

Select Board & Board of Assessors Meeting - Agenda
November 27, 2023 @ 7:00 p.m.
Fire Station Community Room, 86 River Rd.

Present Board Members: Karen Paz, Tor Glendinning, Joel Lind, Rufus Percy

Absent Board Members: Thomas Kostenbader

Staff: Kevin Sutherland, Town Manager

Minutes transcribed by Emma McKearney, Deputy Town Clerk

- 1. Call to Order:** Meeting started at 7:04pm.
- 2. Amendments to the Agenda:** No amendments were made to the agenda.
- 3. Minutes of the previous meeting**
 - a. November 13, 2023:** Tor made a motion to approve the minutes of the November 13, 2023, meeting as written. Motion was seconded by Joel. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- 4. Public Comments on Items Not on the Agenda**
 - a. Kevin Voigt:** Kevin, a resident of Newcastle, shared concerns regarding potential street parking on Mills Rd because of the Village Partnership Initiative and the impact of the construction of apartments at 10 Mills Rd. He doesn't believe there is enough business that would warrant parking on Mills Rd. He had additional concerns regarding how fast people drive in that section of Mills Rd and the conditions of the sidewalk. The Board clarified that the Town currently has a request for bid proposals for a study to be conducted in the pre-determined area. At this time, there is no plan; the Town is exploring possibilities which will be completed with the study. There will be ample opportunity to discuss concerns once the study has been completed. Kevin questioned what would happen if the apartments were built and they remained vacant and their aesthetics to be in line with other homes on the road. Town Manager and the Board explained that the plans for the apartment are similarly designed to fit in with the other homes, and there is a significant housing crisis in the state. They don't believe the apartments will go un-filled.
- 5. New Business**
 - a. North Newcastle Road Weight Limit Petition:** The Town received a petition from residents of North Newcastle requesting that there be a posted weight limit on the road. Residents cited heavy truck use as a shortcut, the road width, and pedestrian traffic being some of the reasons for their request. Town Manager will draft a process/application to address this request and future requests and bring this back to the Select Board for further discussion in January.
 - b. Finance Committee Ordinance:** The Town has had a Finance Committee since 2016. However, the committee hasn't met for a while and there is only one unexpired membership out of the seven positions. Discussion of advantages and disadvantages of a Finance Committee. Town Manager will attempt to engage with previous members and see if there is interest to update the ordinance and revive some membership. If not, to request a repeal of the Finance Committee Ordinance.
 - c. Personnel Policy – Amendments:** Town Manager and Board reviewed proposed changes to the personnel policy presented at the Select Board meeting on November 13, 2023, and changes that were made during that meeting. One additional correction was made for a spelling error. Board will move forward with a final vote during the December 11, 2023 meeting which will include the personnel policy with amendments

6. Unfinished Business

- a. **Special Town Meeting Warrant:** Select Board reviewed the proposed warrant for the Special Town Meeting scheduled for December 11, 2023. Town Manager recommended that the Special Town Meeting start at 6:30pm as there will be a regularly scheduled Select Board meeting following. Tor made a motion to establish a Special Town Meeting for December 11, 2023, at 6:30pm in the Community Rom of the Fire Station at 86 River Rd and send notice to R. Benjamin Frey to inform the inhabitants of the Town of Newcastle of said meeting. Motion was seconded by Rufus. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- b. **December 25th Select Board Meeting:** Town Manager and Select Board discussed options for the Select Board meeting scheduled for December 25, 2023, including canceling the meeting or rescheduling the meeting. Joel made a motion to cancel the December 25th Select Board meeting. Motion was seconded by Karen. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- c. **Traffic and Parking Ordinance:** Town Manager and Select Board reviewed amendments to the Traffic and Parking Ordinance. The changes allow the Town Manager to appoint a person, or people, to enforce parking violations with a warning, ticket, or towing. The Board made wording changes to include 'ticketing and towing.' Joel made a motion to adopt the revised Traffic and Parking Ordinance as amended. Motion was seconded by Rufus. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- d. **Fee Schedule:** Town Manager reviewed the updated Fee Schedule of the things that were missing. Town Manager clarified that, in the instances of hunting and fishing licenses, the most commonly requested items are listed. There are booklets available at the Town Office of IFW hunting and fishing laws and fees. Mal Carey, resident of North Newcastle, sought clarification on Freedom of Access Act fees. Joel made a motion to approve the Newcastle Town Fee Schedule as presented. Motion was seconded by Tor. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- e. **Ordinance and Policy Review:** Town Manager reviewed the updated version of the Ordinance and Policy Review chart presented at the meeting on November 13, 2023. Presently, there is a plan for there to a Special Town Meeting quarterly to vote on the revised ordinances and policies. Town Manager explained that items were put in order due to their age. The Select Board would like to keep in mind the timeliness of the ordinances (ex: Transient Seller and Lunch Wagon Ordinance and Fireworks Ordinance being utilized in the summer months). The Select Board will be voting on the revised personnel policy which will include a updated health insurance policy at the Select Board meeting on December 11, 2023. Town Manager and Select Board will review progress in 3 months. Rufus made a motion to accept the Ordinance and Policy Review Work Plan memo dated November 22, 2023, and commit to reviewing this document for progress and potential modification on a biannual basis. Motion was seconded by Tor. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.
- f. **Select Board Priorities:** A survey was sent to the Select Board and Town staff; there was a 64% completion rate. Town Manager reviewed the report of the survey results. Top priorities, based on responses, include Lynch Rd/May Day project completion and housing. Town Manager noted that some items may be delayed, and have been accounted for, due to needing to work with other towns. There will be ongoing reviews of the progress of this list. Karen made a motion to accept the Select Board List of Updated Project Priorities for Newcastle presented in the memo dated November 22, 2023, and commit to reviewing for progress and potential modification in March of 2024. Motion was seconded by Tor. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.

7. **Town Manager Report and Communications:** Town Manager reviewed his report. Topics discussed were: Newcastle Fire Department submitted a grant through the Maine Forest Service, residents' concerns regarding street lighting, upcoming Planning Board workshop to discuss the Shoreland Zoning Ordinance, upcoming agenda items, and Public Works projects have been impacted due to this year's weather. There will be a community meeting at the Harriet Bird Building in Sheepscot Village from 4:30pm-7pm on November 28, 2023. There will be a Planning Board Workshop scheduled for November 30, 2023, at 6:30pm at the Newcastle Fire Station Community Room.

8. Fiscal Warrants

- a. **FY24 Tenth AP Warrant: \$305,722.44:** Joel made a motion to approve both sections of the Tenth AP Warrant for \$305, 722.44. Motion was seconded by Rufus. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.

9. Executive Session

10. Future Agenda Items

- a. **Fire Engine Bid**
- b. **Comprehensive Plan State Approval**
- c. **Reserve Account Review**
- d. **Board and Committee Membership**
- e. **Ground Lease Agreement**

- 11. Adjournment of Meeting:** Joel made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 9:06pm. Motion was seconded by Rufus. Motion was passed 4-0, 1 absent.