



TOWN OF **NEWMARKET** NEW HAMPSHIRE

CHARTER COMMISSION
Tuesday, July 8, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Town Hall, Basement Meeting Room
PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES
Approved July 22, 2025

Members Present: John Bentley, Scott Blackstone (arrived 7:02), Chris Hawkins, Phil Nazarro (Vice Chair), Patrick Reynolds, Russ Simon, Dan Smith, Toni Weinstein (Chair), and Al Zink.

The Chair opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

1. Pledge of Allegiance

2. Public Comment

The Chair opened the floor for public comment at 7:01. There was no public comment. The Chair closed the floor for public comment.

3. Acceptance of Minutes

The minutes of the June 24, 2025 meeting were presented. There were minor amendments to correct typos. Mr. Zink moved acceptance of the minutes, seconded by Mr. Simon. The minutes as amended were approved 8-0. Mr. Hawkins abstained as he was absent from the June 24 meeting.

4. Steve Buckley, Esq., NHMA

Attorney Buckley explained his understanding that Newmarket initiated the Charter Commission process due to a desire to change forms of government – because otherwise proposed amendments to the charter could simply be placed on the warrant. The Commission explained that Newmarket historically did not approach the Charter Commission process in that fashion as the form of government had not been revised in the past two charter commissions except the adoption of a Town Manager. Attorney Buckley suggested that the Commission review the charters in Salem and Conway, as well as the Bow Charter Revision Committee.



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Attorney Buckley of the NHMA gave a presentation focused on the budget committee and the CIP. He explained that under New Hampshire law the Town was required to retain a budget committee so long as the voters retained the authority to approve the budget. Otherwise, the Town could either retain an unofficial/advisory budget committee or eliminate it entirely. The discussion revealed some inconsistent understandings among the Commission members regarding the authority of the Budget Committee. Attorney Buckley explained that the Budget Committee was legally authorized to review and amend the budget on a line-item basis and that in most Towns the Budget Committee presents the budget at the deliberate session/Town meeting. Newmarket has moved away from this process over time as a matter of practice and perhaps due to a lack of training of Budget Committee members. This led to extensive discussion both with Attorney Buckley and among the Commission members.

Discussion then turned to the CIP. Attorney Buckley explained that under RSA 674:5, the Planning Board is the default entity to oversee development of the CIP unless a separate CIP committee is created. Newmarket follows the latter course. There was extensive discussion that overall capital planning is diffused among the Town Council, CIP committee, and School District and that this leads to inefficiencies as none of these planning mechanisms provide formal means to integrate with the Master Plan. Attorney Buckley explained that there is currently no legal mechanism for integrated planning between the Town and School (broadly speaking) aside from agreed mutual cooperation. There was further discussion of potential amendments to the Charter to underscore the desirability and necessity of integrated capital planning.

5. Cris Blackstone, Conservation Commission Chair

Ms. Blackstone provided the Commission a detailed overview of the history, means and methods of encouraging volunteerism utilizing a variety of outreach strategies and networking. Ms. Blackstone provided the Commission several handouts outlining these strategies, which the Commission discussed with her in some detail.



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6. Communications Update

The Communications Subcommittee presented draft FAQ's and a "one-pager" document educating the public as to the Commission's work and soliciting input. The Commission discussed setting up tables at various community events, mailing and emailing information documents, promulgating the community surveys, and other ways and means of "spreading the word."

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Adjournment

Mr. Smith made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Vice-Chair Nazarro. The meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.