



**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, November 15, 2022
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 Burrill called the meeting to order at 6:00pm. In attendance were Selectmen Matthew A. Burrill, Chairman, Robert Marchand Jr, Vice-Chairman, Charles R. Melvin Sr., Michael Connolly, Mark Andrews, Town Administrator, and Selectmen's Secretary Diane M. Morin. The non-public session was audio taped. The public meeting was videotaped. Portions of the non-public session minutes were transcribed and typed by TA Andrews and Secretary Morin. The public meeting minutes were transcribed and typed by Secretary Morin.

Selectman Lawrence Foote was not present.

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (a) – Compensation

Selectman Marchand moved to go into non-public session at 6:02pm under RSA 91-A: 3 II (a) – Compensation. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Marchand moved to close the non-public session at 6:55pm. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

II. Scheduled Business

A. Seal non-public minutes

Selectman Marchand moved 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 except to provide the Bookkeeper/Payroll Administrator with the necessary information for payroll. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

B. ARPA/EOC update

Acting Emergency Management Director (AEMD) Trisha McCarthy addressed the Board. She informed them that we are still waiting for the bio filters for the Town Hall and library to be delivered. They are still waiting for the engineering design for the septic and well at the Transfer Station. They are waiting for a quote from a second security camera company. At the last minute the solar company postponed the meeting, so the ARPA committee decided to wait until after the Thanksgiving Holiday to re-schedule. The large HP Plotter printer was installed at the Town Hall today, November 15, 2022. The town engineer will be conducting a site visit at Greenie Park to evaluate the possibility of expanding the parking lot.

The EOC completed another grant for the electronic message board. This is the only source of income for the Emergency Management Department. This will allow them to operate when a local emergency is declared. A warrant article will be submitted to the voters in March to move the accumulated funds from

the general fund to the Emergency Management Fund. These are the funds the Town received for using the electronic message board to keep residents informed during the pandemic.

She has been in touch with the Building Department about a new grant that is available.

She is still working on the grant for the twin culverts on Wilders Grove.

She wanted to thank all those that worked the elections on November 8, 2022. She stated that the US Treasury regards those that worked the elections to be essential employees and for this reason they will be receiving a stipend from the ARPA funds in the amount of \$125.00. She reminded the public that the people that work the election are paid \$10.12 an hour. She also would like to thank Mrs. Mary Allen for purchasing pizzas for the workers. It was greatly appreciated.

She provided the latest statistics on COVID for the town. She stated that Respiratory Syncytial Virus, RSV, infections are still high. People should wear masks when in a group to help avoid contracting either viruses. The EOC has masks and gloves should anyone need them.

Forty seven percent of town residents have been vaccinated.

Chairman Burrill stated that election workers, worked three times this past year. The Board thanked all the election workers.

C. Transfer Station – Update on new chutes for compactors -- Tabled

D. Snowplow rates for 2023 -- Tabled

E. 2023 Proposed Budgets

a. Police Department

Police Chief Jewett presented the proposed 2023 Police Department Budget. The major increase is due to salaries increases. The budget includes the costs for the drug drop box and a comfort dog to be used at the school and town events.

Chairman Burrill asked if the SRO salary was included in the salary line item. Chief Jewett stated it was and that if the warrant article to move the funds from the general fund balance the school paid for the SRO, then that would offset the salary line item.

Selectman Melvin asked for more details on the community outreach. Chief Jewett explained that the funds will be used to support the drug drop box and comfort dog. The SRO will be caring and training the comfort dog.

Chairman Burrill asked for more details on the uniform line item. Chief Jewett stated that the vest is the major cost of the uniform. He was asked why the vest is not included in the equipment line item. He stated that the equipment line item is for things like flashlights, defibrillators, and other items found in the cruiser.

Selectman Melvin asked about the phone line item increase. Chief Jewett stated that he was informed that the Cable Revolving Fund would not be able to support paying for phone service for all the departments and that each department will need to budget for it. Secretary Morin stated that the service includes internet, phone, and basic TV. There will be 16 extensions available.

Selectman Melvin asked if the department will be purchasing a new vehicle. Chief Jewett stated that it would be a lease.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Police Department Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town operating budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

b. Forest Fire

Fire Chief Alcainho presented the proposed 2023 Forest Fire Budget. He stated that the proposed 2023 budget be level funded. He asked if remaining funds could be encumbered to pay for the grant that was applied for. Chairman Burrill stated that the necessary paperwork needs to be in place. TA Andrews will work with Chief Alcainho to ensure the paperwork is in place.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Forest Fire Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town operating budget. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

c. Fire Department

Fire Chief Alcainho presented the proposed 2023 Fire Department Budget. The Department did do diligence to keep the budget increase to a minimum.

The Fire Department is now purchasing fuel from the State distribution sites which is less expensive than retailers. He stated that in previous years, the cost for the State fuel was a set rate that went from November to November. However, due to the fuel cost fluctuating, the rates will not be a set rate but will still be less than the retail price.

The other budget increase is to the salary line item. It has been difficult to find a firefighter with a CDL.

He informed the Board that the number of calls the department responses to has increased considerably.

He will be looking to encumbered funds to pay for gear that has been ordered but not received.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Fire Department Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town operating budget. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

d. Executive -- Tabled

e. General Government Buildings -- Tabled

f. Insurance

TA Andrews reviewed the proposed 2023 Insurance Budget. He stated that he worked with the Town's insurance company to ensure that the Town received the 2.5% discount. The discount was offered to the Town because of the work the Joint Loss Management Committee (JLMC) has done through the year.

The Board thanked the work the JLMC has done to keep the insurance costs down.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Insurance Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town operating budget. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

g. Personnel Administration

TA Andrews reviewed the proposed 2023 Personnel Administration Budget. The cost for Medicare has increased 2.9%. The New Hampshire Retirement System is a set rate for eligible employees.

Selectman Marchand moved to accept as proposed the 2023 Personnel Budget for inclusion in the proposed 2023 Town operating budget. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

F. Communication services

a. Highway Department Office

Secretary Morin explained that the highway department office needs its own internet, phone, and basic TV service. The services will be provided by Comcast and the monthly cost will be included in the highway department's budget.

AEMD McCarthy addressed the Board and reminded them that the ARPA funds could be used to purchase any equipment. The funds cannot be used to pay monthly fee. Secretary Morin asked if the ARPA funds could be used to purchase the network switch. AEMD McCarthy said to send her the information and the committee will investigate.

Selectman Marchand moved to authorize the Chairman to sign the Comcast agreement for a new Highway Department office setup which includes internet, phone, and basic TV services for a monthly fee of \$172.84 which does not include taxes or fees. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

b. Police Department

Secretary Morin stated that the phone system went down over the weekend.

Police Chief Jewett addressed the Board and informed them that he has spoken with AEMD McCarthy about this. The ARPA funds cannot be used to purchase the equipment because Comcast will only lease it. He explained that the phone system was down for over 24 hours. He is recommending the system be updated.

Selectman Marchand moved to authorize the Chairman to sign the agreement to upgrade phone service to VoIP with Comcast for the police department for a monthly fee of \$536.44 which does not include taxes or fees. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

G. Lease for PC's

a. Server for Town Hall

Secretary Morin stated that the current server is over 6-years old and is recommending that it be replaced.

TA Andrews is recommending that the ARPA Funds be used to purchase the equipment. Secretary Morin is recommending leasing the server. She suggested that ARPA funds be used to pay for the installation the server.

Chairman Burrill asked if the Cable Revolving Fund would cover the lease cost. Secretary Morin stated that the yearly lease payment would come from that account.

TA Andrews clarified that he is suggesting the Board consider using ARPA Funds to offset some of the costs for the server.

AEMD McCarthy asked to have the quote information sent to her and she will present it to the ARPA Committee at their December 5, 2022, meeting.

Selectman Connolly asked where the server is housed and where is it backed up to. Secretary Morin stated that it is located in the cable room and is backed up to the cloud.

Secretary Morin explained that the reason the equipment is leased is for budgeting and to keep the Town's IT Resources up to date as possible. By leasing, there is a set yearly payment that can be easily budgeted for. Then when the lease is up, the equipment can be returned, and a new lease entered into. When she first started working for the Selectmen, there were PC's running different versions of operating systems and applications. This caused issues between users not been able to share documents.

Selectman Connolly stated that everything is moving to a cloud based system. He asked AEMD McCarthy if she sees the ARPA Funds being used to pay monthly fees such as this for the server. She stated not so far. She went on to state that if the Town wanted to commit to a monthly payment, it would only be until 2026. A report to the US Treasury would need to be filed explaining that the funds will be used for yearly/monthly payments for 2025 and 2026.

The Board will tabled this item until further information about funding is available.

b. Laptops for Fire and EOC Departments

Chairman Burrill asked if these would fall under the same category as the server. Secretary Morin stated yes but these items are a lot less expensive. The Board can enter into a lease agreement or purchase out right.

Fire Chief Alcadinho stated that the current laptops were purchased from the fire department and EOC budgets. They were purchased in 2018.

Chairman Burrill stated that he was in favor of leasing.

Selectman Marchand moved to authorize the Chairman to sign a 3-year lease agreement with HP Financials with a yearly payment of \$1,620.43 for 4 laptops to replace the out of warranty ones at the Fire and EMD Departments. Funds to come from the Cable Revolving Fund. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

H. Renewal – license to sell pistols and revolvers

Chairman Burrill stated that this request is for a renewal and that it has approval from the State and Federal Government.

Selectman Melvin stated that when he was on the Planning Board, they required the applicant to come before the Board of Selectmen each year.

Selectman Marchand moved to sign the renewal license to sell pistols and revolvers for Mr. Bradford Denison of 83 Amesbury Road. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

I. Resident Request – Change date for Halloween

Chairman Burrill stated that a resident has requested the Town change the day Halloween is observed to the Saturday prior to October 31. The resident was looking to see if the Board would propose a warrant article to be voted on by the residents at the 2023 Town meeting. He stated that at one time the Board did try this and received comments from resident wanting to keep it on October 31.

Chairman Burrill suggested a survey be taken to see if the residents wish to hold Halloween as suggested. Concerns were raised by other Board members and staff that not everyone has the capability to respond to online surveys and how would we ensure that only residents respond to the survey. Upon further discussion the Board decided to recommend to the resident to have a petition warrant article placed on the 2023 Town Warrant.

J. Update – Code of Ethics Policy

Chairman Burrill stated that Town Counsel is recommending the Town update its Code of Ethics Ordinance that was passed in 1998. Town Counsel provided an example of what Counsel did for the Town of Bow.

Selectman Marchand moved to engage Town Counsel to review and propose updates to the current Code of Ethics Ordinance and to place it on the 2023 Town Warrant for voters to approve. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote

K. Gift cards for election workers

Selectman Marchand stated that he would like to recommend the Town thank all the election workers by giving them a \$15 gift card. The cost would be about \$330. Mrs. McCarthy asked if the setup and tear down employees were counted. Selectman Marchand will add their names to the list.

Mrs. McCarthy stated that taxpayer's money should not be used for items like this. TA Andrews will verify if taxpayers' money can be used for the gift cards.

III. Other Business

A. Veterans Day

Mr. Joe Simone thanked the individuals that supplied breakfast for the Veterans Day Ceremony and stated that the Town should support this. He also asked that residents from Sargent Woods and Jacobs Village be invited. Chairman Burrill stated that all Veterans were invited.

He expressed his disappointment with the Sanborn Regional School District for not supplying any music. Chairman Burrill stated that the school informed him that they would have a representation present for next year.

Selectman Marchand and Mrs. McCarthy stated that Mr. Mike Pivero and Mr. Chet Bearce purchased the breakfast for Veterans Day.

B. Representative for EMS Coalition

Fire Chief Alcainho addressed that Board. He asked which Selectmen would be attending the EMS Coalition meeting being held in Plaistow on November 30th in the evening. Selectmen Marchand, Melvin and TA Andrews will represent the Town.

C. Manifest

Selectman Melvin moved to sign payroll manifest pay period October 23 – November 5, 2022, with a pay date of November 10, 2022. Total payroll is \$59,983.62 which includes \$433.91 ARPA administrative costs. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

D. Appointments

Selectman Melvin moved to appoint Joseph Simone as an alternate to the Recreation Commission for an 18 month term. Term to expire on April 30, 2024. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

IV. Approval of Minutes

Selectman Melvin moved to accept the non-public and public meeting minutes dated November 1, 2022, as written. Seconded by Selectman Marchand with a unanimous vote.

V. Non-Public Session

Nonpublic Session under RSA 91-A:3 II (b) – Hiring New Employee, (c) – Reputation

Selectman Marchand moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91 A: 3 II (c) – Reputation at 8:23pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Marchand moved to close the non-public session at 8:42pm. Seconded by Selectman Connolly. Burrill – aye, Melvin – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye.

Selectman Marchand moved to go into non-public session under RSA 91 A: 3 II (b) – Hiring New Employee at 8:42pm. Seconded by Selectman Connolly with a unanimous vote.

Selectman Marchand moved to close the non-public session at 9:02pm. Seconded by Selectman Connolly. Burrill – aye, Melvin – aye, Marchand – aye, Connolly – aye.

Selectman Marchand moved that the Board just came out of a non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) and (c) and that they keep all matters discussed confidential until in the opinion of the majority of the Board the circumstances no longer apply except to provide the Bookkeeper/Payroll Administrator with the necessary information for payroll. Seconded by Selectman Melvin. Burrill – aye, Melvin – aye, Marchand – aye Connolly – aye.

VI. Adjourn

Selectman Marchand moved to adjourn at 9:03pm. Seconded by Selectman Connolly.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary