



**Office of the Board of Selectmen
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**NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
DATE: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2022
TIME: 6:00PM**

**LOCATION: NEWTON TOWN HALL, 2 TOWN HALL ROAD and
ZOOM CONFERENCE CALL**

PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

Zoom Conference phone number 929-205-6099

Meeting ID 818 7979 5674

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81879795674>

I. Call to Order

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. In attendance were Selectmen Matthew A. Burrill, Chairman, Robert Marchand Jr, Vice-Chairman, Charles R. Melvin Sr., Michael Connolly, Mark Andrews, Town Administrator, and Selectmen's Secretary Diane M. Morin. The non-public session was audio taped. The public meeting was videotaped; the non-public session minutes and the public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Secretary Morin.

Selectman Lawrence Foote was not present.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (c) – Reputation

Selectman Marchand moved to go into non-public session at 6:00pm under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) -- Reputation. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Melvin – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye.

Selectman Marchand moved to close the non-public session at 6:52pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Melvin – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye.

II. Scheduled Business

A. Seal non-public minutes

Selectman Marchand moved that the Board just came out of a non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) and that they keep all matters discussed confidential until in the opinion of the majority of the Board the circumstances no longer apply. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

B. Road Agent – Guard rails on Country Pond Road

Road Agent (RA) Mike Pivero addressed the Board. He stated that 5 years ago, he installed used guard rails to save on costs as part of other repairs done at the time on Country Pond Road. He reviewed the Town Engineer's report concerning the guard rails and it was noted that the guard rails on both sides of the road are deficient. The engineer recommends that repairs/replacements be done. RA Pivero stated that he estimates the cost to be between \$20,000 -- \$25,000. He would prefer that the funds come from another source other than the highway budget. If the Board decides to use the funds from the highway budget, it will mean about 300' to 400' of roadway will not be repaired.

RA Pivero recommends the Board place this on the town warrant for March.

Selectman Melvin asked RA Pivero what the town's liability is. RA Pivero stated that once the town is informed of an issue, it becomes liable.

Secretary Morin asked if the funds could come from the Highway Block Grant. RA Pivero stated that it could, but it will affect what he can do next year.

TA Andrews stated that there may be grants available that he will investigate once we have a better estimate on the cost.

RA Pivero stated that there's a failing culvert on Wilder's Grove that he has a temporary fix in place. He stated that he has applied for a grant to help cover the cost of the repair.

Chairman Burrill and Selectman Marchand stated this should be put before the voters as a warrant article. Secretary Morin stated that she has a concern that if the warrant article fails, the town is still liable, and the Board will need to find the funds elsewhere.

The Board will wait until the estimate is received.

Mrs. Trisha McCarthy stated that in December there will be grant money available for bridge repairs and the culvert may qualify.

C. ARPA/EOC update

Acting Emergency Management Director (AEMD) Trisha McCarthy informed the Board that the ARPA committee is still waiting on one more proposal for security cameras.

She informed the Board that Mr. John Guilfoil will be presenting tonight what his company can offer the town. His company specializes in communications on social media platforms. They can write articles and then post them on various social media outlets. They develop and host websites as well.

The air filters for the Town Hall and Library have been ordered. The committee is still investigating options for the main hall, police, and fire station.

The committee will be recommending improvements to Greenie Park.

The large printer has been ordered and room is being made in the back conference room for it. The US Treasury considered this purchase as forward thinking.

AEMD McCarthy explained how ARPA money can be used. When the town applied for the funds, a category had to be chosen and 6.1 Government Services was chosen. This can be used for any normal government services especially for police, fire, and EMS which can include any equipment they may need. It can also be used for technology. There are restrictions to using the funds for new projects. Projects should be in the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). She stated as an example, the solar panels for the fire station are not in the CIP, therefore that could be challenged by the US Treasury as improper use of the funds. However, security cameras would be an upgrade and would most likely be accepted.

Selectman Marchand asked if there were grants for the security cameras. AEMD McCarthy will investigate.

There needs to be a plan for the funds in place by December 31, 2024, and must be spent by December 31, 2026.

She stated that there have been 13 new COVID-19 cases reported in the last week.

Selectman Connolly asked about a different type of virus that seems to be in town. AEMD McCarthy will update the Board when more information becomes available.

Selectman Marchand stated that the bridge and police body camera grants are matching funds which means the town will need to pay a portion of the cost.

AEMD McCarthy reminded the Board that they could request to use funds from the unassigned fund balance via DRA to fix the guard rails.

a. John Guilfoil – public relation proposal

Mr. John Guilfoil introduce himself as a public relations/communication specialist. He provided his background in public relations. His company offers services such as writing articles for municipalities. The company does website development and is proposing to develop 3 websites for the town. One each for the town, police, and fire. They would keep the site updated with current information pertaining to the town. They would also post on other various social media outlets.

Chairman Burrill asked what other NH municipalities do they support? Mr. Guilfoil stated that they have contracts with Salem NH police and several SAU but no towns.

AEMD McCarthy stated that the fee to develop the website is \$17,500.00. There is a monthly charge of \$1,000.00. The ARPA committee is considering paying the upfront cost and 1-year of monthly fees. Departments would then need to budget the monthly charge after that.

Secretary Morin asked if there is a limit on the number of postings per websites. Mr. Guilfoil stated no, there is not. She also asked if the \$1,000.00 was for all 3 websites. Mr. Guilfoil confirmed that it will cover all 3 websites.

TA Andrews asked if it is a community service? Mr. Guilfoil stated that the more you communicate the better you are perceived. This is where they could help the town. They do charge for off hours if the incident is more than an hour.

Chairman Burrill asked AEMD McCarthy to post the ARPA committee minutes.

Selectman Marchand stated that there are line items in budgets that could be used to cover the monthly fees. AEMD McCarthy suggested that the departments that utilize the service more would pay more.

D. NH Paid Family Medical Leave optional coverage

Town Administrator (TA) Mark Andrews reviewed the options for the Board regarding the new NH State Paid Family Medical Leave being offered. The State has contracted with MetLife as the insurance carrier. The cost is still being evaluated by the State. The town could cover the entire cost of the insurance, split the cost with employees, or the employee would cover the entire cost.

He is recommending the Board consider offering this optional insurance to employees in order to retain employees. The cost of the premium has not been set. The Board agreed that it is important to offer this type of insurance and to consider it further investigation.

AEMD McCarthy stated that the town is responsible for paying employees that contracted COVID while at work.

E. Transfer Station – review proposed bulk item fee structure increases for residents and non-residents

Transfer Station (TS) Pete Gagnon addressed the Board and informed them that it is costing more to have certain items disposed of. The last time the fees were increased was in 2017. As an example, mattresses are getting hard to dispose of because landfills are not taking them. He reviewed the changes to the fees.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept the updated residential and non-residential transfer station fees for bulk items as presented. Seconded by Selectman Connolly. Burrill – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye. Melvin abstained because he had not reviewed the changes.

F. 2023 Proposed Budgets

a. Library

Mrs. Kathy Meserve, a Gale Library Trustees, addressed the Board and reviewed the proposed 2023 library budget. The increase in the budget is due to increases in salaries. She went on to explain that the Trustees hired a new library director, Michelle Baker.

Chairman Burrill asked about the cleaning line item. Mrs. Meserve stated that the library is being cleaned under the same arrangement as the Town Hall. Secretary Morin stated that the ARPA funds are being used to clean both buildings. Selectman Connolly asked if the line item should be increased in case ARPA funds are not available. AEMD McCarthy stated that the funds are to be used for bio cleaning and not general cleaning. The funds should only be used for disinfecting when needed.

Selectman Connolly asked that if the funds could be used for the library as they have children in there. AEMD McCarthy stated that a fogger could be used a couple of times a week and would be covered by ARPA.

Selectman Marchand asked if the ultraviolet robotic lights could be used. AEMD McCarthy stated that the committee is researching these options.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Gale Library Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

b. Building Department

Building Inspector Robert Donovan addressed the Board via Zoom and stated that the proposed budget is level funded.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Building Department Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

c. Elections, Registrations and Vital Statistics

Town Clerk MaryJo McCullough addressed the Board via Zoom stated that the salaries and training line items were increased. Other line items were decreased.

Chairman Burrill asked how many elections will be held next year. Ms. McCullough stated 1 but in 2024 there will be 4.

Selectman Melvin asked why the postage line item was decreased. She answered that she hasn't used as much postage as she thought.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Elections, Registrations, and Vital Statistics Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

d. Tax Collector

Tax Collector MaryJo McCullough reviewed the proposed budget. Salaries and training line items were increased.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Tax Collector Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

e. Health Officer

Chairman Burrill stated that the \$200.00 proposed budget is for office supplies. The health officer is paid from fees that are collected.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Health Officer Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

f. Other General Government – legal, street lighting, West Nile, and pest control

TA Andrews reviewed the budget. The legal budget was level funded. The street lighting was increased due to electric rates going up. The pest control was lowered slightly.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Other General Government Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town Operating Budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

G. Joint Loss Management Committee – Programs and Policy manual updated

Secretary Morin stated that the only change was the addition of the last page that included DOL links to websites.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept the updated Joint Loss Management Committee Programs and Policy manual as presented. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

H. Review—Information Resource Policy

Chairman Burrill explained that the new policy language was recommended by Primex.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as written the Information Technology Resource Policy as proposed. Seconded by Selectman Melvin for discussion.

Secretary Morin asked if the Board would want to consider adding to the motion that all applicable employees read and sign the new policy.

Chairman Burrill stated that most companies on an annual basis have employees review and acknowledge companywide policies. He suggested that a policy acknowledgement form be sent to the department heads. The Board agreed.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

III. Other Business

A. CIP

Mrs. McCarthy asked if there is an update on the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). TA Andrews stated that he is working with the departments to ensure that their capital needs are in the plan. The CIP is still a work in progress.

B. Ramp to back meeting room

Secretary Morin asked the Board to consider making a motion to allow the staff to move forward with having the ramp repaired before winter sets in. She explained that TA Andrews, Facilities Maintenance Technician (FMT) Botsch and herself have reached out to several companies. They have had contactors on sight but did not receive a quote. They were finally able to get 2 quotes. They are recommending the Board make a motion setting the amount not to exceed \$25,000.00 and for the funds to come from the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund.

Chairman Burrill moved to direct the Town Administrator and Board Secretary to contract a company to repair the handicap ramp at the Town Hall, not to exceed \$25,000.00. Funds to come from the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Connolly will ask some of the contractors he knows to provide a quote.

C. Veterans Day

Secretary Morin asked if the Board will be sending a representative to Sargent Woods Veterans Day Ceremony.

Chairman Burrill stated that there will be a ceremony held at the Fire/Rescue Station as well.

Selectman Melvin and Marchand will attend the town sponsored event. Chairman Burrill and Selectman Connolly will attend the Sargent Woods event.

D. Manifest

Selectman Melvin moved to sign vendor manifest dated October 18, 2022, in the amount of \$65,057.22 which includes ARPA costs of \$890.64 to New England Trauma Services for disinfecting the Fire/Rescue station post-primary election. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Melvin moved to sign Highway Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated October 18, 2022, in the amount of \$40,562.83. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Melvin moved to sign Police Special Details Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated October 18, 2022, in the amount of \$2,219.78. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Melvin moved to sign Inspector Fee Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated October 18, 2022, in the amount of \$253.29. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Melvin moved to sign payroll manifest for pay period September 25 – October 8, 2022, with a pay date of October 13, 2022. Total payroll is \$54,623.10 which includes \$806.64 ARPA administrative costs. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

E. Requisitions

Selectman Melvin moved to sign requisition #1051FD in the amount of \$321.70 for carbon monoxide and smoke detectors to be given out to residents in an emergency. The funds to come from the Uniformed Fire Watch Details Revolving Fund. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

F. Appointments

Selectman Melvin moved to appoint Rob Hallock as a member of the Conservation Commission. Term to expire on April 30, 2025. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

G. Letter

Selectman Marchand moved to sign a letter to all financial institutions, where the town has accounts with, that the town has institute a financial policy and procedure as recommended by the draft audit findings. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Selectman Melvin moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated October 4, 2022, as written. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

V. Announcements

Chairman Burrill announced that there will be a candidate's night for NH State Representatives. The event will be Wednesday, October 19, 2022, beginning at 7:00pm in the Town Hall.

Chairman Burrill announced that the Recreation Commission will be hosting a Trunk or Treat on Saturday, October 22, 2022, from 4:30pm – 6:30pm at the Memorial School.

Chairman Burrill announced that the State elections will be held on November 8, 2022, from 8:00am – 8:00pm at 8 Merrimac Road.

Selectman Marchand announced that Halloween will be October 31 from 5-8pm.

Selectman Melvin moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 8-3-11-43. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote. *(Note: this was approved at the October 4, 2022, BOS meeting.)*

Chairman Burrill stated that the Board and staff worked on weeding out records that do not need to be retained on Friday and Saturday.

Mrs. McCarthy asked if the Conservation Commission could add their records for destruction to the Selectmen's pile? The Board agreed.

VI. Adjourn

Selectman Marchand moved to adjourn at 8:39pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary