

## **Special Council Meeting**

**January 13, 2026**

A duly warned Special Meeting of the Newport City council was held on Tuesday, January 13, 2026 in the council room in the Newport Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase, Council President Kevin Charboneau, council members John Monette, Andrew Touchette, Carter Finegan, City Clerk/Treasurer James Johnson, Dominic Cloud, Dave LaForce, Brian Gray, Stephanie Clark, PW Director Tom Bernier, members of the public.

Mayor Ufford-Chase called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

### **Additions/Deletions**

Add 2026 meeting date schedule

### **Meeting Date Schedule for 2026**

Mayor Ufford-Chase provided the council with a proposed meeting schedule to review. Action will be taken at the January 21, 2026 meeting.

### **Review Potential New Hire to fill Position in the Water/Sewer Department**

Mr. Touchette moved to enter into executive session to review new hire position in the water/sewer department and invite PW Director Tom Bernier into executive session per 1 V.S.A. 313(a)(3). Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

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

No action.

Mr. Touchette moved to authorize the Director of Public Works to offer the full time position in the Water/Sewer Department. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

### **Planning Meeting with Dominic cloud for City Manager Hiring Process**

Dominic Cloud shared general information about himself and the manager search process.

Mr. Monette moved to enter executive session to discuss the appointment or evaluation of a public officer and find that premature general public knowledge of sensitive matters regarding council deliberations would compromise the City and its ability to carry out an effective search. Per 1 V.S.A. 313 (a) (3). Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Ms. Finegan moved to enter executive session to discuss the search process for a City Manager and invite Dominic Cloud into executive session. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Mr. Monette moved to come out of executive session. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried. No action.

Mr. Monette moved that a City Manager search committee shall be comprised of two City councilors, two staff members, and two members of the public. The city council shall appoint all members and a designate a Chair. The charge of the committee shall be to work with the consultant to develop a candidate profile and other recruitment materials, interview candidates in the first round, and recommend a slate of candidates for consideration and interview by the city council. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

If interested in serving on the committee, please send a letter of interest, in confidence, to Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase by January 26, 2026 at [rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org](mailto:rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org)

Mr. Cloud stated that the committee will meet in working sessions and the public will opportunity to comment. The committee will create recruitment document and candidate confidentiality shall be upheld.

#### **Executive Session Regarding Next Steps on downtown Development as Per 1 V.S.A. 313(a) (2)**

Mr. Touchette moved to enter executive session for the purpose of hearing an update on sensitive matters regarding potential planning commitments as they relate to possible real estate negotiations regarding downtown development and invite Dave LaForce, Brian Gray, and Stephanie Clarke into executive session. Seconded by Mr. Monette, motion carried.

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

No action.

#### **Public Comment**

Ann Chiarello commented on the powers of city manager and the city council.

#### **New Business**

None

**Old Business**

None

**Next Meeting Dates**

Public Hearing January 21<sup>st</sup>, Public Hearing and regular council meeting January 26<sup>th</sup> and Special council Meeting January 28<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment**

Mr. Charboneau moved to adjourn at 8:40 p.m. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Attested James Johnson This 26<sup>th</sup> Day of January 2026

[Signature] Mayor