

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday October 12th, 2021

Present: Chair Ted Connors, Selectman Mike Marconi, Selectman Bob Blonigen, Historic District Commission members; Peggy Lamson and Katie Moody, Economic District Commission Chair Jeff Hiatt, EDC Vice-Chair, Mike Donahue, EDC Coordinator, Karen Anderson, Planning Board Chair Denis Hebert, Police Commission Chair, Brenda Blonigen, Police Chief, Mike Bilodeau, Police Department Administrative Assistant Taylor Cooney, Recreation Committee Members; Jack O'Reilly, Chair Rebecca Navelski, Brian Haberstroh and Bill Wright, Fire Chief EJ Hoyt, Fire Engineer Ann Hyland Hebert, Finance Director, Sheryl Bagley, Martha Roy, Town Administrator and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

T. Connors called the meeting to order at 4:03pm. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

M. Marconi moved to enter a nonpublic session at 4:01pm per RSA 91-A:3 II (d). T. Connors seconded the motion and T. Connors asked for a roll call vote: B. Blonigen-Yes, M. Marconi- Yes, T. Connors-Yes. All were in favor.

M. Marconi moved to return to public session at 4:22pm, seconded by B. Blonigen. T. Connors asked for a roll call vote: B. Blonigen-Yes, M. Marconi-Yes, T. Connors-Yes. All were in favor.

M. Marconi moved to seal the minutes indefinitely. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. T. Connors asked for a roll call vote: T. Connors-Yes, M. Marconi-Yes, B. Blonigen-Yes. All were in favor.

Minutes Approval: Approval of the October 4th, 2021 minutes was postponed until the next meeting.

Manifest Approval: M. Marconi moved to approve the manifest for \$35,927.73 dated 10/7/2021. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Health Officer Appointment:

M. Marconi moved to nominate Building Inspector, Steven Paquin, to position of Newington Health officer. B. Blonigen seconded the motion with all in favor.

Old Parsonage HVAC and Electric Upgrades:

M. Marconi moved to approve the installation of an HVAC system in the Old Parsonage with the \$20,000 grant funds that were received last year from Eversource. T. Connors seconded the motion.

B. Blonigen expressed concern about the effect the HVAC system will have on the horse hair plaster in the Old Parsonage. He understands that the NH Division of Historic Resources Approved the project and the NH Division of Historic Resources stated that due to entering through the floor the horsehair plaster will not be compromised. **T. Connors called for a vote. M. Marconi and T. Connors in favor. B. Blonigen opposed. The motion passes.**

Coleman Drive Light-Safety Committee Review:

M. Marconi moved to refer the Coleman Drive Light issue to the Highway Safety Committee and to appoint B. Blonigen to the Highway Safety Committee as the Selectmen's Representative. B. Blonigen seconded the motion with all in favor.

Complaint Filed with USPS-Mail Deliveries being delivered to Hodgdon Farm, Newington rather than Hodgdon Brook, Portsmouth:

M. Roy filed an official complaint with the USPS last week. B. Blonigen moved to send a letter to the Portsmouth City Council to officially complain about this ongoing postal issue. M. Marconi seconded the motion with all in favor.

Fox Point to Durham Historic Bridge Video- Fritz Wetherbee has reached out to the Town asking if he could shoot a segment of Chronicle at Fox Point. The Board agreed to allow Fritz Wetherbee to use Fox Point for a segment.

B. Blonigen thanked Finance Director S. Bagley for the one-page budget summary she produced. He liked it very much.

M. Roy reminded the Board that they had agreed to give \$5,000 to the Newington Historical Society for the purpose of building a memorial garden. B. Blonigen thought that this is a very worthwhile project. **B. Blonigen moved to approve the \$5,000 for the project but would like to receive plans, a budget and the estimated costs for maintaining the garden each year, before the money is given. M. Marconi seconded the motion with all in favor.**

T. Connors called for a meeting recess at 4:38pm.

T. Connors called the meeting back to order at 5:00.

Economic Development Committee Budget Review:

J. Hiatt said that the 2022 is \$34 less than last year. They have moved some funds from one expense line to another. They have added more hours for K. Anderson because of anticipated work that will be done on a collaborative grant. However, the end result could be a new use for the old Eversource building.

T. Connors wanted to commend the committee on their event last week. Many businesses attended and enjoyed the evening.

J. Hiatt explained that the committee's mission statement says that they are to try and help the town retain and attract new businesses. It is especially important now when the mall and the utilities are losing value. It is important to build relationships with the businesses in town.

T. Connors thought the committee had great outreach to the businesses during this tough year and a half.

Planning Board Budget Review:

D. Hebert explained that the bottom line of the 2022 budget is the same as the bottom line of the 2021 budget. However, they are decreasing some expense lines and increasing others. The Planning Board is currently working on two housing developments at the same time which has never happened before. They anticipate many projects in 2022 so the engineering and legal expense lines have increased. D. Hebert would also like to encumber \$6,000 for the Capital Improvement Plan. He has been learning about the Blue Economy grant from the Rockingham Planning Commission. T Connors let him know the Selectmen have already submitted a letter of support. Town Planner John Krebs is working on the Capital Improvement Plan and is just waiting for the Board of Selectmen's response on future projects. B. Blonigen said that the Board would like to put money aside each year for a future Fire Station addition, but doesn't feel that it can be done this year when taxes are going up. D. Hebert mentioned that Coast Bus is looking to build a brand-new facility and may ask towns for money for it.

Police Budget Review:

Police Chief M. Bilodeau reviewed the proposed changes from their 2021 budget to the 2022 budget. The salary line has decreased because the department had a retirement this year. The longevity line has decreased due to the retirement. The uniforms line has increased by \$13,000 because 9 officers have to get new ballistic vests this year. These vests need to be updated every 5 years. Discussion ensued about establishing a capital reserve account for the vests. The telephone line has increased by \$6,000. The department has had a couple of serious phone outages in 2021 and would like to replace their current phone system with a VOIP (voice over internet protocol) system. These lines work off the internet, not the standard phone lines. The equipment contract line has a \$1,600 increase due to a new cyber security system. The department would like to put \$250 in the Police Commission line for awards and support. M. Bilodeau thanked the Fire Department for providing food and drink during the air show. The vehicle fuel line has an increase of \$9,000 due to higher gas prices. The only way to reduce this line would be to decrease patrols. B. Blonigen thought it was very important to maintain the current patrol amount. The training-firearms expense line increased because they

need to go to a different range. M. Bilodeau has contacted three different ranges to get prices. The professional training line has increased by \$2,000. This increase reflects additional training for the officers per the Governor's order on Commission on Law Enforcement Accountability, Community and Transparency. The training equipment line decreased by \$1,500.

The Police Department is proposing two warrant articles for 2022. One would be to add money to the current Police Department Radio/Electronics capital reserve fund in anticipation of replacing the server at the Police Station in 2022. The other warrant article would be to establish a revolving fund for the purchase of police cruisers. The money that the Police Department collects from details would go into the fund and then that money would be used to purchase a cruiser each year. Police details bring in about \$30,000 per year. The cost to purchase a cruiser and outfit it is \$53,000. The Chief is considering increasing the administrative fee for details to increase the amount collected. B. Blonigen liked this idea.

M. Bilodeau thanked everyone who supported the department during the accreditation process.

Recreation Department Budget Review:

The 2022 Recreation budget bottom line is the same as 2021.

The summer camp program had 40 kids this year. Two were tuition students. Running the summer camp was very stressful for the Recreation Committee this summer. B. Haberstroh said that the Recreation Committee's first choice for summer camp 2022 is to have the YMCA run the camp. The \$10,000 warrant article for a recreation director is only if the YMCA can't do it. The warrant article is just a "place holder". T. Connors asked if \$10,000 would be enough for the director. The Recreation Committee thinks so. The Recreation Director would be a part time position for 3 months of the year. They would run the summer camp and Septemberfest. B. Wright said they are hoping the director could also develop SOPs for the future. The other proposed warrant article is to add \$10,000 to the Town Recreation Facilities and Equipment capital reserve fund. These funds would be to maintain the tennis courts and the baseball field at the school on a regular basis. B. Haberstroh explained that the baseball field at the school had not been maintained in several years.

Adjournment: M. Marconi moved to adjourn at 6:30pm. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Boy
Recorder