

Town of Newport, New Hampshire
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for Meeting of April 2, 2018
6:30 pm Public Hearings and Regular Business Meeting
Municipal Building

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman; John Hooper II, Barry Connell, William Wilmot, Jr.

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul J. Brown, Finance Director; Larry Wiggins, P.E. Director of Public Works; Julie Magnuson, Planning and Zoning Administrator, Peter Lovely, Jr. Director of Recreation Department

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Gail Wilde, Linda Wadensten, School Board Chairperson; Tim Renier, School Board member; Cindy Gallagher, Newport Superintendent of Schools; Donna Mahair, Chamber of Commerce; Ella Casey, Chamber of Commerce; Elizabeth Woodhull Maiola; Christy Whipple, Jeff North, Hillary Halleck and Deena Cota, Community Center Committee; Lee Dufort, Larry Cote and Jacqueline Cote, Farmer's Market; Bert Spaulding, Sr. and Dick Wentzell

NCTV: Louis Cassorla, videographer

GUEST: Michael Petrovick, AIA; Catlin + Petrovick Architects, PC

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: Was accepted as presented.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: Chairman Kessler read aloud the Notice of Public Hearing for the April 2, 2018 BOS meeting. "The Town of Newport will hold a public hearing on Monday, April 2, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the Board of Selectmen meeting room, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773 in accordance with RSA 41:14-a, regarding a proposal to purchase approximately .08 acres, identified as Map 116 Lot 047 to be acquired in lieu of an easement for the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and Knoll Streets Infrastructure Project"

Recommendation to Purchase Land in Lieu of an Easement of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and Knoll Streets Infrastructure Project: Chairman Kessler opened the Public Hearing.

Town Manager Rieseberg explained it was a straightforward process. The Public Works Department was acquiring several easements for the Town in order to do the project. The landowner for this small parcel offered to gift the land to the Town. In pursuant to RSA 41:14-a the Town is required to have two public hearings before accepting the land. Town Manager Rieseberg stated as part of the process the Planning Board and the Conservation Commission had both been asked for recommendations; both bodies had recommended that the Town go forward with acquiring the property (Map 116 Lot 047). They had no concerns with the acquisition of the land under the purview of their authorities.

There was a short discussion as to whether the April 2nd Public Hearing was the 1st or second required public hearing.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the public could ask questions at this time.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. stated one reason for the Town to acquire the land (in addition to the construction project) would be for the safety of the public and Public Works employees during plowing.

Finance Director Brown clarified that the BOS needed to have two public hearings after the Planning Board and Conservation Commission had reviewed the recommendation to purchase the land. The BOS was currently holding their first hearing; the second was scheduled for April 16, 2018 at 6:30 p.m. in the BOS room.

Mr. Wentzell asked where the land was located. Mr. Wiggins explained it was at the intersection of Juniper and Knoll Streets.

There being no further questions or comments, Chairman Kessler closed the public hearing.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING (S): March 19, 2018 Regular and NPS Minutes; March 23, 2018 Regular Minutes

Minutes of March 19, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the March 19, 2018 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

NPS Minutes of March 19, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the NPS minutes of the March 19, 2018 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

Minutes of March 23, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the March 23, 2018 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of April 2, 2018 as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

Chairman Kessler commented on one item on the Consent Agenda. He stated one item had to do with a Veteran's Credit. He asked those veterans who thought they were eligible for this credit to contact the Town Office to see if they met the requirements.

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Wentzell addressed the BOS and told them about his animal shelter and his request to the Town to have abated taxes due to his 501(c) 3 nonprofit status. He stated he had sent in all necessary paperwork to the BOS for this decision. He asked the Board what the procedure was to get this decision and how long it would take. Chairman Kessler stated that the first step would be to get an appraisal from Mr. George Hildum. Mr. Hildum would make the assessment and give the BOS his recommendation. The Board would not act without Mr. Hildum's recommendation.

Selectman Connell asked Mr. Wentzell if he had received any information from Mr. Hildum. He replied no.

Town Manager Rieseberg told the Board that the information they had received had been forwarded to Mr. Hildum for his review and comment. A decision from Mr. Hildum (whether he accepted or denied Mr. Wentzell's request) would be forwarded to the Selectboard members.

After a lengthy discussion, Mr. Wentzell addressed Chairman Kessler and asked for a timeframe for the decision on his request. Chairman Kessler repeated the procedure that would be taken; he did not give a specific timeframe.

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

Selectman Fratzel had nothing to share at this time.

Selectman Hooper informed the public that Library Arts Center Peeps Diorama Contest was this weekend. The dioramas will be on display through April 7, 2018. Also, groups have been put together for Spring Cleanup around Town.

Selectman Wilmot had nothing to share at this time

Chairman Kessler invited the public to the Town Deliberative Session on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 6 p.m. in the Opera House.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to add.

INFORMATIONAL: Town Common Rental Agreement: Farmer's Market 2018 Fees - There was a discussion between Jaqueline Cote, Treasurer of the Farmers Market and the BOS concerning the newly established rental fees for the Town Common. Mrs. Cote gave the BOS some historical data. 2018 marked the 20th year of the Newport Farmer's Market. She listed recognitions that the Farmers Market had been given in recent years. Mrs. Cote stated that for most of their 20 years the Farmer's Market has not been charged for the use of the Common. A few years ago the Town started charging \$1 per vendor per week.

Mrs. Cote explained the costs and new costs being imposed on them as a Farmer's Market, including programs that were previously paid by USDA and state grants.

Mrs. Cote addressed the Board and stated that because of the reasons she listed, she was asking the Board to waive the rental fee for the Farmer's Market.

There was a general discussion among the BOS members on the rental fees, the EBT, SNAP and POP programs, the use of the common and the maintenance (clean-up) after the Farmer's Market.

Chairman Kessler asked how much the Farmer's Market paid the Town in 2017. Mrs. Cote stated \$341.00. After a short discussion, Selectman Wilmot moved *that the Town waive the rental fee for the Farmer's Market for 2018 season*. It was seconded by Selectman Connell.

There was a discussion on the use and wear and tear of the Common by the Farmers Market as well as income of the Farmer's Market organization. Chairman Kessler asked what the Farmer's Market expenses were. Mrs. Cote stated that expenses were approximately \$4,000 a year for the following items: Insurance, Music, Credit Card Fees.

Ms. Gail Wilde addressed the BOS and stated the Farmer's Market was a real asset to the Town. It brought out-of-towners and local people to the common. She gave additional information stating the asset of the Newport Farmer's Market. She requested that the BOS waive the fee for the Farmer's Market as an investment to the Town.

Mrs. Elizabeth Woodhull Maiola addressed the Board members and the Town Manager and stated that they were hurting the Town of Newport by the actions they have been taking. She stated that Newport was not made up of rich people; it was made up with wonderful, normal people. She felt bad that the BOS actions were happening to them by charging for the use of the Common.

Mrs. Maiola addressed the BOS and stated that it was also wrong (to charge the Chamber) for the Concerts on the Common. She explained some of the historical information and how the concerts brought in people from out of town to Newport. She asked the Selectmen and Town Manager why they would want to quench the things that mattered to the Town.

Chairman Kessler addressed Mrs. Maiola, stated there was a motion on the floor concerning the Farmer's Market and told her that when the Board got to the Concerts on the Common she would be recognized.

Chairman Kessler responded to the charging of fees and the need for money in addition to taxes to pay for the upkeep of the Town infrastructure. There was further discussion by the Board and public in attendance.

After a short discussion, Selectman Wilmot moved ***that the Town waive the fee for the Farmer's Market for the 2018 season.*** It was seconded by Selectman Connell. Chairman Kessler called for a vote. ***The motion passed 3-2-0 (Fratzel and Hooper voted no).***

Town Common Fees – Donna Mahair: Ms. Mahair addressed the BOS and stated she was at the meeting representing the Chamber of Commerce and speaking to the rental fees for the Town Common and the Opera House.

Ms. Mahair started with the Concerts on the Common. There were ten concerts a year. They each cost approximately \$ 600. The Chamber of Commerce solicits from local businesses to pay for the concerts; approximately \$6,000 total. She explained the careful planning of the concerts and solicitations. Historically, they have been going on for 30 years. Mrs. Maiola has volunteered to work the concerts for 15 years.

Ms. Mahair stated the Town was planning to add costs to the Chamber for the Concerts on the Common that they provide for the Town of Newport and area for free. Therefore, the Chamber was asking that the rental costs be waived. She stated that the Chamber policed the area and picked up after the concerts. Ms. Mahair reiterated the concerts were something the Chamber provided free of charge; they do not make money on them. She said it was nice to go through Town on Sunday evenings and listen to the music playing on the Common.

Selectman Fratzel made a motion ***to waive the fees for the Concerts on the Common and to waive the fee if there is a rainout and they have to use the Opera House.*** It was seconded by Selectman Wilmot.

Selectman Hooper addressed Ms. Mahair and stated that \$600 seemed a lot of money for a band. Ms. Mahair explained that was the rate the bands charged.

Mrs. Ella Casey, Chamber of Commerce, explained they all didn't charge that much. Some were more, others were less. Some gave Newport a discount and came for less than their going rate. In addition to the expense of the bands she gave a list of the other expenses the Chamber incurred. She also explained the vetting process as to whether the Chamber will ask the bands back.

Chairman Kessler called for a vote. ***The motion passed 5-0-0.***

Opera House Rental Fees-Donna Mahair: Ms. Mahair addressed the BOS and stated that the Chamber put on three events each year in the Opera House.

- T'was Just Before Christmas. She explained what it was. The Chamber of Commerce loses money on this event.
- Annual Chamber Business Dinner. The Chamber covers the cost of the meal.

A fee of \$125 for the two events had been paid in 2017. She asked with the new fee schedule what their fee would be.

The third event was:

- Dancing with the Newport Stars. That was a fundraiser. She wanted to know what the BOS would

charge and what the breakdown would be. The Board stated it would cost the Chamber \$900. Ms. Mahair stated that \$900 might make it cost prohibitive.

Ms. Mahair informed the Board that the Chamber/Willey Perra "Red Star Twirlers" would not be happening in 2018 because the Chamber did not earn \$600 to cover the new rental and maintenance fee.

The BOS members discussed the amount the Chamber would be charged for the T'was Just Before Christmas and the Annual Chamber Business Dinner. Selectman Hooper addressed Ms. Mahair. He then addressed the Chair and stated that \$150 was adequate for the events.

Selectman Hooper made a motion *to charge the Chamber \$150 for each event*. It was seconded by Selectman Wilmot. After discussion by the Board, Chairman Kessler called for a vote. *The motion passed 4-1-0 (Fratzel voted no)*.

Chairman Kessler requested they defer discussion concerning charges on the Dancing with the Newport Stars until the Chamber knows whether they are doing it. Selectman Wilmot concurred.

Ms. Mahair thanked the Board members.

Selectman Fratzel reiterated for clarification to all parties that the charge to the Chamber would be \$150 per event.

Historical Impact of School Tax Rate - Chairman Kessler gave an introduction, stating what made a good community. He listed activities, good housing, a good school system and a low tax rate. He then held a long discourse on the needs of the school system that had not been voted in at the 2018 Newport School voting.

Chairman Kessler continued, speaking at length on the proposed Community Center the Town would like to build and its proposed costs as well as the historical school expenditures and revenue amounts. He asked School Board Chairperson Wadensten for a dollar amount that could go to the Town for the Community Center facility study.

School Board Chairperson Linda Wadensten spoke to Chairman Kessler's concerns and answered all the Board members questions. She stressed that the school's expenditures are in flux throughout each fiscal year.

Ms. Gallagher addressed the Board and stated some of the money expenditures Chairman Kessler had not listed. Among them was an audit of the school system and matching local monies to school grants. She listed several other necessary expenditures that had not been listed.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. gave a discourse on the school system 2018-2019 fiscal budget and expenditures.

Mr. Larry Cote stated that if Newport wanted to have good teachers, the schools needed to pay the teachers commiserate to their worth and what the area is paying. He spoke in favor of both the school system and the proposed Community Center.

Mr. Louis Cassorla addressed Chairman Kessler and asked if there was a state statute that says the school budget voting has to occur when it does (March), or can it be postponed three months so that we have better numbers?

Chairman Kessler directed the question to Ms. Gallagher, Superintendent of Schools. Ms. Gallagher stated the Selectboard set the SB2 date. She had to defer to the BOS on the date. Chairman Kessler stated it was something they would look into.

To conclude, Chairperson Wadensten addressed Chairman Kessler and stated that in the future the school board

would like to collaborate with the BOS instead of pointing fingers. The school board would like to meet with the BOS to initiate this.

After Chairman Kessler's closing statement, school board Chair Wadensten asked Chairman Kessler a clarifying question. She asked how much the Town was allowed to keep of their funds at the end of the fiscal year. She asked how it worked. Chairman Kessler requested that Finance Director answer the question. Finance Director Brown stated the DRA and government finance association recommend between 5% and 17%. The Town of Newport generally kept 5%. There was a discussion on the monies.

Project Updates: Chairman Kessler addressed Mr. Wiggins and asked him to go through the projects. Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the Board and stated that he would give brief updates on the progress of each of the projects:

❖ Coon Brook Bridge and Oak Street Bridge

Projects are moving along. Easements are being acquired. Projects will be ready for bidding in May.

❖ First, Second, Third, Fourth, and Knoll Streets

Bids were in, opened and were favorable proposals. The bids are being reviewed and the project should go forward.

❖ Town Office Parking Lot and Opera House Renovation

A feasibility study for the parking lot is under way to address parking, drainage and elevation. The following would be done at the Opera House at this time: the clock tower, upper levels of the building, roofing and flooring within the building. A proposal will be put together for the project.

❖ Sidewalks: Project on Cheney Street:

Bids would be going out.

❖ Salt Shed:

Project was moving along. Proposal was being worked on.

The BOS was told the reconstruction project on Cheney Street was from Sunapee Street to Highland Street

Selectman Fratzel asked if the bid results of 1st-4th would allow the Selectmen to reduce the amount of the Warrant Article at the Deliberative Session. Town Manager Rieseberg stated yes.

ACTION ITEMS: Presentation of Newport Community Center Feasibility Study - There was a lengthy presentation by Mr. Michael Petrovick, AIA of Catlin + Petrovick Architects PC on the Newport Community Center Feasibility Study. For the entire presentation and slideshow, go to: <https://vimeo.com/channels/newportnhselectmen>. Mr. Petrovick stated that the study report would be delivered tomorrow and then the Town would receive hard and electronic copies.

Acceptance of Wage & Classification Study

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the Board voted to accept the Town of Newport, NH classification and wage study that was done in March. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

The proposed wage adjustments were calculated into the 2018-2019 fiscal year budget.

Acceptance of Newport Community Center Feasibility Study: The acceptance of the Newport Community Center Feasibility Study was tabled to the April 16, 2018 BOS meeting.

Acceptance of Proposal to Purchase Map 116 Lot 047 in Lieu of an Easement: The acceptance of Proposal to Purchase Map 116 Lot 047 in Lieu of an Easement was tabled to after the second Public Hearing on the proposal during the April 16, 2018 BOS meeting.

Assignment of Warrant Articles for Deliberative Session: The assignment of reading and explaining the 28 Warrant Articles at the 2018 Deliberative Session was distributed among the Selectmen.

APPOINTMENTS: Bruce Burroughs Resignation – Conservation Commission: After a short discussion, on a motion from Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the BOS regretfully accepted the resignation from Mr. Bruce Burroughs of the Conservation Commission.*** Mr. Burroughs was publicly thanked for his many years of service to the Town on this Commission. The Selectmen requested that a letter be sent to Mr. Burroughs thanking him for his service. ***The motion passed 5-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into non-public session (NPS) pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II, (c) Reputation of Another at 9:22 p.m. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

See NPS information

The Selectboard exited NPS at 9:41 p.m.

There was no action taken.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:41 p.m.

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, April 16, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson
Scribe

Approved on: April 16, 2018