

Town of Newington, NH
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Tuesday September 5th, 2023

Present: Chair Bob Blonigen, Selectman Brandon Arsenault, Selectman Chris Wayss, Police Chief Mike Bilodeau, Town Engineer Eric Weinrieb, Board of Fire Engineer Chair John Klanchesser, Board of Fire Engineer Ann Hyland Hebert, Town Administrator Martha Roy and Eleanor Boy, Recorder.

B. Blonigen called the meeting to order at 5:44pm. Followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes Approval: B. Arsenault moved approve the August 7th, 2023. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor. B. Arsenault moved approve the August 21st, 2023. C. Wayss seconded the motion. B. Arsenault and C. Wayss in favor. B. Blonigen abstained.

Manifest Approval: B. Arsenault moved to approve the manifests for \$18,016.10 dated 8/24/2023 and \$230,372.64 dated 8/31/23. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Facility Use Requests:

B. Arsenault moved to approve the following facility use request:

Rep. David Meuse-TH Auditorium- 9/25/23-Million Air Concerns Meeting

B. Arsenault explained that this is a Board of Selectmen sponsored event about the drinking water concerns at Pease. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Arsenault moved to approve the following facility use request:

Wayne Semprini-OTH & Grove-9/17/23-Family Picnic. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Arsenault moved to approve the following three facility use requests from the Recreation Committee:

Recreation Committee-Town Hall Parking Lot-10/30/23-Trunk & Treat

Recreation Committee-OTH-10/14 & 15/23-Trolly Tours

Recreation Committee-OTH-Craft Classes-10/12, 11/9 & 11/16

C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Michael Bilodeau-Police Chief-Bicycle Races/Rides-Future Procedure or Regulations:

M. Bilodeau explained that after the last bicycle race through town there were a lot of phone calls and emails from residents who were concerned about the cyclist's behavior during the race. M. Bilodeau said that there was very little communication from the organizers of the race to the Police Department. M. Bilodeau believes that it would be a good idea to require a permit for these races through town in the future. M. Bilodeau reached out to other towns in the area to find out what they require and found that Rye

has a good permit that is very thorough. The Town could use this permit as a guide to create one for Newington for bike and road races through town.

B. Arsenault said that he thinks that requiring a permit is a good idea because it will hold the organizers responsible for anything that happens and the Town can deny any future permits from them.

M. Bilodeau said that the most important item will be the contact information for the organizers. The permit will give the town good leverage.

B. Blonigen asked M. Roy and M. Bilodeau to create the permit for Newington and to then send it to legal for their opinion.

B. Blonigen thought that the permit should go through Town Hall and be on the website.

Discussion ensued about whether a fee should be charged for these permits and should Police details be required for these events.

C. Wayss would like to add a section about having police details for large bike events and the decision to require police details is up to the Police Chief. Any cost to the Town will be paid by the applicant.

M. Bilodeau would like to see groups of motorcycles coming through Town to be added to the list of groups that would require a permit.

Jack O'Reilly-Recreation Committee-Appointment Request:

B. Arsenault explained that he had spoken to J. O'Reilly about the number of committees that he is currently on. B. Arsenault said that in the past any resident could only be on two committees at a time, but he realizes that J. O'Reilly brings a lot of value to the Recreation Committee. **B. Arsenault moved to appoint Jack O'Reilly to the Recreation Committee, retroactive to April 1, 2023. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.**

John Stone-Library Trustee Alternate-Appointment Request:

B. Arsenault moved to appoint John Stone to the Library Trustees as an alternate. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

CDS Communications Grant-Department of Justice-Next Steps:

M. Roy said that Paul Deschaine has been working on this grant for a long time and is getting frustrated by the US Department of Justice's delay in getting the awarded funds to the towns. There are a couple of ways to try and get things moving. One would be to go to the press and the other would be to get together with other surrounding towns

that have also been awarded funds for this grant and write letter to our US Senators asking for their help.

B. Blonigen said that he would not favor going to the press and would like to get together with the other towns and go through our Senators.

B. Arsenault said that he knows that Paul Deschaine follows up every month about this grant and it is frustrating, but there is no pressing need at this time and would support the letter with the other towns. The deadline is in October.

C. Wayss agrees with the group letter approach once the deadline has passed.

B. Blonigen is pleased with the work that Paul Deschaine is doing for the Town.

Patterson Lane Culvert Drainage Status:

M. Roy explained that there is an issue with the first culvert on Patterson Lane. During heavy rainfall the water doesn't drain correctly, and it is coming to the door of the business in that area. L. Thomas cleaned out the culvert and determined that a new extension was needed there. No price has been given yet for the project. E. Weinrieb said that all that is needed is to connect the extension to the pipe that is already there and thought that the Highway Department could do it, so the cost would be minimal.

Fox Point Road Drainage Concerns-Robert Spinney:

M. Roy read a letter from Robert Spinney to the Board of Selectmen:

Dear Sirs:

My name is Robert Spinney and I reside at 253 Fox Point Road with my wife Cheryl. I have a small request I would like you to consider.

I have noticed the recent paving improvements on Nimble Hill Road and support such projects. It has come to my attention that perhaps in the not so distance future the area of Fox Point Road past my house may be resurfaced. If this is a possibility, there are a couple of improvements I feel should be addressed.

First, in the area just downhill of my lower driveway there are two 10-inch by 12-inch corrugated culverts. These culverts run across diagonally from the old Walter Pickering property and empty on to my side. They are approximately 15-feet by 20-feet apart from one another and are crushing at the ends and drain poorly. In addition to the poor drainage, the road shoulders are virtually nonexistent and pose a serious driving hazard for about a 75-foot stretch. I am very sure both culverts were put in back in the sixties when the 24-inch water main was put in.

I think a single properly sized pipe would be sufficient as was put in on Little Bay Road a few years back. This, along with a decent shoulder improvement would help greatly. I would be happy to point these areas out to Len Thomas.

Please feel free to share this letter with Len and our Code Enforcement Officer as you see prudent.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert Spinney
253 Fox Point Road
Newington, NH 03801

B. Blonigen said that he had spoken to Robert Spinney today and then asked Town Engineer Eric Weinrieb to look at this issue and the possibility of upgrading it when Fox Point is paved later this year. B. Blonigen asked E. Weinrieb to give the Board of Selectmen his recommendation after he has a chance to look at it.

Portsmouth Site Investigation Committee Rep. for a Sports Complex in the Area:

M. Roy said that there are two Newington residents that have expressed interest in being on this committee. There are no meetings scheduled at this time, but a virtual meeting will take place soon. C. Wayss said that this committee has been formed to explore areas for a sports complex in the seacoast region.

B. Blonigen questioned the material that Portsmouth sent to the Board about this complex and asked M. Roy to reach out to them for clarification.

B. Arsenault asked M. Roy to find out if Newington can appoint two members to this committee.

Fox Point Walking Path and Sign Upgrades:

M. Roy said that the Board had received an email from Victoria and Stuart Eversman asking if upgrades to the paths on Fox Point could be done. They included pictures of paths at other parks in the area.

B. Arsenault thought that this would be a question for the Conservation Commission.

B. Blonigen agreed and would like to hear from the Conservation Commission on this issue and asked that this be put on the next Conservation Commission meeting agenda.

B. Arsenault said that he thought it was a good idea, but may not be in the spirit of the trails on Fox Point.

Choice Hotel Moratorium Permit Fee:

M. Roy said that in 2018 a five-year moratorium on road cuts on Woodbury Ave. was placed. Choice Hotel is asking permission to cut into Woodbury Ave. for their electric and gas lines. The last time a fine was given for a road cut on Woodbury Ave. was \$10,000 for the Storage Barn.

B. Blonigen thought that the Selectmen should consider waving the penalty for the road cut because there are only a few months left on the moratorium and they are asking permission to do it and their work will be bonded.

C. Wayss thought that the Board should proceed with waiving the penalty. The Hotel is going to do improvements along Woodbury that will be beneficial for the Town and their work is bonded.

B. Blonigen said that the Planning Board has worked really hard on this project.

B. Arsenault moved to approve waiving the Woodbury Ave. pavement cut penalty for the Choice Hotel project. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Arsenault moved to approve the curb cuts on Woodbury Ave. for the Choice Hotel project. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Grant Application:

M. Roy said that Paul Deschaine has found a grant called the Climate Resilience Regional Challenge Grant that could fund the preserving of the bluff at Fox Point.

B. Arsenault moved to authorize Paul Deschaine to move forward applying and submitting this grant. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

B. Blonigen said that the Board is just approving applying for this grant, not voting on doing any work on Fox Point without the Conservation Commission's recommendation.

Road Race -Pease Relay 2023:

B. Blonigen said that this road race is a low impact race. There are only four racers in the road at a time. It is important to support the airmen. This race doesn't require a police detail. M. Roy said that the Town has never had a problem with this race.

B. Blonigen moved to approve the Pease Relay Road Race on October 14th. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

C. Wayss commended the organizers of this road race for getting their request to the Selectmen in plenty of time before the race.

NEMBA Scavenger Hunt Request:

M. Roy said that the Board received a request from NEMBA to park along the side of Arboretum Drive and in the Town Forest parking lot that is located along Arboretum Road.

B. Blonigen said that there is not parking lot along Arboretum. The parking should be along Short Street and they should be asking the PDA about that. The Scavenger Hunt is on PDA property. B. Blonigen asked M. Roy to make sure that they understand there is no parking on Arboretum, no Town forest parking area.

Chris King, USAF Meeting-Well Results:

M. Roy said that Chris King will be in the area on September 13th and 14th and could meet with the Selectmen at that time. The Board thought that the 13th at 5:30pm would work. M. Roy will let them know.

COAST Bus:

Denis Hebert has asked if the Rad Nichols, the Executive Director of Coast Bus, should come to the budget meetings. B. Blonigen said that he thought it would be beneficial to have him attend.

Brandon Arsenault was named an Honorary Wing Commander by the National Guard. He said it was an honor and he learned a lot about their operation at Pease.

B. Arsenault would like to start getting monthly reports from the Planner about any projects that are going on in Town. He would like a report to be included in the next Selectmen's meeting. B. Blonigen will run it by Denis Hebert.

The Economic Development Committee will no longer be having meetings but would like to get on the Planning Board agenda once a quarter.

Newington is waiting for Portsmouth Water to send back the MOU for the Little Bay water project. It should be coming soon.

The Board discussed the clearing of brush on roads and intersections in Town and thought it would be a good idea to include funds to do this in the 2024 budget.

New road signs have been ordered and will be installed soon.

Repaving roads in the cemetery has been discussed.

Clearing the growth around the Great Bay Marine sign was discussed. M. Roy will ask Great Bay Marine to clean it up.

C. Wayss asked about the dead trees on Fox Point and the Library parking lot. All the funds for care of trees have been spent in the 2023 budget. L. Thomas may be able to remove these trees. B. Blonigen said that he didn't want L. Thomas to cut down any trees that he is not comfortable doing. We could hire an outside company.

Public Comment:

Ann Hyland Hebert said that the Fire Department had purchased a rescue tripod and jacks. That was the expense that will be taken out of the Major Equipment Capital Reserve account.

John Klanchesser asked that the PDA clean up the brush along Arboretum. It is very overgrown and could be dangerous. B. Blonigen said that the Board will address this issue with the PDA.

John Klanchesser asked if there would be notifications about the upcoming paving in Town. M. Roy said that it is in the September Newsletter and a postcard will go out to residents.

B. Arsenault moved to enter a nonpublic session at 7:21pm per RSA 91-A:3 II (e) & (l) 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 7:58pm, 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.

B. Arsenault moved to seal the minutes indefinitely. C. Wayss seconded the motion. B. Arsenault asked for a roll call vote: B. Arsenault-Yes, C. Wayss-Yes. All were in favor.

Adjournment: B. Arsenault moved to adjourn at 7:58pm. C. Wayss seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted, Eleanor Boy, Recorder