

Special Council Meeting

January 7, 2026

A duly warned Special Meeting of the Newport city council was held on Wednesday, January 7, 2026 in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase, Council President Kevin Charboneau on line, Carter Finegan, John Monette on line, Andrew Touchette on line, City Clerk/Treasurer James D. Johnson, Kari Schulze Financial and Office Administrator, members of the press and public.

Mayor Ufford-Chase called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm.

Additions/Deletions

None

Mayor Ufford-Chase stated his thoughts on the Budget and Charter process.

Council Action to approve Proposed Charter Language

Council members stated their thoughts on the Charter process.

Ms. Finegan moved to amend the Charter for the City of Newport as shown in the Charter proposal to be dated January 8, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Monette.

Discussion, the council took public comments.

Motion carried.

Mr. Monette moved to find that the charter proposal to be dated January 8, 2026 is too long and unwieldy to set out in amended form, so the notices of the public hearings and warning for the City's Annual Meeting shall include a concise summary of the charter proposal with copies of the approved charter amendment on file and available for public inspection and copying at the City Clerk's office upon request. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Mr. Monette moved that because the current City Charter is more than 100 years old and contains language that is unwieldy and outdated, the council believes that it is important to create a new, clear, simplified document that adopts best practices in municipal governance and acknowledges current state statutes, and that makes it clear that the City of Newport is committed to a Council/Manager form of government. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Touchette moved to warn a Public Hearing on the proposed charter on January 21, 2026 at 6pm in the council room and warn the second Public Hearing on the proposed Charter on January 26, 2026 at 6pm in the council room as part of the regular council meeting. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

Ms. Finegan moved to warn a Special Meeting on January 28, 2026 for the council to consider the content of what they heard in the public hearings making changes they would like to the charter proposal and determine whether or not to move the charter proposal forward for the voters to consider on March 3, 2026. Seconded by Mr. Charboneau, motion carried.

Mr. Touchette moved to warn a Special Meeting on January 13, 2026 with Dominic Cloud. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

Public Comment

Karen Geraghty commented on the Mayors statements.

Ann Chiarello commented on the TIF.

Jen Hopkins commented on the grant report for Saturday's meeting.

New Business

None

Old Business

Mr. Johnson noted a BTA meeting on 1/8/26 at 5pm.

Next Meeting Dates

Special town Meeting 1/10/26 from 9am – 1pm.

Special Council Meeting 1/13/26 at 6pm.

1st Public Hearing for proposed charter 1/21/26 at 6pm.

Special Council Meeting 1/21/26 at 7pm or immediately following the Public Hearing.

Regular council Meeting 1/26/26 at 6pm.

2nd Public Hearing for the proposed Charter 1/26/26 at 6pm.

Adjournment

Mr. Charboneau moved to adjourn at 8:40 pm. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

Attested *James Johnson* This *26th* Day of January 2026

R. P. [Signature] Mayor