

**Newport Selectboard
Regular Meeting Agenda
July 17, 2024 @ 6:00 PM
Newport Public Safety Building**

Present:

Town Manager, James Ricker

Deputy Clerk, Kathleen Kemp

Selectboard: Vice Chair, Donna Berry, Bruce Clarke, Adam Russell, Andrew Colford, Mark Sawyer

Guests:

Maxine Pare, Planning Board

Debra Ricker

Barbara Fletcher

Albert Hall

Cheryl King and Donald King

Lyle Peirce and Diane Peirce

Tammy Smith and Mike Smith

Christina Avery

Rick Peck

Alice Peck

Cerlene Engstrom-Lasselle and Kevin Laselle

Theresa Van-Loon

1. Call to Order: The meeting was called to order at 6:00 pm.

a. Pledge of allegiance

b. Election of officers: Bruce Clarke motioned to nominate Donna Berry as Chair, Adam Russell seconded, all in favor. Bruce motioned to cease nominations, all in favor, Donna Berry voted in as Selectboard Chair. Donna Berry motioned to nominate Bruce Clarke as Vice Chair, Andrew Colford seconded, all in favor. Donna Berry motioned to cease nominations, all in favor, Bruce Clarke voted in as Selectboard Vice Chair.

2. Public Access: None

3. Consent Agenda

a. Approval of minutes from meeting held 06-26-24: D. Berry made a motion to approve the minutes, A. Russell seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

b. Communications

1. Town Meeting: The Town Manager reported that it was one of the fastest Town Meetings on record, lasting about twenty-nine minutes.

2. Festival: On Friday, August 2nd there will be a free concert by Tom Clukey, the 2023 Talent Show Winner! The Festival will be on Saturday, August 3rd starting with a parade, followed by food vendors, crafters, children's activities, talent show, chili contest, duck race, and children can win a bike through the Passport to Safety. There is also a Raffle for Eat, Sleep, Play Newport! All winners will be announced at the end of the festival. This year's festival is dedicated to the Memory of Bruce Bowman.

3. On Premise Permit for Newport Entertainment Center: D. Berry made a motion to approve, B. Clarke so moved, A. Russell seconded, motion carried.

4. Lights on Main Street: The Town Manager reported that the flashing, yellow, pedestrian lights have been received from the DOT. We are coordinating with Public Works for installation. The Board members were concerned if the lights were power or solar, the Town Manager explained that they were solar.

5. Safety Program Inspection: The Transfer Station and Public Works passed with minor observations, the storage at the TS is in very bad repair and will need replacing.

4. Old business

a. 24/25 Tax commitment: Presently a work in progress. The Tax Assessor is working with the state to make sure that we can keep our exemptions. There will be an increase in taxes due to the community being rated at 65% value, but needs to be at 92-100% in order to maintain the exemptions. There was a delay in completing the commitment today due to a software/computer crash.

5. New business

a. Public Hearing regarding the future of "Permitted Cannabis Establishments in the Town of Newport":

This is a follow up to the request for a Public Hearing regarding a Moratorium on any new Permitted Cannabis Establishments. This does not affect any of the six present businesses and/or the two pending businesses. Chairperson Donna Berry opened the Public Hearing regarding the future of Permitted Cannabis Establishments.

Q: Kevin Lasalle asked when/if present establishments goes out of business, will any new licenses be permitted?

A: The Moratorium will prohibit any new licenses from being permitted.

Q: Christina Avery from Gram's Five and Dime asked if other licenses can be transferred?

A: The Town Manager explained that this must be discussed with the Town Attorney(s). This has been an issue with the Solar Projects as they were transferred several times. Mike Smith stated that the State allows for the Towns to opt in for Cannabis licensing, resulting in a limited amount of Towns participating, causing several businesses to be in one Town. This dilemma seems similar to the Video businesses of the past.

Maxine Pare, Planning Board/Healthcare Provider, stated that there are many cases in the Hospital Emergency Rooms of people too high on cannabis to function. Cannabis is also a gateway to other drug use. She supports the right to free enterprise for the present stores, however, requests that a Moratorium be voted on tonight. The Town Manager explained that the Board can make a motion to implement a Moratorium. He read the corresponding verbiage.

Board Member Andrew Colford had a question regarding the Moratorium time period and requested the presence of the Town Attorney(s) to answer any legal questions on free enterprise for the Town's citizens. The Town Manager reiterated that the time period for a Moratorium is six months and if voted on tonight will be in effect until January 18, 2025. All requirements of the Moratorium must be adhered to during the six month time period. The Town Manager also reviewed free enterprise information that has been previously stated.

Board Member Adam Russell made a motion for the Town Manager to read the verbiage to instate the Moratorium, seconded by Mark Sawyer, Bruce Clarke requested discussion reiterating that there would be no more licenses provided, but that all present businesses fall under the present rules and will have the opportunity to review options.

Chairperson Donna Berry brought this to a vote, all Board Members were in favor, motion carried.

Board Member Adam Russell stated that Newport needs to be open for business, but that we should take a hard look at the ordinances, which should be a "living document" making good decisions and provides opportunities.

b. Off-Premise Catering Permit for Jeff's Catering, wedding reception at the Grove 9-28-24: D. Berry made a motion to approve the permit, so moved by B. Clarke, seconded by A. Colford, motion carried.

c. Off-Premise Catering Permit for Morgan Hill Event Center, function to be held at the

Grove 7-13-24: Due to timing, the Permit was previously signed by the Town Manager so no vote is needed.

d. Executive Session: Tax Payment arrangement: D. Berry made a motion for the Board to go into Executive Session, so moved by B. Clarke, seconded by A. Colford, motion carried. The Board went into Executive Session at 6:30 pm and returned from the Session at 7:05 pm.

e. Code Enforcement: D. Berry made a motion to the following, so moved by B. Clarke, seconded by A. Colford, motion carried: The Town Manager will use the old FD Rescue for CEO business, he will receive a \$100 stipend for CEO duties starting July 1, 2024, retroactive to start date, and will advertise for a permanent CEO at 16 hours/week.

f. Anglers Liquor license renewal: M. Sawyer made a motion to accept the renewal, A. Colford seconded, motion carried.

6. Warrant: B. Clarke made a motion to accept the warrant, seconded by A. Colford, motion carried.

7. Adjourn: B. Clarke made a motion to accept the warrant, seconded by A. Colford, motion carried

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Kemp

Kathleen Kemp, Deputy Clerk

Next Meetings:

- **There will be a meeting on Wednesday, August 21st at 6:00 pm**
- **Starting in September, Selectboard Meetings will be held on regularly scheduled dates, the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month (unless otherwise indicated)**