



Town Council Regular Session

June 26, 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 Joe LaMattina, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Justin Glazebrook.

Excused: Councilor Sonke Dornblut

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

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to seal the June 26, 2024 non-public meeting minutes indefinitely because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.

Second: **Councilor White**

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

3. Public Forum

Chair Conley opened the Public Forum at 7:01 PM.

Chair Conley closed the Public Forum at 7:01 PM without public comment.

4. Public Hearing

- a.** Ordinance No. 5 2023/2024 - An Ordinance Amending Chapter 30 of the Code of the Town of Newmarket New Hampshire; Traffic and Vehicles - Prohibiting the Sale of Vehicles on Public Lands

Chair Conley opened the Public Hearing at 7:04 PM.

Town Manager Fournier explained that there was a private vehicle for sale on town property and later realized there were no provisions in the ordinance prohibiting such sales. This Ordinance is intended to prohibit the sale of personal property on public lands.

Chair Conley closed the Public Hearing at 7:05 PM.

5. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

- a. June 5, 2024 Non-public Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve the June 5, 2024 Non-public Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

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

- b. June 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve the June 5, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

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

6. Town Council to Consider Nominations, Appointments, and Elections

- a. Rebecca Camire - Energy & Environment Advisory Committee - Term Expiration April 2025

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to appoint Rebecca Camire to the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee with a Term Expiration of April 2025.

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

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

7. Report of the Town Manager

- a. June 26, 2024

- FY24 Financial Report: The month of May completes 92% of the fiscal year. The operating budget is 83% spent, similar to the previous fiscal year.
- Tax Deeded Property: 302 Piscassic Street: We have entered into a purchase and sales agreement for 302 Piscassic Street for the amount of \$270,750. We received 7 offers and that was the best and highest offer for the town. We are now proceeding to closing.
- Newmarket300: The Council passed a resolution that allows the Town Manager to sign a contract with Newmarket300 for the Town to give grant money to mark the country's 250th birthday and Newmarket's 300th. After months of submissions, the USA 250/Newmarekt300 Committee selected a design by Newmarket artis Alex Edgerly of Alex Edgerly Design Company. We will be using the design in town materials.

- b. Scott Marsh and Paul McKenney, Municipal Resources Inc. - present preliminary values from town-wide revaluation

Assessors Scott Marsh and Paul McKenney from Municipal Resource Inc., (MRI) presented the preliminary results of the 2024 revaluation. MRI inspected all sales properties in the town and analyzed qualified sales from 4/1/2022 through 3/31/2024. Preliminary value notices will be mailed the week of June 24, 2024.

Hearings will be held beginning July 22, 2024. Taxpayers will have the opportunity to schedule an informal hearing either in person at the town hall or by phone.

Assessor McKenney stated that there was a 69% increase overall for town properties.

Assessors Marsh and McKenney, as well as Town Manager Fournier emphasized that residents should contact MRI with any questions. The Town Hall Staff will not be able to answer questions about the revaluation.

Town Manager Fournier stated that residents should not use the current tax rate on the new assessments. The estimated tax rate is around \$19.29 per thousand.

Below is a table demonstrating the percentage change and number of sales used:

	Percent Change	Number of Sales
Overall Values	69%	258
Residential	68%	122
Condominium	84%	96
Residential Vacant Land	74%	4
Commercial/Industrial	53%	13
Mobile Homes	127%	23

c. Department Reports - May 2024

Councilor Blackstone questioned the letter regarding the Post Office and Newmarket Community Development Corp. and wondered if it was still the same plan to move forward.

Town Manager Fournier said that it is, and stated he hasn't heard otherwise from any of the Councilors.

8. Committee Reports

Councilor LaMattina said that Newmarket Community Power, upon board approval, will lower the rate to 8.6 cents per kW. Eversource will increase their rate to 10.45 cents per kW. There are now 60 members of Community Power.

Councilor Ward reported on the June 13th Conservation Commission Meeting:

- Emma Fortin is the new non-voting student liaison to the Commission.
- The Commission held a public hearing on the proposed Mitchell Family land conservation acquisition and are in favor of the Council approving the 100,000 contribution towards it. (The resolution's first reading this evening).
- The Commission reviewed the semi-final draft of the 2024 Open Space Plan.
- A sign was erected at Moonlight Brook advising people to swim at their own risk.
- The Commission is currently working on bookmarks and post cards to put wild life facts on the back as an educational tool.

- The TurtleFest 2025 is a go.

Councilor Ward reported on the Budget Committee Meeting:

The Budget Committee reviewed the FY2024 budget up to May 2024. Everything remains on track. The Budget Committee will not be meeting in July.

Councilor Glazebrook reported on the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission Meeting: The Commission is looking for residents to submit pictures of Newmarket capturing what they love best about Newmarket and enter them into a contest. Each participant can submit up to 5 pictures by August 1st and is required to make a \$1.00 donation.

9. Old Business

10. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

- a. Ordinance No. 5 2023/2024 - An Ordinance Amending Chapter 30 of the Code of the Town of Newmarket New Hampshire; Traffic and Vehicles - Prohibiting the Sale of Vehicles on Public Lands

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Ordinance No. 5 2023/2024 - An Ordinance Amending Chapter 30 of the Code of the Town of Newmarket New Hampshire; Traffic and Vehicles - Prohibiting the Sale of Vehicles on Public Lands

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Vote: **Motion Passed (5-1-0) Councilor White opposed.**

11. Items Laid on the Table

- a. Resolution #2023/2024 - 42 Amending the Elderly Exemption

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to Remove Resolution #2023/2024 - 42 Amending the Elderly Exemption from the table.

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

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

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to Approve Resolution #2023/2024 - 42 Amending the Elderly Exemption

Second: **Councilor Glazebrook**

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

Motion: **Councilor LaMattina** made a motion to amend Resolution #2023/2024 - 42 Amending the Elderly Exemption.

Second: **Councilor White**

Discussion:

Councilor LaMattina presented information from the Neilsberg Research based on the latest American Community Survey by the Census Bureau (2022).

- In Newmarket, the median household income stands at: \$52,871 for age group 65 and older.
- The distribution of households among age brackets are: 956 (22.12%) households where the householder is over 65 years old.
- Of the 956 households 65 and over: 314 households (32.54%) have a household income of less than \$40,000.

Councilor LaMattina suggested raising the income limit for single status from \$35,000 to \$38,000 and raising the limit for married status from \$50,000 to \$52,000.

Town Manager Fournier reminded the Council that changes to exemptions and credits can happen anytime; they do not have to wait every five years during the revaluation process.

Vote:

Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)

12. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a. Resolution #2023/2024-40 - Mitchell Land Conservation
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-40 into the record.
- b. Resolution #2023/2024-46 - Solar Development Services
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-46 into the record.
- c. Resolution #2023/2024-47 - General Engineering Services - Water Resources
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-47 into the record.
- d. Resolution #2023/2024-48 - Letter of Support for Grant Proposal - Ash Swamp Rd Culvert Replacement
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-48 into the record.
- e. Resolution #2023/2024-49 - Plan NH Charrette Services
Chair Conley read Resolution #2023/2024-49 into the record.

13. New Business/Correspondence

- a. Correspondence to the Town Council - *None*
There was no correspondence to the Town Council.
- b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors
Councilor LaMattina thanked Environmental Services Director Greig for hosting an Open House at the Wastewater Treatment Plant on Saturday June 15th. He addressed concerns about expenditures.

Councilor Blackstone also thanked Mr. Greig and commented on the success of

the Treatment Plant and the fact that area communities are copying Newmarket at their wastewater treatment plants. He said that the launder covers recently purchased by the town is a big improvement to the Plant.

c. Next Meeting

i. July 17, 2024

14. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 7:53 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary