



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

DATE: Wednesday November 15, 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 6:03 PM. Selectmen in attendance were Chairman Robert Marchand Jr., Matthew Burrill, Daniel Guide, and Joseph Simone. Also in attendance were Interim Town Administrator (ITA) James O'Mara, and Selectmen's Executive Assistant (EA) Robyn Sparks. The non-public meeting was scheduled for after the public session and the minutes were typed and transcribed by ITA James O'Mara. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by EA Sparks.

Vice Chairman Connolly was not present and was excused from this meeting.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

3. Citizen's Input

No discussion.

4. Administration

4.1 Announcements

Lease of Town Land-Cellular Tower

ITA O'Mara stated that at the last meeting the lease of town land to a cellular tower would be discussed in a non-public session. However, any lease longer than 1 year will have to go on a town warrant. ITA O'Mara recommends securing a 10-20 year term lease on a warrant and then moving forward with the project.

4.2 Highway Block Grant Funds

ITA O'Mara stated that the New Hampshire DOT sent notice that a payment of \$29,524.00 was sent to Newton's Highway Department. These are appropriated by 2024 funds. Diane Morin stated that the money was received because the DOT operates on a fiscal year.

5. Staff Reports

Please check subsequent minutes for approval of and/or amendments to these minutes

5.1 Budget Presentations 2024

- **Cable Committee**

Diane Morin stated that she has revised the cable budget, yet it is still level funded. She has included merit raises and redistributed funds based on hours worked by staff.

- **Recreation**

Pat Masterson Secretary for Recreation stated the department should meet the 2023 budget. However, the 2024 budget request will be increased by \$26,120.00, which would include two warrant articles. First one being for four Lifeguard positions 30 hours a week at \$17.00 hourly. The second being senior activities totaling \$5,000.00. Total budget request is \$49,600.00, which includes the increases in postage and salary lines.

ITA O'Mara wanted to clarify that Recreation wants to eliminate the two warrant articles and incorporate them in the operating budget.

- **Planning Board, ZBA, Trustee of the Trust Funds**

James Doggett, Administrative Assistant (AA) for the Planning Board, is requesting a budget increase of \$3,910.00, bringing the departmental budget to \$52,660.00. The salary line has increased to reflect the work that would be done and costs to maintain the current employee. The legal line decreased a \$1,000.00.

Chairman Marchand stated that there were still some variables the Planning Board wanted to review in the budget which would change the overall figures.

Selectman Guide notice an error in the legal line, which is the result of an error in the excel formula. The correct amount in the legal line should be \$4,000.00.

AA Doggett stated the increase in the salary is reflected in the work that is conducted and equivalent to the surrounding area.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Planning Board's draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Cable Committee draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Recreation's Commission draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **ZBA**

Jim Doggett presented the ZBA 2024 budget with an increase of \$2,489.00. The increase is reflected primarily in the salary line. He also stated that training has increased, with New Hampshire Municipal Association only providing in person classes.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the ZBA's draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **Trustee of the Trust Funds**

AA Doggett stated that a \$300.00 line for training was added to the 2024 budget. The Trustees need training using the portal. The travel line includes transportation costs for training.

Selectman Simone stated that the travel line would be short if 2 or 3 Trustees were to attend training. Chairman Marchand stated the budget needs to reflect the actual costs, which should be based off the IRS rate of 65.5. AA Doggett stated he would re-do those figures.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Trustee of the Trust Funds draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Simone . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **Fire & Rescue**

Chief Alcaindinho stated that his budget needs an increase over several lines and the current budget presented would also have further increases. There is also an increase in work volume. Vehicle Repairs would be increased by \$10,000.00 totaling \$40,000.00, along with vehicle maintenance to be increased by \$8,000.00 totaling \$20,000.00. The Chief is requesting the salary line be increased to stay competitive . Newton's Fire Department is losing employees to neighboring towns for increased pay and hours.

Chief Alcaindinho voiced his concern about staffing the fire station 24/7 after the EMS contract ends. He requested to increase the salary line by \$65,000.00. Selectboard asked that the requests be made and submitted in the budget.

- **Forest Fire**

Chief Alcaindinho stated he will level fund the budget.

- **Gale Library**

Kathy Meserve, Gale Library Trustee, is requesting that the salary line increase, and a contracted bookkeeper position be added. Kathy is the current bookkeeper who would like to transition out of the position. These are the two main variances that cause the budget to increase.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Gale Library draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Simone . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **Building Department**

Sam Zannini presented the proposed budget for 2024 Building Department. He is requesting an increase of \$90.00 in postage. In addition to the salary line for the permit clerk. The position was recently filled at a higher rate with more hours. He is also requesting travel be increased based on mileage for training.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Building Department draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Simone . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **Conservation Commission**

Trisha McCarthy Secretary presented the proposed 2024 budget and acknowledged that there was a payroll posting error submitted at the beginning of the year. However, She stated it will not cause the line to go into deficit. Secretary McCarthy is requesting a line item for fuel and equipment repairs of \$100.00 each. In addition, there have been decreases and increases in line items, the overall budget has been reduced by \$50.00.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Conservation Commission draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Simone . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

- **Transfer Station**

Peter Gagnon, Transfer Station Manager stated he revised the 2024 budget, which now reflects an increase in the Compactor and Box rental. Disposal is also increased based on the growth of the town. Mr. Gagnon increased the repair for tools and equipment purchases based on the need of the transfer station. He also stated that funds required for Household Hazardous Waste Day has been added to the proposed budget along with disposal of oil. The wage increase for employees have increased the salary line.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the Transfer Station draft proposed budget for inclusion in the overall default budget as written. Seconded by Selectman Simone . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Marchand announced that the tax rate is not yet set, and the bills have not been sent out. A message was sent out on the town website, residents that subscribe will receive updates and notices.

6. Approvals

6.1 Requisition 1072FD

Selectman Simone moved to approve Requisition # 1072FD to Beltronics , in the amount of \$12,136.06 to replace a non-serviceable mobile and portable from account # 4220303. Seconded by Selectman Guide . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

6.2 Manifests

Selectman Simone moved to approve Vendor Manifest in the amount of \$1,490.00 with a pay date of November 14, 2023. Payment is to KV Partners for engineering services at Greenie Park. Seconded by Selectman Guide . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

Motion was amended:

Selectman Simone moved to approve Vendor Manifest in the amount of \$1,490.00 with a pay date of November 14, 2023. Payment is to KV Partners for engineering services at Greenie Park funds to come from ARPA. Seconded by Selectman Guide . 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

7. Action Items New/ Old Business

7.1 275th Anniversary Celebration-Update

Selectman Simone stated that although great progress has been made toward planning the 275th town anniversary, more volunteers could be used. He will provide another update in upcoming months.

Chairman Marchand stated that the locked gates at Greenie Park field have been a discussion amongst residents. Selectman Burrill requested this issue be managed by the Recreation Commission, because they are in charge of the park. These gates have been locked to prevent lawn damage by vehicles.

Selectman Burrill announced that the Secretary of State issued the date of January 23rd as being the primary election day from 8AM-8PM. Three Selectman will be needed for the event.

Selectman Burrill moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) -hiring of a public employee. Seconded by Selectman Simone. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Marchand declared the meeting adjourned at 7:37pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Sparks

Robyn Sparks
Executive Administrative Assistant