



Town Council Regular Session

December 20, 2023 at 7:00 PM

Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Chair Conley convened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Councilor White led the pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Present: Council Chair Katanna Conley, Council Vice chair Brian Ward, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Justin Glazebrook.

Staff Present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier, Engineer Lyndsay Butler, Police Chief Greg Jordan and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary.

3. Public Forum

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

Chair Conley closed the Public Forum at 7:01 PM without public comment.

4. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. December 6, 2023 Work Session Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Dornblut** made a motion to approve the December 6, 2023 Work Session Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Vote: **Approved (6-0-1)** Councilor Ward abstained because he was not present at the 12/6/23 meeting.

b. December 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Dornblut** made a motion to approve the December 6, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Vote: **Approved (6-0-1)** Councilor Ward abstained because he was not present at the 12/6/2023 meeting.

5. Report of the Town Manager

a. December 20, 2023

- The Town will launch the Newmarket Community Power program in the spring and the information session will be held January 31st.
- The Primary Election will be held on January 23rd from 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM at the Jr./Sr. High School. There will be a sign-up sheet available for

each Councilor to pick a time that they can be present. There will need to be a quorum at the end of the election at 7:00 PM.

- Damage from the storm on Monday, December 18th included flooding and road closures on Route 152. There was a watermain break on Elm Street also. Flood warnings for the Lamprey River will continue until tomorrow.
- Schoppmeyer Park dock lost 2 pieces of the dock in the storm, some pieces that fell over the dam were recovered by Chief Malasky.
- FY24 expenses and revenues are normal for this period. 46% of the budget has been spent.

Town Manager Fournier wished everyone a happy holiday.

b. November 2023 Department Reports

Councilor Lamattina commended the Police Department for their successful "stuff a cruiser" Christmas toy event. He congratulated Officer Schmidt for the work that she did to make it a success.

Councilor Blackstone asked about the status of the Recreation Department's sign. He asked if they should put up a temporary sign/banner, so people would know where to find the department. Town Manager Fournier said that the company is still building the sign and that they can not put up a banner sign because the location is not town-owned property.

Chair Conley welcomed new Dispatcher Christina Bernardy and commended her for doing a great job dispatching during the recent storm. She congratulated new hire Kody Heath for graduating from the fire academy and congratulated the public works department for the great job that they did decorating the downtown area and a special thank you to Karen Bloom for moving all the kayaks after the storm. She thanked Engineering for the work being done on the stormwater system and the collaboration with UNH on water quality. She thanked the Building, Safety & Zoning department for resolving the issue with housing standards to ensure Newmarket has safe housing. Town Manager Fournier also commended the Fire Department for entering the Lamprey with wet suits and securing the dock at Schoppmeyer Park.

6. Committee Reports

Councilor Ward reported on the December 11th and December 18th Budget Committee meetings and the December 14th Conservation Commission meeting:

The Budget Committee met on December 11th and 18th to review the town and school budgets.

The Conservation Commission met on December 14th. The Commission discussed with the Strafford Regional Planning Commission the open space survey and the next steps to take for next year. The public is encouraged to take the survey. It is available on the town's website and there are QR code cards around town that will access the survey when scanned. The Commission is looking at a new logo design. The Nature Conservancy is hosting an astronomy night on January 8th at 7:00pm. Those interested in registering may do so by emailing the Chair Ellen Snyder, ellensnyder1@gmail.com. If the night is cloudy, it will be rescheduled for February

5th.

Councilor Blackstone reported on the December 12th Planning Board meeting:

The age restricted 55+ proposed apartment building project was changed by increasing the minimum required age to 62 years. The applicant also had the architecture of the building revised to a New England look. The Planning Board approved the application. The Planning Board has accepted a completed application for a proposed 42 unit apartment complex on Railroad Ave. The application has been continued to the February meeting.

7. Old Business

8. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

- a. Resolution #2023/2024-16 - Contract for Dispatch Services
Newmarket/Newfields

Motion: Councilor Glazebrook made a motion to approve Resolution #2023/2024-16 - Contract for Dispatch Services Newmarket/Newfields

Second: Councilor Ward

Discussion: Town Manager Fournier explained that the Town of Newmarket provides dispatch services to the Town of Newfields and the three-year contract will soon expire. The new contract will expire on December 31, 2026.

Chief Jordan explained that we do go to Newfields daily and add some volume to Newmarket services, but only 1/10th of what Newmarket generates for dispatch services.

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

- b. Resolution #2023/2024-26 - Moody Point Stormwater Management Project

Motion: Councilor Ward made a motion to approve Resolution #2023/2024-26 - Moody Point Stormwater Management Project

Second: Councilor LaMattina

Discussion: Town Engineer Butler explained that the town has received 100% loan forgiveness for \$100,000 for the moody Point Stormwater Management project.

Councilor LaMattina asked if the drains were located on town property. Ms. Butler said that the drains are on private property and that the town maintains Lubberland Drive drains and also the culverts located in the roadway and right-of-way; anything out of the right-of-way is maintained by Moody Point Homeowners Association.

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

- c. Resolution #2023/2024-27 - Ash Swamp Road Bridge - Rehab Final Design and Bidding

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2023/2024-27 - Ash Swamp Road Bridge - Rehab Final Design and Bidding

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Town Engineer Butler explained that this is the next phase to rehabbing the Ash Swamp Road bridge. This next step is to get us to the final design stage, then we go out to bid and be prepared to have construction ready to go for construction season. Traffic will be detoured, but at this point she does not know how long traffic will be impacted.

Vote: **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**

9. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

a. Resolution #2023/2024-28 Approve FY2025 Default Budget

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to suspend the rules and consider Resolution #2023/2024-28 Approve FY2025 Default Budget

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Town Manager Fournier requested suspending the rules to vote on the resolution so that there is time to meet statutory deadlines.

Vote: **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**

Motion: **Councilor White** made a motion to Approve Resolution #2023/2024-28 - Approval of the FY2025 Default Budget

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Vote: **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**

10. New Business/Correspondence

a. Correspondence to the Town Council

There was no correspondence to the Town Council.

b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors

The Town Councilors read the following comments written by Chair Conley reflecting on this past year:

As we reflect on the work people have done over the past year, the Town Council would like to take a moment to thank some of the people who worked together to make the town of Newmarket a welcoming, warm, and vibrant community in 2023.

- The Newmarket Library-Thank you for the welcome you give our families, the excellent programming you brought to the town this year, and for putting service to Newmarket at the forefront of all you do. You're a vital resource, and we're grateful that you continue to stand for knowledge, inclusion, and compassion.

- The Newmarket Rec Department-Amy Gigandet-thank you and your team so much for your ongoing dedication to recreation and to celebration. In addition to the incredible rec programming the team offers, the events you organized this year, like Rec Connect, the Backyard Bash-then Bunt!, the tree lighting: events

like these give our community ways and reasons to celebrate, both large and small. It's easy to forget how important it is to take time for celebration, and we are grateful that your team continues to remind us.

- Police Department-Thank you for the many ways you help make Newmarket a stronger, safer, and more welcoming community. Your emphasis on community policing and conflict resolution, your skills at de-escalation, and your commitment to connecting with and serving our citizens have been a joy to witness this year. Your work is not easy, and the care with which everyone in the department does it is appreciated.

- Fire and Rescue: Rick, so much of the work of this department over the past year continues to be rescue and emergency. When Newmarket citizens are in crisis, we are grateful that the members of this department - full-time, part-time, and volunteers, are the heroes who answer the call. Your professionalism, efficiency, and compassion reflect the best of Newmarket. Thank you.

- Finance: The work of managing the town's budget, finances and human resources is often invisible, but your work is quite literally what allows everyone else to do theirs. The work on things like managing the budget and your work on the NH retirement conversion has not been simple. Thank you for caring for Newmarket's purse and its people in 2023.

- Public Works and Engineering: The work of keeping roads, buildings and grounds in great shape often goes unnoticed unless a problem arises. Thank you for doing the hard work of making sure Newmarket citizens can get out after a storm, maintaining our buildings and parks, and helping make sure that the face Newmarket presents to the community is an outstanding one.

- Environmental Services: There's a reason this department is a model, and a reason its members are award winners. Your upgrades to our water and sewer systems and your ceaseless dedication to excellence and improvement makes us proud. Thank you for taking such tremendous care of the health and safety of our Newmarket citizens.

- Building Safety, Zoning Enforcement: The work you do helps keep Newmarket residents and businesses safer. From enforcing housing standards for community members who rent, to ensuring that construction and renovation work gets done to high standards of safety and quality, we don't often see the work you do, but thankfully, we see the results. Thank you.

- Town Moderator and Election Volunteers-Thank you for the work you do to make sure our elections are safe, open, fair and run smoothly. We have one coming up next month and are grateful to have you at the helm. The work you do helps Newmarket citizens participate in our democracy; and that makes it, and us, stronger.

- IT and Channel 8: From fielding support requests to making sure the technology at our wells are running smoothly-who knew! IT had a busy year, and we're grateful. Your social media posts, newsletters, and Channel 8 are the reason every person in Newmarket has access to the discussions, decisions, and work of the town, its council, committees, departments, and even school events. Thank you for making our community more connected.

- Welfare-Heather, how a community cares for citizens in need is the clearest reflection of that community's character, humanity and strength. This means it's some of the most important work we do. Thank you for being the compassionate face of Newmarket's Welfare and Human Services department. When a Newmarket community member makes the difficult decision to reach out for help,

we're grateful that you're the person they meet.

- Town Clerk's Office-Terri and team, thank you for helping Newmarket citizens conduct their business with the town every single day. Your warmth and efficiency help people get things done. You're the face of Newmarket town government for so many of our citizens, including staffing our elections! - so thank you for being a face of welcome and support.

- Town Manager - Thank you for the work you do managing all the spinning plates that are Newmarket. Manager Fournier, your professionalism, problem-solving skills, and commitment to transparency and fairness continued to serve the town well in 2023. Thank you for both making Newmarket a better place, both for its citizens, and for its employees this year. We truly appreciate the work you've done on behalf of the town. Wendy, every time we've needed anything, large or small, important or trivial, you have stepped in, and stepped up, to provide support. Thank you for your depth of knowledge, expertise, and kindness.

c. Next Meeting

i. January 3, 2024

11. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 7:40pm without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary