

Council Minutes

January 24, 2022

A duly warned meeting of the Newport City Council was held on Monday, January 24, 2022, in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Paul Monette, Council President Melissa Pettersson, Council members Kevin Charboneau, John Wilson, and Christopher Vachon, City Manager Laura Dolgin, City Clerk/Treasurer James D. Johnson, Public Works Director Tom Bernier, Police Chief Travis Bingham, Elementary School Principal Elaine Collins, Neil Morrissette, Liz Harrington, members of the Press and Public.

Mayor Monette called the meeting to order at 6:30 PM.

Approval of Minutes

Mr. Wilson moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2022. Seconded by Mr. Vachon, motion carried unanimously.

Comments by the Public

Jay Walsh accused the mayor of making false statements about leachate leaking from the landfill. Mayor Monette stated that the topic of discussion was about the city's water supply not the landfill.

Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities

Neil Morrissette and Liz Harrington presented the city with an award and plaque from the Governor's Committee on the Employment of People with Disabilities in appreciation for hiring people with disabilities.

Newport City Elementary School Presentation (attached)

Principal Elaine Collins presented the school's proposed 2022-23 budget to the council.

Water & Sewer Allocation (attached)

Mr. Vachon moved to approve the allocation request for Nancy Laforce on Cedar St. Seconded by Ms. Pettersson, motion carried unanimously.

Annual Approval of the Certification of Highway Mileage (attached)

Ms. Pettersson moved to approve the Annual Certification of Highway Mileage. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Annual Warning

The council signed the 2022 Annual Meeting Warning.

Authorization to Conduct the Next Tax Sale

Mr. Vachon moved to authorize the City Attorney to conduct a tax sale. Seconded by Ms. Pettersson, motion carried unanimously.

New Business

Mr. Wilson noted that Newport was on a list to evaluate the Wastewater Plant for Covid-19. Mr. Bernier stated that Newport was on the list and that they were participating in the Federal program at no cost to the city.

Mayor Monette gave kudos to Public Works and the Recreation Dept. for the fine work on the sledding hill at Prouty beach.

Ms. Dolgin mentioned the skating rink ice is nice, the lights are on, and the hot chocolate and skates are free.

Ms. Pettersson and Mr. Vachon both mentioned the lights at the skating rink.

Mayor Monette noted that the Common Level of Appraisal is at 94%

Old Business

None

Next Meeting Date

February 7, 2022, at 6:30 PM.

Executive Session to discuss Contracts

Mr. Vachon moved that for the board's specific finding that premature general public knowledge of the subjects of the anticipated executive session would clearly place the board and/or persons involved at a substantial disadvantage. 1 VSA 313(a)(1). Seconded by Ms. Pettersson, motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Petterson moved to enter executive session to discuss a contract. Seconded by Mr. Wilson, motion carried unanimously.

No action.

Adjournment

Mr. Charboneau moved to adjourn at 8:03 PM. Seconded by Mr. Vachon, motion carried unanimously.

Attested James D. Johnson this 7th day of February 2022



Mayor



NEWPORT CITY ELEMENTARY

166 Sias Ave. Newport, VT 05855

Phone: 802-334-2455 * Fax: 802-334-0161

Elaine Collins, Principal * Aaron Larsen, Assistant Principal

January 24, 2022

Dear Newport City Council Members,

It has been my privilege to be the principal at Newport City Elementary School for the last six years. This year, we have been very fortunate to continue with in-person instruction, except for several days earlier in the school year when we have to pivot to remote instruction and learning. COVID continues to be a challenge and a strain for everyone.

As a result of the continuing pandemic, we have experienced several difficulties. Through no fault of their own, students have missed a lot of school. Whether it's because of being close contacts, contracting COVID, or families being nervous because of increasing counts, the result is lost learning. This is compounded when it is a different set of students each day or week that are missing different content or skills.

Therefore, the need to differentiate and provide intervention for students has increased exponentially. With students missing instruction, concepts or skills, and having different gaps in instruction, the need to plan and implement substantially different instructional groups continues to be a challenge. Additionally, students continue to require social-emotional supports. For many students, a prolonged heightened sense of anxiety and uncertainty has compounded this need.

We have also been very fortunate to have received significant COVID-relief funds, called Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Funds (ESSER). There are three rounds of ESSER funds. ESSER I was for direct COVID mitigation efforts, like cleaning supplies, masks, additional personnel for duties, etc. For ESSER II, designated for the FY22 school year, the purpose is to help students to recover from the interruptions of COVID both academically and socially. For the second round, we received \$392,978 in FY22. For ESSER III, designated for FY23 and FY24, we will receive \$450,000 per year for a total of \$900,000 over the two years of the grant. An unintended consequence of receiving this money that is the additional ESSER expenses are counted in our overall spending per equalized pupil.

We have funded several things with these grant funds:

1. Additional Home-to-School Coordinator
2. Additional School-Based Clinician
3. Additional Academic Interventionist
4. Additional Behavior Technician
5. Moved SEL Coach from local funds to the grant
6. Laptops and other technology equipment

Additionally, switching from a reimbursement model to block grant funding for special education has had an extremely negative effect on our budget. In the current reimbursement model, whenever we expend money to pay for special education services, we receive reimbursement for 56% of the cost. For next year and moving forward, the legislature is phasing in block grant funding. Instead of receiving 56% of whatever the actual cost is, we will receive a block grant per student. Districts and supervisory unions with lower special education students will see an increase in revenue, but in a supervisory union like North Country, this will cause a loss of \$2.3 million in revenue from FY22 to FY23. At Newport City Elementary School, we will lose

The mission of the NCES is to educate the whole child to become a caring, productive participant of the community.

\$383,360 in revenue from FY22 to FY23. Our superintendent, John Castle, has been a strong advocate at the state level to either postpone block grant funding until weights are implemented in some form, or there are other categorical funds put into place to mitigate the negative impacts of block grant funding for districts with higher percentages of special education students. When we were budgeting, we had to budget with our current reality, which is block grant funding without any other additional revenues factored in. That may change as the legislative session continues their work, but for now, this is the current picture.

As you can see from the enclosed budget, our local budget is up less than 1%, not factoring in ESSER funds, with a difference of \$87,920 increased spending from last year to this, even though we are losing \$383,360 in special education reimbursement revenues. However, when we factor in our ESSER spending, our overall spending is up \$537,920 (\$450,000 in ESSER III funds plus the \$87,920 increase in local spending). Although we are almost level funding our local budget, the warning that voters will see on Town Meeting Day will state that our spending per equalized pupil is up 12.35%. This is due to the loss of revenue, not an increase in spending of local dollars.

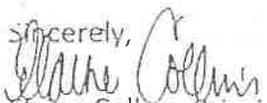
Another factor for the tax rate is the Common Level of Appraisal (CLA). With the influx of so many out-of-state property buyers, and homes selling at a higher rate than they are listed for in the grand list, the CLA has decreased from 96.55% to 91.84%. This decrease has a negative impact on the tax rate.

I'm attaching the estimated homestead tax rate worksheet. You can see from this worksheet, that although the spending per equalized pupil is up and CLA is down, the estimated tax rate is down by 3.71% or \$0.0585. For a \$100,000 home, this is an estimated *decrease* of \$58.50 for the year.

As part of my preparation for presenting this budget to City Council and to the taxpayers, I looked at historical spending to see how what we are proposing to spend compares to prior years. As you can see, our proposed budget is ten cents lower than in 2017.

*2017: \$1.6232
*2018: \$1.3528
*2019: \$1.4242
*2020: \$1.3992
*2021: \$1.5522
*2022: \$1.6079
*2023: \$1.5201

Our school system continues to work hard to build strong working relationships with community stakeholders and to keep the line of communication open with everyone involved, including taxpayers. We will be holding an informational meeting for taxpayers before the actual vote to make sure that people in the community are well informed and have an opportunity to have any questions about the budget answered satisfactorily. I will have more detailed information about the approved budget available at that meeting for people to take a look at. Our informational meeting will be on Wednesday, February 23th at 6 pm via Google Meets. If you unable to attend the informational meeting, please feel free to contact me with your questions. I am happy to answer any of your questions or listen to any of your concerns. Thank you for the opportunity to work with Newport City's children. It is truly a privilege and honor to make a positive difference every day.

Sincerely,

Elaine Collins, Principal

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CITY OF NEWPORT

PRELIMINARY WASTEWATER ALLOCATION APPLICATION

Application No. P22-001
Date Received: 1-20-22
Signature: Thom J. Benin

Application Fee: \$30 Residential
\$100 Non-Residential
Reserve Capacity Fee: \$0.12 per gallon
Final Allocation Fee: \$0.24 per gallon

To the City of Newport, Vermont:

The undersigned, being the Owner of the property located
at Cedar Street Parcel ID # 104019
(Number) (Street)

does hereby request a permit for sewer use to serve
the _____
(Residence, apt., commercial bldg., industrial facility, etc.)
at said location. Sewer use is for (check the appropriate boxes)

- Renewal of an existing permit.
- Expansion of an existing connection.
- A new connection.
- A reserve capacity flow allocation.
- Other.

1. Residential:

a. Number of living units by types:

Single Family Homes: 1

Mobile Homes: _____

Apartments: _____

Townhouse/Condominiums: _____

b. Estimate of Flow:

Use the Vermont Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rule, effective
1 January 05, Table 1, Design Flow: 210 gallons per day

2. Non-Residential:

a. Description of Connection's Flow.

Type: _____

Number of Units: _____

b. Estimate of Flow:

Use the Vermont Wastewater System and Potable Water Supply Rule, effective
1 January 05, Table 1, Design Flow: _____ gallons per day

3. Will the strength of the wastewater be typical domestic wastewater?

Yes No

4. Failure of the applicant to meet the requirements of the Sewer Ordinance and this permit, will result in permit revocation.

Page 1 of 2

5. The applicant may not transfer, by any means, this allocation approval to any other person.

6. Submit the application fee with this application. Make the check out to "City of Newport."

7. Submit the allocation fee with this application by separate check. Check will be returned if application is denied.

8. Applicant Information:

Date: 1/20/22

Applicant: City of Newport

Name: Nancy Laforce

Address: 222 Main Street

Signature: Nancy Laforce

Daytime Phone No.: 802-624-3660

Daytime Fax No.: _____

9. Is this a Preliminary or Final Application? Refer to the Newport Sewer Ordinance for the details of the reserve capacity allocation request.

Preliminary
 Final

If this is a final application then ensure the submittals identified in the Sewer Ordinance are included in this application.

Connections which generate a flow over 1000 gpd or have waste strength above residential use must be certified by a Vermont registered engineer.

To be completed by the City:

A. PRELIMINARY COMMITMENT OF RESERVE CAPACITY

1. Your request for permission to use the Newport public sewage system has been received and considered.
2. Preliminary Commitment of Reserve Capacity for sewer system use is granted. You must comply with all provisions of the City's "Sewer Use Ordinance."
3. The committed reserve capacity allocated for you is 210 gallons per day.
4. This preliminary commitment will expire ONE YEAR from the preliminary approval date below.
5. Review for Final Approval will not proceed until your letter request, including required documents, for Final Approval is received.

Preliminary Approval:

City of Newport
City Council _____

Date: _____

Expiration Date: _____

Page 2 of 2

**CITY OF NEWPORT
APPLICATION FOR WATER ALLOCATION/TURN-ON**

OWNER/APPLICANT: Nancy Laforce
ADDRESS: 133 Estates Drive
Newport, UT 05855.

Permit # W22-001

ADDRESS WHERE ALLOCATION IS BEING REQUESTED:
Cedar St Newport, UT 05855

FEE: RESIDENCE - \$30.00
COMMERCIAL - \$30.00
INDUSTRIAL - \$60.00
EXISTING - \$15.00

Allocation GPD 210
City Tax Map # 104019

GENERAL CONDITIONS:

- 1) All costs for connecting to the City water system shall be borne by the owner/applicant.
- 2) All plumbing shall be done in accordance with all applicable national, state and/or local codes.
- 3) Water lines two (2) inches or less in diameter installed within the City's R.O.W shall be K type copper.
- 4) Water lines greater than two (2) inches in diameter shall be ductile iron.
- 5) The owner/applicant shall install a radio read water meter which shall be purchased from the City and paid for by owner/applicant.
- 6) Water and sewer billing will commence from date of water meter purchase.
- 7) An application for water service connection shall be filed with the City when a new service needs to be installed.
- 8) The City must be notified 48 hours in advance of a water turn On/Off to activate system. **No person other than a City employee shall operate a City-owned water shut off valve. The water turn on will not take place unless all conditions have been addressed.**

Special Conditions: _____

Nancy Laforce
Owner/applicant Signature

1/20/2022
Date

Approval: The City of Newport has sufficient uncommitted reserve hydraulic capacity to serve the above proposed project.

Authorized Signature

Date

District 9
Certcode 1015-0

CERTIFICATE OF HIGHWAY MILEAGE
YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 10, 2022

Fill out form, make and file a copy with the Town Clerk, and submit the Mileage Certificate on or before February 20, 2022 to: Vermont Agency of Transportation, Division of Policy, Planning and Intermodal Development, Mapping Section via email to: aot.mileagecertificates@vermont.gov or if necessary via mail to: VTtrans PPAID - Mapping Section, 219 North Main Street, Barre VT 05641.

We, the members of the legislative body of NEWPORT CITY in ORLEANS County on an oath state that the mileage of highways, according to Vermont Statutes Annotated, Title 19, Section 305, added 1985, is as follows:

PART I - CHANGES TOTALS - Please fill in and calculate totals.

Town Highways	Previous Mileage	Added Mileage	Subtracted Mileage	Total	Scenic Highways
Class 1	6.637				0.000
Class 2	6.640				0.000
Class 3	23.03		.04	22.99	0.000
State Highway	1.352				0.000
Total	37.659				0.000
* Class 1 Lane	0.296				
* Class 4	0.01				0.000
* Legal Trail	0.00				

* Mileage for Class 1 Lane, Class 4, and Legal Trail classifications are NOT included in total.

PART II - INFORMATION AND DESCRIPTION OF CHANGES SHOWN ABOVE.

1. **NEW HIGHWAYS:** Please attach Selectmen's "Certificate of Completion and Opening".
2. **DISCONTINUED:** Please attach SIGNED copy of proceedings (minutes of meeting).
3. **RECLASSIFIED/REMEASURED:** Please attach SIGNED copy of proceedings (minutes of meeting).
0.08 mi CL3 TH-139 (Gardner St) designated Not Up To Standards (NUTS) pursuant to 19 VSA 305(a)
4. **SCENIC HIGHWAYS:** Please attach a copy of order designating/discontinuing Scenic Highways.

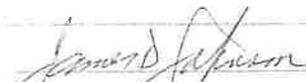
IF THERE ARE NO CHANGES IN MILEAGE: Place an X in the box and sign below.



PART III - SIGNATURES - PLEASE SIGN.

Signatures of Selectmen/ Aldermen/ Trustees:

Signature of T/C/V Clerk:



Date Filed: _____

Please sign ORIGINAL and return it for Transportation signature.

AGENCY OF TRANSPORTATION APPROVAL: Signed copy will be returned to T/C/V Clerk.

APPROVED:

Representative, Agency of Transportation

DATE: