

**TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**Board of Selectmen**  
**Minutes for Meeting of July 6, 2020 6:30 pm**  
**Public Hearing and Regular Business Meeting**  
**Municipal Building, 15 Sunapee Street, Newport, NH 03773**  
**Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 869 2399 7763 Password: 732172**  
**+1 (253)215-8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees may apply)**

---

**SELECTMEN PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; John Hooper II, William Wilmot, Jr.;  
*Via Zoom:* Barry Connell; *Via Zoom Telephone:* none

**SELECTMAN ABSENT:** Todd Fratzel, Vice Chairman

**STAFF PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul Brown, Finance Director; Brent Wilmot, Police Chief; *Via Zoom:* Lisselle Dufort, Town Clerk

**COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT:** *BOS Room:* Bert Spaulding, Sr., Jackie Cote, Larry Cote, Steve Smith, Archie Mountain and Beatrice Mountain

**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.

Chairman Kessler did a roll call attendance. Selectboard members Connell, Hooper, Wilmot and Kessler were in attendance.

**DEDICATION OF THE 2019 TOWN REPORT:** Dedication of the 2019 Town Report - Chairman Kessler asked Selectman Wilmot to make the presentation. Selectman Wilmot addressed Mr. Arthur "Archie" Mountain and asked him to take a seat at the front of the Board of Selectman's room. Selectman Wilmot informed Mr. Mountain and all present that the 2019 Town Report was dedicated to him. Selectman Wilmot then read aloud the dedication to Mr. Mountain and viewers. Selectman Wilmot thanked Mr. Mountain for his years of service covering news stories around the Town.

Chairman Kessler asked Mr. Mountain to stand for a picture with the Town Report. Chairman Kessler thanked Mr. Mountain for his years of service to the Town of Newport. Mr. Archie Mountain thanked the Town for the honor. He said he had enjoyed covering the Town; it was a good Town. Mr. Mountain said he had had good teachers in the newspaper business; the original ones were all gone now. He thanked his wife Beatrice for always supporting him in his endeavors.

Chairman Kessler stated that Tuesday, July 14, 2020 there will be Town Meeting voting from 8 AM to 7 PM in the Newport High School Gymnasium. Voting will not be at the Opera House. It will be at the high school. He stated that voting will be indoors, it will not be drive through voting. Voters will have the ability to park at the high school, walk in, maintain social distancing according to state guidelines and vote. He asked if there would be a shuttle from the middle of Town to the high school if people did not have transportation. He was told it could be done.

**ADGENDA REVIEW:** Add ACTION ITEM: Appoint two Board members to join a committee to negotiate a new contract with NCTV (Kessler).

**MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING(S):** June 1, 2020 - On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted to approve the minutes of the June 1, 2020 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Chairman Kessler was informed that although it was not a "Covid-19" meeting roll call votes were necessary.

Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. *The motion passed by a roll call vote 4-0-0.*

NPS June 1, 2020 - On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted by roll call vote to approve the NPS minutes of the June 1, 2020 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

**CONSENT AGENDA:** On a motion by Chairman Kessler, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *the Board voted by roll call vote to approve the Consent Agenda of the July 6, 2020 BOS meeting as presented. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

**OPEN FORUM:** Mrs. Jackie Cote addressed the Selectmen present and stated the Board is the Town Fathers. They set the example for the townspeople. She hoped that any Selectman working the polls will wear a mask. She stressed the necessity of wearing masks, and the Selectmen's example. Newport does not have any active (known) cases at this time, but she asked that the Selectmen wear masks out of respect for the townspeople that are seniors.

Chairman Kessler stated that anyone working the polls, the workers or Selectmen need to wear masks. He stated the public cannot be required to wear masks. The rights of the public to exercise the liberty and freedoms of the country conflicts with the guidelines on mask wearing from the CDC.

Mr. John Lunn stated that he believed the Selectmen should be wearing masks in the BOS room. He stressed that wearing a mask does no harm to the wearer. The worldwide pandemic numbers are going down everywhere except the United States where people are choosing to not wear masks. It is not hard for the virus to spread quickly. He understood wearing a mask was a matter of choice, but it also was a proven way to keep each other safe. All officials in the Town need to set an example to Newport's community members by wearing one. He informed the BOS members and Town Manager that he would not be in person at future BOS meetings; too many people were not wearing a mask. Therefore: 1. He would broadcast the meetings from the Town Office lobby; 2. Remotely at NCTV through zoom; 3. Or the Board and staff members could begin wearing masks. He thanked the Board.

Mr. Steve Smith, Newport Chamber of Commerce, addressed the BOS and stated he was asking for permission for the Chamber to hold its 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Brewfest. It would tentatively be scheduled for Sunday, September 13, 2020. He was at the meeting to ask for a waiver of the Town Ordinance regarding alcohol on Town Property for the Newport Chamber. Having it would all depend on if the Governor and state regulations allow them to hold it this year. He stated the Brewfest would be different this year; one concept is to have a farmers market set up. Final plans have not been established; Mr. Smith was at the meeting to first acquire permission from the Town.

Chairman Kessler stated that Mr. Smith could work out any requirements with Police Chief Wilmot.

Selectman Hooper stated he believed the BOS should vote in favor of the Chamber's request. If permission was given now, the Chamber would have time to properly plan and organize the event.

Selectman Wilmot asked why they were tentatively scheduling it on a Sunday. Mr. Smith stated he had to work announcing football games on Saturdays.

Finance Director Brown informed the Board members that Newport would have “the” one Concert on the Common on Sunday, September 13, 2020.

Selectman Connell said he thought it would be great to have something to look forward to. Mr. Smith and the Chamber of Commerce put on quality events. If the Chamber can get it, he was in favor of it.

Addressing Mr. Smith, Chairman Kessler stated he had heard the comments from the Board members. The Town will need a formal application.

Mr. Smith explained he needed to get approval from the BOS first, then the State. He has to show in writing approval from the Town.

Chairman Kessler asked that Mr. Smith put together documentation so that the BOS can vote on the request in a formal manner at the next BOS meeting; July 20, 2020. Selectman Wilmot requested that the last motion made by the BOS (2019) be used and add the pertinent language for coronavirus in 2020.

Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the Board and stated his office could get the documents together as well as the motion and insert appropriate language for Covid-19 for the July 20, 2020 meeting.

Selectmen Wilmot, Hooper and Connell asked that the request be voted on at the July 6, 2020 BOS meeting.

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *the Board voted by roll call to allow the Newport Chamber of Commerce to hold its annual Brewfest on the Town Common on Saturday, September 12, 2020 or Sunday, September 13, 2020 from 11 a.m.-4 p.m. and to waive the Town Ordinance regarding alcohol on Town Property for that period of time. It will be allowed if it meets all the requirements of the Newport police department and the State of New Hampshire. The Newport Chamber of Commerce will provide the Town with a certificate of insurance. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Selectman Hooper stated if it was on Sunday, the Brewfest will be followed by a Concert on the Common.

Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. addressed the Board members and gave his opinion on the pandemic, suffering and personal freedoms during this time in our nation.

Mr. Lunn refuted Mr. Spaulding, Sr.’s remarks and asked that people look at the data concerning the pandemic and suffering.

**COMMUNICATIONS:** Selectman Wilmot stated he spoke with a member of the executive team at Sturm Ruger Company. The executive asked him to spread the information that the company is hiring. Sturm Ruger is the largest employer in Newport.

Selectman Hooper stated he was on the Executive Board of LaValley’s Building Supply. They are hiring as well. LaValley’s is the second largest employer in Newport. Selectman Hooper also thanked the Department of Public Works/Buildings and Grounds for the new fencing down at the Public Works garage. It looks good. He asked Town Manager Rieseberg to convey his thanks to them.

Selectman Connell had nothing to share at this time.

Chairman Kessler had nothing to share at this time.

Town Manager Rieseberg had nothing to share at this time.

**INFORMATIONAL:** OHRV Operation-Police Chief Brent Wilmot - Police Chief Brent Wilmot addressed the Board members and explained he was in attendance at the BOS meeting to ask for the Board's permission for Town personnel to ride the Town of Newport Public Safety Off Highway Recreation Vehicle (OHRV) on roads during non-emergency operations. He explained the steps required by NH RSA 215-A:15.

Selectman Wilmot asked if it was also a vehicle for the fire department. Police Chief Wilmot stated it was.

Selectman Connell had no questions.

Selectman Hooper asked if the OHRV was registered. He was told it was. Selectman Hooper questioned the police personnel not being able to travel on roads with it being registered. He was told they were not allowed without the BOS approval.

Town Manager Rieseberg stated that information can be collected for the public hearing to take place on July 20, 2020.

Chairman Kessler stated he thought the request could be voted on at the July 6, 2020 meeting, but because the RSA specified a public hearing was necessary and it needed to be advertised 14 days in advance, the Board would vote on Police Chief Wilmot's request at the next BOS meeting, July 20, 2020. He thanked Police Chief Wilmot and stated he would see him at the next BOS meeting on July 20, 2020.

Olivewood Energy: Town Manager Rieseberg addressed the BOS and stated representatives from Olivewood Energy were in attendance to explain a sizeable solar array they were planning to build in the east side of Newport.

Mr. Dominic LeBel and colleague Mr. Andrew Provencher from Olivewood Energy addressed the BOS. Mr. LeBel stated that neither he nor Mr. Provencher had been around anyone with Covid-19 nor have they experienced any symptoms of the virus. He apologized, stating he would normally be wearing a mask but he wanted to make sure that his voice projected well for the microphones.

Mr. LeBel gave a PowerPoint presentation explaining their endeavor (visit: [www.nctv-nh.org](http://www.nctv-nh.org) for the whole presentation). He stated that Nellie Solar was a solar farm Olivewood Energy proposed to build between Bradford Road and Maple Street in Newport. It will be encompassed within 144 acres and will use 65 to 75 acres. The electricity produced will be equivalent to that needed for 7,200 homes (900 more than the number in Newport).

Mr. LeBel said that Olivewood Energy was a solar farm developer working with host communities across NH and the northeast. For the Nellie Solar project they are targeting a date of 2022.

He explained where they were in the building process.

- ❖ They have completed a feasibility study for the project.
- ❖ They are currently in the system impact study process
- ❖ They are working with TRC (TRC Companies, Inc. Manchester, NH) who is providing environmental consulting and civil engineering design of the project.
- ❖ TRC conducted a wetlands study
- ❖ TRC did the archeological assessment for the project.
- ❖ NH Division of Historical Resources has concluded that no historical properties would be affected by the project

The Town of Newport will control the project approval process.

1 The Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILOT ) agreement

- 2 ZBA and Zoning Administrator for requirements
- 3 Planning Board Site Plan Review process

The Olivewood Company will work with:

- ❖ The Town
- ❖ Jim LePre of TRC for emergency responder access regulations
- ❖ The DES
- ❖ Fish and Game
- ❖ The NH Heritage Bureau

Chairman Kessler asked if the connection into the Eversource lines was adequate. Mr. LeBel stated there was a three phase line off of Maple Street that Eversource was planning on extending onto Maple Street (upgrades to the Eversource network). The new line will host their connection.

Selectman Wilmot applauded the representatives from Olivewood Energy. He wished them luck and hoped that Eversource took good care of them.

Selectman Connell asked if this project was in conjunction with the projects that are currently going on and if it will serve the needs of the Town. Chairman Kessler said that it was his understanding it was a separate project. It has no direct benefit to the Town except for the PILOT.

Mr. LeBel concurred and stated they were hoping to keep the energy created at the site in the State of NH.

Selectman Hooper said it was good information to have. He looked forward to PILOT time. Selectman Hooper wished him luck with the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Adjustment.

Chairman Kessler thanked Mr. LeBel and Mr. Provencher for attending the meeting. He wished them well.

Paving, Crosswalks and Sidewalks Update - Town Manager Rieseberg stated the Capital Projects are behind schedule due to Covid-19. Projects for the summer are:

- 1) Sidewalks on Maple and Laurel Streets will be done.
- 2) Crosswalk refreshing, installing new signs, bridge deck work will be done.
- 3) Line painting-contractor is reporting delays due to shortages of manpower; therefore the Town staff has been doing the "short line" work.
- 4) Working on the "siphon" pipe at Gilman Pond
- 5) Replace roof on District Court building
- 6) Replace emergency generator at Riverbend pump station
- 7) Floor in the Opera House coming along nicely.
  - o Main floor has been completely installed; they are working on the stage. Will finish main floor when the stage is completed.
  - o Replace floor in the stairwells, stairways and side rooms
  - o Masonry work
  - o Wiring work

The Opera House received a grant to help replace the sound and lighting system.

Town Manager Rieseberg informed the Board that the Town is hiring. Positions include summer grounds crew, mechanic in DPW and various other positions.

Chairman Kessler asked how the opening of the Town Offices has gone. Town Manager Rieseberg has stated he believed it was going well. Townspeople are encouraged to access the Town Office services as they are comfortable, whether that is online, using the drop box or going into the office in person. The public has been very supportive.

WWTP Update - Finance Director Brown gave an update on the Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), the permits and requirements that Newport is now responsible for. Costs could run the Town \$16,000,000-\$18,000,000. Finance Director Brown addressed the Board and offered a suggestion of solving the problem in Newport by combining with Claremont's facility. There was a lengthy discussion among the Board, Finance Director Brown and Town Manager Rieseberg as to the best way to solve the WWTP problems (visit [www.nctv-nh.org](http://www.nctv-nh.org) for the full discussion).

Discussion and Update on Town Voting Day on July 14, 2020 - Chairman Kessler gave an update on Town Voting Day to be held on July 14, 2020.

- Location: Inside the high school gym with social distancing being practiced
- Time: 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Masks: all workers will be wearing face shields or masks while working the polls
- The polling booths will be wiped down and sanitized throughout the day.
- Containers of hand sanitizer will be available in the gym.
- Voters will be instructed not to touch the ballots with sanitizer on their hands. The sanitizer jams and breaks the voting machine.
- Voters will be instructed to use a separate piece of paper provided in order to eliminate the need to touch surfaces in the voting booth. They are to take the blank paper home with them (a trash can will be available to throw it away).
- Gloves will be available for those that would like to use them.
- Pens will be available-voters are asked to take the pens with them.
- The Town Clerk office will make posters informing the voters of important Covid-19 practices and correct ballot handling.

There was a discussion with Town Clerk Dufort about what could be done to inform the public.

Chairman Kessler stressed that if possible people should wear masks. For the common good of the people, the poll workers will wear a mask or face shield and he believed the Selectboard should as well to set an example to townspeople.

Selectman Hooper stated he agreed with the mask proposal.

Selectman Wilmot agreed with the mask proposal.

Selectman Connell agreed with the mask proposal.

Selectman Wilmot asked for a vote on whether the Selectmen and Selectmen Pro Temp should wear masks at the polls on July 14, 2020. On a motion by Chairman Kessler, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board voted by roll call vote to require all Selectmen and Selectmen Pro Temp to wear a mask while working the polls.*** Chairman Kessler stated that Selectmen that worked the polls should wear a mask; if they cannot or will not they will be replaced with a Selectman Pro Temp. Selectman Wilmot agreed with Chairman Kessler. Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

Selectman Assignments for July 14, 2020 Voting Session - The Selectmen volunteered to man the polls at the following times:

Chairman Kessler: All Day

Selectman Connell: All Day

Selectman Wilmot: 12 noon to closing

Selectman Hooper: unknown

Selectman Fratzel: unknown

On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted to appoint Mr. Larry Cote and Mr. John Lunn as Selectmen Pro Temp for the July 14, 2020 Town voting. Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. The motion passed 4-0-0.***

**ACTION ITEMS:** Tax Abatement Requests: Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, Church of the Good Sheperd United Methodist Church, Lake Sunapee Baptist Church - There was a short discussion on the abatements being requested.

Selectman Wilmot made a motion: *to grant tax abatements for the 2020 first bill for the Bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church at 2 Cedar Street, Newport, NH; a tax abatement for the 2020 first bill for the Church of the Good Sheperd United Methodist Church at 9 Park Street, Newport, NH and a tax abatement for the 2020 first bill for the Lake Sunapee Baptist Church at 70 Laurel Street, Newport, NH.* It was seconded by Selectman Hooper

On a point of order, Selectman Connell stated the BOS had passed the abatements to the three churches in the July 6, 2020 Consent Agenda. He asked for an explanation, procedurally, of the motion. Chairman Kessler concurred that the abatements had been granted. The Selectboard's action with the motion was "housekeeping" at this time. Selectman Connell thanked him for the clarification. Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Conservation Commission Resignation- Stanley Hannum - On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *on a roll call vote the Board accepted the resignation of Stanley Hannum from the Conservation Commission with regret. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Heritage Commission Resignation-Brian Kelly - On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *on a roll call vote the Board accepted the resignation of Brian Kelly from the Heritage Commission with regret. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Planning Board Resignation-Erna McCormick - On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; *on a roll call vote the Board accepted the resignation of Erna McCormick from the Planning Board with regret. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Recreation Advisory Council-Kim Gaddes - On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; *on a roll call vote the Board accepted the resignation of Kim Gaddes from the Recreation Advisory Council with regret. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Zoning Board of Adjustment Resignation-Ben Nelson - On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; *on a roll call vote the Board accepted the resignation of Ben Nelson from the Zoning Board of Adjustment with regret. The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Appoint two Board members to join a committee to negotiate a new contract with NCTV - There was a short discussion concerning the need for a committee to meet with representatives of NCTV to formalize a new contract. Chairman Kessler asked for Board volunteers to be on the committee. Selectman Connell and Chairman Kessler volunteered to be on the committee. Selectman Wilmot made a motion *to appoint Chairman Jeffrey Kessler and Selectman Barry Connell to a subcommittee to renegotiate the contract with NCTV.* It was seconded by Selectman Hooper. Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Mr. Spaulding, Sr. reminded Chairman Kessler that any subcommittee is subject to the Right to Know law. Chairman Kessler stated he was aware of it.

**APPOINTMENTS:** Annual Appointments to Boards and Commissions - The Selectboard appointed the following individuals to Town Boards, Commission and Committees:

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Scott McCoy as a full member to the Airport Advisory Board with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Kenneth Vigue as an alternate member to the Heritage Commission with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Bert Spaulding, Sr. as a full member to the Planning Board with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Richard Cota as a full member to the Rec Advisory Council with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Timothy Beard as a full member to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board reappointed Mr. Scott McCoy as an alternate member to the Zoning Board of Adjustment with a term to expire June 30, 2023.*** Chairman Kessler called for a roll call vote. ***The motion passed 4-0-0.***

Chairman Kessler thanked Selectman Wilmot for his seven years of service on the Board of Selectmen. He wished him well in the future. Selectman Wilmot thanked Chairman Kessler. He stated the reason he was wearing a tie at the July 6, 2020 meeting was because he wore a tie at his first meeting of the BOS. He figured he would wear a tie at his last meeting as a Selectman. Selectman Wilmot said serving on the BOS has been educational; he has learned more about bridges, roads and sewage treatment plants than he knew existed. He stated the Selectmen were great stewards.

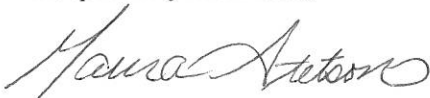
Chairman Kessler stated that there were many vacant positions on other Town Boards that Selectman Wilmot could apply to.

Mr. Lunn addressed Selectman Wilmot and thanked him for his service.

After a brief discussion, on a motion by Chairman Kessler, seconded by Selectman Wilmot; ***the Board voted by roll call that the Selectmen representatives continue in their present representative rolls until the second meeting in the month of July 2020 when new Board representatives are appointed by the incoming Board of Selectmen. The motion passed by roll call vote 4-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Wilmot, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted unanimously to adjourn at 8:50 pm.***

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

**The next regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen is scheduled for July 20, 2020 at 6:30 p.m.**

Approved on: July 20, 2020