



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

DATE: TUESDAY, April 4, 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 6:00pm. In attendance were Selectmen, Robert Marchand Jr, Chairman, Michael Connolly Vice-Chairman, Matthew Burrill, Daniel Guide, Joseph Simone, Jim O'Mara, Interim Town Administrator, and Selectmen's Executive Assistants, Robyn Sparks, and Diane M. Morin.

The Public Meeting was taped. The non-public session minutes were typed and transcribed by Interim Town Administrator O'Mara. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Executive Assistant Sparks.

II. Scheduled Business

A. RPC Presentation-Age Friendly Community

Chairman Marchand called Scott Bogle to the floor for a slide presentation on Age Friendly Communities. Mr. Bogle stated that he is a Senior Transportation Planner with the Rockingham Planning Commission. Mr. Bogle stated that he has been working on this project for about a year and half, the program is funded by what used to be the Tufts Health Plan Foundation and is now called Point 32 Health Foundation. Funding is also provided by AARP. He stated the overall idea of the project is to help communities in the region plan for a rapidly growing senior population.

Mr. Bogle's slide show presented a framework of the overall program and listed counties in NH that also participate in the program. The slide show presented data that 1 in 5 seniors over 65 years of age does not drive and that is the greatest concern of seniors. This program would do a 1 & 2 year assessment regarding concerns of seniors. This would include information from a community survey and forum, once completed the information would be taken back to the Selectboard.

Mr. Bogle completed his presentation stating that this would be at no cost to the community.

Selectman Burrill asked for the next steps if there was interest. Mr. Bogle suggested that the town make a motion to endorse the program. He then would work with Jim Doggett to put together a local steering committee.

Selectman Guide asked for clarification, Mr. Bogle stated that he has funding just for the assessment reports, in which they would write. Further stating they would provide some technical support, but resources are limited. The Rockingham Planning Commission essentially just collects the data, and the community can use it for those purposes.

Selectman Burrill stated that he sees the value in it and Selectman Guide agreed.

Selectmen Burrill moved to endorse Newton's involvement in the age friendly community study that is being conducted by the Rockingham Planning Commission. Seconded by Selectman Guide. Chairman Marchand opened the floor for discussion. Jim Doggett stated the information from this study could be used in the CIP and possible Master.

This Motion was passed with a unanimous vote.

B. Public Comment

Chairman Marchand opened the floor to public comments. No Public comment received.

C. ARPA/EOC update

Trisha McCarthy, Emergency Management Director (EMD) provided an ARPA and EOC update. She stated the AED's are being disbursed to various places that they were taken from. ARPA approved new cases, in which were purchased. The invoice is anticipated to be less than \$1,000.00. Projects such as camera installation, rescue boat, are in progress and will need a few more weeks. The repeater was installed and is currently being tested by Police, Fire, & EOC. She stated that they are trying to confirm signal strength, which is still weak in some areas. Trisha stated she wrote another EOC Grant for \$25,077.60, the money came from the message board sign. Funds will end on May 11th, 2023. This money will be used to operate the EOC, during State, local, or Federal emergencies. EMD will be working on transferring funds with the new Bookkeeper. EMD stated that COVID has not gone away. Vaccines and boosters are available for free until May 11, 2023. Employees are needed to volunteer for NIMS, National Incident Management System. A certain percentage of staff in town needs to be certified. Otherwise, this will affect money received from a Federal Grant. Two classes are required for certification. EMD will send emails to new employees. EMD addressed Newton residents, stating that there is a program called NH Homeowner Fund Program, which aids homeowners who have been financially impacted by COVID. Qualifying residents can go online and receive assistance before May 11, 2023. Selectmen Guide asked to see a list of on-going ARPA projects. EMD complied and stated she will forward it.

D. Discussions of unused Vehicles

Chairman Marchand opened the discussion for unused town vehicles. Further stating this could affect receiving emergency vehicles in the future. There are some generators never used by a housing facility. These may be available for sale, which could be used for revenue. Selectboard would like a list of vehicle inventory from Department heads. Robyn Sparks will send an email to Departments for an inventory of vehicles and equipment.

E. Discussions of Harris Trust

a. Letter to Bank

Selectman Simone stated he is looking into getting information regarding this Trust Fund. Letter was drafted authorizing information to be released to Interim TA Jim O'Mara, Selectman Simone, and Robyn Sparks.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign a letter, authorizing correspondence from BMO Bank to be received. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

F. Department Head Monthly Meeting

Jim O'Mara, Interim Town Administrator (ITA) introduced the idea that during Selectboard meetings a Department Head will present and update the Selectboard on the current state of their department. Selectboard members agreed but wanted to make sure future presentations include metrics and substance. This would help the community understand the day to day operations in the town.

G. Discussion on Code Enforcement

ITA stated that he has received complaints regarding code enforcement. The complaints raise concerns because multiple vehicles on properties can lead to environmental issues, with chemicals and oils leaking into ground. Code enforcement has begun looking into unregistered vehicles on various properties in the Town. Furthermore, issues with home businesses. Chairman Marchand confirmed one unregistered vehicle is allowed on property. Selectman Burrill wants to confirm that the issues that being investigated are properties, visible from the street. ITA confirmed.

Chairman Marchand expressed leaching concerns, which could result in further environmental issues. These issues could lead to fines and essentially loss of property. EMD stated that Conservation had 3 site walks last week, 2 of the 3 were issues with unregistered vehicles beside or next to wetlands. Conservation has sent letters to involved properties. EMD stated Conservation is

aware of the issues. Chairman Marchand states this is a friendly reminder to the community to clean up your property.

H. Update on NH Invest

Diane Morin Board Secretary stated at the last meeting some misinformation was presented. The Town is not getting a lump sum; therefore, a Public Hearing will not be held. Another clarification involved the employment of Jennifer Rowden, who is not self-employed. She is currently working for RPC. The process for payment is as follows; Jennifer will invoice the Planning Board. James Doggett will add his time and fees to the invoice. NH invests will pay the total due. The Treasurer will issue a check to RPC for said amount.

James Doggett stated the payment process has been changed 3 times by the State. His concern is the how the hourly wage per month will be reimbursed. Mr. Doggett reminded the Board that a new revolving account will need to be opened at North Shore Bank. The Selectboard will need a letter to the bank authorizing the Treasurer to open the account. Select Board Secretary stated a proposed motion will be on for next meeting.

I. Constellation New Energy Update

Selectman Connolly stated he wanted to disclose that he works as an Energy Broker and Constellation Energy is a supplier. He has reviewed the data and the rates appear to be in align with the current market. The market has dramatically changed in the last few months due to current events. He stated that he supports signing with Constellation. ITA stated that the Public should be aware Newton along with surrounding communities are part of an aggregation. Newton is 5 months into a 3 year agreement, in which the rates have not been favorable. As a result, the aggregate has locked in at 50% for years 2 and 3, until the rates become more favorable. To sign at current rates will include an issue to be sent requiring immediate signatures.

Selectman Guide asked what the penalty for not signing? Selectman Connolly stated it was market based liquated damages.

Lisa Gonyer Treasurer, stated Municipalities cannot enter into a multi-year contract without approval of the people. Treasurer wanted the Select Board Members to be aware of the escape clause.

Selectman Burrill stated he would refer to Council who previously authorized moving forward in this manner.

Jill Longval spoke via zoom. She stated the non-appropriation clause is in the contract. If money were not to be appropriated for electricity, it would be a non-binding contract.

Selectman Burrill moved the Town enter into an agreement with Constellation NewEnergy, Inc to procure the remaining electricity supply for their current 3-year contract and to authorize the town administrator to sign on behalf of the board. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

J. Funds to Library

ITA stated a letter was received from Trustee, Kathy Meserve requesting a check to the Gale Library for \$29,925.00 for operating expenses. This amount will be in the next manifest.

K. Intent to Cut-Tax Map 9-6-18 NH Fish and Game Land

Selectman Burrill stated that he wanted to clarify that the Board is not approving. The vote is on whether to accept the notice for Intent to Cut. Chairman Marchand referenced a Timber Tax, which may not be valid because it is a State Road. Selectman Burrill moved to sign the Intent to Cut Tax Map 9-6-18. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

L. Property Tax Abatement

a. Tax Maps 99-3-1, 99-2-2, 99-2-3, 99-2

Selectman Burrill moved to sign abatement for tax map 99-3-1 in the amount of \$4.00 to Eversource Energy as recommended by the Assessor. Seconded by Selectman Connolly, with a unanimous vote. Selectman Burrill moved to sign abatement for tax map 99-2-2 in the amount of \$2.00 to Hudson Light and Power as recommended by the Assessor. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign abatement for tax map 99-2-3 in the amount of \$35.00 to Mass Municipal Wholesale as recommended by the Assessor. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign abatement for tax map 99-2-4 in the amount of \$2.00 to Taunton Municipal Lighting CO as recommended by the Assessor. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

III. Other Business

A. Manifest

Selectman Burrill moved to sign vendor manifest dated March 27, 2023, in the amount of \$811,049.92 of which, \$755,030.00 goes towards April 2023 Sanborn Regional School District Payment. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign Cable Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated March 27, 2023, in the amount of \$4,778.00. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign Uniform Fire Watch Revolving Fund vendor manifest dated March 27, 2023, in the amount of \$110.00. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign payroll manifest for pay period March 12th -25th, 2023, in with a pay date of Month 30, 2023. Total payroll is \$58,382.68 which includes \$560.57 ARPA administrative costs. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

B. Veterans Tax Credit

Selectman Burrill moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 16-5-22-1 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 8-2-15-2 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 17-3-5 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Burrill moved to sign veterans tax credit for tax map 17-2-7 beginning tax year 2023. Seconded by Selectman Simone with a unanimous vote.

C. Requisitions

Selectman Simone moved to sign requisition 1059FD in the amount of \$2,878.36 for a VHF Radio from Beltronics. Funds to come from the 2023 Fire Department Budget line item #4220312. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign requisition 1060FD in the amount of \$1,848.00 valve for Engine #2 from Firematic. Funds to come from the 2023 Fire Department Budget line item #4220303. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign requisition 1061FD in the amount \$3,605.00 for fire protection clothing from Firematic. Funds to come from the 2023 Fire Department Budget line item #4220309. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign Requisition ARPA-2023-005 for waste oil heater installation, provided by Arrow Equipment, Inc in the amount of \$2,000.00. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

EMD stated on December 19th of 2022, the waste oil heater which was purchase for \$13,500.00. was approved by the Selectboard. However, the installation fee of \$2,000.00 was not included due to a clerical error. The Selectboard agreed.

D. Appointments

Selectman Simone moved to appoint Amanda Aiello as the Deputy Treasurer with the term to expire March 31, 2024. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to sign a letter authorizing Amanda Aiello, as an authorized signer for Town held accounts at the North Shore bank. As determined by the Treasurer. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Simone moved to appoint Diane Morin and Christine Kuzmitski to the Cable Committee with the term to expire April 30, 2026. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Selectman Simone moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated March 21, 2023, as written. Seconded by Selectman Guide with a unanimous vote.

V. Announcements

ITA asked the Select Board members if the Purchasing Policy should be reviewed. Selectman Burrill agreed the policy should be reviewed.

VI. Adjourn

Selectman Simone moved to adjourn at 7:46pm. Seconded by Vice-Chairman Connolly.

VII. Non-Public Session

Selectman Burrill moved to go into non-public at 7:28pm; under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) Compensation. Seconded by Selectman Guide. Burrill – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye, Guide – aye, Simone – aye. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Chairman Marchand moved to seal non-public minutes April 4, 2023, at 7:46pm Seconded by Selectman Guide. Burrill – aye, Guide – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye, Simone - aye. Motion passed unanimously 5-0.

Move that the Board just came out of a non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (a)- and that they keep all matters discussed confidential until in the opinion of the majority of the Board the circumstances no longer apply.

Respectfully submitted,

Robyn Sparks
Executive Assistant to the Board of Selectmen