

TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE

TOWN COUNCIL GOAL SETTING WORKSHOP

May 25, 2022 6:00 PM

Town Hall Auditorium

186 Main Street, Newmarket, NH

Minutes

Approved June 15, 2022

Councilors Present: Council Chair Toni Weinstein, Council Vice-chair Katanna Conley, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Brian Ward, Councilor Joe Lamattina and Councilor Colin White, Sr.

Councilors Excused: Councilor Megan Brabec

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

Chair Weinstein convened the meeting at 6:10 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Rick Alpers from Primex was present to work with the Council on their suggested goals for the next 12 – 18 months and asked each Councilor and the Town Manager to provide three goals each.

Mr. Alpers began by asking what each person thought was going well in Newmarket:

Councilor LaMattina – the town side of the budget is very good; it's lean and accounts for 25% of the property taxes. The Police and Fire Department personnel have good relationships with people.

Chair Weinstein – A positive quality of life with the downtown, access to recreation and education; employees in general are well rounded and each department has great staff as a result from steady leadership; the Recreation Department is top notch.

Councilor Blackstone – Agrees with a positive quality of life; he walks downtown every morning, and everyone knows the Police Chief and DPW Director; small town feel.

Councilor Conley – There have been a lot of important repairs and expansions to foundational systems; wastewater, roads that puts the town in a good position; tremendous improvements to downtown over the years while keeping a small-town feel; the Millspace has regular events with a group of people dedicated to it; a good foundation to build on; the Town Manager has created a good work environment for employees.

Town Manager Fournier – Communication – with the lack of media coverage we are still able to get as much information out as possible. Transition – with department heads retiring we have had seamless transitions with the positions we've filled so far; the downtown is not 9 to 5, it's still

vibrant at night.

Councilor White – the Town has had good growth but still a small-town community.

Councilor Ward – downtown is a walkable area; easy to walk to bars, MillSpace and stores.

Mr. Alpers asked the Councilors what they thought needed attention:

Town Manager Fournier – the current government structure; it's been a long time since there was a contested election; what may have worked 20 years ago may not work for the next 20 years; updating town facilities; shrinking our carbon footprint.

Councilor Blackstone – downtown still needs to grow; the McDonalds building has been vacant for a few years now.

Chair Weinstein – Communication is good but can use improvement; Economic Development; more work needs to be done with the Planning Board on possible zoning changes; strengthen our relationship with the school - we are at a transitional period so it's a good opportunity to reestablish that relationship.

Councilor Ward – lack of affordable housing; college students and young families cannot afford to live in town.

Councilor White- lack of parking is a big issue in town.

Councilor Conley – should continue to enrich the downtown area and expand the areas that draw people in; pay attention to our shrinking assets like public transportation; make our community a destination spot.

Mr. Alpers asked for 3 goals from each Councilor and the Town Manager:

Councilor LaMattina:

- Evaluate the future space needs for all town facilities.
- Experiment with different social media with channel 13 and work on improving communication with residents in town.
- Develop a strategy and timeframe to obtain electricity for town facilities to clean renewable resources.

Councilor Ward:

- Create areas through zoning changes to develop/build affordable housing.
- Expand walkable areas in town, near the golf course and western part of town.
- Reduction of the carbon footprint.

Councilor Blackstone:

- Councilor Blackstone agreed with Councilor Ward's goals and said they are basically what he is focused on.
-

Councilor Conley:

- Agreed with Councilor Ward's goals with the expansion of affordable housing and expansion of walkable areas and renewable energy. The losses of public transportation have created a hardship.

Town Manager Fournier:

- Review the Town Charter – it's been 10 years since the last review.
- Implement the Economic Development Plan – we have the grand scheme for the 3 gateways; now we have to come up with a game plan.
- Establish a facilities plan.

Councilor White:

- Develop a parking plan to address parking issues in the downtown area

Chair Weinstein:

- Finalizing the Economic Development Plan that includes development of the gateways and the current downtown and parking issues.
- Continue to work on the Schanda Park development plan.
- Make Arbor Park more accessible. Highlight the town's conservation areas and the river itself.

Mr. Alpers will put together a draft and work with the Town Manager to fine tune the document and come up with the timelines to implement the goals.

Town Manager Fournier said that it would be a good idea to bring in the Department Heads to discuss timelines on implementing the goals.

Chair Weinstein said that a lot of the goals have been goals for many years in some shape or form but there has been some progress on these goals over the years.

ADJOURNMENT

Chair Weinstein adjourned the meeting at 7:15 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary