



Town Council Regular Session

November 20, 2024 at 7:00 PM

Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

- 6:30PM - Non-Public pursuant to RSA 91-A:3,II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. (I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.**

Present: Council Chair Katanna Conley, Council Vice-chair Brian Ward, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Justin Glazebrook, Councilor Colin White (arrived at 6:45 PM), and Town Manager Stephen Fournier.

Motion: **Councilor Dornblut** made a motion to enter Non-Public Session at 6:30 PM pursuant to RSA 91-A:3,II (c) Matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of the public body itself, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine, or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant. (I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.

Second: **Councilor Ward**

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

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to seal the Non-Public Meeting Minutes because it is determined that divulgence of this information likely would render a proposed action ineffective, and it would affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of this board.

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Vote: **Motion Passed 6-0-1** (Councilor White abstained).

- Pledge of Allegiance**

Chair Conley convened the regular meeting at 7:00 PM. Councilor White led the Pledge of Allegiance.

- Roll Call**

Present: Council Chair Katanna Conley, Council Vice-Chair Brian Ward, Councilor Scott Blackstone, Councilor Joe LaMattina, Councilor Colin White, Councilor Sonke Dornblut, Councilor Justin Glazebrook.

Staff Present: Town Manager Steve Fournier, Police Chief Greg Jordan, Town Engineer, Lyndsay Butler.

Absent: Recording Secretary

4. Public Forum

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

Chair Conley closed the public forum at 7:03 PM without public comment.

5. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. November 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve the November 6, 2024 Meeting Minutes

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

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

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

a. Appointment of a Town Council Representative to the USA 250 Steering Group

Motion: **Councilor LaMattina** made a motion to appoint Council Vice-chair Brian Ward as Council Representative to the USA 250 Steering Group

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Councilor Ward accepted the nomination.

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

7. Report of the Town Manager

a. November 20, 2024 Report

- **FY25 Expense and Revenues:** October completes the first quarter of the fiscal year. The operating budget is 41% spent. Revenues are on track.
- **Town Meeting Schedule:**

Friday, November 15, 2024 - Council must submit Budget to Budget Committee

Tuesday, January 14, 2025 - Last Day to post Public Hearing

Tuesday, January 21, 2025 - Last Day for Bond Hearing

Tuesday, January 21, 2025 - Last Day for Budget Public Hearing

Thursday, January 23, 2025 - Last Day for Budget Committee to Approve Budget

Saturday, February 1, 2025 - Deliberative Session at the Newmarket High School

Saturday, February 8, 2025 - Deliberative Session Snow Day

Tuesday, March 11, 2025 - Election Day

Tuesday, April 1, 2025 - Officials Sworn In

There was no objection to the schedule from the Town Council.

- The first Council meeting in January falls on the holiday, January 1st. Without objection from the Councilors, the meeting was rescheduled to Wednesday, January 8.

b. October 2024 Department Reports

8. Committee Reports

Councilor Dornblut reported on the November 13th Public Transportation Committee meeting:

The Committee discussed the revision of the transportation chapter of the Master plan and reviewed the rail network in town. They reviewed the possibility of developing a roadway categorization plan to see what a neighborhood street or connecting road may look like. The Committee plans to continue to work on the transportation chapter of the master plan at the next meeting.

Councilor Glazebrook reported on the Arts, Culture and Tourism Commission November meeting:

Representatives from Strafford Regional Planning Commission was present to work on the Master Plan process. The lights on the Willey House Park mural are up and running. The Chess tables will not be placed at the site until the spring. The Commission voted on the design of the calendars, t-shirts and hats with pictures from the mural and the mural depicted on them. They will be available soon.

Councilor Ward reported on the November 14th Conservation Commission meeting:

The Commission renewed its membership with the NH Association of Conservation Commissions. The Wiggin Farm boardwalk replacement will be covered by the \$10,000 grant they received. Commissioners had concerns about the proposed abandonment of the slope easement on Railroad Ave., and questioned what would happen if the landlord of the property did not maintain it? Would the town be liable?

9. Old Business

10. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

a. Resolution #2024/2025-20 - Ash Swamp Rd Bridge Rehabilitation

Motion: Councilor Ward made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-20 - Ash Swamp Rd Bridge Rehabilitation

Second: Councilor Dornblut

- Discussion:** Town Engineer Butler explained that the bridge over the Piscassic River on Ash Swamp Road was evaluated, and it was determined that it must be rehabilitated for public safety reasons. They will try and get the project complete in a timely manner to avoid as much traffic interruption as possible. Town Manager Fournier said that they are in discussions with the school regarding bus traffic.
- Vote:** **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**
- b. Resolution #2024/2025-21 Approve School Impact Fees
- Motion:** **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-21 Approve School Impact Fees
- Second:** **Councilor Dornblut**
- Discussion:** Town Manager Fournier explained that the school impact fees collected for School projects total \$281,504. The school has requested the withdrawal from impact fees of \$22,650.70 for renovations of the Newmarket Junior Senior High School Courtyard. The Town Council must pass the resolution before the School Board can vote on it.
- Vote:** **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**
- c. Resolution #2024/2025-22 - Purchase/Release of funds for Computer Aided Dispatch Systems(CAD) and Records Management Systems(RMS)
- Motion:** **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-22 - Purchase/Release of funds for Computer Aided Dispatch Systems(CAD) and Records Management Systems(RMS)
- Second:** **Councilor Dornblut**
- Discussion:** Chief Jordan explained that the Resolution, if passed, would give authorization for the department to make the purchase with the awarded grant money totaling \$358,000.00.
- Vote:** **Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)**
- d. Resolution #2024/2025-23 - Railroad Ave Easement Abandonment
- Motion:** **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-23 - Railroad Ave Easement Abandonment
- Second:** **Councilor Dornblut**
- Discussion:** Community Development Director McDonough explained that the Town conveyed a slope easement along Railroad Street from the NH Department of Transportation (DOT) in 1996 to protect the integrity of the slope along Railroad Street. The Planning Board approved a multi-family building that is located within the Town's slope easement. It was determined that the slope easement is no longer necessary due to the erosion control improvements to be installed to accommodate the 41-unit development. He further explained that he has sought an opinion from legal counsel but has not received a response. Chair Conley asked for an opinion from the Conservation Commission. She said that

some members of the Commission had concerns about terminating the easement.

Vote:

Motion Passed 6-1-0 (voting against - Chair Conley)

11. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a. Resolution # 2024/2025 - 24 Water & Sewer Metal Storage Building
Chair Conley read Resolution #2024/2025-24 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 met with the COAST Board of Directors via phone. The census concluded that Newmarket is no longer part of the urban area, so it is no longer eligible for transit funding. There was discussion on new opportunities for funding. Through the Master Plan process, it was learned that there is a lot of interest in the resumption of the transit. A representative of the town of Exeter was present at the meeting and discussed changing the nature of the service on bus 7. He asked him to attend a future public transportation committee meeting to discuss reestablishing connectivity to Durham, Dover and Portsmouth.
- c. Next Meeting
 - i. December 4, 2024

13. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 7:55 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary