

**Newport Selectboard  
Regular Meeting Minutes  
February 7, 2024 @ 6:00 PM**

**Present:**

**Town Manager:** James Ricker

**Deputy Clerk:** Kathleen Kemp

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

**Attendees:** Maxine Pare, Planning Board

1. **Call to Order:** K. Rush called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

a. **Pledge of allegiance**

2. **Public Access:** None

3. **Consent Agenda:**

a. **Approval of minutes from meeting held January 17, 2024:** K. Rush motioned to accept the minutes, D. Berry so moved, B. Clarke seconded, motion carried to accept the minutes.

b. **Communications**

1. **Update on meeting held February 1, 2024 regarding Broadband:** The Manager informed the Board of the meeting. It was informative and provided the Town with answers regarding Broadband timelines and presented a map of the Town indicating Broadband locations.

2. **Efficiency of Maine facilities inspection at the Newport Rec:** The Rec Center passed the inspection with flying colors. The Town will be receiving a check within two to three weeks for \$16,800.00 which will go into the ARPA fund.

3. **Grinding Wood Chips:** The Manager reported a cost of \$2,800.00 for 484 tons of brush.

4. **Old Business**

a. **Signage update: Vehicles and Town Office:** The vehicle signage arrived today, however, both emblems were in black. One needed to be white and has been reordered. Miller Signs will be providing sample signs for the Town Office for the Board to review.

b. **Rec Grant update:** All materials have been updated as requested and forwarded to the reviewers.

c. **Update on Newport Metals:** D. Berry stated that she has seen some improvements. The Manager and CEO executed a site visit to find that half of the issue has been picked up. Newport Metals was given six months (May) to show intent of a fence or barrier installation.

5. **New Business**

a. **Tax Assessing , additional hours consideration:** The Manager explained the need for an additional eight (8) hours for the Tax Assessor and furnished the Board with supporting data (please see attachments). The data included four years of Municipal Assessment Return Reports generated by the State of Maine. The latest report showed a comparison of sales data assessment and the value of real estate in Newport. The state determined that we are currently assessing at 65% of value. The Manager impressed upon the

Board that unless the value is brought back to 92%, the Town will run the risk of losing Homestead Reimbursements, Veterans Reimbursements, and Revenue Sharing. There was much discussion from the Board, but no determination was made. The Board requested more information from the State. The Manager stated that he would contact Mr. Dave Ledew, former Head of Real Estate Taxation for the State of Maine, to meet with the Board and further explain the ramifications and possible appeals for State Assessment. Once contact is made, a date will be determined to meet with the Board.

- b. **MDOT Round-a-bout discussion 2-13-24 @ 09:00:** Meeting will be held in the Town Office Conference Room, the public is invited and if needed, the meeting will be moved to the Public Safety Building. The Board and Departments Heads are invited and encouraged to attend.
- c. **Executive Session:** Motion made by B. Clarke to go into Executive Session at 7:00 pm, so moved by K. Rush, seconded by A. Russell, motion carried. Motion to end the Executive Session at 7:25 pm made by A. Russell, seconded by D. Berry, motion carried.

**6. Warrant:** Motion to approve the warrant by A. Russell, seconded by B. Clarke, motion carried.

**7. Adjourn:** Motion to adjourn the meeting by D. Berry, seconded by B. Clarke, motion carried.

**Respectfully submitted,**

*Kathleen Kemp*

**Kathleen Kemp, Deputy Clerk**

**Next meeting: Wednesday, February 21, 2024**