

# **TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

## **TOWN COUNCIL REGULAR MEETING**

February 16, 2022 7:00 PM

Council Chambers

Approved March 2, 2022

### **6:30 PM Non-Public Session Pursuant to RSA 91-A:3,II(d) Consideration of the acquisition, sale or lease of real or personal property**

Councilors present: Council Chair Toni Weinstein, Councilor Jonathan Kiper, Councilor Megan Brabec, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Katanna Conley and Councilor Brian Ward.

Staff present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier, Director of Planning and Community Development Diane Hardy, Police Chief Greg Jordan, and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary.

Chair Weinstein convened the meeting at 7:06 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Councilor Conley made a motion to seal the February 16, 2022 Non-public Meeting Minutes, which was seconded by Councilor Brabec.

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

## **AGENDA**

### **PUBLIC FORUM**

Chair Weinstein opened the public forum at 7:07 PM.

Newmarket State Representative Ellen Read spoke on behalf of ReVision Energy. Ms. Read is a member of Newmarket's Energy and Environment Committee. She voiced concern over the lack of support ReVision Energy has received in regards to the Solarize Newmarket Project. She did point out that information was added to the town's website upon request from ReVision Energy, but nothing has been added to the weekly newsletter and other social media.

Town Manager Fournier said that he has received zero correspondence from ReVision Energy in terms of advertisement for the campaign.

Chair Weinstein said that she is the Council Representative to the Energy and Environment Committee and they met for the first time in months due to the fact that they did not have a quorum for the past 3 or 4 meetings because members have not been able to attend. She said that there was a representative from ReVision Energy at the last Committee meeting and that representative did not mention any concerns raised by Ms. Reed. Chair Weinstein asked that

ReVision Energy contact her directly to help with getting the word out about the solar project.

Chair Weinstein closed the public forum at 7:15 PM.

## **TOWN COUNCIL TO CONSIDER ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES**

### **February 2, 2022**

Councilor Conley made a motion to Approve *the February 2, 2022 Meeting Minutes*, which was seconded by Councilor Brabec.

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

## **REPORT OF THE TOWN MANAGER**

### **Proclamation to Planning & Community Development Director Diane Hardy**

Chair Weinstein read a Proclamation to Planning and Community Development Director Diane Hardy highlighting her many accomplishments over the years and congratulated her on her upcoming retirement at the end of the month.

Town Manager Fournier thanked Diane for her commitment to the Town and her willingness to take on the projects assigned to her; some not as easy as others. He congratulated her and said that she will be missed.

Director Hardy gave a heartfelt speech and expressed gratitude to those she worked with over the years.

### **Town Manager's Report**

Town Manager Fournier requested action from the Councilors on the proposed Town Warrant. He explained that the Municipal Budget Committee's recommendation is different than the Town Council's due to the increase of \$50,000 to the budget made by the Municipal Budget Committee. He will request the Finance Director to create a new budget line titled "lease payment" and put the \$50,000 there, and not withdraw from the Capital Reserve fund this year so it would be a "wash".

Councilor Ward made a motion that the Town Council recommends the Municipal Budget Committee's Budget, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Motion was passed by a vote of 6-0-0.

- **COVID-19 and Vaccination Update:** As of February 9, there are 13 active cases in the community, a decrease of 84% since the last report. We have had 1,576 cumulative cases, an increase of 73 cases since the last report. The Seacoast and Rockingham County have seen a 11.6% increase in new cases in the past week. This is down 4.2% from the previous report. There is a slight increase in the percentage vaccinated.
- **FY22 Budget Update:** At the end of January we are on target with our expenditures; we

are 58.3% through the fiscal year and have expended 59% of our operating budget. One area of concern is road salt; there is a 44% increase in salt costs. Currently we are \$25,000 over budget. Revenues are okay, but motor vehicle registrations are below what they should be, but we received more than anticipated revenues from the Room and Meals Tax.

- **Director of Planning and Community Development:** Interviews will be conducted in the coming week.
- **Non-public Session:** The Newmarket Community Development Corporation will be meeting with the Council in non-public session to discuss a potential development.

Councilor Blackstone inquired about the hybrid cruiser that was damaged in the crash and his concern on how long it will take to replace it.

Chief Jordan explained that he will be coming before the Council to request the purchase of a new cruiser (gas powered) to replace the damaged vehicle. He said that it is difficult to get vehicles manufactured and he found a dealership in MA that has a cruiser available. They will also be asking to order and purchase a hybrid model that would potentially be available in June.

## **Department Reports January 2022**

### Councilor Brabec reported on the Conservation Commission Meeting:

The Commissioners asked for an update on the Class A Trail at Neal Mill Road. Town Manager Fournier replied that the town's attorney is working on that. The Commission is looking into herbicides to deal with the invasives at Wiggin Farm. They also plan to organize a "work day" recruiting volunteers to help with that project.

### Councilor Blackstone reported on the Planning Board Meeting:

The Board approved a scaled down version of the Seacoast Pool Plastering site plan. The Board will hold a Stormwater Management Meeting to discuss amendments to the regulations to comply with the State regulations.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Councilor Blackstone said that he likes the community policing section of the Police Department's monthly report.

Councilor Weinstein agreed and mentioned two things in that section of the report: 1. The welfare check on an elderly resident where the officers were able to help them out with a power outage, and 2. Postal worker Kayla alerted her Postmaster who alerted the Police to do a welfare check on an elderly person who had fallen and was trapped for days. She also commented on the Fire Department report; the new fire truck will be here soon and noted that Bill LePage will be leaving to take a position in another town and she wished him well.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **RESOLUTIONS/ORDINANCES IN THE 2ND READING**

#### **Resolution #2021/2022-23 - Creating an Advisory Committee on Racial Equity, Inclusion and Human Rights**

Councilor Ward made a motion to Approve *Resolution #2021/2022-23 - Creating an Advisory Committee on Racial Equity Inclusion and Human Rights*, which was seconded by Councilor Conley.

Town Manager Fournier explained that the Committee is not a judiciary committee. Their charge is to review current town policies and see if any adjustments need to be made to them regarding racial equity and human rights. Members will include the Town Manager, Police Chief, Superintendent of Schools and 7 community members. Preference will be given to Newmarket Residents, but non-resident members will be allowed.

Councilor Ward commented that he thinks this Committee is a great idea and is glad to see more effort is being done toward racial equity.

Chair Weinstein said that she is glad that members can include non-residents because she can think of a couple of people that would be perfect to serve on this committee.

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

### **NEW BUSINESS/CORRESPONDENCE**

#### **Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading**

#### **Resolution #2021/2022-24 - Tucker Well Project Award**

Chair Weinstein read Resolution #2021/2022-24 into the record.

#### **Resolution #2021/2022-25 - Tucker Well Dredge and Fill Permit**

Chair Weinstein read Resolution #2021/2022-25 into the record.

### **CORRESPONDENCE TO THE TOWN COUNCIL**

There was no correspondence to the Town Council.

### **CLOSING COMMENTS BY TOWN COUNCILORS**

Councilor Kiper commented that the Council should be made aware of the rising rental costs in Newmarket. The rents in some instances have nearly doubled in the past five years and the only antidote to help with rising rents is more housing.

Councilor Ward said it's harder and harder for young professionals to move into town and renters need protection to make sure the town stays viable to avoid the "silver wave" issue that's happening throughout the State.

Councilor Blackstone said that the Planning Board is forming a committee to address such issues.

Councilor Blackstone asked about the replacement of signage in town, particularly the Recreation Center and School. Town Manager Fournier said that Parks and Rec are getting new signage and hopefully the School will get something new.

Councilor Blackstone asked if it were possible to solicit volunteers to help build a new skateboard park. Town Manager Fournier said unfortunately that is not an option; it's too much of a liability.

Chair Weinstein asked why it's taking so long to get the Class A Trail at Neal Mill Road and the solar garden finalized. Town Manager Fournier said the solar garden is in negotiations. He said he will speak to the Attorney.

## **NEXT COUNCIL MEETING**

**March 2, 2022**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

Chair Weinstein adjourned the meeting at 8:06 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,  
Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary