

Newport Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 16, 2022 @ 6:30PM
Newport town Office Meeting Room

Present: Town Manager: James Ricker

Selectboard:

Chair: Kate Rush, Vice Chair: Donna Berry, Bruce Clarke, Adam Russell, Andrew Colford

1. Call to Order

Meeting called to order by K. Rush at 6:30pm

- a. Pledge of allegiance

2. Public Access - None

3. Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of minutes from meeting held 11-2-22

Motion to approve minutes by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, all in favor, motion carried.

- b. Communications

Charter Communications-

Mr. Ricker confirmed with Charter that Drew Lane and Sunrise Dr have always had connectivity available. Residents just need to sign up. All other areas discussed at previous meeting are identified as meeting the connection criteria with a 12 to 18 month buildout. Contract does not include moving public access from NCC to Town Office. It was discussed that the Public Safety Bldg may be a more logical spot for the public access. Mr. Ricker stated public access could be at both places due to fiber optics that are already in place. Motion made to sign the contract contingent on adding the movement of the NCC public access infrastructure to the Town Office/Public Safety Bldg made by A. Colford, seconded by D. Berry, all in favor, motion carried.

4. Old Business

- a. Fire Department billing

Town Manager said the ambulance is averaging about \$8,000-\$10,000 every 2 weeks. Total billed is \$97,156 with a total of \$32,000 collected all from Medicare/Medicaid so far. This data is from Aug, Sept and Oct.

- b. Shoreland Zone Violations / Town Enforcement

Mr. Ricker has been in contact with the town attorney regarding complaints against the 3 people responsible for the violations. After speaking with DEP and determining that DEP is understaffed and will be unable to assist us for quite some time, he concluded it was in the best interest of the town to use our own ordinances. The town is able to do this under the Submerged Lands Act. This states that a watershed controlled by a dam, can be controlled by the town at the 5 feet below highwater mark point. Mr. Ricker also met with one of the responsible parties and he will enter into a consent agreement with the town. The other 2 parties live in Florida and Massachusetts and Mr. Ricker will pursue them accordingly for restoration and fines. All will need to complete income affidavits. K. Rush

inquired how we ensure the quality of the restoration whereas Town Manger replied DEP will determine restoration work to be completed. Mr. Ricker will keep the Board informed going forward.

5. New Business

a. Victualers License request: The Country Whisk, Dawniel & Erika Soule
Board voted unanimously to approve victualers license.

b. Lease purchase for police vehicle

Town Manager stated he had correspondence with the Board throughout the day to approve a lease on a Ford Explorer for the PD. This is a Municipal 2 year lease with 2 - \$18,785 payments. Due to lack of availability this was the best way to obtain a vehicle and will eliminate any need for the next 3 years. Board inquired where old vehicles will go where Mr. Ricker stated Public Works and Fire Dept. Motion to approve the lease by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, unanimous.

c. Titan Energy Electricity Supplier

Mr. Ricker has been in talks with Constellation and Titan energy regarding electricity rates. It was released today that CMP's standard offer is .1763. Mr. Ricker received 2 offers:

Constellation: .1456 at 36 months with no fluctuation

Titan Energy: .14068 at 36 months with no guarantee

Much discussion was had but recommendation was made to go with the more stable contract due to the volatility of the market. Motion to sign with Constellation by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, vote unanimous.

d. Employee Benefits / cost analysis

Town Manager stated that the Town is still having a difficult time attracting new talent despite raising pay and instituting lateral transfer benefits. He is proposing free single coverage healthcare and deeply discounted healthcare for families. A decision needs to be made soon as open enrollment is 11/15-12/15. A spreadsheet was provided to the Board. Much discussion was had about stipends and how much to discount the family coverage. It was decided that stipends would stay all other plans would be discounted at the single coverage rate of \$57.00 per week. This would make the single subscriber health care free and single w/ child and family plans @ 85% paid by the town. Motion to approve the change to free and discounted healthcare keeping stipends made by A. Colford, seconded by D. Berry, all in favor, motion carried.

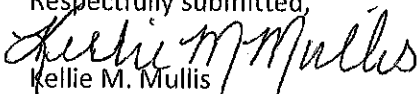
6. Warrant

Motion to approve warrant made by D. Berry, B. Clarke, all in favor, motion carried.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn at 7:50 made by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, all in favor, meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Kellie M. Mullis
Municipal Clerk