



Town Council Regular Session

March 5, 2025 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 Sonke Dornblut.

Excused: Councilor Justin Glazebrook.

Staff Present: Town Manager, Stephen Fournier, Community Development Director Bart McDonough, Finance Director William Tappan, Recording Secretary Wendy Chase.

3. Public Forum

Chair Conley opened the public forum at 7:02 PM.

Joan DeYoreo, 191 Bay Road, voiced concerns about the permitting process for protests and demonstrations. She doesn't agree with the 7 to 10 day processing period when it comes to matters of free speech. She suggests that demonstrations and protests should be something separate and different, and not be lotted together with yard sales and parades.

Chair Conley closed the public forum at 7:05 PM.

4. Town Council to Consider Acceptance of Minutes

a. February 19, 2025

Motion:

Councilor White made a motion to approve the February 19, 2025, Meeting Minutes.

Second:

Councilor Ward

Vote:

Motion Approved (5-0-1). Chair Conley abstained because she was not present at the February 19th meeting.

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

a. Dedication of the Annual 2024 Town Report

Chair Conley presented Annette Brousseau with a town report and read the proclamation made to her. Members of Annette's family were present for the dedication. Annette thanked the Town Council and said she felt honored to receive the dedication.

- b. Scott McGrath - Reappointment to the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee - Term Expiration April 2028

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to re-appoint Scott McGrath to the Energy & Environment Advisory Committee with a term expiration of April 2028.

Second: **Councilor LaMattina**

Discussion: Councilor LaMattina said Mr. McGrath is relatively new on the Committee and feels he would make an excellent Committee member.

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

6. Report of the Town Manager

The new website was launched on February 25th. It is much more mobile-friendly.

March 11th is town/school election day from 7:00 AM - 7:00 PM. Councilors White and LaMattina may not participate in helping at the polls on the town side because they are both on the ballot for re-election.

Town Manager Fournier responded to the public forum comment regarding public demonstrations and the permitting process. The event/sign permit is geared more for large protests, and it was discussed when it originated where the threshold lies regarding the number of people participating in protests and demonstrations. It is designed to inform the town departments of the events. He said that he will look at other communities' wording to see if there is a need to alter our process.

Chair Conley agreed that the Town Manager should look for wording for peaceful assembly regarding the event/sign permit application.

7. Committee Reports

Councilor LaMattina said that the CEO of Community Power tendered his resignation to the board of directors, and they are currently looking for a replacement. The Energy & Environment Committee's March 26th meeting will include discussions with people from Casella to discuss improving recycling in Newmarket. The Councilors and the public are welcome to attend.

Councilor Dornblut reported on the COAST Board meeting. He explained that the Governor has zeroed out the public transportation funds from the budget. COAST will be significantly affected by jeopardizing entire routes. Councilor Dornblut encouraged the town council to voice concerns to the state house about how this will affect this town. He suggested reaching out to our state legislators. Town Manager Fournier said that the proper committee to contact at the state level is House Finance Division II, which will be meeting on Friday. He said he would log in and give written testimony that day to oppose the cuts.

8. Old Business

9. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 2nd Reading

- a. Resolution #2024/2025-29 - Library Architectural Feasibility Study
Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-29 - Library Architectural Feasibility Study
Second: **Councilor White**
Discussion: Town Manager Fournier explained that the Library had already entered into an agreement with Lassel Architect. The Resolution is to get approval to get the funds reimbursed to the Library from the Capital Reserve Fund. The feasibility study is to find out the best way to use the library and library space under its current conditions.
Vote: **Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)**
- b. Resolution #2024/2025-30 - Cybersecurity Audit
Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to amend Resolution #2024/2025-30 - Cybersecurity Audit to include the language to authorize the Town Manager to enter into an agreement with Adam Consulting Group.
Second: **Councilor White**
Vote: **Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)**

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-30 - Cybersecurity Audit as amended.
Second: **Councilor White**
Discussion: Finance Director Tappan explained that IT conducts a cybersecurity update on a regular basis to combat potential security breaches.
Vote: **Unanimously Approved (6-0-0)**
- c. Resolution #2024/2025-31-To Authorize the Town Manager to Enter into a Professional Service Agreement with Stafford Regional Planning Commission for \$92,500.00 to Assist the Town in Developing Zoning Recommendations via the Housing Opportunity Planning Grant Program.
Motion: **Councilor Dornblut** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-31-To Authorize the Town Manager to Enter into a Professional Service Agreement with Stafford Regional Planning Commission for \$92,500.00 to Assist the Town in Developing Zoning Recommendations via the Housing Opportunity Planning Grant Program.
Second: **Councilor Ward**
Discussion: Community Development Director McDonough explained that the town was awarded \$100,000 in grant money by Invest NH Housing Opportunity Planning Grant Program to hire consultants to assist the Town in developing new land use regulations and zoning amendments for the entire town for the purposes of increasing housing development opportunities based upon feedback from property owners

via a comprehensive community outreach program. He said the money is guaranteed; once we submit it for reimbursement, we will receive the money. They will most likely begin the community focus groups in April. Councilor Dornblut suggested we offer rides to residents who may have a problem getting to a focus group due to lack of transportation.

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

- d. Resolution #2024/2025-32 - Acceptance of Tanner Circle as a Town Road

Motion: **Councilor Ward** made a motion to approve Resolution #2024/2025-32 - Acceptance of Tanner Circle as a Town Road

Second: **Councilor Dornblut**

Discussion: Community Development Director McDonough reported that there are no issues with the road itself and drainage structures and sidewalks are constructed.

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

10. Resolutions/Ordinances in the 1st Reading

- a. Resolution # 2024/2025 - 33 WWTF Solids Disposal
Chair Conley read Resolution #2024/2025-33 into the record.
- b. Resolution #2024/2025-34 - Sewell Solar Project Preliminary Design
Chair Conley read Resolution #2024/2025-34 into the record.

There was an abutter to the proposed solar site requesting to speak. Town Manager Fournier explained that there is no discussion at the first reading and that public forum at the beginning of the meeting is the only time the public is allowed to comment.

11. New Business/Correspondence

- a. Correspondence to the Town Council
There was no correspondence to the Town Council.
- b. Closing Comments by Town Councilors
Councilor Dornblut said that, based on the current volatile nature of the Government, the Council may want to have a conversation about the uncertainty of receiving federal funding for the projects we are going to be working on this year. We may have been approved for grant money, but we may not receive it.

Town Manager Fournier said that we have been through volatile times at the state and federal government levels before. Department heads have an option to go to the council with a project change of scope proposal and reduce the project to an amount that the town can cover and then be "shovel ready" when the funds do become available to finish the projects. He said if projects do not come to fruition, then we don't borrow the money. Town Manager Fournier will speak with Environmental Services Director Greig to get updates and suggest alternatives on how to handle the projects he has coming up and will include these updates

in his Town Manager's report to the Council.

Councilor Blackstone commented that every year we hear about dumps closing, and we won't be able to get rid of sewage waste. He suggested sending Environmental Services Director Greig to Europe to the sewage sludge incineration plant in Munich for information on their operations and to come up with a long-term plan for getting rid of sewage sludge. In Europe, they dry it to the point that they are able to use it as a renewable fuel and fertilizer. Town Manager Fournier said that he would discuss this with Director Greig.

Chair Conley reminded everyone of the Energy & Environment Committee meeting on March 26th. Representatives from Casella will be there. She reminded everyone of next week's election from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM on March 11th in the Town Hall Auditorium and encouraged residents to vote.

c. Next Meeting

i. March 19, 2025

12. Adjournment

Chair Conley adjourned the meeting at 8:00 PM without objection.

Respectfully submitted,

Wendy V. Chase
Recording Secretary