

# 2020 Newton Voters Guide

## Article 1

*To elect all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year.*

This article is for the election of Town Officers as described. Instructions are included on the ballot.

## Article 2

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment No. 1** in the Town of Newton to amend the Newton Zoning Ordinance as follows?

### **Expiration of variances and special exceptions granted prior to 2013.**

In Section X add the following:

**13. As authorized by State of NH RSA 674:33 I-a, Variances granted on or after August 19, 2013 shall be valid only if exercised within two (2) years from the date of final approval. Variances granted before August 19, 2013 shall be valid only if exercised within two (2) years from March 11, 2021.**

**14. As authorized by State of NH RSA 674:33 IV, Special Exceptions granted on or after August 19, 2013 shall be valid only if exercised within two (2) years from the date of final approval. Special Exceptions granted before August 19, 2013 shall be valid only if exercised within two (2) years from March 11, 2021.**

#### **A YES vote would mean...**

A yes vote aligns Newton's Zoning with the new State Statutes.

#### **A NO vote would mean...**

A no vote ignores the new State Statutes, but failure to adopt does not extend the validity of the approvals.

## Article 3

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment No. 2** as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Newton Zoning Ordinance as follows?

### **Rezoning Old Fire Station from Residential to Commercial.**

In Appendix D – Commercial Zone – Parcel List, add the following:

South Main Street: **Map 12 Block 1 Lot 11**

#### **A YES vote would mean...**

Rezoning the old fire station to Commercial would make it more appealing to potential buyers. Rezoning allows the potential buyer to build a residential home or business within the zoning ordinances.

#### **A NO vote would mean...**

The property can only be used to build a residential home unless a variance is applied and granted. This will limit the list of potential buyers.

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## Article 4

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment No. 3** as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Newton Zoning Ordinance as follows?

**Amend general zoning provisions to automatically use most current building codes and fire codes.**

In Section X add the following:

### 12. Building Safety

- a. The State Building Codes are RSA 155A (International Building Code) and **current** Saf-C 6000 (State Fire Code). These codes are the statewide minimum requirements, which shall serve as the building code for the Town of Newton.
- b. All new construction for residential or commercial use, shall be equipped by the owner with approved smoke detectors / carbon monoxide detectors as per **current** National Fire Protection Assoc. (NFPA) 72 101; RSA 153:10-a VI; Saf-C 6000 and shall be inspected and approved by the Newton Fire Chief or his/her designee.

#### **A YES vote would mean...**

Every time the Statutes change this section will automatically point to the new building code.

#### **A NO vote would mean...**

Every time the State adopts a new building code Newton must adopt it as a warrant article.

## Article 5

On a petition of 25 or more legal voters, are you in favor of adopting the changes to the Town of Newton Zoning Ordinances as follow:

### **Petitioned Proposal – Reduction of setbacks on Light Industrial / Commercial Properties**

In Section XXV.1 Location on Lot: delete the following:

- a. Side yard 200-foot structural setback with a minimum 50-foot undisturbed natural buffer when any other zone. Any additional buffer that may be required by the Planning Board up to but not exceeding 1,500 feet for a side yard that abuts any other zone.
- b. Rear yard 200-foot structural setback with a minimum 50-foot undisturbed natural buffer when abutting any other zone. Any additional buffer that may be required by the Planning Board up to but not exceeding 1,500 feet for a rear yard that abuts any other zone, plus adequate provision for off-street parking as determined by the Planning Board.
- c. No building shall be set within 75-feet of the centerline of the street nor within 50 feet of any lot line within the Light Industrial / Commercial Zone.

**And replace with the following:**

1. **Side yard 50-foot setback with a minimum 25-foot undisturbed natural buffer when abutting any other zone.**

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2. **Rear and front yard 50-foot setback with a minimum 25-foot undisturbed natural buffer when abutting any other zone.**
3. **No building shall be set within 50 feet of the centerline**

## **A YES vote would mean...**

Light Industrial/Commercial properties may be clear-cut to within 25 feet of the property line and a building may be built as close as 50 feet to the property line.

## **A NO vote would mean...**

The zoning will remain as it has since it was adopted in 1989, with a 50-foot undisturbed buffer where that property abuts property of a different Zone and no building within 200 feet.

For comparison purposes below are links to nearby Towns that have setbacks for industrial/commercial zones.

[Kingston, NH](#) (There are several different areas and not one matches Newton exactly, but Article 107 seems to be the best fit.)

[https://www.kingstonnh.org/sites/kingstonnh/files/uploads/107\\_0.pdf](https://www.kingstonnh.org/sites/kingstonnh/files/uploads/107_0.pdf)

[Plaistow, NH](#) (The table on page 44 list site requirements.)

[https://www.plaistow.com/sites/plaistownh/files/uploads/2019\\_zoningordinance\\_final.pdf](https://www.plaistow.com/sites/plaistownh/files/uploads/2019_zoningordinance_final.pdf)

[East Kingston, NH](#) (The commercial zoning ordinance starts on page 15.)

<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/57292575f8baf3fcc46d3501/t/5935db22beba7b7d2649cd8f/1496701756394/2017+Zoning+Ordinance.pdf>

[Kensington, NH](#) (Site requirements begin on page 9.)

[https://www.town.kensington.nh.us/sites/kensingtonnh/files/uploads/2019\\_kens\\_zoning\\_ordinances.pdf](https://www.town.kensington.nh.us/sites/kensingtonnh/files/uploads/2019_kens_zoning_ordinances.pdf)

## **Article 6**

*“Shall the Town of Newton raise and appropriate as an Operating Budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$3,604,090.00. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$3,516,932.00, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newton or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.”*

*The estimated budget increase from the 2019 ACTUAL budget to the 2020 PROPOSED budget represents a tax impact increase of \$0.51 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value.*

*Default Budget would result in an estimated \$0.34 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value.*

This article sets the total Town Operating Budget for FY 2020 to be raised by taxes.

## **A YES vote would mean...**

\$3,604,090.00 will be raised to fund the operating costs of the Town.

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## **A NO vote would mean...**

\$3,516,932.00 will be raised to fund the operating costs of the Town.

## **Article 7**

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,200.00 to be deposited into the Engineering & Renovation Capital Reserve Fund created in 2015; said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. This represents the Rental Fees received.*

Since 2015, each year with voter approval, the rental income from the tenant at 8 Merrimac Rd has been deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund which can only be spent on Engineering and/or Renovation of the land and buildings at the same address. This amount was approved last year.

## **A YES vote would mean...**

Rental income from 8 Merrimac Road will be deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund. These funds could then be directed by a vote of the Board of Selectmen to be used for Engineering and Renovation of the land and buildings belonging to the Town at 8 Merrimac Road

## **A NO vote would mean...**

Rental income from 8 Merrimac Road will remain in the Unassigned Fund Balance.

## **Article 8**

*To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,300.00 to increase the Town Treasurer Salary from \$6,200.00 to \$7,500.00 due to the increase of accounts, hours of work and additional responsibilities. (Last increase was 1996)*

## **A YES vote would mean...**

The Treasurer is paid a stipend and would be increased by \$1,300.00 a year. There are more accounts and processes that require additional hours of labor.

## **A NO vote would mean...**

The stipend does not change.

## **Article 9**

*Shall the Town modify and expand the purpose of the Cable Access Revolving Fund to allow for funding of the Town's Information Technology? 100% of the amount of revenues received as stated in the cable contract for cable access, including Franchise Fees, or as determined by the legislative body, will be deposited in the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year and shall not be considered part of the Town's unassigned fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created. This revolving fund was established in (2013) to provide Cable Access for public, educational or governmental use.*

## **A YES vote would mean...**

# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

The fund would be used to offset the cost of the Town's Information Technology needs. The balance as of December 31, 2019 is \$193,504.83. The Cable Committee sponsored the article and believes it is in the best interest of the Town to expand the use of the funds.

## **A NO vote would mean...**

The fund would only be used for operating the PEG channel (Comcast channel 20). The money needed for the Town's IT would then come from the Operating budget.

## **Article 10**

*To see if the Town will vote to modify the Elderly Exemption from property tax in the Town of Newton, based on the assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for the person 65 years of age up to 74 years of age \$100,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 79 years of age \$110,000; for a person 80 years of age or older \$125,000. To qualify, the applicant must have resided in this state for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such a person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$35,000 if single, or, if married, a combined net income of no greater than \$45,000, and own net assets not in excess of \$85,000 excluding the value of the person's residence.*

## **A YES vote would mean...**

Any qualified elderly resident would have their property taxes reduced per the article. This assistance helps the elderly remain in their home. This article is to increase the amount of assessed value so more elderly might qualify.

## **A NO vote would mean...**

The exemptions rates would remain the same.

\$85,000 VALUATION REDUCTION (65-74 YEARS OF AGE)

\$95,000 VALUATION REDUCTION (75-79 YEARS OF AGE)

\$110,000 VALUATION REDUCTION (80 OR MORE YEARS OF AGE)

## **Article 11**

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Town Administrator, the sum of \$34,400.00 for Tax Map Conversion, Updating and Recompile Services. This sum is to come from the unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the Map Conversion is completed or by December 31, 2025*

## **A YES vote would mean...**

The current vendor has informed the Town that they will no longer provide paper tax maps. It is a State law that the Town provide tax maps. In order to compile with State law, the Town needs to have the tax maps digitized. The money to do this will come from the unassigned fund balance and will not come from property taxes.

## **A NO vote would mean...**

The Town would be in violation of State law. The tax maps would not be available to residents.

## **Article 12**

*To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen and the Transfer Station Manager, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000.00 to be paid toward the 2020 SOLID*

# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

*WASTE DISPOSAL BUDGET as an offset to the recycling and disposal costs, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund created in 2003 for this purpose.*

**A YES vote would mean...**

The Town can withdraw \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund to off-set the 2020 Solid Waste Disposal budget. Currently there is \$212,057.11 in the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund.

**A NO vote would mean...**

The Town would not withdraw \$60,000 from the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund and the \$60,000 would be raised by taxes. Currently there is \$212,057.11 in the Transfer Station/Recycling Special Revenue Fund. These funds could be used in the future for things such as: Hazardous Waste Day or other specific purposes, if approved by voters at Town Meeting.

## Article 13

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,327.00 for the following **Community Services**.*

AREA HOMECARE & FAMILY SERVICES	\$ 3,800.00
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER	2,000.00
DRUGS ARE DANGEROUS	2,500.00
HAVEN	3,050.00
LAMPREY HEALTH CARE	1,600.00
NHSPCA	750.00
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION	5,000.00
ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION MEALS ON WHEELS	2,927.00
VIC GEARY CENTER	2,700.00
WAYPOINT (f/k/a CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES)	<u>2,000.00</u>
	\$26,327.00

The Town votes to pay for certain community services. The list of service providers in the article represent services used/offered to town residents and are used by the Newton Police Department, the Newton Fire Department, and the Newton Welfare Department.

**A YES vote would mean...**

That the Community Services listed would be funded as summarized in Article 13 and they will work with the residents and offset the costs to the Town. Since these services were approved by the voters last year, there would be no additional increase to taxes.

**A NO vote would mean...**

This type of assistance required by Newton residents in need would come directly out of the Operating Budget.

## Article 14

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission the sum of \$4,500.00 for Recreational Programs and Trips for Newton Senior Citizens.*

# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

The Newton Recreation Commission is requesting \$4,500 to plan/offer special programs and trips for Newton resident senior citizens.

**A YES vote would mean...**

There would be \$4,500.00 to support programs and trips specifically for Newton Seniors. These events would be planned and organized by the Newton Recreation Commission.

**A NO vote would mean...**

There would not be \$4,500.00 to support programs and trips specifically for Newton Seniors. No means No.

## Article 15

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission the sum of \$15,750.00 to hire three Part-Time Lifeguards, one Part-Time Supervisor of Lifeguards, and to purchase the necessary Safety Equipment, to oversee the safety of all swimmers at the Town Beach between May 2020 and September 2020.*

**A YES vote would mean...**

The Town would recruit, train and hire lifeguards and a supervisor to oversee the safety of swimmers at the Town Beach during peak hours of the summer months. In 2019, the Town, as approved by the voters, hired 3 Part-Time lifeguards from July-September. Last year was the first time in quite a while that we had lifeguards at the beach. The position of supervisor was added during last year's program to manage the program.

**A NO vote would mean...**

The Town would not hire lifeguards or supervisor for the Town Beach.

## Article 16

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen the sum of \$1.00 for a Sign at the Street Entrance of the Safety Complex located at 8 Merrimac Road.*

Per a request from a resident, the Board of Selectmen placed this on the warrant.

**A YES vote would mean...**

A new sign would replace both smaller signs at the Safety Complex.

**A NO vote would mean...**

The signage would remain as is.

## Article 17

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen the sum of \$50,000.00 to be deposited into the Engineering & Renovation of the Land and Buildings located at 8 Merrimac Road, Capital Reserve Fund, created in 2015.*

**A YES vote would mean...**

The funds would go into the fund. As of December 31, 2019, the account balance was \$40,991.36.

**A NO vote would mean...**

# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

The funds will not go into the fund.

## Article 18

*To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a ten year lease/purchase agreement to purchase a fully equipped E-ONE Fire Apparatus for the Fire Department at a cost of \$649,000.00, payable over a term of 10 years at a rate of \$76,744.14 annually, and to raise and appropriate \$76,744.14 for the first year's payment. The full cost of the vehicle is \$669,000.00; the amount of the lease reflects the trade-in value of the vehicles being replaced. This agreement does contain an escape clause. (Majority vote required.)*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The Town has 3 fire apparatus vehicles that are over 20 years old. The cost to maintain these vehicles increases each year because the cost of parts. Some of the parts need to be custom made due to the age of the apparatus. By purchasing a new vehicle, 2 of the older ones would be traded in to offset the cost. The new vehicle would take the place of the 2 trade-ins.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

The Town keeps the old vehicles and maintains them.

## Article 19

*If article 18 fails, to see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Fire Chief, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000.00 to be placed in the existing Capital Reserve Fund known as the "Fire Apparatus and Equipment / Refurbishment Fund" voted in 2011.*

*If warrant article 18 passes, this article is null and void.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

Instead of purchasing a new vehicle in Article 18, the Town would build up the Capital Reserve Fund by adding \$50,000.00 to it. As of December 31, 2019, the account balance was \$52,653.29. At the current rate, \$50,000.00 per year, it would take 13 years to accumulate enough funds to purchase a new vehicle. This does not take into consideration any increase to the cost of the vehicle.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

No funds would be added to the Capital Reserve Fund.

## Article 20

*To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen and the Police Chief, to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 to be known as the "POLICE CRUISERS AND EQUIPMENT FUND" for the purpose of maintenance, repairs and purchase of cruisers and equipment; and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to be placed in this fund and to name the Board of Selectmen as Agents.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

This article creates a new Capital Reserve Fund that would be used by the Police Department for purchasing/leasing, maintenance and repairs for cruisers. Currently, these expenses come from the operating budget under the Police Department line items.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

No fund would be created.



# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

## Article 21

*To see if the Town will vote to accept the donation of a former Newton 1941 Fire Truck to be used for special events and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$750.00 for maintenance and repairs to the truck.*

Per a request from a resident, the Board of Selectmen placed this on the warrant.

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The Town would take ownership of the 1941 Fire Truck. The Town would be responsible for all maintenance, repairs and storage of the vehicle.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

The Town does not accept the donation. Therefore, the Town would not be responsible for any costs associated with the truck.

## Article 22

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, the sum of \$25,000.00 to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund called ROAD SYSTEMS IMPROVEMENTS.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The fund monies would be used to pave additional Town roads that could not be done using the Highway Block Grant funds.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

No additional paving of Town roads would be done.

## Article 23

*To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,500.00 to remove and install a new Flagpole at the Gale Library, located at 16 South Main Street.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The flagpole at the Gale Library would be replaced.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

The flagpole would not be replaced.

## Article 24

*On a petition of 25 or more legal voters, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000.00 to upgrade and replace Greenie Park Playground Equipment and add proper safety surfacing. This is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the Greenie Park Playground upgrade is completed or by December 31, 2025.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

New playground equipment at Greenie Park would be installed and the surface would be replaced with the proper materials.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

No funds would be spent to upgrade and replace the equipment or improve the surface.

# 2020 Voters Guide (continued)

## Article 25

*On a petition of 25 or more legal voters, shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,936.00 (\$1 per person) based on the population numbers provided in the 2017 Census American Community Survey, to support the substance misuse prevention, suicide prevention and community wellness services of the SoRock Coalition for Healthy Youth. SoRock's work promotes wellness and nurtures resiliency for the children, youth and families of Newton as well as surrounding communities. SoRock works through coordinating community education, programming & resources and collaborating with federal and state agencies to help direct additional resources to the towns they serve.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The Town would support SoRock so that they may continue to provide services to the Town. The organization was federally funded for the past 10 years but has aged out of the program.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

SoRock would not receive the needed funds to support the Town.

## Article 26

*On a petition of 25 or more eligible voters of the Town of Newton will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000.00 to support a LAKE HOST PROGRAM at the Newton Town BOAT RAMP for the 2020 summer season. The Lake Host Program is a collaborative effort between NH Department of Environmental Services, NH Lakes and local lake associations. It trains and employs individuals to provide courtesy boat inspections to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive plants, such as milfoil, from one lake to another thereby protecting public lake uses such as swimming, fishing and boating.*

### **A YES vote would mean...**

The program would continue to educate boaters about invasive plants and provide a free voluntary inspection of boats and trailers.

### **A NO vote would mean...**

The program would not be able to run without the funding.