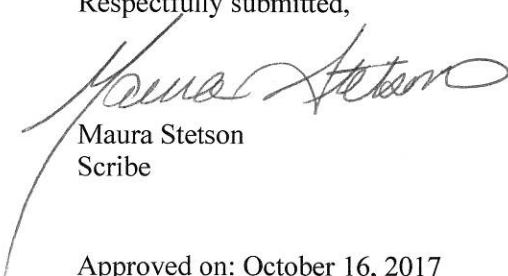
On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted unanimously to exit NPS at 9:35 p.m.*

There was no action taken during NPS.

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:36 p.m.*

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, October 16, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson  
Scribe

Approved on: October 16, 2017