

# **TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

## **Board of Selectmen Minutes for Meeting of October 1, 2018 6:30 pm Regular Meeting Municipal Building**

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

**STAFF PRESENT:** Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** Tom Gallagher, Margaret Drye, David Kibbey and Bert Spaulding, Sr.

**NCTV:** Louis Cassorla

**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:** ADD: NPS 91-A:3 II (e) Litigation (by Kessler), ADD: Informational Item: Fund Balance (by Kessler)

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S):** Minutes of September 17, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the August 27, 2018 Board of Selectmen meeting as presented. The motion passed 3-0-2 (Wilmot and Fratzel abstained).*

Consent Agenda of October 1, 2018: On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted to approve the Consent Agenda of the September 17, 2018 meeting as presented. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

**OPEN FORUM:** Tom Gallagher addressed the Board and stated he was at the October 1, 2018 meeting concerning the flying of the American flags on the poles along Main Street in Newport. He appreciated the BOS taking it up for consideration. He asked what the status of the request was. Town Manager Rieseberg stated it was currently an action item. Town staff had been directed to order brackets and flags. There were some samples that would be up in the near future. Mr. Gallagher thanked Town Manager Rieseberg. He stated it meant a lot to him and his neighbors. Mr. Gallagher also thanked the BOS and requested that the Town advertise where the sample flags would be located. Chairman Kessler asked that Mr. Gallagher give Town Manager Rieseberg his phone number. He would be called when the sample flags were up. Mr. Gallagher concluded by again thanking the BOS on their action.

Margaret Drye, republican candidate for District 9, introduced herself to the Board and viewing public. Addressing the Board members she stated she would answer any of their questions. The Board had no questions for the candidate.

Bert Spaulding, Sr. addressed the Board members and stated that he had not come to the October 1, 2018 BOS meeting prepared to discuss the Town fund balance. He asked if a Selectman at the meeting had a sheet of the encumbrances that Finance Director Brown had handed out in a previous meeting. None of the Selectmen had a copy. Mr. Spaulding, Sr. asked if the BOS would be voting on the fund balance without documentation. Chairman Kessler stated the BOS would discuss it on October 1<sup>st</sup> and finalize it at a future meeting. Mr. Spaulding, Sr. thanked them for only discussing and not acting on it at the October 1<sup>st</sup> meeting.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Selectman Wilmot informed the Board that:

- Parlin Field had their first movie night on Friday, September 28, 2018. One hundred people showed up for the movie and fifteen aircraft flew in for it. It was a very successful night.
- He attended the dedication of the Terri Whittaker Memorial. Selectman Wilmot described the dedication ceremony to the Board and viewing public. Chairman Kessler added that the recognition of Terri Whittaker is long overdue.

Selectman Hooper stated:

- Recreation Department fall activities now in progress include soccer. He gave his opinion of the wonderful job the staff and volunteers are doing.
- He complemented the Town on the new sign at the Fire Station
- He received comments from people that the roof of the Opera House looks great.
- In Springfield, VT at the River Valley Technical Center on Thursday, October 4, 2018 there will be a program, Young Women in Engineering for students in grades 7-9. Selectman Hooper explained the program and listed the companies that are a part of it. Individuals interested in participating should contact Gerry Demuro at 1-603-835-2386. Selectman Hooper reiterated the program would be on Thursday, October 4, 2018.

Selectman Fratzel stated:

- ❖ PJ Lovely celebrated 25 years of employment with the Town of Newport.
- ❖ The Community Center Committee is working closely with BreadLoaf. The size of the proposed building has been reduced. The company is planning a presentation to the BOS in the near future.

Selectman Connell addressed the Board and informed them that:

- ✓ Kathy Hubert is planning a discussion on the topic of "Equalized Funding" across the state for education. Selectman Connell explained equalized funding and how the issue affects Newport. He stated that Mrs. Hubert would like to talk to the BOS concerning this.
- ✓ He concurred with Selectman Hooper that the program he mentioned, "Young Women in Engineering" was a good one. He had been a part of the 2017 program and explained its positive objectives.

Chairman Kessler described a similar semester long program held at the Rye Junior High.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the Opera House roof was completed. He explained what the contractors fixed and replaced to install the new roof. The next projects include the Opera House tower, including the clock; the replacement of the floors in the Opera House, the stain glass windows currently in storage and the correction of a structural problem in the building.

Historic organizations in the state have been notified to see about the acquisition of substantial grant funding for the building restoration. Town Manager Rieseberg explained procedures taken to accomplish the projects.

**INFORMATIONAL:** Newport Summit-Steve Smith: As a member of the Newport Chamber of Commerce, Steve Smith was at the BOS meeting to formally invite the Board members and Town Manager to an event called The Newport Summit. The goal of the Newport Summit is to bring all Town boards, committees and organizations into one room on November 13, 2018 at 6 p.m. It will be a meeting where we discuss what we do and to network with each other. Each organization will be given a few minutes to get up and speak. The Chamber hopes to have it become an annual meeting with the groups in town. The Board members and Mr. Smith discussed the event and potential groups to invite who were not on Mr. Smith's list. Mr. Smith thanked the Board for their time.

Discussion-Fund Balance: Chairman Kessler stated that the BOS had discussed the fund balance for the last few meetings. The Town has over \$300,000 in fund balance. Town Manager Rieseberg has a list of projects he would like to do with the money, there was also a desire by some Board members to return some to the taxpayers. The Board needed to come up with a definite number by the next meeting so the tax rate could be set. Town Manager Rieseberg stated that the next meeting met the deadline for the state. He explained the reporting the Town had to do.

Chairman Kessler addressed Town Manager Rieseberg and asked for updated fund balance numbers for Board members, for potential numbers for projects and the priorities of projects. Chairman Kessler stated that Town Manager Rieseberg had wanted to set the fund balance aside and use it for projects over the upcoming year. Town Manager Rieseberg stated he could have an updated amount on the unassigned fund balance for the 2018-2019 fiscal year for the October 15, 2018 meeting. The Board members could make a decision at that meeting and a report could be sent to the state.

There was a short discussion on the fund balance among some of the Board members.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. addressed the Board and discussed the money left over from their fiscal year's budget. He asked the BOS to analyze the Town and citizen's financial situation and responsibilities. Taxes included the State (unknown amount), County (unknown), School (\$2.52) and Town (\$.64). It was premature for the Town to spend the unassigned funds without knowing their total financial responsibilities and without the permission of the voters in Town.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. then addressed the BOS and gave his opinion on the best way to use the money in the unassigned funds.

Mr. David Kibbey spoke to the BOS on the subject of the fund balance. He stated that the BOS had to remember the people that were really being hit were the senior citizens. In his park he had eighty tenants and the strain on them was really beginning to show. Continuing, he stated it was going to show in sales, values and everything else. He believed the BOS were in crisis mode. Mr. Kibbey explained his beliefs to the BOS.

Chairman Kessler addressed Mr. Kibbey and stated that there were increases that were beyond the BOS control. He added that for the last five years the water and sewer rates had not increased. The taxes had only increased \$.35 over five years. Chairman Kessler stated that whatever increases Mr. Kibbey's tenants were experiencing could not be blamed on the Town (water, sewer, taxes). Now there were major increases because the Town hasn't had increases (in water and sewer) in five years.

There was a discussion about increases between the Board and Mr. Kibbey.

Chairman Kessler stated that the Board would continue its discussion on the encumbered funds at the BOS meeting in two weeks, Monday, October 15, 2018.

**ACTION ITEMS:** none

**APPOINTMENTS:** Recreation Advisory Council-Jessica Rothbart; Full Member with term to expire June 2021  
On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board appointed Jessica Rothbart to the Recreation Advisory Council as a Full Member with term to expire in June 2021. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

Town Manager Rieseberg reminded everyone that Homecoming was this weekend. There would be a bonfire and taco dinner on Friday night and parade on Saturday morning.

**NON-PUBLIC SESSION (NPS):** On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Connell; *the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into NPS pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Personnel and RSA 91-A:3 II (e) Litigation at 7:26 p.m. The motion passed 5-0-0.*

The Board exited the non-public session at 8:06 p.m.

No action was taken.

***The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:07 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Maura Stetson", written in dark ink.

Maura Stetson  
Scribe

Approved on: October 15, 2018

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for Monday, October 15, 2018 at 6:30 p.m.**