

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING

OCTOBER 17, 2018 7:00 PM

TOWN COUNCIL CHAMBERS

Approved November 7, 2018

PRESENT: Council Chairman Dale Pike, Council Vice Chairman Toni Weinstein, Councilor Zachary Dumont, Councilor Gretchen Kast, Councilor Kyle Bowden, Councilor Casey Finch, Councilor Amy Burns (by speakerphone)

ALSO PRESENT: Town Administrator Steve Fournier, Recreation Director Aimee Gigandet, SRPC Executive Director Jennifer Czysz, SRPC Senior Transportation Planner Colin Lentz, SRPC Commissioner Lisa Henderson

AGENDA

Chairman Dale Pike welcomed everyone to the October 17, 2018 Newmarket Town Council Meeting and called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Pike stated that Councilor Amy Burns would be present via speakerphone.

PUBLIC FORUM

Jenn Czysz, Executive Director Strafford Regional Planning Commission (SRPC)

Chairman Pike opened the Public Forum at 7:01 pm.

Lisa Henderson of 6 Maplecrest Drive said she was a Commissioner with the SRPC and she wanted to introduce the new Executive Director Jenn Czysz, with whom she had previously worked at the office of Energy & Planning. She said she had known her to be a dedicated public servant, and said she had 19 years of experience in municipal, regional, and State planning as well as community development and architectural design.

SRPC Executive Director Jenn Czysz said she was visiting communities in the region to hear what they were working on and what their interests were in order to understand how the SRPC could be of service to each

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community. She explained that they were a regional planning commission formed under State Statute and had a few mandated obligations to provide assistance with comprehensive planning, needs assessment to help with Master Plans, and serve as a resource for the Town. She said they tried to find solutions collaboratively and were a frequent partner with the Rockingham Regional Planning Commission.

Executive Director Czysz said recent work with Newmarket included Master Plan updates and working with Stormwater regulations. She said they also served as a metro-planning organization and said Colin Lentz, also present this evening, was their Senior Transportation Planner. She said the Newmarket Commissioners policy set the direction for the SRPC and doubled as the Metropolitan Planning Commission Policy Committee. She said a meeting would be held Friday morning at their headquarters at 9:00 am, with the DOT Commissioner speaking on proposals in the Department of Transportation.

Colin Lentz, SRPC Senior Transportation Planner, said there were a number of transportation fund programs for various projects with regard to safety issues on public roads, and said they worked to move transportation projects up into the State's 10-year plan and eventually obtain Federal funding. He said in the next few months he would be working with the Policy Committee on a set of directions and issues local communities faced which have a regional perspective.

Discussion: Vice-Chair Weinstein said their presence was timely as she was planning to bring up later some correspondence she received regarding the School Building Project and the safety of students crossing Route 108. She said due to the construction, a lot of people were crossing Route 152 around pickup and drop-off times. Councilor Kast said she had heard comments about heavier traffic through Downtown Newmarket which exacerbated the safety issues through people commuting.

Chairman Pike said that north of Newmarket on Route 108 they were seeing major improvements in the roadway which increased traffic, but there was also congestion on Route 108 South. Executive Director Czysz said they did traffic counts throughout the region and might have some trend data available, and Mr. Lentz said they were getting more data on areas of congestion and there were programs for congestion reduction. Town Administrator Fournier said they did try to work with NHDOT on the bike path project, but ended up in court and probably would not work with them on any projects in the near future.

Chairman Pike closed the Public Forum at 7:17 pm.

PUBLIC HEARING – None

TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Acceptance of the Minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of October 3, 2018

Vice-Chair Weinstein made a motion to approve the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of October 3, 2018, which was seconded by Councilor Kast.

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Chairman Pike corrected a statement on page 4, line 124 with regard to the Macallen Dam and the sentence was deleted; he also made a correction on page 6, line 214 to change “composting” to *compost*.

Town Administrator Fournier polled the Council and the minutes of the Town Council Regular Meeting of October 3, 2018 were approved as amended by a vote of 5-0, with 2 abstentions.

REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR

Presentation of the Town FY2020 Proposed Budget

Town Administrator Steve Fournier said he had presented his proposed budget to the Town Council for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2020 on Monday, October 15, 2018, per Town Charter. He said he would go over the highlights and said there was an all-day Workshop Session being held on Saturday October 27, 2018 from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm for the Council to review in depth.

Town Administrator Fournier started with Economic Indicators for the area and said the Consumer Price Index had been going up. He said the US had increased 1.7% to 2.9% over last year, the Northeast increased from 1.6% to 2.7%, and the Boston Area increased from 2.2% to 3.4%, of which the Town was a part. He said Unemployment Rates were negligible with the US down from 4.3% to 4.1%, the State up 2.5%-2.7%, the County up 2.7% to 3%, Portsmouth Metro down 2.5% to 2.4%, and Newmarket up 1.9% to 2.1%.

Town Administrator Fournier said the Estimated Tax Rate would be \$29.26, with the biggest portion for the School of roughly 74% of tax dollars. He said the town was at 21.9% and the County at 3.8%. He said a 5-Year Comparison of the Tax Rate showed the Town pretty level, and said the reason for the jump in the School was because it was the first year of the Bond Payment for the new School renovations. He said the Assessed Value of the Town had also increased from \$75,803,033 to \$762,100,100, which meant for every dollar on the tax rate the Town could raise \$762,100. He said the 5-year statistical update and revaluation would also be coming up this year.

Town Administrator Fournier said he was recommending \$12,222,871 for a bottom-line budget for FY2020 or an increase of 0.68%, and said Departments had recommended \$12,897,704 or 6.23%, and the current budget was \$12,140,734 or 5.42%. He said his proposed budget increase was \$82,137, Enterprise funds decreased \$108,096, and Other Funds increased \$190,233. He said Expenditures by Fund showed the General Fund at \$7,864,846, Special Revenues at \$1,201,083, and the Enterprise Fund at \$3,156,942 for Water & Sewer.

Town Administrator Fournier said the increases included: \$30,000 for an Economic Development Consultant, \$124,125 for the first year of the Police Contract, \$22,000 for the Solid Waste Contract, and \$27,000 for the Recycling Contract. He explained that his budget and the Department Head budget differed in contributions to Capital Reserve Funds, and said he was recommending \$550,400 with Department Heads recommending \$1,097,525. He said the reason behind this was that they also had a reduction in their Fund Balance which was currently at \$2.4 million, of which the Council had budgeted \$850,000 to be withdrawn to fund Capital projects last year leaving \$1,597,000.

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Town Administrator Fournier said they were not anticipating a huge increase in revenues and were only anticipating approximately \$250,000 to go back into the Fund Balance. He said at \$1.5 million they were at 7%, with the bottom being 5% and policy being between 5-10%. He said the cuts would impact projects but not impact the day-to-day operations of the government. He said he was requesting the following contributions to Capital Reserves: Public Works \$75,000, Building Improvements \$15,000, Roadway Improvements \$250,000, Stormwater Management \$25,000, Macallen Dam \$50,000, Fire Department \$50,000, Police Vehicles \$26,000, Police Dispatch Equipment \$10,000, Veterans Memorials \$2,000, Master Plan \$10,000, 300th Anniversary Celebration \$2,000, Compensated Absences \$10,000, Library \$10,400, and Recreation Facilities 15,000.

Town Administrator Fournier said the total Revenue Budget last year was \$7,437,656 and decreased to \$7,089,248 because of the Fund Balance. He said if the FY2020 Budget passed as it was today the Tax Impact would be Gross Appropriations of \$12,222,871, less Revenues of \$7,089,248, plus Overlay of \$20,000 and War Service Credits of \$160,000, for a net Town Appropriation of \$5,313,623 with an assessed value of \$762,100,100 resulting in an Estimated Tax Rate of \$6.97 or an increase of 56 cents. He stated that they anticipated a Bond for the Macallen Dam Project at \$1.5 million, and Water projects which would only affect the rate-payers.

Discussion: Vice-Chair Weinstein asked why they were contributing to the Macallen Dam Capital Reserves if there was a potential bond, and Town Administrator Fournier said they still needed money for engineering.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Councilor Finch stated that the *Conservation Commission* had met and had discussed Schanda Park. He said he informed the Commission they could initiate a Sub-Committee, and said they had agreed to ask if the Town could help with maintenance, repair, and oversight as it was a Town Park. He said they had begun surveys of some of the local conservation areas, and said a volunteer cleanup day at Heron Point had been scheduled for Saturday, October 27, 2018 from 9:00 am to noon, with the Department of Public Works hauling away debris.

OLD BUSINESS

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS IN THE 2ND READING – None

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS IN THE 3RD READING

Amended Resolution #2018/2019-10 WWTP Boiler Replacement Agreement with Patriot Mechanical & Withdrawal from Sewer CRF

Chairman Pike said no vote would be required on Amended Resolution #2018/2019-10 this evening as it was being held over for another reading.

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ITEMS LAID ON THE TABLE – NONE

NEW BUSINESS /CORRESPONDENCE

TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER NOMINATIONS, APPOINTMENTS AND ELECTIONS – None

ORDINANCES AND RESOLUTIONS IN THE 1ST READING

Resolution #2018/2019-11 Use of Recreation Impact Fees for Leo Landroche Field Swing-Set Upgrade
(Town Administrator asks for suspension of the rules to vote on this resolution this evening.)

Town Administrator Fournier said he was requesting the Council to suspend the rules to act on Resolution #2018/2019-11 Use of Recreation Impact Fees for Leo Landroche Field Swing-Set Upgrade this evening, due to the use of Impact Fees that would otherwise be lost. He said Department Heads should know they needed to come forward beforehand.

Vice-Chair Weinstein made a motion to suspend the rules to vote on Resolution #2018/2019-11 Use of Recreation Impact Fees for Leo Landroche Field Swing-Set Upgrade this evening, which was seconded by Councilor Bowden. Town Administrator Fournier polled the Council and the motion to suspend the rules was approved by a vote of 7-0.

Vice-Chair Weinstein made a motion to approve Resolution #2018/2019-11 Use of Recreation Impact Fees for Leo Landroche Field Swing-Set Upgrade which was seconded by Councilor Finch.

Recreation Director Aimee Gigandet said this project had been put into CIP several years ago to redo the swings at Leo Landroche Field. She said to replace them and to bring them up to code they could only have 2 swings per bay versus the current 3 swings/bay. She said they had decided instead to purchase swing-like apparatuses which could carry several children and would increase swing capacity from 10 swings to 23 total. She said they were seeking to use Impact Fees to cover the cost.

Discussion: Chairman Pike mentioned the 3 quotes, and Recreation Director Gigandet said they did not use the lowest bid as it came down to the quality of the swings, using newer models, and working with a local vendor. Vice-Chair Weinstein said she supported the upgrades to the playground equipment, but said it was important to be timely when using Impact Fees.

Town Administrator Fournier polled the Council and Resolution #2018/2019-11 Use of Recreation Impact Fees for Leo Landroche Field Swing-Set Upgrade was approved by a vote of 7-0.

Resolution #2018/2019-12 Water Truck #37 Replacement

Town Administrator Fournier read Resolution #2018/2019-12 Water Truck #37 Replacement in full.

Resolution #2018/2019-13 MacIntosh and Tucker Well Treatment Project

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Chairman Pike read *Resolution #2018/2019-13 MacIntosh and Tucker Well Treatment Project* in full.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vice-Chair Weinstein said she had received a series of emails from parents with regard to the safety of the crosswalk on Route 152 at the Junior-Senior High School. She said driving past at pickup and drop-off time was chaotic and dangerous. She said the flashing lights had been taken out and a crossing guard was easily distracted and not always there. She said there was more foot traffic as student drivers could no longer park at the School and it was now getting dark with drop-offs for after-school activities and increased congestion. She said she felt this had the potential to be a huge liability for the Town.

Town Administrator Fournier said this had been going on for 2 years since the original flashing lights were installed. He said State DOT District 6 had since indicated that the lights were not permissible and forced the Town to have them removed, stating they had to have uniform traffic control devices throughout that area. He said that would mean installing 5 additional flashing lights in areas where they were not needed and where there was no pedestrian traffic at a cost of \$10,000-\$15,000 per light. He said they were still working with the State DOT to try to get the flashing lights put back in but needed their permission.

Councilor Bowden asked if there were any interim solutions and Town Administrator Fournier said their hands were tied by the State. Vice-Chair Weinstein pointed out that this project did not just appear and they were now well into the school year without much of a solution. Councilor Burns and Councilor Finch both said they agreed with everything that had been said. Chairman Pike recommended working with local representatives in the near term to set up a public meeting with parents present. Councilor Bowden asked where the property line was between the Town and the State, and Town Administrator Fournier said it did not matter as it was a State road. Councilor Kast said she would like to see some interim solutions.

Town Administrator Fournier stated that they could put more street lights, and said it was part of the frustration of the Town's main street being a State road that they could not govern, and said the State followed their rules which did not make sense at a local government level. Councilor Dumont asked about installing large information signs, and Town Administrator Fournier said they could but over time people became blind to them. Chairman Pike said he would still like the opportunity to make the political system work, and said this was an opportunity for the local representatives to serve their community. Vice-Chair Weinstein said the lights were originally installed for student to cross to art class, but that this was a different situation. Councilor Bowden suggested having volunteers work as crossing guards.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Councilor Finch said he wanted to remind everyone that the Heron Point Volunteer Cleanup would be held on Saturday, October 27, 2018 from 9:00 am to noon.

Councilor Bowden said he was working on getting Candidates Night ready and hoped to get information back on that soon.

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NEXT MEETING: The next Regular Town Council Meeting will be held on November 7, 2018 at 7:00 pm in the Town Council Chambers.

ADJOURNMENT

Chairman Pike adjourned the meeting at 8:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary