

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Monday September 18th, 2023

Present: Chair Bob Blonigen, Selectman Brandon Arsenault, Selectman Chris Wayss, Newington PDA Rep Margaret Lamson, Greenland-Newington PDA Rep Susan Parker, Police Chief Mike Bilodeau, Fire Chief EJ Hoyt, Resident Mike Donahue and Town Administrator Martha Roy.

B. Blonigen called the meeting to order at 5:39pm. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes Approval: B. Arsenault moved to approve the September 5, 2023 minutes. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Manifest Approval: B. Arsenault moved to approve the manifests for \$82,215.49 dated 9/7/23 and \$41,206.35 dated 9/14/23. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Facility Use Requests:

Fire Department- Fire Marshall Class-9/26/23-TH Auditorium.

B. Arsenault moved to approve the facility use request. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Million Air Fuel Storage Information Update to PDA Reps-Margaret Lamson and Susan Parker:

S. Parker said that they have very little information on the Million Air project because a proposal has not been submitted by Million Air. B. Blonigen said that he had spoken to Paul Brean and he said that the Board of Selectmen's questions are going to be answered and have been passed along to Million Air.

B. Arsenault asked S. Parker how much information they have been given and have they been able to watch any of the public meetings and information sessions that the Selectmen have had with Portsmouth Water, Million Air and our representatives at the State level. S. Parker said that she hadn't seen any of the meetings. B. Arsenault said that they are available on the Town's website if she would like to watch them. S. Parker said that there are PFAS chemicals everywhere. B. Blonigen said that he told Paul Brean that when the Air Force pulled out of Pease, Newington was switched off wells to public water because of the concern about PFAS. The concern is: where do we go next. The Haven Well location is a concern. When Portsmouth Water came to a Selectmen's meeting and told us that they are buying up land around their wells and the Madbury

Reservoir because they don't want anyone to build there, but yet look at what is being built near their biggest well.

B. Blonigen explained that the Board of Selectmen have been asking questions to the PDA but have not gotten any answers and the Board is hoping that our State Senator and Representatives could help get some answers for them. The PDA Director has said that Newington is against this project, which is incorrect. No one is against this project; the Board just needs answers to our questions. The Board has written letters, we have asked our PDA Reps to ask the questions, but have gotten no answers. The tank farm is proposed to be built on top of the Haven Well, which supplies parts of Newington with drinking water.

S. Parker said that since the Air Force has left Pease they have been collecting information about the water under the runways and thinks what we need to do is to look at the baselines from now and what they were and what they should be. B. Blonigen said that in 1982, people weren't allowed to swim or fish in the ponds because of the contaminated water in them.

M. Lamson pointed out that there is a lot of cancer among airmen in the area.

B. Arsenault asked both representatives to go back and watch those meetings because there is a lot of information there.

B. Arsenault said that there are a couple of issues that are important. B. Arsenault asked the representatives that while they are hearing the arguments for a new Fixed Base Operator, that they separate what exists there today verses what is being proposed. This is because in the Board's experience, the current FBO and the Million Air group just want to talk about each other and that's not the point the Board of Selectmen have at all. By becoming a successful Fixed Base Operator they will fix the problems of the existing Fixed Base Operator and that is not the way you fix them.

When Million Air Rep, Peter Bragdon, came to a meeting and was asked the Selectmen's four questions:

1. A public third-party review of the plans has not been completed
2. Alternate sites for the project have not been looked at
3. An explanation of the "public good" has not been addressed
4. The difference of the square footage of the wetlands from 2017 vs 2022 has not been explained.

P. Bragdon was unable to answer them.

B. Arsenault pointed out that the wells serve a majority (85%-90%) of Newington residents that are fed from the Pease Water system, that includes the Haven Well.

C. Wayss said that only about 34 residents have their water come from Madbury.

B. Arsenault pointed out that also includes Durham. It is very concerning that Portsmouth Water is buying up land so that snow plowing won't affect the aquifers and we have Fixed Base Operators so close to the Haven Well. Is this the only place where the new Fixed Base Operator can be located, it's not just the equipment and material that they are proposing to be located there, it's what's going to happen when they dredge it all up and what they are disturbing and where it goes, because the land and the soil is not allowed to leave Pease. Where are those stockpiled and where do they drain?

S. Parker asked how long 85-90% of the Newington residents were on the Pease water system. B. Blonigen said that they were on before the water system was installed at Pease. S. Parker asked if anyone was tracking public health issues.

B. Arsenault said that in that system for the type of PFAS chemicals that they test for is no detect. The system has done a good job for what they are testing for, but what chemicals are we not testing for now that currently exist in the Pease water system. Short chain chemicals are a concern and are not being tested for at Pease, they are only testing and treating for long chain chemicals.

B. Arsenault said that the Selectmen are going to hold an informational meeting on this with our State Representative Muse and some scientists to educate the residents about this issue. No date has been set yet but should be within 30 days.

C. Wayss said that currently in NH the only way that you can participate in those health surveys and tracking is if you volunteer. Which means it's not very well tracked. C. Wayss said that he is someone that has high levels of PFAS in his bloodstream because he was born at Pease and lived there and the letter he got said that they don't know the long-term effects of PFAS in your bloodstream and didn't offer any help with it.

C. Wayss said that the Million Air project is different than the water source contamination. It's not just about what you are going to store on top of the ground, its what's going to happen when those soils are disturbed and where does it go and how does it impact our water.

B. Arsenault asked if both representatives could watch the Selectmen's meetings of note and asked M. Roy to send the dates of these meetings to them and will let them know of the meeting with Representative Muse.

B. Blonigen said that the Lonza plant that is being built at Pease is a tremendous leap forward in diabetes treatment and will put Pease on the worldwide map.

B. Blonigen thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Peter Welch-Cars with No Stickers parking at Dock:

This item was tabled until a later meeting.

B. Blonigen said that he was anxious to talk to P. Welch about the proposed sticker program for the boats on the dock. M. Roy contacted legal about this issue and they are researching two laws about this. M. Bilodeau asked about the enforcement that would be needed and how it would be done.

Fire Chief EJ Hoyt-Engine 5:

Engine 5 will soon be replaced by the new engine that will be here shortly. What should the Town do with it. Donate it or sell it. B. Blonigen asked what the maintenance status was of Engine 5. E. Hoyt said that it won't pass the State inspection. It needs new tires and some electrical work. Discussion ensued about the value of Engine 5 and the best plan going forward. B. Blonigen thought that after the Fire Department strips off all the valuable equipment on Engine 5, it should be parked at the Town hall and put out to bid.

E. Hoyt thanked Police Chief Bilodeau for helping out on a call. B. Blonigen commended the two departments for working so well together.

Police Chief Mike Bilodeau-2024 Cruiser:

M. Bilodeau expressed his concern with the UAW strike and the Town's ability to get a cruiser in 2024. M. Bilodeau believes there is going to be a backlog in getting cruisers. He would like to purchase just the cruiser this year instead of one in 2024 and could put funds in the 2024 capital outlay budget to outfit it. B. Blonigen asked if the Police Department ordered a cruiser now, when it would be delivered. M. Bilodeau said it would cost \$43,000 and could be delivered next week. \$16,000 to be outfitted in 2024. The department has nine cruisers right now, but one will be donated to the town soon. There are 11 full-time officers. The goal is to have seven functioning cruisers, that includes one for details. Another issue is that NEVO is back logged at this time. The Police Commission Chair is in support of this discussion.

C. Wayss asked if the Police Department will be returning funds to the Town at the end of the year. M. Bilodeau said yes. C. Wayss said that the Board allowed the Fire Department to purchase a pickup truck at the end of the year and thought that this was a similar circumstance. B. Blonigen thought that if the Town doesn't preplan and have a new cruiser on the lot, then we will be set back.

B. Blonigen said that he is in favor of purchasing a cruiser now to get ahead of the strike. C. Wayss said that he would like a little more information on the new outfitter and the timeline.

B. Arsenault said that he thought it was very early and if the Town got three vehicles in 12 months, that in eight years they would all have to be replaced at the same time.

B. Arsenault asked the Chief to bring the unspent numbers from this year's budget and to get information about the new outfitting company and how quickly they could turn around a cruiser and then come back to the Selectmen.

B. Blonigen asked about putting together a chart with all the cruisers on it and the mileage of each and when it is anticipated to be replaced.

M. Bilodeau said that it is recommended that cruisers be turned in when they have between 85,000-125,000 miles on them.

Discussion ensued about revolving accounts for details, policing at the Air Show and the income that comes from it. The use of the ATV during the show.

C. Wayss showed a piece of the tail of the Spirit of Newington that was presented to C. Wayss and B. Arsenault at the beginning of the air show by the National Guard.

Guardrail Project:

B. Arsenault said that there was no safety issue with the guardrail as it is now and because the Highway Department has overspent some lines in their budget and thought that it could be delayed this year. C. Wayss agreed that it is a good project to do but not this year due to the over expenditures in the Highway budget. B, Blonigen agreed.

Stone School Committee Report:

C. Wayss read the recommendation of the Stone School Committee.

September 18, 2023

RE: Recommendation on Old Stone School

Newington Board of Selectmen,

The Old Stone School Committee considered various options, reviewed the reports on building conditions, and reviewed the recommended remediation and restoration of the

Old Stone School contained in those reports. The committee also conducted a survey of residents on what they would like to see done with the Old Stone School.

The recommendation to the Newington Board of Selectmen, from the Old Stoen School Committee, in a unanimous vote is:

To preserve the Old Stone School from further deterioration, in a historic fashion, adding funds yearly to include partial grant funding to be phased over time, until a workable use may be found for the Old Stone School.

The Old Stone School Committee did not determine what the workable use for the building should or could be.

Respectfully Submitted
Christian Wayss, Chair
Old Stoen School Committee

B. Arsenault said that there was a lot of effort, hours and emotion put into the Stone School Committee. The Board couldn't have asked for anything better than the people that participated, gave their opinions, and worked together.

C, Wayss said that the reason that the committee gave that recommendation to the Selectmen was because they didn't feel that we had enough information to recommend something specific for the building, until the workable use can be found. The Town needs to prevent the building from getting worse. Money from the Stone School capital reserve fund, plus grants, could be used to do the repairs that are needed and could make the building more attractive to a potential user.

There was no motion to dissolve the committee. B. Blonigen thought it was a good idea to keep the committee together to come back together for anything that may come up in the future.

B. Blonigen thanked the committee for all their work on behalf of the Town.

Planner Report:

The Board reviewed the report. J. Krebs forwarded the report he does for the Planning Board to the Selectmen.

Stone Face has decided not to build a new brewery, so their parking situation and tent will need to be looked at.

The hotel on Woodbury is moving along.

The Mall owners are traveling across the country looking at what other mall owners are doing. Nashua just changed their empty Sears building into a casino. M. Roy said that Torrington said that will get back to the Board this week with a time they could meet.

Wilcox is expanding to the front lot along Woodbury and will be getting an engineer to document what easements are under the lot. They will be building a five to seven story structure and a parking garage.

Dustin Bakery is opening a location in Newington at the corner of Gosling and Woodbury Ave.

Invasive brush cutting has been started on Fox Point.

Conservation Commission sent a letter to the Selectmen about two issues they were concerned about at Fox Point. One was the area to the left side of the stairs was eroding. The waterfront engineer has been out there to review it. The second issue was wanting a barrier placed to prevent vehicular access to the beach. M. Roy said that vehicles have always been allowed to bring their trailers down to the beach. The Highway department uses this access to pick up trash, seaweed etc. B. Arsenault questioned why this was requested and asked M. Roy to follow up with them. B. Blonigen asked to table this item until a later meeting.

Halloween trick or treating was set for October 30th from 5pm-7pm.

Public Comment:

There was no public comment.

The entrances to the Cemetery are not in great shape, especially the one by the Meeting House. The Cemetery Trustees are discussing a paving plan.

C. Wayss moved to appoint B. Arsenault as an alternate Selectmen's rep to the Budget Committee. B. Blonigen seconded the motion. B. Arsenault abstained. All others were in favor.

B. Arsenault moved to enter a nonpublic session at 7:27pm per RSA 91-A:3 II (1) Legal. C. Wayss seconded the motion. B. Blonigen asked for a roll call vote: B. Blonigen-Yes, B. Arsenault-Yes, C. Wayss-Yes. All were in favor.

B. Arsenault moved to return to public session at 8:05pm, seconded by C. Wayss. B. Blonigen asked for a roll call vote: B. Blonigen-Yes, B. Arsenault-Yes, C. Wayss-Yes. All were in favor.

Adjournment: B. Arsenault moved to adjourn at 8:06pm. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Eleanor Boy, Recorder