

Council Minutes

August 4, 2025

A duly warned meeting of the Newport City council was held on Monday, August 4, 2025 in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase, Council President Kevin Charboneau, council members Carter Finegan, John Monette, Andrew Touchette, City Clerk/Treasurer James Johnson, Police Chief Travis Bingham, Fire Chief Kevin LaCoss, PW Director tom Bernier, Frank Cheney, Chip Stearns, SPF Attorney John Klesh, Attorney Kevin Kite, members of the Press and Public.

Mayor Ufford-Chase called the meeting to order at 6:07pm.

Additions/Deletions

None

Consent Agenda

Minutes 7/21, AP Warrants 7/23, 7/24, 7/25, 7/31, PR Warrant 7/24, Licenses and Permits Mr. Touchette moved to approve the consent agenda. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

Open Hearing for Staff re: Personnel Policy Revision

Mr. Cheney spoke on Personnel Days and Sick time. Mr. Bernier spoke on the grievance and overtime issues. Chief Bingham noted employees were involved in the original policy and felt we were forced to sign the present policy. Mr. Johnson talked about the overtime issues and agreed with Chief Bingham that department heads were forced to sign the policy.

Executive Session 1 VSA 313(1)(F) for the purpose of Receiving Professional Legal Services/Advice in Relation to the Personnel Policy

Mr. Monette moved to find that premature general public knowledge of the City's attorney client communications regarding the City's Personnel Policy would place the council at a disadvantage by disclosing the City's privileged attorney-client communication and potentially waiving said privilege. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

Ms. Finegan moved to enter executive session to receive professional services/advice in relation to the personnel policy and invite attorney Klesh into the executive session. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

No action taken.

Mr. Monette moved to come out of executive session. Seconded by Mr. Charboneau, motion carried.

Each council member will investigate the issues. Mr. Carboneau will be in charge of the findings.

Executive Session as per VSA 313(1)(F) to Review Proposed Settlement Agreement with Legal Council Regarding Andrew Capello Lawsuit, with Possible Action to Ratify the Settlement.

Mr. Charboneau moved to enter into executive session to review proposed settlement agreement with legal counsel regarding Andrew Capello lawsuit and invite attorney Kevin Kite into executive session. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

No action taken.

Ms. Finegan moved to come out of executive session. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Ms. Finegan moved to approve the settlement agreement in the case of the Andrew Capello lawsuit as presented on August 4, 2025. Seconded By Mr. Charboneau, motion carried.

Review of Finances with Chip Stearns and Potential vote

Mr. Stearns presented a list of assets to be closed and the funds moved to the general fund (attached) Ms. Finegan moved to authorize the City Treasurer to close and consolidate the following accounts into the general fund checking. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

Mr. Monette moved to authorize the City Treasurer to adjust the Projects Fund balance to zero and move that value into the general fund. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Chip Stearns reviewed balance sheets, and the budget status report for the first period with the council.

Verbal Report on the Audit

Mr. Johnson and Mr. Stearns reported that the audit is in much better shape than last year's audit. The time line set by the council should be on track and the audit draft would be ready by mid-September.

Executive Session per VSA 313(a)(3) for the Purpose of Considering the Appointment of a Public Official to the Planning commission

Mr. Touchette moved to enter executive session to consider the appointment of a public official to the Planning commission. Seconded by Mr. Charboneau, motion carried with Mr. Monette abstaining.

No action.

Ms. Finegan moved to come out of executive session. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Ms. Finegan moved to advertise the vacant position on the Planning Commission, and ask the Planning Commission to bring forth a slate of names for council consideration. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried. Mr. Monette abstained.

Presentation of Local Emergency Management Plan by Chief LaCoss

Chief LaCoss presented the yearly Emergency Management Plan with name changes and corrections. Mr. Moette moved to adopt the Local Emergency Management Plan (NIMS). Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

Task Force Reports

Mr. Monette reported on the Water/Sewer task Force including meter installation and rates. Ms. Finegan reported on the Financial Reporting and Fiscal Practices task force including presentation to the public on the five ballot initiatives. Mr. Charboneau reported on the housing task force with a meeting on Wednesday, August 6th at 3:30 pm, Mr. Touchette reported on the Fire Department Strategic Planning task force they are collecting data for a management system.

Public Comment

Karen Geraghty commented on the financial issues and the difference between the charter and state statues.

Ann Chiarello commented on the previous commenters comments made in public.

New Business

None

Old Business

None

Next Meeting Dates

August 11, 2025, Public Hearing on Special town Meeting regarding Ballot initiatives on August 12, 2025

August 12, 2025, Special Town Meeting

Mr. Touchette moved to set the next regular council meeting for August 19, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

Adjournment

Mr. Charboneau moved to adjourn at 10:40 pm. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

Attested James Johnson this 21st day August of August, 2025

B. Ryker Mayor

8/4/25



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

Suggested Motions August 4th

Willis "Chip" Stearns <chip@nemrc.com>

Fri, Aug 1, 2025 at 9:23 AM

To: rick uffordchase <rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org>

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

The following cash accounts have been reviewed with the Treasurer and are believed to no longer remain as their purpose has been met:

I move the Newport City Council authorize the City Treasurer to close and consolidate the following accounts into the general fund checking:

- 5-00-00.25 a CDBG MMA at M&T (503.98)
 - 5-00-00.30 a CDBG MMA at PSB (29,642.25)
 - 5-00-00.40 a CDBG UDAG at PSB (1,691.91)
 - 6-00-00.30 a START savings at PSB (578.74)
 - ~~6-00-00.60 a Stone Garden Savings at PSB (4,377.29)~~
 - 7-00-01.20 a Prouty Beach Improvement savings at PSB (1425.71)
 - 7-00-02.00 an Ice Rink savings at PSB (8,001.34)
 - 7-00-06.00 a Gardner Park Improvement savings at M&T (50.89)
 - 7-00-07.00 a Performing Arts savings at M&T (1,026.27)
 - 7-00-07.10 a Scholarship savings at M&T (2,200.11)
 - 9-00-06.70 a Water Treatment savings at M&T (12.52)
 - 9-00-06.95 an ARPA savings a PSB (20.00)
- for a total value of \$49,531.01 prior to any interest earned before closing.

There is a \$17 hanging value in the Projects Fund 2 which serves no purpose. After discussion with the auditors the following motion is suggested:

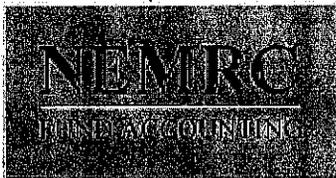
I move the Newport City Council authorize the City Treasurer to adjust the Projects Fund balance to zero and move that value into the general fund.

Note: this is only an accounting step and does not involve actual cash!

Attached are the three reports for review at the City Council meeting:

- Interfund Balances
- Balance Sheets
- FY26 YTD Budget Status

Thank you,
Willis D. "Chip" Stearns II



800-387-1110
www.nemrc.com

3 attachments

- VTNEWC Interfund Balances 2025 08 01.pdf
14K
- VTNEWC Balance Sheets 2025 08 01.pdf
38K
- VTNEWC Budget Status Supressed to headers 2025 08 01.pdf
40K