

**TOWN OF NEWMARKET, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**

May 19, 2025

TOWN HALL AUDITORIUM

MINUTES

Approved June 23, 2025

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Brian Rowley, Justin Looser, Cris Blackstone, School Board Rep Geoff Boyd, Town Council Rep Brian Ward

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Danielle Honan, Carl Blackstone

MEMBER ABSENT: Scott Foster

ALSO PRESENT: Town Manager Steve Fournier, Town Finance Administrator Bill Tappan, School Superintendent Todd Allen, School Business Manager Janna Mellon

Chairman Brian Rowley welcomed everyone to the May 19, 2025 Municipal Budget Committee Meeting and called the meeting to order at 6:33 pm followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

PUBLIC FORUM

No public comments.

NEW BUSINESS

Town of Newmarket Quarterly Report:

Town Manager Steve Fournier presented the 3rd Quarter Financial Report, and Expenditure and Revenue reports: Expenditures: General Fund expenditures at 72% totaling \$7,484,350 vs 69% prior year, primarily due to increases to part-time salaries exceeding budget by implementing per diem program; Roadways & Sidewalks: \$24,064 over budget due to construction line being over by \$61,245 for Grant Road, postponed project from fall to spring; Vehicle Budget has reached 96% due to a number of mechanical failures; Fire: over by 17%, equipment 8%; Police Maintenance 25% over: general and special funds have reached 74% expended, 2% higher due to increase in departmental expenditures; Library at 73% vs 65% last year; REC: 63% vs 62% prior year; Solid Waste: 67% vs 66%.

Revenues: 3rd quarter consistent historically at 95%, accrued total \$37,680,578 vs 96% last year due to improved State forecasting; Ambulance Fund: \$100,000 transfer shows actual earnings difference of \$90,056 vs \$187,590; Solid Waste/Wastewater: better revenue projections in closer alignment with actuals vs prior year; Motor Vehicle Registrations: spike in last 2 months; Building Permits: 21% increase over 100%.

Town Manager Fournier said the town is starting a Charter Commission with original meeting next Tuesday, Public Hearing in June on current charter, report done by December: elected group of individuals will review, make recommended changes, to be on March Ballot. Chairman Rowley asked about the SLSRS Art Grant and Mr. Tappan said the town received a grant of \$900,000 spent over a few weeks. Town Manager Fournier said when things are tight, there is less going into fund balance for end-of-year; will be slowing down expenditures for Department Heads shortly; no large necessary projects.

Newmarket School 3rd-Quarter Financials

Superintendent Todd Allen said School Business Administrator Janna Mellon will do the presentation of the financials. He said we are at that time of year when we are starting to live with 3 different budget cycles: wrapping up 24-25, into 25-26 on July 1st, and already discussing 26-27. He said the School District FY runs July 1 to June 30; January to March what needs to be addressed in next month: amount of Retained Fund Balance and how much will be returned to taxpayers.

School Business Administrator Janna Mellon reviewed 3rd-quarter financials: Expenditures: estimated unused expenditure balance of \$804,000 March 21, represents 2.94% of budget remaining. Board elected to fund one of our Capital Reserve Funds this year from existing balance, done prior year as “raise and appropriate”. Revenues are at 75%; Food Service Summary: ended last year with \$154,000 surplus due to ESSER Funding; carried forward but only allowed to maintain 3 months of Operating Balance as surplus and need a spend-down plan; cannot be used to offset student debt. Plan to institute a new cloud-based POS and Food Service Management System which streamlines transactions as part of the meal program. She said Impact Fees are raised by taxation in town when new building projects go in and School has \$268,000 of useable fees which have to be for expansion or additional use of our faculty.

Revenues: Ms. Mellon said very few things are overspent at this point; couple of salary items, one due to very long-term use of substitutes this year, expansion of an IT role and website management to better meet the needs of the district. In Operations have professional services that average about \$258,000; a lot of kids still experiencing great need, also combined with hiring and retaining paraprofessionals. Repairs & Maintenance: over by \$52,000, undertaking second phase of NES window project.

Trust Fund Balances: Just over \$2M in various funds; School Repair & Maintenance and School Improvement Capital Reserve Fund supports our 20-year CIP Plan. Without ESSER funds running at cost or a slight deficit; ran in the red every year and transferred funds to meet negative balance. Operations remain the same; expenditures went up, but greater revenues carried forward.

Superintendent Allen said the State Legislature is looking at a lot of potential legislation that has potentially significant impact on the Town Budget. Basically a tax cap on all schools in the State which has significant traction; could be someone outside of Newmarket setting the amount that can be spent; if it passes, we would need to cut \$500,000 out of our Budget; may be tied to enrollment long term. There has been a declining pattern of youth with fewer kids year over year.

Superintendent Allen said there is also an EFA Voucher Bill, with talk of making it universal regardless of income level so everyone can access, with potential to take \$7-8M more out of State Education Trust Fund. He said the Open Enrollment Bill is the third with massive implications in Newmarket, which means every kid in the State can go to any school in the State and towns must cover 80% of their tuition; if a Newmarket student wants to go to another school 80% of their tuition would have to be paid. He said we

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plan our Budget on the number of kids we have to educate each year; cannot do that if we do not know how many kids we will have year to year.

Mr. Looser asked if there is any way it could help Newmarket. Superintendent Allen said to benefit Newmarket it will hurt someone else; it could become an incredible local burden as most of our costs are not tied to per-pupil expenses but are based more on fixed costs. Councilor Ward said it sounds like it would destroy any ability to budget or plan ahead. Superintendent Allen said the \$3,100 in advocacy aid per student also goes with the student. He said if open enrollment passes, we are required to have a line item in our budget to cover the cost.

Election of officers

Vice Chair of Budget Committee: Tabled until next meeting.

CIP Representative from the Budget Committee: Cris Blackstone volunteered.

Motion: Mr. Looser made a motion to appoint Cris Blackstone as Budget Committee Representative to the CIP Committee; seconded by Mr. Boyd; motion approved 6-0.

MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of January 6, 2025

Motion: Councilor Ward made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 6, 2025; seconded by Mr. Looser; approved 6-0.

Minutes of January 13, 2025

Motion: Mr. Looser made a motion to approve the meeting minutes of January 13, 2025; seconded by Councilor Ward; approved 6-0.

OTHER BUSINESS

Next Meeting: June 23, 2025

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Boyd moved to adjourn the Municipal Budget Committee Meeting; seconded by Councilor Ward; all in favor 6-0.

Chairman Rowley adjourned the meeting at 7:23 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary