

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen
Minutes for Meeting of June 3, 2019 6:30 pm
Public Hearing and Regular Business Meeting, Municipal Building
15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773

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

SELECTMEN ABSENT: John Hooper II

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul J. Brown, Finance Director; Cody Morrison, Economic Development Coordinator

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Ed Karr, Bert Spaulding, Sr.; Dick Wentzell and Louis Cassorla

NCTV: John Lunn

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Kessler called the meeting of the BOS to order at 6:33 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA REVIEW: Accepted as presented.

PUBLIC HEARING: Proposed CDBG Emergency Grant Application for up to \$500,000 to fund the Replacement of the Riverbend Wastewater Pump Station generator: **Chairman Kessler opened Public Hearing # 1 on the grant application and read aloud the posted Public Hearing Notice:** The Town of Newport will hold two consecutive public hearings on **Monday, June 3, 2019, at 6:30 PM at the Newport Town Offices at 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, New Hampshire**, to hear public comment on a proposed Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) application to the NH Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA), and related planning documents. Up to \$500,000 annually is available to communities or counties on a competitive basis for housing and public facilities, \$500,000 for economic development and up to \$500,000 for emergency activities. All CDGB funds projects must benefit low and moderate income persons. Up to \$12,000 is available for feasibility study grants. The proposals to be heard include:

- A proposed CDBG grant application for up to \$500,000 in CDGB in Emergency funds for the replacement of the Riverbend Wastewater Pump Station generator.
- Adoption of the Town of Newport's Anti-displacement and Relocation Plan for the project.

Mr. Cody Morrison explained that the purpose of these public hearings required for CDBG funding is to solicit the view of citizens on community development; furnish the citizens with information concerning the amount of funds available and the range of community development activities which may be undertaken under the Community Development Act. The proposal to be considered by the Board of Selectmen is a CDBG grant application for up to \$500,000 in Emergency Grant funds for the replacement of the Riverbend Wastewater Treatment Station generator.

The Chair asked Mr. Morrison if there was additional information concerning the reason that the application is for Emergency funding. Would the generator have to be shut down?

Town Manager Rieseberg explained that in taking an inventory of emergency systems in Newport, it was found that the Riverbend Wastewater Treatment Station emergency generator was old and not easily serviceable; due to its age parts were no longer available for the generator. He continued, stating if the Riverbend generator went out

of commission, a majority of the Town's industrial area was at risk of needing to shut down. There would also be an environmental impact with the well located on site and overflow into the Sugar River at the Riverbend Wastewater Treatment Station location.

Chairman Kessler asked if there was a Town copay with the CDGB grant. He was told no, it would be funded 100% through the CDGB grant.

Mr. Morrison stated that included in the grant would be administration costs which would cover legal and public notice fees along with money for staff time to put together the application.

The Chair invited comments from the public.

Mr. Ed Karr asked if it would have an impact on 2019 Town Meeting Warrant Article 5? Chairman Kessler said no and explained the impact would be that the sewerage would not get to the WWTP to be processed if the Riverbend generator failed. He explained that the Riverbend Wastewater Treatment Station generator was a separate project from the upgrade of the WWTP.

Mr. Morrison stated this is a problem that Newport found out about in late April 2019. A handout was available describing the proposed project.

Chairman Kessler asked if there was anyone else who wanted to speak to the hearing. There being no one, Chairman Kessler closed Public Hearing One.

Chairman Kessler called for a motion on Public Hearing One.

Public Hearing One: Selectman Fratzel made a motion *to support submission of a CDBG Emergency Grant application for up to \$500,000 to replace the Riverbend Wastewater Treatment Station generator and to authorize Town Manager Hunter F. Rieseberg to sign, submit and execute any documents that may be necessary to effectuate the CDBG application and contract.* It was seconded by Selectman Connell. There was no discussion. Chairman Kessler called for a vote on the motion. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

The Chair opened Public Hearing # 2 on the Adoption of the Anti-Displacement and Relocation Plan.

Mr. Cody Morrison stated a second handout was available describing this portion of the project. He then explained that if any displacement takes place as a result of this project, the Uniform Relocation Act must be followed, which requires that any displaced household or business in a project using any federal funds must be found comparable housing in a comparable neighborhood at a comparable price. There will be no displacement as a result of this project. Under the certification section of the application, the Town will certify that the Residential Anti-Displacement & Relocation (RARA) plan is in place and in the event that it is discovered that this specific project does displace persons or households, a displacement implementation plan must be submitted to CDFA prior to obligating or expending funds.

Chairman Kessler asked for comments from the Board. There were none. Chairman Kessler invited comments from the public. There were no public comments.

Chairman Kessler closed Public Hearing Two. Chairman Kessler called for a motion on Public Hearing Two.

Public Hearing Two: Selectman Fratzel made a motion *to adopt the Anti-displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan for the Replacement of the Riverbend Wastewater Pump Station generator.* It was seconded by Selectman Connell. There was no discussion by the Board. Chairman Kessler called for a vote on the motion. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Chairman Kessler thanked the community members in attendance for attending the hearing.

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): Minutes of May 20, 2019: On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Fratzel; *the Board voted to approve the BOS minutes of the May 20, 2019 meeting with the following addition:* Page 2, first paragraph in Open Forum. Chairman Kessler stated that Mr. Larry Flint also helped to man Mr. Herb Tellor's sign. He neglected to add that to the relayed incident by Mr. Spaulding, Sr. *Add Mr. Larry Flint to participants who manned Mr. Tellor's sign.*

Chairman Kessler called for a vote on the minutes as amended. *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 June 3, 2019 as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

OPEN FORUM: Mr. Dick Wentzell addressed the Board and asked the following questions of George Hildum, Town Assessor: Why hasn't he bid on the job (to work for Newport)? Why is the Town assessor still employed?

Chairman Kessler asked if he had spoken to Town Manager Rieseberg and if his questions had been answered. Mr. Wentzell stated he had spoken to Town Manager Rieseberg; his questions were not answered. Mr. Wentzell, the Selectmen and Town Manager Rieseberg discussed his questions. Chairman Kessler stated Town Manager Rieseberg would review the paperwork Mr. Wentzell had presented and would inform the BOS of any action to be taken.

Mr. Louis Cassorla addressed the Board. He stated that the meeting was not being televised and the regular minute taker was not present, so he did not know if the Purchasing Policy Ordinance or portion of the ordinance dealing with Mr. Wentzell's questions would be in the minutes. He asked that the relevant paragraphs of the Purchasing Policy be read aloud into the minutes.

Chairman Kessler read aloud: **“Professional Purchasing (pages 2 &3):** Professional service contracts for special projects should be awarded through a process that takes into consideration the Town's unique needs while considering the qualifications and experience of the service provider. Ongoing professional services such as, but not limited to, insurance, audit and maintenance agreements should be examined regularly to insure quality services at competitive prices.”

Town Manager Rieseberg addressed Mr. Cassorla and briefly explained the assessor's job and that he was an independent contractor, not a member of a corporation.

Mr. Ed Karr asked about something that Selectman Fratzel had stated. Is it really the BOS policy to have an assessor go out and “get what they can” from property owners? Mr. Karr didn't like the way it was expressed. Selectman Fratzel stated it was not the best way to state it. No one liked the assessor; the assessor job is to ensure that the Town is getting the fair amount (of taxation) from each property. Selectman Fratzel thanked Mr. Karr for asking for clarification.

Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. had three items:

1. The whole meeting was not televised? Mr. Lunn said he was correct; none of the meeting was televised.
2. New London Hospital and their assessment. It will be worked out in the courts.
3. The First Amendment. He spoke on his concerns with the school board municipal body. He requested that the BOS write a letter to the school board.

Mr. Ed Karr addressed the Board and stated that in reporting school board meetings the newspaper it will state, “Chairman Jeff Kessler said...” or Selectman Todd Fratzel said...” I've never seen “Ed Karr, Telephone man said...” Mr. Karr said that there is a perception when the BOS title is used.

Mr. John Lunn voiced his opinion on the two boards and the frustration he has seen that some Board members have when there are the same statements reiterated at every meeting. Each board has to work out their problems.

Mr. Karr addressed the Board and suggested a joint meeting of the two boards as a way to address some of the stated problems between the two boards. Chairman Kessler said they have had joint meetings in the past and would have one when the interim superintendent was officially employed.

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

Selectman Fratzel had nothing to share at this time.

Selectman Connell had nothing to share at this time.

Chairman Kessler:

- Stated High School graduation is Wednesday, June 5, 2019 at 6 pm on the Common. If it rains, graduation will be held in the Opera House.
- Mentioned the school board meeting in which the school system had quoted \$8,000 had been spent from the school budget during the 2018-2019 fiscal year to acquire Right to Know (RSA 91-A) information.
- Requested a joint meeting of the BOS and school board be set up after the interim superintendent is officially employed (July 1st). Town Manager Rieseberg will contact the new Superintendent to schedule a meeting.
- Asked if the Board members would like a Retreat in 2019. Town project priorities will be established. Board members concurred to have a Retreat. Town Manager Rieseberg will contact the BOS with the date, time and location of the Retreat.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

Agenda Items were taken out of order to accommodate participants.

INFORMATIONAL: Board of Selectmen Changes to Schedule of Summer Meetings: The Summer BOS schedule:

- ❖ July-Regular meeting schedule
- ❖ August-
August 5, 2019
August 19, 2019 **MEETING CANCELLED**
August 26, 2019 Added Regular Board of Selectmen Meeting
- ❖ September-
September 2, 2019 **MEETING CANCELLED (Labor Day)**
September 16, 2019 Regularly Scheduled Board of Selectmen Meeting. Normal meeting schedule will resume.

Update/Schedule of Paving, Sidewalks, Etc.: Town Manager Rieseberg stated:

- ❖ The Town would begin sidewalk work on South Main Street within two weeks and will work their way north. The southern section would be completed by the first of July.
- ❖ North Main Street and Park Street sidewalks would be reconstructed during the beginning of July.
- ❖ Road paving will also begin in July and will be expected to be completed by the first of September. Chairman Kessler asked which roads would be affected. He was told East Mountain Road and

Schoolhouse Road. Fewer roads were being done summer of 2019 because they involved a greater distance.

Chairman Kessler asked for clarification if the crews would be attending to potholes throughout the summer. He was told yes.

Selectman Wilmot had three questions.

1. Potholes behind Village Pizza? He was told they had been fixed.
2. Crosswalk color in Newport? Town Manager Rieseberg wanted the Selectmen to discuss this. He asked about changing over to the hash mark pattern. Town Manager Rieseberg explained the impetus for the changeover is cost and longevity. There was a short discussion on crosswalk color in Newport by the Board.
3. The midblock crosswalk by the Senior Center (non-conforming crosswalk). Will it be eliminated or kept? There was a discussion on the crosswalk. The Board decided to look into moving it to the corner of Church Street and South Main Street.

Mr. Karr told the Board about the potholes on Knoll Street. There has been an increased number and enlargement of potholes due to the construction on First, Second, Third, Fourth and Knoll Streets. He stated that although it was understandable, would the Town or the Construction Company be responsible to fix them. He asked that the Town Manager drive by and look at the condition of the road.

Selectman Fratzel asked for a presentation at a BOS meeting from the Road Surface Management System (RSMS). He stated that over the past few years, approximately 80% of the Newport roads have been overlaid. Chairman Kessler asked if there was also a system for gravel roads.

- ❖ Opera House outside work is scheduled for August and September 2019.
- ❖ Oak Street work is on schedule, there is concrete up; no steel.
- ❖ The Coon Brook Bridge is completed.

John Lunn was acknowledged by the Chair. Mr. Lunn stated that the June 3, 2019 meeting had not been telecast and the audio equipment was not working. He would work on it on Tuesday, June 4, 2019.

Discussion and Review of Proposed Water & Sewer Rates: Finance Director Brown stated that he had come before the Board in the fall of 2018 with new water and sewer rate proposals. The BOS, acting as the Water Commissioners, had set new, increased rates.

Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. asked if there were additional handouts of the report for the public present. Some handouts were made and given to the public present.

Finance Director Brown stated that the PowerPoint presentation was not in hard copy. It would be put on the Town website.

Finance Director Brown stated that water and sewer rates continue to need to be increased. He tried to compare 2018 and 2019 to see where we stand.

Recommended projections of rates:

Water rate increases

2019- 20%
2020-20%
2021-2%
2022-2%
2023-2%

Chairman Kessler asked if Finance Director Brown had looked into different scenarios with a lesser impact in 2019 and 2020. Finance Director Brown had not; he would look into alternatives. There was a discussion on having a lesser % impact on users in the future as well as the current water rate.

Sewer rate increases

2019- 0%

2020-30%

2021-40%

2022-40%

2023- 2%

2024-2%

Chairman Kessler stated he would like to see more of a rate increase than 2% (starting in 2023). He said he didn't want the Town to find itself in the same trouble and have to play "catch up" again. He preferred to have a 4-5% increase. The Board members and Finance Director Brown discussed the Water/Sewer Study, user rate increases and various scenarios to get the needed money.

Chairman Kessler stated that the Town needed more water and sewer users, commercial users.

As a water and sewer user, Mr. Karr agreed with the statements given by Finance Director Brown in 2018; if the users had had gradual increases the Town would be in a better position. He said that any different scenario implemented that would ease the burden of increased rates would be appreciated by the users.

There was further discussion by the BOS members on spreading out the burden of increased water and sewer rates.

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. gave his opinion that it would be better to spread the increase over time for both current and new users.

Chairman Kessler asked Finance Director Brown if he would have a public hearing on water and sewer rate increases at the June 17, 2019 BOS meeting. Finance Director Brown explained the additional information he wanted to compile before holding a public hearing. Chairman Kessler asked him if the Town would be doubling water and sewer rates within five years. He was told yes.

Finance Director Brown will make any typo corrections and email the new rate study to the Board and interested individuals. Mr. Spaulding, Sr. requested a copy of the water and sewer PowerPoint presentation via email. Finance Director Brown would email him a copy.

Selectman Fratzel asked if Finance Director Brown could give a presentation on just water, there were a lot of water users. Finance Director Brown said he will include the rate increase information for water users only.

There was further discussion on the water/sewer rate study and potential state aid.

Mr. Karr said the rate increases will encourage water conservation again. What will happen to their bills if that happened? He asked about a minimum billing. Finance Director Brown stated there was a 3,000 gallon minimum billing. Mr. Karr said that public education was needed about the water and sewer rates and usage. He asked many people to vote yes for Article 5. He had to explain the reasons they needed to (penalties, etc.).

Chairman Kessler addressed Finance Director Brown and stated there would be a Public Hearing on the user rates at the next meeting (June 17, 2019). New rates would go into effect with the July reading or the BOS could have it July 2, 2019 and have the new rates.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that Finance Director Brown could make a draft and post it on the webpage.

Mr. Karr stated that last year's rate increase was a Band-Aid; people have to see that a lot of time and effort has gone into the study and that you have worked on their behalf; not thrown something together.

Selectman Connell asked if there could be a Public Hearing (with all information) on June 17, 2019. Finance Director Brown stated yes. The Board members concurred that the Public Hearing on water/sewer rates would be held on June 17, 2019.

After further discussion on water and sewer rates and infrastructure the BOS closed the agenda item.

ACTION ITEMS: none

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into NPS pursuant to RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Real Estate at 8:17 p.m.*

The Board exited NPS at 8:55 pm.

No action was taken.

The Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:55 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson
Scribe

The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for June 17, 2019 at 6:30 p.m.

Approved on: June 17, 2019