

Newport Selectboard
Regular Meeting Minutes
January 3, 2024, 6:00 PM

Present:

Town Manager: James Ricker

Deputy Clerk: Kathleen Kemp

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

Absent: Chair, Kate Rush

Attendees: Maxine Pare

Guests: Lou Harris – Abraham’s Country Market

1. Call to Order

D. Berry 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 12.06.2023, D. Berry motioned to approve the minutes, A. Colford seconded, all in favor, minutes approved.

- b. Communications

1. Public Works Truck Update: former truck sold, new truck to be picked up 01.04.24
2. Storm Wrap Up: Town fared well, considering. Fire Dept. responded to 38 calls, Public Works cleaned up downed trees to aid CMP efforts, all Team’s worked diligently throughout the storm to assist the Town’s residents.
3. Town Office Sign Replacement: Sign was destroyed in the storm, designs will be provided for the Board to review for replacement.
4. Rec Center Update: Six Heat Pumps have been installed and now need to be guarded from basketballs, etc. Cages are being constructed. Remote protocol for heat pumps is being created. The Rec Center is the only gym with air conditioning which will make the facility attractive for functions. The fees will be adjusted for the new year and new improvements. The current kitchen tenant is moving, providing an opportunity for the kitchen to be renovated. A new, rubberized gym floor will be poured, to include the halls, baths, and kitchen. Talks are in process to partner with the Kasey Lander Foundation for catering out of the kitchen.

4. Old Business

- a. Approval to add Juneteenth to the Town’s Holidays: The Board discussed and agreed to amend the Town’s Holidays to include the Federal Juneteenth Holiday (June 19th). D. Berry made a motion to amend the Town’s Holidays, B. Clarke so moved, A. Russell seconded, all in favor, motion carried.
- b. The Board signed Maxine Pare’s paper to join the Planning Board.

5. New Business

- a. Liquor License Renewal: Newport Entertainment Center: D. Berry motioned to approve, so moved by B. Clarke, seconded by A. Russell, all in favor, motion carried.
- b. Victualers License Approval: Abraham’s Country Market – located at 659 Elm Street (former East Newport Store) – to be operated by Kaili Wardwell: D. Berry motioned to approve, A. Russell so moved, B. Clarke seconded, all in favor, motion carried. The store will be open Wed – Sat and serve luncheon items (similar to Freshies), to include their pizza’s and “farm drop” items for the community.

- c. Dedication of the 2024 Town Report: The Town and Board has decided to honor and dedicate the 2024 Town Report to Jack Carson for his many contributions to the Town.
- d. Ambulance Billing Update:
 - 1. Stephen King Grant: The Fire Chief applied for and received a \$50,000.00 grant from the Stephen King Foundation. These monies will enable the new ambulance to be equipped with all the necessary items. Also, according to the November and December run sheets, Newport has the lowest billing rate. Increasing billing rates to a competitive level can offset the cost of the new ambulance.
- e. Addendum: Permit for an Off Premise Liquor License to Mossey Ledge Spirits of Etna, Me for the Kasey Lander Memorial Fund Dinner/Dance on February 10th at the Recreation Center. D. Berry motioned to approve, B. Clarke so moved, A. Colford seconded, all in favor, motion carried.
- f. United Insurance quotes have increased due to Law Enforcement liability and rising property values.
- g. The DOT will be providing summer paving at the Triangle to Elm Street.
- h. D. Berry suggested that the lettering for the Fire Chief's truck should be recognizable.
- i. The Fire Chief and Deputy Fire Chief will be working with the schools on emergency protocols.
- j. Tax Assessor: may need to be temporarily replaced. We may have a fill-in available for the same rate of pay. The Town Manager will meet with the candidate next week.

6. Warrant: D. Berry motioned to accept the Warrant, B. Clarke so moved, A. Colford seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

7. Adjourn: D. Berry motioned to adjourn the Meeting, A. Russell so moved, B. Clarke seconded, all in favor, motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathleen Kemp

Kathleen Kemp, Deputy Clerk

Next Meeting: Wednesday, January 17, 2024, at 6:00 pm.