



Town Council Regular Session

January 17, 2024 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 Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Justin Glazebrook, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Colin White.

Staff Present: Town Manager Stephen Fournier, Environmental Services Director Sean Greig, Community Development Director Bart McDonough and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary.

3. Public Forum

Chair Conley opened the public forum at 7:03 PM.

Toni Weinstein commented on the January 8th Budget Hearing. The Budget Committee voted not to recommend the Warrant Article for the 1.75M bond to replace sewer lines because some members felt they did not have enough information to vote to recommend it. She said that there may be legitimate reasons, but they did have the information made available to them and an opportunity to ask any questions that they may have. She said that she is going to email the Budget Committee members encouraging them to change their vote and recommend the Warrant Article at their next meeting on January 22nd.

Chair Conley closed the public forum at 7:06 PM.

4. Public Hearing

a. ORDINANCE NO. 2 – 2023/2024 An Ordinance to Amend the Downtown Commercial Overlay District

Chair Conley opened the Public Hearing at 7:06 PM.

Community Development Director McDonough explained that the purpose of the proposed ordinance is to help protect the style and architecture of the downtown area. It will also extend the overlay district from the blinking light at the intersection of Route 108 and Route 152 down to the gas station.

Michael Hoffman, owner of commercial property in the downtown area, spoke in favor of the ordinance.

5. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. January 3, 2024

Motion: **Councilor White** made a motion to approve the January 3, 2024, Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Vote: **Approved (6-0-1)** Councilor Dornblut abstained because he was not present at the January 3rd meeting.

6. Report of the Town Manager

a. TM Report 01/17/2024

Town Manager Fournier informed the Council that the Budget Committee was meeting on January 22nd to discuss reconsidering their January 8th vote to not recommend the \$1.75M bond Warrant Article to replace sewer lines.

Town Manager Fournier provided a schedule for the Primary Election on January 23rd for each of the Councilors.

The Deliberative Session will be held at the High School on Saturday, February 3, 2024 at 9:00 AM and Councilors should be in attendance.

Pedestrian Bridge: Wright Pierce and their subcontractors evaluated the pedestrian bridge in late September and found it to be in fair to poor condition due to the advanced steel sections loss found in the longitudinal floor stringers that directly support the deck and scaling in the primary transverse floor beams. They have determined that the bridge can be rehabilitated to provide another 25 years of service life to the community. Rehab would include removal and replacement of the timber deck and floor stringers and spot repair on transverse floor beams and truss beams. The work is estimated at \$277,000. Full replacement of the bridge is estimated to cost \$1.4 million and projected to cost \$3 million in 25 years.

b. Department Reports - December 2023

Councilor Conley congratulated new firefighters Dylan Kenahan and Jordan Lee on completing the Fire I program. She welcomed new Police Officer Greg Ruby and thanked him for his service.

7. Committee Reports

Councilor Lamattina reminded everyone of the Community Power Information Session on January 31st at 7:00 PM in the town hall auditorium. Flyers will be sent out to residents soon and informed everyone that it is not a scam.

Councilor Ward reported on the January 11th Conservation Commission Meeting:

The Conservation Commission is working with Strafford Regional Planning on a new logo. They are working on forming a new chapter in the Master Plan for Recreation. He said that they have received 200 responses so far on the Master Plan survey.

Councilor Blackstone reported on the January 9th Planning Board Meeting:

The Planning Board met to make determination on regional impact for the application proposing 41 one-bedroom apartments and 2,500 sf of commercial space at 3 Railroad Street. The project is moving forward.

8. Old Business

9. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

a. Resolution # 2023/2024 - 29 Bennett Well Project

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution # 2023/2024 - 29 Bennett Well Project

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Environmental Services Director Greig explained that the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) State Revolving Loan Program has offered the Town of Newmarket a \$2,200,000 loan with 60% loan forgiveness to complete the Bennett Well Improvements. The Town has \$1,446,000 authority to borrow still available for water projects. The total budget cost for the project is \$1,644,636. The (NHDES) has approved North East Earth Mechanics because they are still the lowest bidder with a construction cost of \$1,376,636.

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

b. Resolution # 2023/2024 - 30 Bennett Well ARPA

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution # 2023/2024 - 30 Bennett Well ARPA

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Environmental Services Director Greig explained that due to increases in equipment and installation costs, the energy improvement grant funds were not enough to complete the energy improvements. The Energy Audit Program has offered the Town of Newmarket an additional \$40,000 matching funds to complete the energy improvements at the Bennett Well.

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

c. Resolution # 2023/2024 - 31 Water Master Plan

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution # 2023/2024 - 31 Water Master Plan

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Comments were made about the costs involved and why the need for outside assistance in drafting the Water System Master Plan.

Environmental Services Director Greig explained that the water system master plan is separate from the Town's Master Plan. He said that he needs the expertise of hydrologists to help summarize current and future water demands, water quality assessments and system

improvements to name a few. There is a lot of strategic planning involved and this is a good time to do it to coincide with the work being done on the Town's Master Plan.

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

d. **ORDINANCE NO. 2 – 2023/2024 An Ordinance to Amend the Downtown Commercial Overlay District**

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve ORDINANCE NO. 2 – 2023/2024 An Ordinance to Amend the Downtown Commercial Overlay District

Second: **Councilor White**

Discussion: Community Development Director McDonough explained that after an extensive review process and gaining further guidance from the Town Council on the goals it wanted to achieve, the Planning Board drafted an ordinance that shifted the focus from the Historical Overlay District to the Downtown Commercial Overlay District by requiring all development to follow certain architecture standards under the Planning Board's site plan review regulations. Effectively, the proposed amendment changes capture all development activity within the overlay district while creating consistency and predictability for how future development is to occur and materialize.

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

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

a. **Joshua Skovlund - Resignation - Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission (Term Expiration April 2026)**

Motion: **Councilor Glazebrook** made a motion to approve Joshua Skovlund's Resignation from the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission.

Second: **Councilor White**

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

b. **Glen Stevens - Energy & Environment Advisory Committee - Term Expiration April 2026**

Motion: **Councilor LaMattina** made a motion to appoint Glenn Stevens to the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee with a term expiration of April 2026.

Second: **Councilor Ward**

Discussion: Mr. Stevens was present and explained that he served as Chief Executive and President of the National Center of Housing Management that dealt with many energy type issues over the years and was a founding partner of Energy Reduction Partners which provided the Indianapolis Housing Authority with solar panels. He said he is very interested in energy and environment issues.

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

- c. Glen Stevens - Parking Commission - Term Expiration April 2026
- Motion:** **Councilor White** made a motion to appoint Glenn Stevens to the Parking Commission with a Term Expiration of April 2026.
- Second:** **Councilor Ward**
- Discussion:** Mr. Stevens said that he is interested in helping to resolve parking related issues, especially for those who are disabled.
- Vote:** **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**

11. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a. Resolution # 2023/2024 - 32 WWTF Launder Covers
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-32 into the record.

12. New Business/Correspondence

- a. Correspondence to the Town Council
There was no correspondence to the Council.
- b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors
Councilor Dornblut asked the Town Manager to arrange a meeting with Coast Public Transportation. Town Manager Fournier said that he would connect with Coast Bus Executive Director Rad Nichols and ask him to attend a Council Meeting to discuss public transportation.

Chair Conley congratulated Town Engineer Lyndsay Butler on her appointment as Co-chair to the Seacoast Stormwater Coalition.

Chair Conley commented on the recent house fire in town and informed everyone that there would be a spaghetti supper held at the Community Church in the downstairs fellowship hall Sunday, 4:00-8:00 PM to support the families affected by the fire.

- c. Next Meeting

- i. February 7, 2024

13. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 7:56 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary