



Town Council Regular Session

February 21, 2024 at 6:00 PM

Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. 6:00 PM Work Session - COAST Bus Transportation

Councilors Present: Vice-chair Brian Ward, Councilor Justin Glazebrook, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Scott Blackstone.

Excused: Council Chair Katanna Conley

Staff Present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary

Others Present: Rad Nichols and Michael Williams representatives of COAST

a. Public Transportation Discussion

Rad Nichols and Michael Williams from COAST presented a PowerPoint presentation.

- COAST has worked for 40 years to shape the region's public transit network
- Every dollar invested in COAST generates approximately \$4.08 of activity in the local and regional economy.
- COAST's annual impact on the local economy is estimated at \$31 million.
- COAST is facing a sizable budget deficit as they exhaust several one-time federal grantees in FY24.
- Emergency COVID-19 grants helped COAST through the pandemic.
- Potential funding sources include increased advertising revenues, charitable gaming, municipal & partner funding increases, use of reserve and other unidentified non-USDOT federal or private funding sources.

Route 7 On Demand

- An advance reservation only service. Trips may be reserved up to two weeks in advance.
- Service days are Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday between 9:30am and 5:15pm.
- Service to/from designated stops cost \$1.50 each time a rider boards, and to/from non designated stops is \$3.00.
- The top trip purpose are for employment, shopping, and medical services.

- Projecting a growth in ridership of 15% to 20% this year.

Service Cost/Funding

- \$106.44 per vehicle
- Weekday service approx. \$375,520
- Saturday service approx. \$77,488
- No available FTA funding
- Anticipate all new funding sources needed

The demand response service is the most expensive. The operating costs are \$106.44 and that doesn't include administrative costs. They have approximately 1,400 passengers a year that include Newmarket and Exeter. The cost is just over \$40.00 per ride. Newmarket is the lesser used service.

The two service models:

Fixed Route:

- Designated route running on a timetable
- Predictable
- Allows customers plans to be flexible
- High capacity
- Lowest operating cost if demand is moderate

Demand Repsonse:

- Advance reservation service
- Allows customers flexibility on trip origin/destination
- Low capacity
- Lowest operating cost if demand is light. Becomes very expensive with high demand.

Discussion ensued regarding the creation of an ad hoc committee to look at transportation options and look at where we stand today. Town Manager Fournier suggested they start off with a small ad hoc committee with 1 member from the Energy & Environment Comittee, 1 member from the Planning Board, 1 Member of the Council and 2 members of the public with at least one of them being a COAST rider. He said that if the committee does well they can at some point make it a permanent committee and add more members. Town Manager Fournier said that he would include the Town Engineer as support staff to the committee.

b. Adjourn Work Session

Vice-chair Ward recessed the meeting at 6:58 PM.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-chair Ward convened the meeting at 7:00 PM. Councilor White led the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Roll Call

Present: Council Vice-chair Brian Ward, Councilor Justin Glazebrook, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Scott Blackstone

Excused: Council Chair Katanna Conley

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

4. Public Forum

Vice-chair Ward opened the public forum at 7:02 PM.

Vice-chair Ward closed the public forum at 7:02 PM without public comment.

5. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. February 7, 2024 Draft Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Glazebrook** made a motion to approve the February 7, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Second: **Scott Blackstone**

Vote: **Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)**

6. Report of the Town Manager

a. February 21, 2024

FY24 Expense and Revenue:

60% of the operating budget has been expended, which is in line with last fiscal year. Revenues are still on track. Motor vehicles have rebounded and are higher than last year at this point. Building permits are lower.

Candidate Profiles:

After much research, thought and consternation, Town Manager Fournier is working with the Media Services Division to have candidate profiles placed on the Town's website and electronic newsletter. In addition, there will be a voter guide for the warrant articles. Those who wish to participate would answer the following questions:

- Name
- Address
- Office Seeking
- Occupation
- Education
- Length of time as a Newmarket Resident
- Previous service on town committees or public service
- Explain interest in being elected to town office

There will be no personal attacks on any of the opponents, other elected officials, employees of the Town of Newmarket or other inappropriate content.

Town Staff will have the right to approve or disapprove any profile.
Town Manager Fournier has reservations about doing this, but it is necessary since we have no representation from Seacoast Medai group.

Moody Point:

The Town Manager met with the residents of Moody Point on February 7. He meets with them every year to discuss the issues facing the community while reviewing the ballot with them. He said he is open to meeting with other groups to provide the same service if they so desire.

Retirement:

"It is with mixed feelings that I announce the retirement of Sue Jordan effective February 29, 2024, after 35 years with the Town of Newmarket. Sue started at the Police Department and then moved to Planning, Zoning & Building Safety. I have seen many changes. She has seen many changes in Town in the last 35 years. She has been a dedicated and hard worker. We wish to congratulate her and wish her the best!"

b. January 2024 Department Reports

7. Committee Reports

Councilor Glazebrook reported on the Willey Park subcommittee's February 20th meeting:

The Subcommittee would like to meet with the Council to give a presentation on their Willey Park plans. Town Manager Fournier said that they can meet with the Council prior to a regular Council Meeting.

Councilor Ward reported on the Conservation Commission's February 8th meeting:

- The Commission discussed the Master Plan chapter with Community Development Director Bart McDonough and Arnold Scott from the Strafford Regional Planning Commission. On March 16th there will be a Master Plan Visioning Workshop at the town hall.
- 400 residents responded to the Master Plan Survey and they are currently correlating the data.
- Members of NH Fish & Game and UNH Conservation were present to discuss our checklist for the development of Newmarket Conservation Commission.

8. Old Business

9. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a.** Ordinance No. 04-2023/2034 - Revisions to the Administrative Code
Vice-chair Ward read Ordinance No. 04 2023/2024 into the record by title only without objection.

- b. Resolution # 2023/24-33: Using the Compensated Absences Trust Funds
Vice-chair Ward read Resolution #2023/2024 into the record.

10. Town Council to Consider Nominations, Appointments, Elections, and Resignations

Vice-chair read Resolution #2023/2024-

- a. Joan DeYoreo - Library Trustee - Term Expiration April 2027

Motion: **Councilor White** made a motion to reappoint Joan DeYoreo as a Library Trustee with a Term Expiration of April 2027

Second: **Joe LaMattina**

Vote: **Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)**

11. New Business/Correspondence

- a. Correspondence to the Town Council
There was no correspondence to the Council.
- b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors
There were no closing comments.
- c. Next Meeting

- i. March 6, 2024

12. Adjournment

Vice-chair Ward adjourned the meeting at 7:31 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary