



Town Council Regular Session

September 18, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. Pledge of Allegiance

Vice-chair Ward convened the meeting at 7:00 PM and chaired the meeting. Councilor White led the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Roll Call

Present: Chair Katanna Conley (via zoom), Vice-chair Brian Ward, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Justin Glazebrook

Staff present: Finance Director William Tappan, (Seated for Town Manager Fournier) and Wendy Chase, Recording Secretary

3. Public Forum

Bert Allen, III, Smith Garrison Road spoke about the budget and ways to manage it to alleviate the burden on the taxpayers.

4. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. September 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Councilor Dornblut made a motion to approve the September 4, 2024 Meeting Minutes.

Second: Councilor Blackstone

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

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

a. Chase Eagleson - Racial Equity, Inclusion & Human Rights Advisory Committee - Term Expiration April 2025

Motion: Councilor White made a motion to appoint Chase Eagleson to the Racial Equity, Inclusion & Human Rights Advisory Committee - Term Expiration April 2025

Second: Councilor Dornblut

Discussion: Chair Conley supports the nominee and commended his willingness to serve.

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

6. Report of the Town Manager

a. Revaluation Final Numbers

Paul McKenney and Scott Marsh, representatives of Municipal Resource Inc. (MRI) presented the final figures of the 2024 town-wide revaluation.

The final value increased by 729,282,320 and the taxable value increased by 708,402,820. The overall change was a 68% increase. Residential property increased 67%, vacant land increased 70%, manufactured homes increased 125%, condominiums increased 84% and commercial property increased 52%.

There were a total of 208 scheduled hearings from July 22, 2024, through July 26, 2024, which included 149 in person and 59 phone hearings. Most people were questioning the increase in their property value, their property information they were being taxed on, and wanted an explanation about how the revaluation would affect the tax rate.

25% of the 208 hearings had no changes to their tax card or new assessment.

Councilor LaMattina voiced concern over the fact that 75% of those with a scheduled hearing had changes made to their assessment record. Both Assessors said that the amount is not unusual it; equates to 8/10 of a percent. A lot of the changes were minor changes to the interior of the property because the Assessors were not able to enter the property during the revaluation process. They said that the same result is occurring in all the area towns where they have recently done town-wide revaluations.

Motion:	Councilor LaMattina made a motion to approve the Revaluation Final Numbers
Second:	Councilor Dornblut
Discussion:	Chair Conley had technical difficulties with audio and was not able to vote. The audio later returned, and she informed the Council that she had heard the presentation and agreed with accepting the final figures.
Vote:	Approved 6-0-1 Chair Conley abstained due to technical difficulties with the audio in zoom.

b. Department Reports - August 2024

c. Town Proclamation - Constitution Week: September 17-23
Vice-chair Ward read the Proclamation to establish the Week of September 17 through September 23 as Constitution Week into the record.

7. Committee Reports

Councilor Dornblut reported on the Public Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting:

The Committee met for the first time and discussed the charge of the committee and how the committee would assist with the transportation chapter of the Master Plan.

Chair Conley reported on the Licensing Board meeting:

The Licensing Board approved an application from Jon Kiper to hold an event in the pocket park.

Vice-chair Ward reported on the September 12th Conservation Commission Meeting:

Mark West, West Environmental presented wetlands mapping comparing maps from 1998 to 2019 showing the changes to the wetlands around Newmarket over the years. The Commission approved the merging of Tuttle Swamp and Lita Lane lots. They discussed hazardous trees on Heron Point. Turtlefest will be held on May 10, 2025.

8. Old Business

9. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a. Resolution #2024/2025-10 - Establish Charter Commission Ballot Question
Vice-chair Ward read Resolution #2024/2025-10 into the record.

10. New Business/Correspondence

- a. Correspondence to the Town Council
There was no correspondence.
- b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors
Councilor Glazebrook stated that the unveiling of the mural at Willey House park will take place September 28th at 10:00 AM. There will be music and a show. He encouraged people to attend the event.

Vice-chair Ward received an overwhelming response to his proposed "community service day". Many people emailed him in support of the concept and to volunteer services. The day will take place in May 2025 with a date certain to be determined. He thanked everyone for their support.

- c. Next Meeting

- i. October 2, 2024

11. Adjournment

Vice-chair Ward adjourned the meeting at 7:29 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary