

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen
Minutes of May 1, 2017
Regular Business Meeting
Municipal Building

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman; David Hoyt, William Wilmot, John Hooper.

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter F. Rieseberg, Town Manager; Liselle Dufort, Town Clerk; Jennifer Souliotis, Deputy Town Clerk; Paul Brown, Finance Director.

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

DEDICATION OF TOWN REPORT: Chairman Kessler asked Tony and Betty Maiola to come to the front of the room. Chairman Kessler read the 2016 Town Report dedication which was to Mr. and Mrs. Maiola for their years of commitment to Newport.

Chairman Kessler then called up the McCrillis family and announced the memorial in the Town Report for John Cooper McCrillis.

Mrs. Maiola thanked the board.

AGENDA REVIEW: Selectman Wilmot added: **Action Item: Poll Coverage for next Tuesday's May 9, 2017 Voting.**

MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S): March 14, 2017 Non-Public #1; April 17, 2017; April 17, 2017 Non-Public #1.

March 14, 2017 Non-Public #1 were not available at the time of the meeting.

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted unanimously to accept the minutes of April 17, 2017 with the following corrections: page 3, paragraph starting with Chairman Kessler, third line down, "and concerns he had with events for the last 30 years" be stricken (agreed upon by Mr. Spaulding); and on page 4 of 6, at the bottom, it should say Bert Spaulding, Sr.*

The Board voted unanimously to table the Non-Public Minutes of April 17, 2017.

CONSENT AGENDA: On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted unanimously to accept the Consent Agenda of May 1, 2017.*

OPEN FORUM: Chairman Kessler opened up the discussion to anyone from the public who wished to address the Board. There was no one present who wished to address the Board at this time.

COMMUNICATIONS: **Board of Selectmen:**

Selectman Hooper discussed the letter that went out to residents about Avitar's inside inspections of properties. He said his appointment was set up quickly and he encouraged residents to call for an appointment. He added that residents should require Avitar employees to show their identifications.

Selectman Wilmot announced that *Annie Get Your Gun* will be playing at the Newport Opera House this weekend.

Selectman Hoyt added that tickets are available at the Opera House and on-line. He thanked Town Manager Rieseberg for directing Buildings & Grounds Department and Highway Department to clean up trash on our roadways. He said the roads look great and it is making the Town look better.

Selectman Fratzel had nothing to share at this time.

Chairman Kessler asked if anyone had an update on last week's Comcast Cares Day. Mr. Brown gave a summary of the cleanup projects that were conducted in Town that day.

Chairman Kessler said that local manufacturers are having trouble finding skilled help and he did not want them to move out of Newport due to this. Chairman Kessler said that River Valley Community College received a grant to teach students skills to accommodate our local manufacturers, but this program has closed down. He added that the college has the equipment but no funding for an instructor. Chairman Kessler also said that the college has dropped some of the other classes that would teach these skills. Chairman Kessler stated that he wanted this issue kept on the radar.

Chairman Kessler commended Town Manager Rieseberg's work in changing all the street lighting in Town, the Town buildings, and installing solar arrays, aiming to make Newport a \$0 electric bill.

Town Manager: Town Manager Rieseberg discussed the roadway cleanup work. He said he is hoping that next year the effort would be enhanced by having volunteers participate in the cleanup and to continue it every year thereafter. He added that if anyone would like to volunteer they can call the Town Office.

Town Manager Rieseberg said that the 2015 – 2016 audit has been completed. The report will be put on the Town website.

INFORMATIONAL: 2017 Top Dog Contest – Jennifer Souliotis: Mrs. Dufort introduced Jennifer Souliotis. Mrs. Souliotis, who handles the Top Dog Contest, gave a summary of this year's contest. She asked Chairman Kessler to draw three slips out of the box of entries. Town Manager Rieseberg announced that the winner is Jack Durgin Dog Tag #17-0430, owners Karen and Kevin Durgin. Mrs. Souliotis named the items that this 1st place winner will receive. Selectman Fratzel announced that the 2nd place winner is Bubba #17-0019, owner Steven Vaile. Mrs. Souliotis listed the prizes for the 2nd place winner. Selectman Hooper announced the 3rd place winner as Mabel #17-0505, owner David Irwin. Mrs. Souliotis listed the prizes for the 3rd place winner.

Mrs. Souliotis reviewed the procedure for licensing dogs.

2016 Moose Plate Grant Digital Copies – Lee Dufort: Mrs. Dufort discussed the records that they are preserving. She explained how Addie Kozlik writes the grants for this project.

Accepting Credit Card Payments: Mrs. Dufort explained the need for the Town to accept credit card payments. Town Manager Rieseberg discussed the new website and how it will make accepting credit cards possible. He said it is a priority on his list of projects and thought it might be functioning by the end of this calendar year.

Drought Update: Chairman Kessler said that Sullivan County remains in a moderate drought condition. He said the recommendation of the water department was to maintain water restrictions. Selectman Fratzel said he would rather change it to a voluntary restriction. He pointed out that Newport was the only one in Sullivan County with the restrictions.

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted unanimously to lift the mandatory water restrictions and implement voluntary restrictions effective immediately.*

Selectman Hoyt asked Town Manager Rieseberg to look into the cost of splash boards at Gilman Pond, as they had discussed in the past.

Website Status: Town Manager Rieseberg said that the new website is complete and he expected to release it to the public during the week of May 8, 2017.

Town Manager Rieseberg said he would invite the auditors in to discuss the 2015 – 2016 audit results with the Selectmen directly at an upcoming meeting.

ACTION ITEMS: LED Streetlight Conversion – Town Manager Rieseberg referred to a proposal to replace the roughly 294 street lights that are located typically on top of utility poles. He said the current lights would be replaced with more efficient LED lighting. Town Manager Rieseberg explained how lighting is measured and how this change will benefit Newport, with a payback of 1 – 2 years. He asked the Board to allow him to expedite this project, so the Town doesn't continue to lose \$2000 - \$3000 per month and so that the Town will qualify for Eversource granting that ends at the end of June 2017. Town Manager Rieseberg added that when ornamental lights burn out they are being replaced with LED lighting. He said that the interior of all town buildings are being evaluated for transition to LED lighting.

Mr. Spaulding commended Town Manager Rieseberg for the thorough presentation.

On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper, *the Board voted unanimously to authorize Town Manager Rieseberg to enter into an agreement with Efficient LED Lighting Systems for the replacement of all the Town's street lighting with LED's and in accordance with the proposal dated April 28, 2017, which they discussed at this meeting, and to sign all associated documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen.*

Disposition of Unassigned Funds: Town Manager Rieseberg said that over the years there have been occasions when funds have not been fully expended for the purposes they were originally intended. These funds have now become significant in the amount of \$460,000 in previously taxed money. This money, he added, has already been paid by taxpayers and would not impact the current tax rate. Town Manager Rieseberg referred to his memo, dated April 25 2017, with his recommendations for these funds. He said he is asking the Selectmen to authorize the expending of these funds as recommended in his memo. Town Manager Rieseberg's recommendations were as follows:

- ▶ Highway Paving \$175,000
- ▶ Fire Department Renovations \$10,000
- ▶ LED Conversion \$35,000
- ▶ Sidewalk Repairs \$100,000
- ▶ Ruger Lot Lighting \$30,000
- ▶ DPW Radios \$5,000
- ▶ Consulting Services – Operating Policies \$25,000
- ▶ Wage & Classification Study \$15,000
- ▶ Economic Development \$15,000
- ▶ Range Development \$25,000
- ▶ Demolition of Abandoned Buildings \$25,000

Selectman Fratzel suggested the \$175,000 be redirected to the DPW roof, before any damage is done structurally. Town Manager Rieseberg said they have not heard from any of the company who looked at bidding for the work to repair the DPW roof. Selectman Fratzel suggested they wait to make a decision on the \$175,000 of additional highway paving. There was general discussion on this topic. Mr. Spaulding suggested that the town have financial control in the future so this does not happen again, but

rather at the time of the end of the specific project. Mr. Spaulding also expressed his concern about spending all this money on non-emergent projects without reviewing the list with the tax payers. Town Manager Rieseberg pointed out that he is trying to clear up loose ends before the next years issues arise and costs increase. There was a lengthy discussion about projects needed to be done in Newport and the level of urgency.

On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted unanimously to authorize the Town's use of the amount not to exceed \$460,000.00 of the currently unassigned fund balance to complete the projects listed above and to also potentially repair the DPW roof during fiscal year 2017-2018.*

Conveyance of Town (Tax Deeded) Property: Town Manager Rieseberg reviewed his report, dated May 1 2017, that showed the history of the 24 properties that the Town took over by tax deeding. He said that all of these properties are now ready to be disposed of within the month. He said he needed the Board's approval to return these properties to the public so they are not owned by the Town. Town Manager Rieseberg said that he had a few properties that he felt he would not be able to get rid of, and suggested they be given to the Conservation Commission. Town Manager Rieseberg suggested that a lot on Maple Street be turned into a "Tot Lot" or "Pocket Park" since the surrounding area is residential. He said this would allow children in the area to have a place to play. Town Manager Rieseberg pointed out that making this park area would not prevent the Town from selling this property in the future if they so desired.

Poll Coverage for May 9, 2017 Voting: Pro Tem Appointments – There was general discussion about appointing Selectmen Pro Tem for Town Meeting day.

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted unanimously to appoint Bert Spaulding, Sr. as Selectman Pro Tem for Town Meeting voting on Tuesday, May 9, 2017.*

The Board of Selectmen agreed to meet next Monday, May 8, 2017, at 6:30 p.m., at 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH in the Board of Selectmen meeting room, to appoint two more Selectman Pro Tem.

APPOINTMENTS: None

NON-PUBLIC SESSION: 91-A:3 II (d) Real Estate: On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Fratzel, *the Board voted by roll call vote to enter into Non-Public Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (d) Real Estate at 8:55 p.m.*


On a motion by Selectman Fratzel, seconded by Selectman Wilmot, *the Board voted to exit Non-Public Session at 9:22 p.m.*

There was no action taken during Non-Public Session.

ADJOURNMENT: On a motion by Selectman Hoyt, seconded by Selectman Fratzel, *the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 9:23 p.m.*

The next meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for May 8, 2017 at 6:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Joanne Dufour, CAC
Executive Assistant