

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday June 5th, 2023

Present: Chair Bob Blonigen, Selectman Brandon Arsenault, Selectman Chris Wayss, Police Chief Mike Bilodeau, Recreation Chair Rebecca Navelski, Recreation Member Jack O'Reilly, Town Engineer Eric Weinrieb, Planning Board Chair Denis Hebert, Road Agent Len Thomas, Highway Employee Frank Reinhold, Town Administrator Martha Roy and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

B. Blonigen called the meeting to order at 5:32pm. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes Approval: B. Arsenault moved to approve the May 15, 2023 minutes, May 24th, 2023 minutes and May 25th, 2023 minutes. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Manifest Approval: B. Arsenault moved to approve the manifests for \$113,828.32 dated 5/11/2023, \$161,277.39 dated 5/18/23, \$52,723.36 dated 5/25/23 and \$233,309.01 dated 6/1/23. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Town Salting Discussion:

B. Blonigen asked when L. Thomas and F. Reinhold would be attending Salt School. L. Thomas said that it is usually in September or October. F. Reinhold has attended it 5 years in a row. L. Thomas said that they get a lot of good ideas from the school.

L. Thomas said that he had originally had \$90,000 in his 2023 salt budget expense line, but that amount was cut to \$70,000. The Highway Department will use between 300-500 tons for a big storm and 200 tons for a small storm.

B. Arsenault asked about the type of salt the Town uses. L. Thomas said that they use a blend that has beet juice in it. It costs about \$15 more per ton than just plain salt but it is good for the environment, it works quicker, it works in lower temperatures and it is better for the highway equipment.

B. Arsenault asked about the contractor for Woodbury Ave. Where does he get the salt for Woodbury and who monitors it. L. Thomas said that he gets the salt from Newington's salt shed and he uses the same truck for Newington every time, so if there is leftover salt in his truck, he uses it for the next storm. L. Thomas said that he has no concerns about the contractor taking salt.

B. Arsenault asked how much salt was currently in the salt shed. L. Thomas said between 350-400 tons. L. Thomas said that the salt budget is always a gamble because you are dealing with the weather.

B. Arsenault said that the Highway Department does a good job with the roads in Newington Village.

B. Blonigen asked about mailboxes that are hit by the plows. L. Thomas said that most boxes that are knocked over are too close to the road and in the town's "right of way". B. Blonigen asked L. Thomas to put together a list of these mailboxes and M. Roy will send out a letter to them.

B. Arsenault said that it sounds like there is enough salt in the shed for the end of 2023.

L. Thomas explained that they calibrate the snow plow spreaders to 200 lbs per lane per mile.

C. Wayss pointed out that the price of salt per ton has increased by 34% from 2021-2023. C. Wayss suggested that a couple of the smaller towns near Newington should get together to buy their salt together to get a better price or trying to get a guaranteed price for the entire calendar year.

B. Arsenault asked if Newington could save money by going directly to Sprague to load salt instead of having it delivered. F. Reinhold said that their trucks are smaller and the fuel it would take to keep going back and forth to load up wouldn't make sense.

C. Wayss encouraged L. Thomas and M. Roy to try and figure out better ways to negotiate the cost of salt, maybe we could get a better deal because the State's new salt shed is in Newington.

B. Arsenault said that salt is more expensive the further away you are from the coast.

Town Paving Projects:

B. Blonigen said that the Rockingham Planning Commission report that was done several years ago has had a lot of changes because of different construction projects around town.

B. Blonigen asked E. Weinrieb if Fox Point Road (from Old Post to Little Bay Road) should be done this year considering that there is the upcoming water project on Fox Point. E. Weinrieb thought it was a good idea to do that paving now and get a good subgrade on the road without putting on the top coat. If any damage is done during the water project, it will be Portsmouth's issue.

B. Blonigen said that they would still be following the plan because sections 5 & 6 on Fox Point Road need work.

D. Hebert thought that the original Rockingham Planning Commission report should be followed so the Town doesn't fall behind the projects. Shattuck Way should be a top priority. M. Roy said that Shattuck Way is scheduled for crack sealing in 2023 and the Town has applied for a \$2 million grant to pave Shattuck Way. If the grant falls through, the money to pave Shattuck Way could be taken out of the Major Roads Capital Reserve Fund.

B. Arsenault moved to not proceed with another Rockingham Planning Commission Road survey. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

D. Hebert will contact Tim Roache to let him know that Newington doesn't need an updated plan.

E. Weinrieb said that the Town should revisit the original report each year. The report is a living and breathing document that needs to be revisited several times a year.

The Board reviewed the paving and crack sealing projects schedules for 2023.

The paving projects for 2023 are Fox Point (Old Post to Little Bay) and McIntyre Road (NHDOT to bend).

E. Weinrieb pointed out that Bourassa's proposal is just for a reclaim and doesn't include adding stone. McIntyre is ok with just doing the reclaim, but Fox Point doesn't have good subgrade. B. Blonigen asked M. Roy to put Fox Point out to bid using E. Weinrieb's recommendations.

B. Arsenault read the list of the RPC Road Survey determined priority for crack sealing:

1. Airport Road
2. Beane's Lane
3. Brickyard Circle
4. Captain's Landing
5. Carter's Lane
6. Coleman Drive
7. Dumpling Cove
8. Gundalow
9. Gosling Road
10. Hannah Lane
11. Nimble Hill Road
12. Old Dover Road
13. Old Post Road

14. Piscataqua Drive
15. River Road
16. Welsh Cove Drive
17. Bloody Point
18. Little Bay
19. Little Bay Ext.
20. Woodbury

Trash Pick-Up Event Discussion:

C. Wayss said that he has been approached by several residents about the trash on town roads. He would like to see a roadside trash pick-up event for the town. Residents have started picking up trash on roads by their homes. C. Wayss suggested that the Town do an organized trash pick-up event using the Police for safety and the Highway Department to pick up the trash collected in bags.

J. O'Reilly said that there is so much poison ivy on the sides of the roads that it wouldn't be a good idea, plus the Recreation Committee doesn't have any money in their budget for this event.

B. Arsenault suggested that this event be put off until September when there is less poison ivy. Trash could be picked up on Woodbury, Arboretum and Gosling. The Town could invite the National Guard to help.

C. Wayss understands the budget limitations and that the poison ivy is bad.

M. Bilodeau said that this could be a great community event, but doesn't think Woodbury should be included because of the traffic. The event needs to be well planned for safety. The fall would be a better time of year for the Police Department to participate.

B. Blonigen thought that residents have done a great job on their own and doesn't see the need for a big organized event.

C. Wayss suggested that this idea get tabled until later in the year so the Police could cover the safety concerns. This event would be a good use of the new ATV.

Tennis Court and Ice Rink/Tree Limbing:

Someone trimmed limbs off the trees by the tennis courts and just left them on the ground. If this is going to be done, Town Hall needs to be aware of it, so the limbs can be taken away. Tree limbing needs to be done through the proper channels. B.

Arsenault said that there is a process that needs to be followed. The Selectmen need to approve tree limbing or removal.

The Board received an email with photos from Recreation Committee member Bill Wright showing maple seeds all over the tennis courts. B. Wright explained that the pictures show why he wanted to removed these trees two years ago. The tennis courts were just resurfaced in 2022 and he is concerned about the seedlings on the courts.

C. Wayss said that he disagrees with removing trees because of stuff on courts. If trees are removed then there will be more water going down hill from Nimble Hill Road, which would be more detrimental in the long run than seedlings on the courts.

B. Blonigen and B. Arsenault agreed.

B. Blonigen said that there have been a lot of positive comments about the fence at the South Newington basketball court. J. O'Reilly said that the Senior dinner was very successful.

Sale of Town Land Tax Map 19, Lot 17, 144 Old Dover Road:

B. Blonigen said that the Town had met all the deadlines for the sale to go forward.

If the Selectmen decide to sell a letter will be sent to Jane Moore's address and her sister's address with the total amount of liens and notify them of their right to repurchase the property for the cost of all outstanding taxes, interest, costs and penalties (\$54,274.77).

B. Arsenault moved for the Town to sell the land located at Tax Map 19, Lot 17 144 Old Dover Road with the option for the current land owner's estate to repurchase the property for 30 days and then to the abutters for 30 days after that. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Blonigen moved to amend the motion to say that a condition of a sale to an abutter would include that the lot at 144 Old Dover Road would have to be merged with the abutters lot. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Blonigen asked if M. Roy had heard from Mark Phillips about the land he had bid on earlier in the year. M. Roy said that M. Phillips was having a hard time getting an engineer to move the project ahead, but he is still very interested.

Fire Suburban Bid Opening:

The Selectmen received three bids:

Ringwood Motors	\$1,580.00
Eliot Automotive	\$ 627.00
Community Buses and Vehicles	\$ 713.13

B. Arsenault moved to award the bid to Ringwood Motors for \$1,580.00. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Crack Sealing Quote:

M. Roy said that the Town didn't receive any bids by the deadline, but received one from Connecticut Crack Sealing after the deadline for \$2.05 per pound. B. Arsenault Airport Road is the top priority for crack sealing. B. Arsenault said that crack sealing is the best money you can spend on roads. He asked what the total was we have in the budget this year for crack sealing. M. Roy stated : \$ 26,338. C. Wayss asked what the warranty is for crack sealing. B. Arsenault said 2 years. B. Arsenault and B. Blonigen reminded M. Roy not to have crack sealing done on the roads we are going to pave this year.

Recycling Update:

M. Roy hasn't received a quote for curbside recyclables pick-up from G. Mello yet. It was a consensus of the Board to continue to put glass in the recycle bins.

Stones at Transfer Station:

The Board has received inquiries from residents asking if they can use the stones at the Transfer Station for their properties. M. Roy said the stones are used by the Highway Department for projects around town. The Town needs to be in more control of what gets done with the stones. There should be a new designated area for these stones. B. Blonigen asked M. Roy to ask Len Thomas if the stones could be moved to the Highway shed for safe keeping.

Kayak Storage-Coast Guard Stickers:

B. Blonigen said that the stickers on kayaks on the rack at Fox Point is working. Most have them, just a couple do not. These stickers are part of an official Coast Guard program.

Facility Use:

Field Usage Insurance

Security Deposit Non-Profits

Fee for Fox Point and Fields

B. Blonigen said that he didn't think that there was a need for a security deposit or insurance for use of the fields.

M. Roy said that Peter Bragdon, Past NH Senate President, who is working with the Million Air Project currently, has requested to meet and answer any questions the Selectmen may have about the Million Air project.

B. Blonigen has no objections to meeting with him but would like to delay the meeting until after C. Wayss returns to town. B. Blonigen wanted to make sure to invite the "key" players from Newington; Huddy Grandy, Meghann Wayss, Emily Savinelli, Patty Borkland and John and Meg Ripley. A Public Notice should also be published inviting all residents.

The Board will contact our PDA reps. to ask that their letter, about the Million Air project to the PDA Board, be read into record at one of their meetings.

The Selectmen will have M. Roy ask the PDA if our wetlands engineer/ wetland specialist could gain access to the "yellow circle" in the Million Air project to do our own evaluation as an abutter to the project.

B. Arsenault asked M. Roy to send a letter to Senator Shaheen about this project.

The Town is still waiting for the MOU with Portsmouth Water to be completed.

C. Wayss updated the Board on the Stone School Committee.

B. Arsenault thought that the survey should be done at the end of the process, after the Selectmen have heard what options the Stone School Committee has for Stone School uses, not at the beginning and thought that it was premature to ask residents.

C. Wayss thought that the committee has mapped out good questions and wants to hear from the residents and feels it would be a missed opportunity if the committee doesn't hear from the residents. There is value in a survey. The residents may like an option that we can't do because of deed restrictions, but at least the residents' opinions were heard.

C. Wayss stated that the legal opinion that was received was very helpful on what can be done with the Stone School.

Adjournment: B. Arsenault moved to adjourn at 7:40pm. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Eleanor Boy, Recorder