

Newport Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
November 2, 2022 @ 6:30 PM
Newport Town Office

Present: Town Manager: James Ricker

Selectboard:

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

1. Meeting 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 10-19-22

Motion to approve minutes by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke

- b. Communications

Mr. Ricker said he was notified by the State of Maine that fees for demo increased from \$2 per ton to \$5 per ton. This will force us to increase our fees again. Mr. Ricker will bring the revised fee schedule for approval to next meeting.

Approval of off premise catering license for Millennium/Bovine Inc for the Christmas shopping night on 11/27 from 3pm-8pm. Motion to approve by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, all in favor, motion carried.

Mr. Ricker called attention to a letter he received from a Newport resident who was extremely grateful for the service and kindness of Police Chief David Wintle. He came to her aid late at night during vehicle trouble and went above and beyond to pick her up at home and help get vehicle running. Nice to get positive feedback like this.

4. Old Business

- a. Update on police vehicle delivery

Current ETA for new police vehicle which was ordered May 2021 is now December. Due to the major delays Mr. Ricker requested permission to order their next vehicle now to go in next years budget. If money is not available when vehicle is ready, we won't be required to take it. Board agreed with ordering vehicle at this time.

5. New Business

- a. Q/A with Shelley Winchenbach of Charter Communications re: Contract
Copy of contract was supplied to all board members. Last renewal 2008.

S. Winchenbach touched on some items included in contract:

- Ratio has been built up from 20 homes per mile to 15 homes per mile.
- Negotiated from 15 to 10 year term with a negotiation window of 3 years before expiration.
- Franchise fee has 5% cap.
- Connection NSD signal at Nokomis High School and NCC
- Projects slated for completion: Murray Rd to include Pearls Lane, Jamie Rd, Corrie Rd, Nuthatch Lane, Hamstead Dr and Canadian Geese Drive to include Noah's Landing
- She is currently trying to add "lots" as "homes" to pass further projects

J. Ricker asked for timetable once contract approved where Ms. Winchenbach stated 12-18 months with pole permitting being the most time consuming.

K. Rush asked how do we bring new projects forward where Ms. Winchenbach answered to reach out to Mr. Ricker who will contact Charter. They are constantly surveying.

K. Rush & D. Berry brought up Shady Lane, Drew Lane and Sunrise Drive needing service. Ms. Winchenbach stated she will look into these 3 areas. Turnaround response time will be approximately 2 weeks.

K. Rush inquired to what product will be installed. Ms Winchenbach replied Fiber to Home will be installed unless there are small extensions where coax cable will be used. Fiber to Home will still be the backbone.

A. Colford asked about broadcasting the access channel from the meeting room and talked about putting the franchise fees toward the cost. Ms. Winchenbach said there may need to be a circuit box and she could check the cost. Also it's possible to take the NCC equipment if not being used and move it to the Town Office. Mr. Ricker said he would need approval from the NCC Board to do so. Ms Winchenbach also mentioned that many towns come together to share an access channel.

Mr. Ricker asked about adding internet to the cable tv contract and Ms. Winchenbach replied that cable is only required on franchise agreement.

b. 2022 / Lake re-fill

Town Manager stated gate was closed on 10/31 where water was down 8-8.5 feet.

c. VFW disbanding

Town Manager gave the disappointing news that the Newport VFW will be disbanding. He spoke with a representative from Newport VFW who informed him there are only 4-5 members left and 2 of them are in very poor health. They voted to relinquish all funds totaling approximately \$10,000 used to maintain the monument over to the Town. Mr. Ricker noted there are approximately 10 more names to be added to the monument which is the largest expense. Maintenance can be supplied by the Fire Department and Public Works Department at a low expense. Motion to accept funds by B. Clarke, seconded by D. Berry, all in favor, motion carried.

d. Titan Energy

Town Manager spoke with Titan Energy at length today regarding a contract for 36 months at a rate of .144. Old rates were .085 going up to .118 with CMP. Contract expires 11/2022 since being extended from August. K. Rush questioned what the effect would be if we entered into a solar arrangement and also if rates drop could the contract be amended. At the request of the Board, Mr.

Ricker will supply projected usage for rest of year and next year at next Board Meeting. He will also consult with Houlton to get feedback since they have signed with Solar.

e. Remote Meeting Policy- refresher for everyone

Mr. Ricker noted that only the Chair Person (K. Rush) can approve the meeting being broadcast via zoom for anyone. The policy is based on Maine Statutes. K. Rush noted it only should be used for emergent situations and notice must be given since it must be advertised on the Town website. A. Colford voiced wanting to change the policy to make it easier to switch to zoom. The Board chose to table the discussion until a later date but policy stays as is for now.

f. RFP Watershed bid

Bid was advertised in Bangor Daily News with only 1 response from Ecological Instincts. EI's proposal was for a 2-3 year plan and they have already been working on the lake issues and writing the grant to the State. The proposal was as expected. Will need to form a specialized committee apart from lake committee. Motion to accept proposal by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, all in favor, motion carried.

6. Warrant

Motion to approve warrant by D. Berry, seconded by A. Russell, all in favor, motion carried.

7. Adjourn

Motion to adjourn meeting by D. Berry, seconded by A. Russell. Meeting adjourned at 7:50pm.

Respectfully Submitted,



Kellie M. Mullis
Municipal Clerk