

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

August 18, 2021 7:00 PM

Council Chambers

Councilors Present: Chair Toni Weinstein, Vice-chair Helen Sanders, Councilor Jonathan Kiper, Councilor Megan Brabec, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Katanna Conley, and Councilor Brian Ward.

Staff Present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier, Environmental Services Director Sean Greig and Wendy Chase Recording Secretary.

Chair Weinstein convened the Meeting at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

AGENDA

Approved September 1, 2021

PUBLIC FORUM

Chair Weinstein opened the Public Forum at 7:01 PM.

William Randall, 84 Pear Tree said that he lives across the road from the development taking place off of Hersey Lane. He voiced concerns over safety and noise from the construction.

Chair Weinstein noted for the record that the public forum does not include back and forth dialogue between the speaker and the Council. She also stated that it is the Planning Board, not the Council that approves development projects and that this particular project was approved by the Planning Board many years ago.

Chair Weinstein closed the Public Forum at 7:04 PM.

TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

July 21, 2021

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *the July 21, 2021, Meeting Minutes*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 6-0-1.

REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER

Town Manager's Report

Town Manager Fournier reported on the following:

- **COVID-19 Update:** As of August 10, there are 12 active cases and 585 cumulative cases. The Seacoast Health Region has seen 5.4% increase and Rockingham County has seen an increase of 5.8% over the past week. There will be no change in the mask mandate. Lamprey Health Care is working with the Town to hold clinics and offer incentives to get more people vaccinated. The Town Manager has reached out to the Housing Authority and the Cheney group to work with them to encourage more vaccinations. Newmarket Rite Aid offers vaccines.
- **Community Development:** The following are recommendations made by Municipal Resource Inc.:
 1. *We recommend that the informal organization of Building, Planning, and Zoning be combined into a single department. This department would consist of a Planner, a Code Official, and the Administrative Assistant. Some of the present functions of the Planner and possibly the Building Inspector should be reallocated or, if found unnecessary, cease.*
 2. *Zoning Administration should be delegated to the Code Official rather than the Director of Community Development.*
 3. *Engineering and related technical activities should be delegated to an engineer – either a Town Engineer, or a third-party consultant that might be on retainer or utilized on an as-needed basis.*
 4. *The main function of the Planning Office should be the advancement of future planning such as studies related to the quality of life in Newmarket, the review and advancement of elements of the Master Plan as well as monitoring compliance with the master plan. Part of the effort in this office should be complicit with the Town of Newmarket's economic development goals and objectives.*
 5. *The Administrative Assistant should have a core function like a Permit Technician which will allow the flow of plans and approvals as well as inspections to be more formally organized around this central position (informally it is now). This would also allow better customer service, as well as one-stop, permitting in some cases.*
 6. *A minute taker function should be explored, with the consistent workload and the ability of staff to maintain it, having that function realized outside of their daily duties would be beneficial.*
 7. *A review should be conducted for record-keeping. The maintenance of files and preparation for Laserfiche may be more efficient if connected to the larger record-keeping activities of the town. Most permitting software products allow the applications, plans, and inspections records to be stored as part of the software. The present permitting software may have this function.*

Planning for FY23 budget has begun. The budget will be presented to the Town Council by October 15th per the Charter. It is recommended to hold a Saturday budget workshop on October 23rd at 9:00 AM.

The U.S City Average CPI has risen 5.4% since 2020; the Northeast region is up 4.3% and Boston-Cambridge-Newton is up 4.3%.

The School is reopening soon and the town works with the School by giving them facts and information we receive regarding COVID-19. The Town and School are very different in terms of how to react. The Town looks at it on a community-wide basis. It is ultimately up to the School Board to decide what their mask mandates and policies are going to be.

Road Construction: Bay Road, South Main Street, and Moody Point water main extension. Granese and Sons are contracted to replace the water main on South Main Street; the sewer and water mains on Bay Road and the water main extension on Cushing Road. The South Main Street and Bay Road 1895 6" water main is being replaced by a 12" main; the 1900 clay sewer main on Bay Road is being replaced and the water main is being extended to Moody Point which will be paid for by their association. The delays taking place are due to the amount of ledge they are running into. South Main Street should be online by August 27th and then they will begin cleanup between the hours of 8am-2pm while students are in school. The Bay Road project should be complete by the middle of September then the Cushing Road project will begin.

Town Manager Fournier commended the Recreation Department Staff for the successful opening of the water park.

Councilor Kiper asked the Town Manager to find out the number of children 12 years of age and younger.

The Town Manager said that they are still deciding on how to spend the ARPA funds.

Chair Weinstein commented on the Macallen Dam and Splash Pad ribbon-cutting ceremonies. She said these projects are a direct result of the quality of staff that the Town is fortunate to have and commended Town Manager Steve Fournier, Recreation Director Aimee Gigandet and Public Works Director Rick Malasky.

Department Reports

Chair Weinstein commented on the Police Department report. She said that she liked to see that the Police Officers are moving forward with their training with the increased mandated training and the online training that includes responding to mental health crises and diversity. It was also mentioned in the report that the Police Department continues to receive information regarding "Meth" in town.

The DPW installed two new charging stations in town. One at the Water Street parking lot and one at the Community Center.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Sanders said the Arts & Tourism Commission held their last meeting at Schanda Park. They discussed ideas on what their next project will be. The next Arts in the Park Concert Series concert will be celebrating local eateries and they will be giving out gift certificates. There will be an artist present and they will raffle off a piece of art.

Councilor Brabec reported on the last Conservation Commission meeting. They discussed the purchase of the Neal Mill Road property. She said that there is a "Life Scout" of the Boy Scouts that is helping out with the Heron Point Management Plan. The Commission will be teaming up with the Recreation Department on October 2nd to organize people to visit area parks and to do volunteer work at Heron Point.

Councilor Blackstone said the Planning Board met and they started the process of updating the Master Plan. The members had an active discussion on housing and density and ways to achieve more diverse housing in town.

Chair Weinstein said the Energy and Environment Committee met and the focus was to vote to recommend to the Council to accept ReVision Energy as the preferred vendor to lead the proposed "Solarize Newmarket" project.

OLD BUSINESS

RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES IN THE 2ND READING

Resolution 2021/2022-01 - Establishing Juneteenth as a Holiday

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-01 Establishing Juneteenth as a Holiday*, which was seconded by Councilor Ward.

Town Manager Fournier explained that it is a national holiday and if passed employees will receive an additional holiday in June each year.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolution #2021/2022-02 Community Power Coalition Joint Powers Agreement

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-02 Authorizing the Town of Newmarket to enter into a Joint Powers Agreement of Community Power Coalition of New Hampshire*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Town Manager Fournier said authorizing the Town to enter into an agreement does not commit the town financially or otherwise.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolution #2021/2022-03 Change in Solid Waste Fees

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-03 Change in Solid Waste Fees*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Town Manager Fournier explained that the Town adopted the "pay as you throw" program in the 1990s. The revenue of the trash bags was to offset the solid waste fees. Solid waste prices continue to rise. The cost of bags has not been increased for over 10 years. The proposed increase is \$0.25 for the large bags and \$0.25 for the small bags. The increase would result in \$31,000 in revenue. Town Manager Fournier said that they will revisit the solid waste fees more regularly going forward.

The Councilors discussed free composting available at the transfer station giving residents the option to dispose of compostable materials reducing waste in trash bags.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolution #2021/2022-04 - Investment Policy Review and Adoption

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021-2022-04 Investment Policy Review and Adoption*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Town Manager Fournier said that the Investment Policy has to be approved annually by the Town Council. There are no changes to the policy from previous years.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolution #2021/2022-05 - Huber Thickener Project

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-05 Huber Thickener Project*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Environmental Services Director Greig explained that they haul 750 tons of solids from the WWTP to the landfill each year. The machine will reduce the water from the solids reducing the cost of disposal. There will be an 8 to 10-year payback for the equipment. He proposes to lease the equipment for 7 years. The cost is \$200,000; \$32,000 will come out of the budget and the remaining costs will come from the Capital Improvements Fund. He said it will take 6 to 8 months to get the equipment giving him time to apply for potential grants.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolution #2021/2022-06 - Reinstate the Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-06 Reinstate the Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Town Manager Fournier explained that the original establishment of the Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee included a sunset clause which came due. The reinstatement of the Committee does not include a sunset date.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

NEW BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE

TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS

Gretchen Kast - Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee - Term Expiration - June 2024

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *the Appointment of Gretchen Kast to the Riverfront Advisory Committee with a term expiration of June 2024*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Gretchen Kast said that she has lived at Rivermoore Landing for over 20 years and is very

interested on what's going on at the riverfront.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Peter Sawtell - Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee - Term Expiration June 30, 2024

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *the Reappointment of Peter Sawtell to the Riverfront Advisory Committee with a term expiration of June 2024*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Councilor Kiper mentioned that Peter Sawtell owns and operates Seven Rivers Paddling and is well deserved to be appointed to this committee.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Dale Pike - Ad hoc Riverfront Advisory Committee - Term Expires June 30, 2024

Councilor Sanders made a motion to Approve *the Reappointment of Dale Pike to the Riverfront Advisory Committee with a term expiration of June 2024*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Motion was Passed by a vote of 7-0-0.

Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

Resolution #2021/2022-07 - Request for Legal Interest in Gaziano Tract - Neal Mill Road

Chair Weinstein read Resolution #2021/2022-07 - Request for Legal Interest in the Gaziano Tract - Neal Mill Road into the record.

CORRESPONDENCE TO THE TOWN COUNCIL

Energy & Environment Advisory Committee Letter

Town Manager Fournier suggested drafting a Resolution for the next meeting endorsing the letter from the Energy & Environmental Committee regarding the issuance of an RFP to ReVision Energy to head the solarized project.

CLOSING COMMENTS BY TOWN COUNCILORS

Councilor Blackstone referred to the S.E.L.T. land acquisition on Neal Mill Road and their desire to make the accessway a Class A trail instead of a road. He proposed to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate with S.E.L.T. for parking spots prior to the final approval.

It was a general consensus of the Town Council to authorize the Town Manager to negotiate with S.E.L.T. for parking spaces prior to final approval of the land acquisition.

Town Councilors commented on the Splash Pad. They agreed that Aimee Gigandet did a great job making it happen. They remind parents that the supervision of their children is not the Recreation Department's responsibility and if they have to hire someone to supervise then they

will have to start charging admission.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

September 1, 2021

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Weinstein adjourned the meeting at 8:05 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,
Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary