



Town Council Regular Session

April 2, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Town Council Chambers

MINUTES

1. 6:00 PM Town Council Work Session

- a. Water Master Plan PowerPoint Presentation

2. Pledge of Allegiance

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

3. 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 Stephen Fournier, Environmental Services Director Sean Greig, Finance Director William Tappan, Recording Secretary Wendy Chase.

4. 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.

5. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

- a. March 19, 2025

Motion: Councilor White made a motion to approve the March 19, 2025 meeting minutes.

Second: Councilor Ward

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

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

- a. Shannon Culpepper - Resignation from the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission

Motion: Councilor Ward made a motion to accept Shannon Culpepper's Resignation from the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission.

Second: Councilor Dornblut

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

- b. Doug Spicher - Resignation as Alternate Member to Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission

Motion: **Councilor Glazebrook** made a motion to accept Doug Spicher Resignation as Alternate Member to the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission.

Second: **Councilor Ward**

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

- c. Doug Spicher - Appointment to the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission - Term Expiration April 2028

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Doug Spicher's Appointment to the Arts, Culture & Tourism Commission with a Term Expiration of April 2028.

Second: **Councilor White**

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

dornblut

- d. Peter Nelson - Reappointment as Strafford Regional Planning Commissioner - Term Expiration March 1, 2029

Motion: **Councilor Dornblut** made a motion to approve Peter Nelson's Reappointment as Strafford Regional Planning Commissioner with a Term Expiration pf March 1, 2029.

Second: **Councilor Ward**

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

7. Report of the Town Manager

- a. April 2, 2025 TM Report

Road Closures: CSX Transportation will temporarily close two railroad crossings throughout the Town for essential maintenance work, according to the Newmarket Highway Department. The closures are scheduled to begin on Tuesday, April 15, 2025, and will continue through April 21.

Affected crossings and potential dates of closure include: April 15 – 18: Exeter St. (Route 108) and April 19-21: Elm Street. Notice will be sent on all town's social media and will include detour maps.

Senate Bill 297 - Regulating Risk Pools: The NH State Senate unanimously approved Senate Bill 297, which adds regulations to the risk pools that municipalities participate in across the state. Risk pools are formed to reduce insurance costs and limit individual exposure by sharing risk collectively. Members create and govern these pools. SB 297 is bad for communities because it imposes new financial burdens on municipalities and alters the terms of participation in risk pools. Town Manager Fournier said this could be catastrophic for municipalities. He is working with the town's legislative delegation, the NHMA and other municipalities to work on defeating the bill and ensuring we have healthcare for town employees.

Roadside Cleanup Day: Roadside Cleanup Day will be April 27th from 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM. There will be supplies available at the Library that day.

Ash Swamp Road Bridge Closure: Ash Swamp Road will be closed beginning Monday, April 7th for the bridge rehabilitation project. Notices will be sent on all town's social media.

8. Committee Reports

Councilor LaMattina reported on the March 26th Energy & Environment Committee Meeting:

The committee had a representative from Casella at the meeting to discuss recycling. Casella said that Newmarket is doing good. 40% of the tonnage Casella picks up in Newmarket is recyclable. That 40% gets commingled with other communities and 80% of all that combined is recyclable. Plastic milk bottles, aluminum cans and cardboard are the main recyclable items. Pizza boxes are contaminated and should not be placed in recycling. Casella said that it is better for them if the aluminum cans and plastic bottles are not crushed before placing them in recycling bins. The Committee is going to offer an educational meeting on recycling for the community. The City of Dover is starting to go with automatic pick-up of recycling and Public Works Director Malasky will be looking to see how that will work and if it is feasible for Newmarket.

9. Old Business

10. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

a. Resolution #2024/2025-35 - Computer Systems Upgrades

Motion: **Council Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-35 - Computer Systems Upgrades

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Discussion: Finance Director Tappan explained that Microsoft is ending support for Windows in October 2025, requiring an upgrade to Windows 11; the 6 current computers are not compatible with Windows 11.

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

b. Resolution #2024/2025-37 Asset Management Plan WW

Motion: **Councilor White** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-37 Asset Management Plan WW

Second: **Councilor Ward**

Discussion: Environmental Services Director Greig explained that we have an asset management plan for the water department and the goal was to also have one for the wastewater department. It costs approximately 3 to 5 times more money to replace assets reactively than planned replacements.

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

c. Resolution #2024/2025-38 - Wastewater Master Plan

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-38 - Wastewater Master Plan

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Discussion: Environmental Services Director Greig explained that the Wastewater Department would like to create a Wastewater System Master Plan that would guide the department on ways to deal with issues such as collection, treatment, infrastructure and solids waste disposal.

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

11. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

a. Resolution #2024/2025-39 - Opposing SB 297

Motion: **Sonke Dornblut** made a motion to suspend the rules and act on Resolution #2024/2025-39 - Opposing SB 297.

Second: **Colin White**

Discussion: Council Chair Conley read Resolution #2024/2025-39 into the record.

Councilor Dornblut requested the Council suspend the rules to act on the resolution this evening.

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

Motion: **Councilor LaMattina** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-39 - Opposing SB 297

Second: **Councilor Ward**

Discussion: Councilor Ward commented that if something works, why change it? He is in opposition of SB 297.

Councilor Blackstone questioned what problem would SB 297 solve?

Town Manager Fournier said the Secretary of States Office believes that Health Trust and NHMA Local Government Trust are close to solvency. Their reserves are down but they paid out \$54M during the pandemic for claims, and they are rebuilding that reserve now. He said 10 years ago the Secretary of State's office thought they were holding too much in their reserves and made the trusts turn the money back after a hearing from an independent judge.

Councilor Dornblut commented that there is no upside to SB 297 and is perplexed that this Bill has come this far. He urged the Council to approve this Resolution to give the Town Manager another tool in getting it defeated.

Town Manager Fournier has sent letters to the Legislative Delegation and will continue to do so urging them to

oppose SB 297.

Vote: Unanimously Approved (7-0-0)

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 said that Coast Bus applied for global transportation funds to essentially replace the funds that were cut from the State's budget.

Chair Conley encouraged everyone to participate in the town clean-up day on April 27th. She also suggested becoming educated on alternate routes to take during the road closures coming up at Ash Swamp Road, and the railroad crossings at Elm Street and Route 108.

Councilor Lamattina reminded everyone of the upcoming special election to vote on Charter Commission members. The filing period begins April 16th and ends April 25th. The Special Election will take place on May 13th from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM in the Town Hall Auditorium.

- c. Next Meeting

- i. April 16, 2025

13. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 8:02 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary