



**Office of the Board of Selectmen
2 Town Hall Road, Newton, NH 03858
Tel: 382-4405 Option 5 Fax 382-9140**

www.newton-nh.gov

NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN

DATE: Tuesday , April 18, 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>

I. 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, Joseph Simone, Jim O'Mara, Interim Town Administrator (ITA), and Selectmen's Executive Assistant (EA), Robyn Sparks. 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 and therefore a session was not held on April 18, 2023.

Selectman Daniel Guide was not present at the start of the meeting. Selectman Guide joined the meeting in person at 7:02PM.

II. Scheduled Business

A. Public Comments

No public comments from the public.

B. Police Department

Police Chief Michael Jewett stated he is interested in increasing the fees per hour for the Special Police Detail Rate, from \$78.00 to \$90.00. The fee is currently defined into 3 parts , officer \$50.00, cruiser \$14.00, and administrative \$14.00. The Chief provided documentation of the rates in neighboring towns. Further stating Newton's Detail Rates are lower and wants to obtain an increase relative to the market. The Police Special Detail rates are paid by the responsible parties such as Unitil, gas, or other likewise companies. Chief Jewett stated the last rate increase was estimated to be 4 years ago.

The Police Special Detail rate increase will assist in making an overall more attractive package for the officers. The rate increase was presented as follows \$60.00 Officer, \$14.00 Cruiser, \$16.00 Administrative. For a total of \$90.00 per hour.

Selectman Burrill stated that he wants residents to understand that although the town is operating in a deficient budget, safety remains a priority.

Selectman Burrill moved to approve the increase for the Police Special Detail Rate \$60.00 Officer, \$14.00 cruiser, \$16.00 administrative. Seconded by Selectman Simone. The Vote 4-0, unanimous.

Chief Jewett stated that South Hampton Police Department is willing to sell a 2016 fully outfitted police vehicle to Newton for \$6,000. He presented documents showing the Kelly Blue Book value was above the

asking price. The Chief stated that the funds needed would be drawn from the Police Special Detail account and not at the cost of the taxpayer.

The Chief stated that several current vehicles are presenting safety issues. He would like to remove one immediately from the fleet.

Vice-Chairman Connolly asked if there would be any financial benefit from removing the problematic car? The Chief stated he would explore options once out of a default budget.

Selectman Burrill asked for the balance in the Police Special Detail account.

Executive Assistant Robyn Sparks (EA) stated roughly \$112,000.

Selectman Burrill moved to approve the purchase of 2016 Ford fully outfitted police cruiser from South Hampton PD in the amount of \$6,000.00, the funds will be drawn from the Police Special Detail fund. Seconded by Selectman Simone. 4-0, with a unanimous vote.

C. Fire Department

Fire Chief Alacaidinho stated that he wanted to address the public safety issue regarding the receptor and communications.

Diane Morin, Juniper Lane, wanted to clarify that the issue is not cellular, but the reception referring to a 2 way radio. She stated that repairing the antenna could solve the problem.

ITA O'Mara stated that once full intelligence was gathered, a decision would then be made.

Selectman Simone moved to approve the ITA to look into regionality that would be appropriate. Vice-Chairman Connolly seconded. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

D. Appointments

Chairman Marchand stated that Robert Leverone, Newton's Health Officer has submitted a verbal resignation based on health reasons.

Selectman Burrill moved to accept the verbal resignation of the current Health Officer Robert Leverone. Seconded by Vice-chairman Connolly. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

ITA O'Mara stated that a letter of intent was received for the Health Officer position from the Deputy Health Officer. However, no final decision was made because it did not include his resume. ITA O'Mara reminded the Selectboard that they only make the recommendation to the State of N.H., who in turns makes the appointment.

Selectman Burrill suggested posting the job opening on the website, ITA concurred.

Diane Morin, wanted to emphasis that the Deputy Officer is already conducting these duties and a delay, could cause issues with residents getting septic tanks.

Selectman Burrill agreed time is of the essence and the Deputy Health Officer is now the Acting Health Officer. Item will go on the next agenda.

Selectman Burrill read a letter to the Northshore Bank authorizing the Treasurer to open an account titled "Invest NH Grant Disbursement Revolving Fund."

Vice-Chairman Connolly moved to approve the letter authorizing the Treasurer to create an account at NorthShore Bank for NH Invests, titled "Invest NH Grant Disbursement Revolving Fund." Seconded by Selectman Simone. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

E. ARPA/EOC Update

Trisha McCarthy, Emergency Management Director (EMD) provided an ARPA and EOC update. She stated the security cameras are up and running, although fine tuning is needed. The generator in the transfer station is still in progress.

The ARPA committee acknowledges that communications for the Fire and Police is a life and Safety issue. Actions have been taken to correct this such as new desk sets, radios, and repeaters. EMD McCarthy acknowledged further steps must be taken to improve communications. ARPA supports the ITA in researching a long-term solution for the issue.

Earth Day is this Saturday the 22nd. Residents can bring the blue bags to the Transfer Station. The first 150 residents will receive a gift.

EMD McCarthy stated she is working with Homeland Security to compile a list of departmental spending during a 48hrs emergency period. The amount of \$23,291.26 was submitted and if it meets the threshold, it may be reimbursed.

F. Skatepark-Primex Report.

Chairman Marchand stated that Primex is the company which insures the Town properties. They recently surveyed the skatepark in Newton. Chairman Marchand read a letter submitted by Primex, who recognize the benefits of a safe skate park. However, the report stated the safety of the skate park in its current condition presents several hazards. The letter closes by asking the town to correct these issues and send notification upon completion.

Chairman Marchand stated that letter suggests closing the skate-park, until issues are addressed.

Selectman Burrill acknowledged the lack of maintenance and funding for the skate-park. He stated the balance in the Recreation account is roughly \$28,000.00 which would not cover the repairs needed.

Selectman Simone and Connolly stated that the publication of the report, now makes the town liable. Selectman Simone suggested having the structures demolished.

Mike Pivero, Road Agent (RA) stated he would inspect the skate park to see if structures could be removed without cost and causing further damage to the ground.

ITA O'Mara stated the structures were not in good condition and the cracks are a danger.

Chairman Marchand moved to allow RA Pivero to remove the skatepark. Seconded by Vice-chairman Connolly. 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

G. Proposed Restructuring Building Fees Update.

ITA stated he would like to further this discussion at the next meeting.

H. Food Pantry Donation

Selectman Burrill moved per RSA 3195 B to accept and expend unanticipated funds for the food pantry in the amount \$250.00 from the Triquet Foundation. Seconded by Selectman Simone. 4.0 with a unanimous.

III. Other Business

A. Finalized Documents for Sale

ITA stated that the Quitclaim Deed for the land locked property on Thornell needs signatures from the Selectboard.

EMD McCarthy on behalf of Conservation asked if there was information on the easement that was promised by the seller.

Selectman Burrill stated that there are four conditions which address the easements, and the Town Council has reviewed the documents and recommends proceeding.

Vice -Chairman Connolly moved to sign Quit Claim Deed for Tax map 12-1-1, located off of Thornell Road. Seconded by Selectman Simone, 4-0 with a unanimous vote.

B. Conservation Update

EMD spoke on behalf of Conservation. She stated that Conservation sent letters and conducted site walks for wetland violations, at different sites within the Town. This letter acknowledges multiple commercial vehicles and possible business were being conducted in residential areas. EMD provided copies of the letters to the Chairman, Planning Board and Building Inspector.

EMD McCarthy shared a documents showing ARPA accounts and transactions ,which detailed balances and spending.

C.

Chief Jewett asked the Selectboard what the process for obtaining payment for the approved police vehicle, which was explained as the bookkeeper will cut the check with the Treasurers signature.

D.

Selectman Simone stated that he wanted to review the fee structure at the Transfer Station. He stated the mattress disposal fee is \$50.00 but the removal fee for costs is \$80.00. He also stated that there are mattresses on the property because the storage container is full.

Chairman Marchand stated he would like the Department Head of the Transfer Station to address the Selectboard and provide and overall status of the department.

Selectman Burrill concurred and stated he would like to see the proposed budget for the Transfer Station. Lisa Goyner, Treasurer, stated that the Selectboard was treading on thin water discussing an employee's performance.

Diane Morin stated that the fees were updated in October 2022, the fee for resident is \$50.00. The fee for non-residents balances out the costs.

The Treasurer stated she worked with the former Town Administrator to create a spreadsheet of fees, that sheet would be helpful to gage current rates.

E.

Selectman Simone provided an update on the Harris Trust fund. He spoke with the bank representative, and she will further explain the process of accessing the monies.

A. Manifest

Selectman Burrill moved to sign vendor manifest dated April 10, 2023, in the amount of \$248,567.29. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign vendor manifest dated April 10, 2023, in the amount of \$74,390.45. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign Cable Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated April 10, 2023, in the amount of \$4841.68. Seconded by Selectman Guide.5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign Police Special Details Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated April 10, 2023, in the amount of \$5113.80. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign payroll manifest pay period March 26 – April 8, 2023, with a pay date of April 13, 2023, in the amount of \$71,691.71, which includes \$423.74 ARPA costs. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

B. Veterans Tax Credit

Selectman Burrill moved to sign credit for tax map 13-5-9-1 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 7-3-1 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

C. Tax Abatement

Selectman Burrill moved to sign abatement for tax map 7-2-1-24 as recommended by the Assessor. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Selectman moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated April 4, 2023, as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide. 5-0 with a unanimous vote.

Announcements

No Announcements.

V. Adjourn

Chairman Marchand moved to adjourn at 7:20pm. Seconded by Selectman Simone.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Sparks
Board of Selectmen Secretary