



**Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DATE: Tuesday , May 16, 2023

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>

1. Call to Order

Chairman Marchand called the meeting to order at 6:05pm. In attendance were Selectmen, Robert Marchand Jr., Chairman, Michael Connolly Vice-Chairman, Matthew Burrill, Daniel Guide, Joseph Simone, James O'Mara, Interim Town Administrator (ITA), and Selectmen's Executive Assistant, Robyn Sparks (EA) . The Public Meeting was taped. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Executive Assistant Sparks.

There were no agenda items for the non-public session.

2. Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Board of Appointments

3.1 Recreation Commission

ITA, James O'Mara stated there was one applicant, Christine Kuzmitski for the open vacancy for the Recreation Commission.

Selectman Burrill moved to re- appoint Christine Kuzmitski to the Recreation Commission for a 3-year term to expire in April 2026. Seconded by Selectman Connolly. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

4. Citizens Forum

No comment.

5. Administration

5.1 ARPA/EOC Update

Trisha McCarthy, Emergency Management Director (EMD) provided an ARPA and EOC update. EMD McCarthy stated a workgroup has been established who will follow the US Treasury guidelines for relief spending. These funds can be used for a wide variety of instances such as public health emergencies or any negative economic impacts in the community. It can also be used for recreation, anything technology and infrastructure related.

The workgroup met on May 15,2023, and included, EMD McCarthy, Selectman Simone, Chief Jewett, Chief Alcainho, Jack Kozak, ITA O'Mara and guest Chairman Marchand. EMD stated that during the meeting ideas continued to be discussed on spending the relief funds. She explained the process as such, the workgroup is responsible for researching and developing the ideas.

At which point those ideas will be presented to the Selectboard and community for comment. EMD McCarthy then stated the Selectboard will have the final decision on suggested projects.

EMD McCarthy stated that town buildings such as Town Hall and the Butler Building need technology upgrades as well as regular building maintenance.

EMD wanted to remind everyone that the Town of Newton is in a local emergency, any funds or grant that could improve local services or equipment is critical.

Selectman Burrill asked if it's possible to move forward with the paving at the park, furthermore, could ARPA funds be used to pay for the process, including Engineering?

EMD concurred and said the Road Agent, has input regarding this plan that could be helpful.

ITA O'Mara suggested the possibly of using a paving company already conducting work in Newton. Further stating the issues regarding light installation and timber removal will require attention for this project.

Diane Morin of Juniper Lane, suggested that funds used from ARPA could require an RFP. She stated the Town Administrator and Engineer could work together on an RFP. Together they could develop the entire project and complete it in stages.

Selectman Guide asked if the alarm system could be fixed in Town Hall and paid with ARPA funds.

Chief Jewett stated that the panic buttons at Town Hall are antiquated rather than broken. He will review the contracts and possibly updating the equipment.

5.2 Trustee of the Trust Funds

ITA O'Mara stated that Trustee of the Trust Funds posting will remain on the town's website for another week due to its late posting. A candidate will be presented at the next meeting.

5.3 Police Hires

Chief Jewett stated that he has employment vacancies for a full time and 3 part time officers. He asked to fill the full time position and allow the hiring of 3 part-time officers. Chief Jewett asked the Selectboard to allow him to streamline the interview process by approving the candidates based off his recommendation. Further stating, it would still include the physical, psychological, and background check.

Chief Jewett stated that the interviewing process needs to be streamlined because there is only one existing part-time Police Academy, as they are becoming non-existent.

Selectman Connolly asked for clarification on funding the Police Academy for the potential candidate.

Chief Jewett stated that employment time after the academy is typically 3 years per signed agreement.

Selectman Simone motioned to approve the streamlining process for the hiring of a full time Officer and 3 part-time officers. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

5.4 Police Cruiser Purchase

Chief Jewett stated he understands his department is operating in a default budget; however, the police vehicles are still breaking down. Chief Jewett has the opportunity to purchase a Ford Utility 2020 hybrid. Chief Jewett stated this purchase presents cost saving benefits such as gas and oil maintenance.

Chief Jewett stated that there has been money put in the Police Revolving Fund for the purchase for approximately the past 4 years.

Chief Jewett stated the balance on the account is \$95,181.00. The total estimated cost for the new car purchase would be \$63,051.00.

Selectman Burrill stated that although still in a financial crisis, the account was established for this very reason, vehicle maintenance can be more of a drain on a default budget than a new purchase. Then thanking the voters for putting \$25,00.00 into this account.

ITA O'Mara provided clarification that the Trustees of the Trust Fund would need a copy of the invoice along with a letter stating the withdrawal. The Trustees are the managers, but the Selectboard is the agents to expend.

Selectman Guide motioned to approve the town to purchase a police cruiser working with the Town Administrator not to exceed \$65,000.00, funds to come from the Police Cruiser and Equipment Fund. Seconded by Selectman Burrill. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Chief Jewett stated that one of his Police Officers has reached ten years of employment with Newton. He then referred to the pay matrix stating he would receive an additional dollar, with the Selectboard approval.

Selectman Guide, asked for clarification on the process and questioned why this was an agenda item, if it's part of the pay matrix.

Selectman Burrill stated not all pay increases should be automatic.

**Selectman Guide motioned to approve the increase in payrate suggested by Chief Jewett .
Seconded by Selectman Burrill . 5-0 with a unanimous vote.**

6. Staff Reports

6.1 Police Department

Chief Jewett stated that the Officer Manager Katrina Russo has completed her 12 week -certification with the CALEA program. Together they have now entered the self-assessment phase, which includes assessing policies, buildings, and Officers. This should be completed in approximately 60 days.

Once the assessment is completed, he will address the areas that need policy enforcement.

Chief Jewett stated that he previously received a grant for body cameras, however, it is not enough to complete the process, so he is pursuing other ways to find the funds.

Chief Jewett stated that his department has 5 sexual assault cases, 3 theft cases which includes embezzlement charges, and several property damages cases. The department continues to address speeding and other driving infractions throughout town.

Chief Jewett acknowledged operating in a default budget, and is trying to save money in electric invoices , and car maintenance. He has also agreed to host police training, which allows free participation in the program being hosted.

Chief Jewett closed by stating he is trying to save money and cut costs in the areas possible.

EMD McCarthy-Conservation

Conservation Secretary McCarthy stated that the removal of graffiti in town has been and will continue to be addressed if the issue persists. Conservation Secretary McCarthy stated there should not be unauthorized vehicles on the peanut trail, which seems to be an ongoing issue. Signage is being made and will be posted on the trail.

7. Approvals

7.1 Resignation of Finance Specialist

ITA O'Mara stated the Bookkeeper has given her notice but has agreed to stay on until June1, 2023.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the resignation of Finance Specialist Melinda Stanley with thanks and gratitude. Seconded by Selectman Guide . 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.2 Renewal of Lease

Selectman Burrill stated that under the State statute, the town cannot sign a lease longer than 1 year. He added that the rental funds are available to re-invent and maintain the building.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign a one year lease with Civil Construction Management, Inc in the amount of \$10,200.00 to be paid for the term of the lease for 8B Merrimac Rd. Seconded by Selectman Simone. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.3 Requisitions

Selectman Simone moved to sign requisition ARPA 2023-007 in the amount of \$1,500.00 for the balance on the rescue boat , provided by North Atlantic Inflatables. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign requisition ARPA 2023-008 in the amount of \$875.09 for the installation of lettering on the rescue boat. Funds to come from ARPA. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.4 Letters to the Trustees of Trust Funds

Selectman Simone moved to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$10,200.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into the Engineering & Renovation Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$50,000.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$25,000.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into the Police Cruisers and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$50,000.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into the Fire Apparatus and Equipment / Refurbishment Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone Move to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$25,000.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into a new account to be known as Town Cisterns and Fire Ponds Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign the letter to the Trustees of Trust Funds instructing them to deposit \$5,130.00 per Town meeting vote on March 14, 2023, into the Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.5 Tax Bill Warrant

Selectman Simone moved to sign the tax bill warrant for the first half of the tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.6 Letter to the Bank-Timber Bond

Selectman Simone moved to sign a letter to North Shore Bank instructing them to close out timber bond for Fred Leclair & Sons. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.7 Manifests

Selectman Simone moved to sign vendor manifest dated May 4, 2023, in the amount of \$853,370.91 of which \$755,032.00 goes towards June 2023 Sanborn Regional School District payment and \$81.25 goes towards ARPA. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign Cable Revolving Fund dated May 4, 2023, in the amount of \$6,402.02. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign payroll manifest for pay period April 23 – May 6, 2023, with a pay date of May 11, 2023. Total payroll is \$73,187.39 which includes \$733.79 in ARPA administrative costs. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

7.8 Minutes.

Selectman Simone moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated May 2, 2023, as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

8. New /Old Business

8.1 Selectman Goals/ Objectives

Selectman Simone stated he wanted to address Goals/Objectives during tonight's meeting. He acknowledged this ideology was adopted in 2022-2023 by the Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Burrill stated he would edit the current Ethics Statement with written input from members of the current Board of Selectmen.

Selectman Simone stated that culture and change is highly important to running town departments seamlessly. He further stated he wants to focus on the growth of the town and its success.

Selectman Simone would like to address the maintenance of town buildings and property, working within the budgetary constraints.

Selectman Simone read a list of goals from last year, acknowledging he would like to address public interactions by holding forums.

9. Adjournment

Chairman Marchand moved to adjourn at 7:42 PM. Seconded by Vice Chairman Connolly.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Sparks

Robyn Sparks
Executive Administrative Assistant