

Special Council Meeting

March 27, 2024

A duly warned Special Meeting of the Newport City Council was held on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Linda Sullivan, Council President Chris Vachon, council members Clark Curtis and Rick Ufford-Chase, City Manager Jonathan DeLaBruere, City Clerk/Treasurer James Johnson, Comptroller Becky Therrien, Public Works Director Tom Bernier, Attorney Beriah Smith, members of the Press and Public.

Mayor Sullivan called the meeting to order at 5:00pm.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

None

Address Notice of Open Meeting Law Violation Received on March 19, 2024

Mr. Vachon moved to find that premature general public knowledge of the confidential attorney client communication made for providing legal services to the city council may put the city at a substantial disadvantage because disclosure of the otherwise confidential advice and communication would harm the city by waiving the cities attorney client privilege. 1 V.S.A. sec 313(a)(1)(F). Seconded by Mr. Curtis, motion carried.

Mr. Curtis moved to enter executive session to address a notice of Open Meeting Law Violation received March 19, 2024, per 1 V.S.A. sec 313(a)(1)(F). Seconded by Mr. Vachon, motion carried.

In open session Mr. Vachon moved to deny the open meeting law violation received on March 19, 2024. Seconded by Mr. Curtis, motion carried.

New Business

None

Old Business

None

Comments by the Public.

Jennifer Bjurling commented on the Rules of Procedure regarding public comment.

Pam Ladds commented on the cost of alleged open meeting law violations and public records requests.

Jay Walsh commented on the cost and actions of an individual regarding open meeting law violations.

Mayor Sullivan commented. (attached)

Adjournment

Mr. Vachon moved to adjourn at 5:29pm. Seconded by Mr., Ufford-chase, motion carried.

Attested _____ This _____ Day of April 2024

_____ Mayor



James Johnson <james.johnson.clerk@newportvermont.org>

My comment

Linda Sullivan <mayor.sullivan@newportvermont.org>
To: James Johnson <james.johnson.clerk@newportvermont.org>

Wed, Mar 27, 2024 at 7:26 PM

Dear Jim, here is my comment from tonight's Special Meeting that you asked for:

It is clear from the continued predictable comments by an attorney resident at City Council meetings that there is a fixation on attacking the Mayor AND the council. It appears from past minutes and videos that this attorney resident may have proceeded with similar attacks on others prior to making us the now desired target. In addition, many of the comments are the interpretation of how that person sees things and that person's interpretation of law and that person's legal opinions. That person is NOT an attorney for the City and while we welcome comments that pertain specifically to the agenda at hand or if not on the agenda at the time of public comment, we ask that our council meetings not be used as a forum to practice law as her legal arguments or positions are not well taken and the council does not act as a trier of facts. Instead, the council is judiciously paying attention to council business and needs this time to attend to such business. This is not a vehicle for grandstanding at the expense of the taxpayers. Regardless of how the comments are designed to appear: for example, attempting to justify the comments thinking that perhaps Newport residents need protection, even though residents have demanded that these comments stop, as well as asking publicly that the person stop wasting the City's legal fees and legal resources, it has become destructive with outbursts when not being recognized, verbalizing how the council should vote, and outright interfering with the business of the council. Warnings have been given to please stop the disruption so that there would be no request for people to leave the council meetings. We welcome constructive comments at the appropriate times when recognized.

Thank you

Linda Joy Sullivan, MBA, CPA, LL.M
Mayor, Newport City
Cell: 802-558-1457
Sent from my iPad