

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday December 20th, 2021

Present: Chair Ted Connors, Selectman Mike Marconi via Zoom, Selectman Bob Blonigen, Paul Deschaine, Planning Board Chair Denis Hebert, Fire Engineer Ann Hyland Hebert, Martha Roy, Town Administrator and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

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

Minutes Approval: M. Marconi moved to approve the minutes of November 29th, 2021, November 30th, 2021, December 6th, 2021 and December 8th, 2021 B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Manifest Approval: B. Blonigen moved to approve the manifests for \$417,510.70 dated 12/2/2021, \$100,307.80 dated 12/9/21 and \$966,543.16 dated 12/16/2021. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Lamprey Regional Coop Update-Paul Deschaine:

P. Deschaine gave the Board a brief history of the Lamprey Regional Coop and the Somersworth landfill maintenance issues that have been occurring over the years. Newington has been a participant in the Lamprey Regional Coop for years. M. Marconi is the Newington representative to the Coop. P. Deschaine is the Chair of the Board of Directors for the Lamprey Regional Cooperative. The current issue for the Coop is the renewal agreement with the City of Somersworth which is very important. M. Marconi asked if Newington's share would increase with the new contract. P. Deschaine said that he anticipated a small increase due to the legal fees for the ongoing negotiations.

Commercial/Industrial New Construction Exemption (RSA 72:81) Forum-Paul Deschaine:

P. Deschaine discussed the agenda for the upcoming forum on the exemption that will take place in January to introduce the subject. The exemption would be affecting the local and school taxes, not the state school and county taxes. This is a new statute and is not widespread and does not have many applications. After the forum then it would be put before the voters at town meeting if the Selectmen decide to proceed. T. Connors thought that there is a lot of education that needs to happen before the vote and would like to see something in the next newsletter that asks for resident input and would like to put together a committee. The tentative date for the forum is January 11th, 2022 at 6pm.

Cyber Security Assessment Update:

Funds for the assessment, \$3,400, have been encumbered from 2021. There will a kick off meeting with department heads soon.

School Funding Update:

P. Deschaine reviewed bills that are pending with the state legislature.

T. Connors thanked P. Deschaine for all his work on behalf of the town. It is important for Newington to have a voice on school funding.

City of Portsmouth Response to Selectmen's Letter:

T. Connors would like to schedule a work session with legal council to review the letter.

Historic District Commission Capital Reserve Request:

M. Roy said that the HDC has requested to have a capital reserve warrant article for \$10,000 to repair the stairs at the Stone School added to the warrant articles for Town meeting 2022. The Building Inspector has said that \$10,000 would only scratch the surface of the work that needs to be done to make the Stone School safe. There are many other problems. B. Blonigen said that he would like the Town to have a plan for the Stone School's repairs etc. before we start putting money into it. B. Blonigen would like to see the Planning Board and the Historic District Commission to get together and decide what to do at the Stone School.

2022 Revised Sewer Budget:

This revised budget is \$200,000 less than the previous proposed budget due to reduced numbers for the principal and interest payments for the Force Main bond in 2022.

M. Roy recommends that the Board approve this new budget and pass it along to the Budget Committee. **M. Marconi moved to approve the 2022 Sewer Budget for \$1,369,491 and pass it along to the Budget Committee. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Workforce Housing-Stone School:

The Building Inspector has sent a letter to the Board of Selectmen about the health and safety issues at the Stone School. The Building Inspector has asked the Board to support his decision to declare the Stone School uninhabitable and unsafe. M. Marconi said that the new Building Inspector has done a super job and agrees that the Town should not put any money into the Stone School until there is a plan. **B. Blonigen moved to accept the letter from the Building Inspector declaring the Stone School as uninhabitable and unsafe and his recommendations. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

Fox Point Usage Charge:

S. Philbrick put together a report of what local towns charge for usage of their land and facilities. T. Connors said it was a good report and would like to review it a little more. B. Blonigen would like the Recreation Committee to review the report and give their recommendations.

Playground Equipment Warrant Article:

A resident contacted the board and asked for a warrant article for \$21,500 for a zip line for the playground. T. Connors said that he thought that the slides were going to be replaced in 2022 for \$19,500. T. Connors would like to give this request to the Recreation Committee to look over and then request a warrant article if they want.

A. Hyland Hebert commented that she thought a zip line was a different level of equipment. There was a safety concern with this. P. Deschaine thought the Town should be cautious with that type of equipment.

Shackford Subdivision Road Name:

B. Blonigen moved to table this issue until it goes before the Planning Board. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor. The developer came before the Planning Board to come up with different names for the road.

The next public hearing for the sale of the Town land is December 27th, 2021 at 5pm.

T. Connors opened the Public Hearing at 5pm for the acceptance of the following reimbursements:
\$62,968.83 HealthTrust Return of Surplus

M. Roy explained that these funds were returned to the Town from HealthTrust. A portion of these funds are returned to the employees and a portion goes back to the Town because the employees pay 10% of the total cost of insurance. M. Roy asked that the Board accept the unanticipated funds that will go back to the general fund.

T. Connors asked if anyone wanted to speak in favor of the acceptance. A. Hyland Hebert spoke in favor. D. Hebert spoke in favor. T. Connors asked if anyone wanted to speak against the acceptance; there were none. T. Connors closed the public hearing at 5:11pm.

B. Blonigen moved to accept the unanticipated funds of \$62,968.83 from HealthTrust. M. Marconi seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Adjournment: M. Marconi moved to adjourn at 5:12pm. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,
Eleanor Boy, Recorder