

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday November 16th, 2021

Present: Chair Ted Connors, Selectman Mike Marconi via Zoom, Selectman Bob Blonigen, Finance Director, Sheryl Bagley, Building Inspector Steven Paquin, Fire Engineer Ann Hyland Hebert, Martha Roy, Town Administrator and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

T. Connors called the meeting to order at 4:00pm. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes Approval: M. Marconi moved to approve the minutes of November 1st, 2021 and November 8th, 2021. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Manifest Approval: B. Blonigen moved to approve the manifests for \$60,283.17 dated 11/4/2021 and \$1,067,431.55. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Facility Use Requests:

B. Blonigen moved to approve the following facility use requests:

Gail Klanchesser/Seacoast Girl Scouts-Town Hall-November 19th-Gingerbread House Making

Recreation Committee-Old Town Hall-December 12-Holiday Party

M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Town Buildings Administration Budget Review-Steven Paquin:

The Contracted Services expense line increased from \$11,000 to \$15,000 due to the additional cleaning due to the summer camp and the continuation of covid.

Town Hall Building Budget:

The Heating Fuel/Natural Gas expense line increased from \$8,400 to \$10,000. S. Paquin explained that a 30% increase in heating fuel/natural gas prices are expected in 2022. 2021 painting projects were not completed for the Town Hall and these amounts will be encumbered. When the Town Clerk was audited by the State, they recommended that cameras be installed to cover the Town Hall lobby. This expense is included in the budget. M. Roy will be getting a quote for installing cameras to record public meetings in the deRochement room and the auditorium.

Town Garage Building Budget:

The Heating Fuel/Natural Gas expense line increased by 30%. The Maintenance/Repairs line decreased from \$13,000 to \$3,000. The overall budget decreased from \$23,170 to \$15,170.

Old Town Hall Building Budget:

Exterior painting projects for the Old Town Hall were not completed in 2021, these funds (\$2,500) will be encumbered. The electricity expense line was increased from \$2,620 to \$3,000 and the Heating Fuel/Natural Gas expense line increased from \$4,500 to \$5,700. The Maintenance line decreased from \$14,500 to \$2,500. The overall budget decreased from \$22,325 in 2021 to \$11,955 in 2022. B. Blonigen asked about the lead paint on the door of the Old Town Hall. S. Paquin said that the contractor is going to take care of it.

Meeting House Building Budget:

The Heating Fuel/Natural Gas expense line increased from \$1,800 to \$2,500. The 2021 funds for painting the door and window fans have been encumbered for 2022. The town has received a quote for painting the entire exterior for approximately \$12,000. The 2022 budget has decreased from \$9,427 in 2021 to \$5,600 in 2022.

Fire Station Building Budget Review:

The Heating Fuel/Natural Gas expense line was not increased for the fire station because they got a more efficient heating system which is expected to use less fuel. A. Hyland Hebert said that the temperature at the Fire Station is kept lower than other buildings and this is resulting in a lower cost. T. Connors asked about the installation of another shower. The firefighters need to all shower when they come back from a call. A. Hyland Hebert said that some projects can be put on hold for a while. T. Connors said that he thought the additional shower was a health and safety issue. S. Paquin said that he had spoken to the Chief and he said that the showers are adequate for now. T. Connors expressed his concern that the fire station addition may be out 2 to 5 years out and is concerned for the safety of the firefighters. B. Blonigen would like an architect to look at the Fire Station and then have the addition/expansion plan placed in a capital improvement plan. S. Paquin said that if the addition is going to take 5 years, then they can take another look at the addition of another shower sooner. The 2022 budget has decreased from \$41,827 in 2021 to \$27,950 in 2022.

Police Station Building Budget Review:

The Heating Fuel line has increased. S. Paquin has included funds in the maintenance line for the repair and painting for water damage that has happened over several years. The budget decreased from \$52,700 in 2021 to \$23,700 in 2022.

Stone School Budget Review:

The maintenance budget line decreased from \$5,500 to \$1,000. The overall 2022 budget decreased for \$5,850 in 2021 to \$1,350 in 2022.

Old Parsonage Budget Review:

The electricity expense line increased due to the installation of the mini splits. The maintenance and repair expense line decreased. The overall budget decreased from \$5,045 in 2021 to \$4,920 in 2022.

The overall Town Buildings budget decreased from \$235,973 in 2021 to \$137,646 in 2022.

Code Enforcement Budget Review:

B. Blonigen asked S. Paquin to check in with the Town's electric and plumbing inspectors to see what their future plans are. We have to have a plan for when they retire. S. Paquin said that he is certified to do both electric and plumbing inspections and could do these inspections and save the town the expense of paying outside inspectors when the time is right. He will meet with the inspectors and get their thoughts. The dues and training expense line has increase from \$800 in 2021 to \$2,500 in 2022. S. Paquin has certifications that require a higher level of training, so the expense is more. The \$2,500 will cover these expenses. The Code Enforcement budget has increased from \$137,056 in 2021 to \$152,201 in 2022.

Fox Point Event Criteria:

The Board discussed the criteria for events at Fox Point. The number of people allowed and the ending time of events. E. Boy said that the number of people has never been the problem it is the number of cars at the Point that is the problem. In the past residents have had guests park at their house and car pool to the point or they have a trolley bring people in. Events usually end at dusk. B. Blonigen asked M. Roy to check with the Fire Chief and Police Chief for their recommendations. Septemberfest doesn't end until after dark and doesn't see a problem.

Portsmouth Road Naming Issue-Senator Shaheen's Office Correspondence:

The Town has heard back from Michele Cota of Senator Shaheen's office. M. Cota said that they have been unsuccessful with petitioning the USPS for this, plus the timeframe to appeal the denial has expired. Senator Shaheen's office has suggested the possibility of introducing legislation for this issue. The Board asked M. Roy to move forward with this legislation.

Spaulding Turnpike Expansion-Inadequate Drainage:

During a recent two-inch rain storm areas around Custom Pools on Shattuck Way flooded. The culverts under Shattuck Way are inadequate. The Selectmen have sent a letter to the Executive Council about this issue and asked to set up a meeting about the problem. M. Roy hasn't heard anything back yet. She has also sent a l

Executive Office Budget Review:

The 2022 budget has increased from \$322,646 in 2021 to \$328,944 in 2022. B. Blonigen would like the four departments, Police, Fire, Library and Town Hall to look at getting the same IT services. B. Blonigen believes that the Town could save some money in this area.

Legal Budget Review:

The 2022 budget has decreased from \$95,005 in 2021 to \$80,000 in 2022.

Regional Associations Budget Review:

The 2022 budget has decreased from \$44,331 in 2021 to \$44,011 in 2022. The Coast Bus donation of \$34,236 represents 78% of this budget. Coast has had to decrease their routes because they are unable to get help. All their routes to Newington remain. One Sky has their own expense line in 2022. Previously their donation was paid out of the miscellaneous charities expense line.

Debt Service & Capital Outlay Budget Review:

The only item in debt service is the SCBA lease purchase. 2022 is the fourth year of the seven-year lease purchase agreement.

2022 Large budget requests- Delay & Cuts to 2022 Budget:

M. Roy explained that the total of all 2022 requests is approximately \$400,000 more than 2021. The Board asked M. Roy to send an email to all the departments asking them to make some additional budget cuts in order to keep the tax rate low. T. Connors said that the departments had done a great job in 2020 when the Board asked them to "tighten their belts" and believed they can do the same for 2022 by delaying or cutting items.

2022 COLA:

M. Roy said that the Social Security COLA for 2022 is 5.9%. M. Roy said that the average of other NH towns is at 3% COLA. B. Blonigen thought that 3% was appropriate. M. Marconi thought that 3% was fair. **M. Marconi moved to set the COLA for 2022 at 3%. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Air Force Collecting Samples in Newington:

The Town has received a letter from the Air Force asking permission to take environmental samples from the land at the Fire Station and the Transfer Station. T. Connors is not in favor of this request. The Board asked M. Roy to let the Air Force know that the Town has respectfully declined their request to take samples from the Fire Station and Transfer Station.

Zoning Ordinance:

M. Roy has received an email from the Town Planner asking that the Board address an issue with Zoning Ordinance Section 4 C (2). **B. Blonigen moved in accordance with Section 4C (2) of the Newington Zoning Ordinance, to allow the surety for the Shackford subdivision Conditional Use Permit for construction activities in the wetland buffers to be contained in the total surety for all infrastructure. Security to be in the form of cash or letter of credit. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Sale of State Land:

The Board decided to table this item until the next meeting.

B. Blonigen moved to give this item to the Planning Board to get their opinion on it. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

The NHDOT has decided to move forward with the sale of the land at Bloody Point without the Board of Selectmen's approval. B. Blonigen explained that there are many residents that would like to save the Train Depot and have expressed this to him. B. Blonigen would love to save the Train Depot but feels the cost is too high. The State has assessed that it would take \$450,000 to restore the depot, plus another 2.5 million for shoreline restoration. Newington is too small a town to take on this kind of expense at this time, especially when we are working hard to keep the tax rate low. It is good that the train depot was added to the "NH Seven to Save", but would hope some money would be given to the Town to help save it.

Adjournment: B. Blonigen moved to adjourn at 5:05pm. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Boy
Recorder