

Special Council Meeting

April 9, 2026

A duly warned Special Council meeting was held on April 9, 2026 in the council room in the Newport City Municipal Building. Present were Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase, Council President Carter Finegan, council members John Monette, Sharon Pare', Andrew Touchette, Financial and Office Administrator Kari Schulze, City Clerk/Treasurer James Johnson, PW Director Tom Bernier, Dominic Cloud, Police Chief Travis Bingham, Zoning Administrator Frank Cheney, members of the Press and Public.

Mayor Ufford-Chase called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

Additions/Deletions

None

Consent Agenda, Approval of Minutes 4/6/26

Mr. Touchette moved to approve the minutes of April 6, 2026. Seconded by Ms. Pare', motion carried.

NBRC Grant: Authorize Official Resolution (attached)

Ms. Pare' moved to approve the resolution with NBRC as presented and read. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Review Manager Form of Government

Mr. Cloud reviewed the Council/Manager form of Government with the council.

Review and Approve City Manager Job Description (attached)

Mr. Cloud reviewed the City Manager's job description with the council. Language changes were made.

Mr. Touchette moved to accept the manager's job description with changes. Seconded by Ms. Pare', motion carried.

Review and Approve the City Manager Position Posting (attached)

Mr. Cloud reviewed the manager position posting. Changes were made to the description. Including travel into Canada, City Managers role would be to prepare and advise the Mayor and City Council on major city agreements such as union contracts, insurance settlements, real estate and legal matters, and changing the Bachelor's Degree from required to preferred.

Mayor Ufford-Chase stated he would except a motion to approve the City Manager's job description as presented with the two changes, Oh, actually three changes, we're also going to change the Bachelor's Degree from required to preferred.

Mr. Touchette moved to make those changes. Seconded by Ms. Pare', motion carried.

New Business

Ms. Pare noted that the MOU with NDD has expired. Asked if it could be extended until another one is negotiated. Ms. Finegan moved to extend the MOU with NDD until June 30, 2026. Seconded by Ms. Pare', motion carried.

Ms. Pare' noted the school budget vote on Tuesday, the 14th.

Old Business

None

Next Meeting Date

Mr. Touchette moved to set the next meeting for April 20, 2026. Seconded by Ms. Finegan, motion carried.

Adjournment

Ms. Pare' moved to adjourn at 6:30 PM. Seconded by Mr. Touchette, motion carried.

Attested James Johnson This 4th Day of May 2026

R. Ufford-Chase Mayor

Memo: From Mayor Rick Ufford-Chase

To: Council Members

Re: Authorization to pursue NBRC Grant Request for Main Street Infrastructure improvements

Date 4/7/2026

Council Members,

Following a pre-application that was submitted by City Staff and Newport Downtown Development with support from Annie McLean from NVDA, The Northern Borders Regional Commission has invited the City of Newport to submit a funding request to take on a major infrastructure project to improve water and sewer lines on Main Street and carry out pedestrian, bike and vehicle transportation improvements above grade. This project, if it were to move forward, would be a major step toward preparing for serious economic development efforts in downtown Newport.

Initial estimates from VHB suggest that the cost of this project would be approximately \$3,750,000, and, if awarded, this grant from NBRC would cover \$3,000,000, or 80%, of the total project cost. The City is exploring possible sources of funding to cover our 20%, \$750,000 match. If awarded, no grant would be accepted without a clear explanation and Council approval of a plan to secure the necessary local match.

This is very exciting news. The process is extremely competitive, and this invitation to apply for such a significant amount represents a high level of interest from NBRC in supporting the development of critical public infrastructure to rebuild Newport's downtown. Grants such as this one are critically important to the success of any potential application for TIF or CHIP status by the City of Newport.

For now, the Council is simply being asked to name an Authorized Representative to be the primary contact for NBRC. My recommendation is that we name Grants Administrator Frank Cheney the Authorized Representative.

City Manager..... (802) 334-5136
City Clerk/Treasurer 334-2112
Public Works/Parks 334-2124
Zoning Adm./Assessor 334-6992
Recreation 334-6345
Fax..... 334-5632



City of Newport
222 Main Street
Newport, Vermont 05855
www.newportvermont.org

CITY OF NEWPORT MUNICIPAL RESOLUTION

Resolved by the City Council of Newport, VT as follows:

WHEREAS, the City of Newport VT has been awarded Northern Border Regional Commission funding in the amount of \$ 3,000,000 for the Downtown Redevelopment Project;

NOW THEREFORE, the Grants Administrator, Frank Cheney, is hereby authorized, on behalf of the City of Newport, VT to be the Authorized Official and apply for, accept, and expend grant funds from the Northern Border Regional Commission. As Authorized Official, Frank Cheney has permission to sign all Northern Borders Regional Commission investment documents that bind the applicant.

Approved this 9th day of April, 2026

Rick Ufford- Chase, Mayor

Carter Finegan, President

Andrew Touchette

John Monette

Sharon Pare

**City Manager
Job Description**

Nature and Scope

The Newport City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the City. They work closely with the Mayor and City Council to develop policy priorities, pursue strategic opportunities, and implement the City Council's vision through the City's departments and programs.

The Manager is responsible for developing and managing the annual budget, managing economic development projects, overseeing personnel matters, implementing City Council decisions, managing the delivery of City services, and administering City departments efficiently and effectively.

Essential Functions

The Manager serves as the critical link between the Mayor / Council and the staff and is responsible for the following duties and responsibilities:

- Serve as the principal advisor and staff member to the Mayor / Council; ensure that City Council meetings are well staffed with clear, concise materials and action items that facilitate the work of the Council.
- Manage all operations and personnel of the City in accordance with City Charter.
- In close collaboration with the Mayor, facilitate the development of policy-oriented goals and objectives at the City Council level and implement those goals and objectives through the Department Heads and other staff.
- Collaborate with the Mayor and City Council, Newport Downtown Development staff, and other economic development advisors to advance redevelopment efforts of the City.
- Cultivate an accomplished team of Department Heads and facilitate their collaboration in support of City priorities; provide the supervision and performance management necessary to build a high-performance organization.
- Ensure the preparation and implementation of various City budgets and capital programs and regular reporting on the financial condition of the City; serve as chief procurement officer for the City.
- Develop or maintain a deep knowledge of Vermont municipal management and the laws, best practices, and emerging trends in the field; serve as resident expert on municipal government.

- Take a leadership role in preparation of major City agreements such as union contracts, insurance settlements, real estate, and legal matters for Council authorization.
- Serve as primary press contact for the City, unless a Department Head or the Mayor is more appropriate due to the subject matter.
- Serve as a principal representative of the City; regularly engage with stakeholders, partner organizations, and the general public. Appear formally and informally at City and community events.
- Provide the Mayor / City Council with strategic advice that includes professional expertise of the staff, operational constraints, and legal requirements.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

- Strong, working knowledge of local government.
- Ability to think strategically and anticipate possible outcomes based on knowledge and experience.
- Ability to build consensus and find common ground between different perspectives.
- Strong personnel and project management skills.
- Ability to gain the trust and respect of others.
- Ability to use tact and diplomacy to express disagreement or concerns to others while still serving as a strong collaborator.
- Ability to inspire confidence of others.
- Ability to accept constructive criticism, communicate, and work well with others.
- Ability to build and maintain effective relations with State and Federal agencies and representatives, City leadership, business leaders, and community stakeholders.
- Ability to drive and travel locally, statewide, and into Canada.

EDUCATION, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE

- Bachelor's Degree preferred.
- At least five years of public management experience.
- Working knowledge of principles and practices of public administration.

PHYSICAL DEMANDS / WORK ENVIRONMENT

This is an office-based position. The Manager is expected to have a physical presence throughout the City. While performing the duties of this job, the Manager is required to communicate frequently with the public, City Councilors, and City staff members, operate office equipment, move throughout the City, and travel throughout the State and into Canada. The Manager is often required to sit for long periods of time.

ICMA CODE OF ETHICS

The mission of ICMA is to create excellence in local governance by developing and fostering professional local government management worldwide. To further this mission, certain principles, as enforced by the Rules of Procedure, shall govern the conduct of every member of ICMA, who shall:

1. We believe professional management is essential to effective, efficient, equitable, and democratic local government.
2. Affirm the dignity and worth of local government services and maintain a deep sense of social responsibility as a trusted public servant.
3. Be dedicated to the highest ideals of honor and integrity in all public and personal relationships in order that the member may merit the respect and confidence of the elected officials, of other officials and employees, and of the public.
4. Serve the best interests of all community members.
5. Submit policy proposals to elected officials; provide them with facts, and technical and professional advice about policy options; and collaborate with them in setting goals for the community and organization.
6. Recognize that elected representatives are accountable to their community for the decisions they make; members are responsible for implementing those decisions.
7. Refrain from all political activities which undermine public confidence in professional administrators. Refrain from participation in the election of the members of the employing legislative body.
8. Continually improve professional capabilities and those of others while fostering growth and development through ethical leadership and effective management practices.
9. Keep the community informed on local government affairs. Encourage and facilitate active engagement and constructive communication between community members and all local government officials.
10. Oppose efforts to interfere with professional responsibilities by consistently executing official duties, policies, and processes with an unwavering commitment to unbiased public service.
11. Manage all personnel matters with fairness and impartiality.
12. Public office is a public trust. A member shall not leverage his or her position for personal gain or benefit.

Adopted by the ICMA Executive Board in 1924, and most recently revised by the membership in May 2025.

City Manager Newport, Vermont

The Opportunity

The City of Newport, Vermont (pop. 4,500) is recruiting for an experienced public sector manager to serve as its next City Manager. Located on the southern shore of Lake Memphremagog, Newport serves as the economic and cultural hub of Vermont's Northeast Kingdom (NEK). The NEK offers four seasons of outdoor recreation anchored by Jay Peak ski resort, miles of hiking, biking, and four wheeling, and Newport's lakefront downtown.

Newport's downtown is recovering from a failed private redevelopment project. The City has responded with the Newport Initiative -- an ambitious vision to form public/private partnerships to redevelop critical downtown properties, increase housing opportunities, and expand the tax base. For more on the Newport Initiative, visit discovernewportvt.com.

The City Manager will help achieve this vision by recruiting private sector partners, utilizing development incentives such as tax increment financing, and promoting the City's vision to the public and other stakeholders in writing and in person. The Mayor and City Council envision a capable leader who inspires public confidence, works well with community partners, and can build and maintain public trust.

The Position

The City Manager is the Chief Administrative Officer of the City. They work closely with the Mayor and City Council to develop policy priorities, pursue strategic opportunities, and implement the Council's vision in the City's departments and programs. The Manager is responsible for developing and managing the annual budget, managing economic development projects, overseeing personnel matters, implementing City Council decisions, and managing the delivery of City services.

Newport is a full service community that provides police, fire, water/sewer, recreation, and public works services in seven square miles. The Manager reports to the five-member City Council, comprised of four Aldermen and the Mayor who are elected at large and typically meet twice a month. The Mayor and City Council provide broad policy direction while delegating operational matters to the Manager. The Mayor provides political leadership to advance key City initiatives while the Manager provides administrative leadership.

The Manager oversees all day-to-day operations and is responsible for building a strong leadership team. There are 47 full time employees and two unions (police and public works). Labor relations are generally strong. The City has combined budgets of \$13 million across multiple funds. A Finance and Office Administrator assists with budgeting and human resource administration.

The Manager must be the consummate generalist and able to easily transition from strategic conversations about redevelopment opportunities and growing the tax base to operational matters such

as camping regulations on the City owned campground and annual street paving. While the position has many responsibilities, it is primarily a people-centered position. The Manager must be both affable and knowledgeable, and able to connect with others from all walks of life. A detailed job description is available at newportvermont.org.

Desired Characteristics (Text Box)

- Fit: the Manager should enjoy living in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom.
- Trustworthy: an honest broker who upholds high ethical standards.
- Stabilizing force: the Manager should provide stability in a position with recent turnover.
- Strategic: the Manager must be a strategic thinker and able to navigate through challenging political waters.
- Consensus builder: the Manager must be skilled at finding the common ground between different perspectives and helping to forge consensus.
- Energetic: the Manager should be genuinely excited over the challenge of managing a resurgent community and the process of renewal.
- Knowledgeable: previous experience as a Manager or a department head in a full service community.
- Pragmatic: able to think creatively and solve problems both large and small.
- Budget experience: previous experience building budgets and achieving economies of scale or efficiency.

Compensation and Qualifications

The City Council envisions starting the next Manager with an annual salary between \$125,000 and \$140,000, depending on qualifications and experience. Newport covers 100% of health insurance for employees and family. Retirement benefits are provided through the Vermont Municipal Employees Retirement System Group C, with full retirement eligibility at age 55. A relocation stipend of up to \$7,500 is available. The Manager will receive either a City car or a mileage stipend.

A Bachelor's Degree is preferred. Previous leadership experience in a comparable organization is required. While city residency is not required, reasonable proximity to Newport is important for participation in the civic life of the community.

The Process

The City has formed a search committee who will conduct the first round of interviews. The committee is comprised of two City Councilors, two staff members, and two members of the public. Recruitment is being managed by the Vermont League of Cities and Towns. Initial review of resumes is planned for May 29, 2026. To apply, please send a PDF formatted resume and cover letter via email to Dominic Cloud at dcloud@vlct.org. Mr. Cloud can also be reached via phone or text at (802) 309 – 1775.

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST AS REQUIRED BY THE VT CODE OF ETHICS
TO BE FILED ONLY IF A PUBLIC SERVANT CHOOSES TO ACT

PUBLIC SERVANT INFORMATION	
Name and title/position of public servant:	Rick Ufford-Chase
Agency/Department:	Mayor of City of Newport, VT
Office Phone:	845 608 4056
Office E-mail:	rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org
In my capacity as a public servant, I am expected to take certain action(s) in the performance of my official duties. Under present circumstances, a reasonable person could conclude that I am, or will be, confronted with a conflict of interest in the performance of these duties. A conflict of interest is defined as a direct or indirect interest in the outcome of a matter pending before me, or the public body in which I serve, that is greater than that of another person generally affected by the outcome of the matter. The interest can be my own, that of an immediate family or household member, or of a business associate. I am filing this disclosure form to disclose the facts surrounding this potential conflict of interest, and to explain why, despite the conflict, I choose to take official action.	
CONFLICT OF INTEREST INFORMATION	
Briefly state the nature of the conflict (including identities of all potentially affected parties or properties, whether the conflict is ongoing or a one-time event, potential or perceived benefits, and any other relevant information).	At a special meeting of City Council on Thursday, April 9 2026, Council member Sharon Parè made a motion to extend the MOU between the City Council and the Board of Newport Downtown Development that ran from Dec 24, 2024 to April 1, 2026 in order to create some time to negotiate a new MOU. I recused myself from the conversation entirely due to the Conflict of Interest inherent in my dual roles as the Mayor of Newport and the Director of NDD, and asked Council President Carter Finegan to take over as Chair of the meeting for that conversation. The Council voted to extend the MOU through the end of June, 2026, though they did not yet take any action to determine the process they will follow to renegotiate the terms of the MOU.
Explain your relationship to the person or organization at issue.	☐ Self ☐ Immediate family member ☒ Business I am associated with ☐ Business a family member is associated with ☐ Business partner ☐ Property I own or co-own ☐ Property owned or co-owned by a family member ☐ Other [Explain]:

State the action(s) you intend to take, and how your action(s) may affect the person or organization at issue.	I will continue to recuse myself from participating in any negotiations between the Board of NDD and the Council regarding this matter, and I will continue to ask Council President Carter Finegan to preside over any Council deliberations about the MOU.
Explain why, despite the relationship, you will act on the matter (Check at least one box)	☐ The conflict is de minimis in nature ☐ My action on the matter is ministerial or clerical ☐ My action will not benefit me [or the person or organization at issue] any more than others who are generally affected by the outcome of the matter ☐ The conflict is amorphous, intangible, or speculative ☐ I cannot legally or practically delegate the matter to another person ☐ I have received advice from the Ethics Commission that permits my action(s) ☐ Other [Explain]:
Confirmation and Signature	
Confirmation	☒ This disclosure fully discloses the nature of my conflict of interest. Taking into account the facts that I have disclosed above, I believe that I nonetheless can perform my official duties objectively and fairly, and in the best interest of the State.
Public servant signature:	<i>Rick Ufford-Chase</i>
Date:	4/14/20

Attach additional pages if necessary.

Audit trail

Details

FILE NAME	COI re NDD MOU 4 14 26 - 4/14/26, 8:44 AM.pdf
STATUS	 Signed
STATUS TIMESTAMP	2026/04/14 14:18:04 UTC

Activity

 SENT	kari.schulze@newportvermont.org sent a signature request to: • Rick Ufford-Chase (rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org)	2026/04/14 12:46:32 UTC
 SIGNED	Signed by Rick Ufford-Chase (rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org)	2026/04/14 14:18:04 UTC
 COMPLETED	This document has been signed by all signers and is complete	2026/04/14 14:18:04 UTC

The email address indicated above for each signer may be associated with a Google account, and may either be the primary email address or secondary email address associated with that account.