



Keith Chapman
Town Manager

TOWN OF NEWINGTON

131 CEDAR STREET
NEWINGTON, CONNECTICUT 06111

MAYOR BETH DELBUONO

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Town Clerk

NEWINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

SPECIAL MEETING MINUTES

Saturday, March 19, 2022

This meeting was presented as a Zoom Webinar/Hybrid Meeting.

Mayor DelBuono called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

1. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

2. ROLL CALL

Councilor Braverman *(via Zoom)*

Deputy Mayor Budrejko

Councilor Camillo *(via Zoom)*

Councilor Donahue

Councilor Manke

Councilor Nagel

Councilor Page

Councilor Radda

Mayor DelBuono

Staff Attendees:

Keith Chapman, Town Manager *(via Zoom)*

Janet Murphy, Director of Finance

Gary Fuerstenberg, Town Engineer

Joe Salamone, Director of Facilities Maintenance

Paul Boutot, Chief Information Officer

Carol LaBrecque, Director of Human Services

Jeffrey Trommer, Fire Chief *(via Zoom)*

Tom Lapierre, Assistant Fire Chief *(via Zoom)*

Brian Whalen, Fire Commissioner

Renata Bertotti, Town Planner

Rob Hillman, Highway Department Superintendent *(via Zoom)*

James E. Krupiński, Town Clerk

Susan Gibbon, Council Clerk

3. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION - ON AGENDA ONLY **(Via Zoom Application or Phone)**

(3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

- None

4. REMARKS BY COUNCILORS ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

- None

5. CONSIDERATION OF OLD BUSINESS (Action My Be Taken)

A. Department Budget Reviews

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Change</u>
• CIP	1100	+8.4%

- Janet Murphy stated the total increase for CIP is \$587,482, brief discussion of changes from prior years; five year plan; minor adjustments due to increase in costs. Department heads available if you have any questions. Historical properties not included in this list.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed General Government.
- Councilor Manke if monies for historical properties was spent.
- Mr. Salamone stated there is \$33,000.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked why historical properties aren't included this year.
- Ms. Murphy stated it wasn't a department request. You added it on at the end last year.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked if the \$25,000 for beatification has been spent?
- Ms. Murphy stated that most of it has been spent.
- Councilor Camillo stated Company 3 has a lot of history, asked to reconsider demolition of Old Company 3.
- Councilor Donahue asked if here was a grant for the roof repair.
- Councilor Radda stated she too has concern about demolition of old Company 3 on Chapman Street Could be a historical site/property.
- Joe Salomone believe it is beyond repair; cost to repair and replace doesn't make sense
- Paul Boutot provided an update on radio tower project; within budget; some additional costs will occur; FD has approx. 50 outdated radios. NPS system can be maintained; price to upgrade to new system approx. half million dollars. Legacy needs infrastructure still needed.
- Mayor DelBuono asked if there was a time frame
- Mr. Boutot explained process and time frame.
- Councilor Nagel asked if BOE was on board with the new radio system
- Mr. Boutot in contact with Mr. Morgan at BOE.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Public Safety.
- Councilor Manke asked about the door openers.
- Commissioner Whelan stated that is for the openers.
- Assistant Chief Lapierre stated we've had trouble in the past; not what we have in our homes; need to meet specific requirements. Don't want to be surprised with expensive repairs.
- Chief Trommer stated the door openers is inclusive of the entire door system.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Public Works.
- Councilor Page asked the town engineer about the bridge repairs.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated most bridges in Newington are in fair to better condition. Only two conventional bridges are on Dowd Street and Main Street north of Stoddard.
- Councilor Page pleased to see Elm Hill Business streetscape on list.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated a lot of grants need matching funds. Many funding opportunities are beyond our budget means.
- Councilor Donahue asked if there was grant in place for town hill
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about pedestrian overpasses.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated that these are pedestrian bridges. Have sidewalk plan in place. Pedestrian and traffic plans don't mix. DOT has plans to improve traffic flow on the Berlin Turnpike and Cedar Street; anticipate more people arriving on green; not red. Less and less pedestrian friendly.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that any plans will come to the council.

- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated to the council and DOT. Just see money. Do have bike routes in plan.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked if there was grant monies for sidewalks between Churchill and Price Chopper.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated we can't get more grant monies until we spend the matching grant monies. The money we have is for Garfield Street so we can get the money for the next project.
- Councilor Page stated we have concerns about a pedestrian friendly Newington.
- Councilor Nagel thanked Mr. Fuerstenberg for bringing up the lighting in the Berlin Turnpike. Will those pedestrian bridges come up and over the roads and be handicapped accessible.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated that they will have ramps. Imagine something attractive.
- Councilor Nagel stated that it's good you are looking to have sidewalks in certain areas.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about the state increasing traffic.
- Mr. Fuerstenberg stated that they are trying to increase the through flow. When I-84 construction in Hartford ever happens, they will be coming through Newington.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that we should have some state assistance during that time.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Community Development.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about the Transit Village Design District Guidelines for Cedar Street. Didn't we have someone come in and design several years ago?
- Ms. Bertotti stated that this CIP request started with redoing zoning regulations. Don't have enough staff; that particular section was not in our books/zoning map. It is a 70-page form based code regulation, very detailed. It's a 60-acre property but it doesn't include any economic analysis or costs for land consolidation.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated we voted on the TVDD zone.
- Mr. Bertotti stated this is not about a train station.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko stated that this is an area of potential development.
- Ms. Bertotti stated in order for this to happen there has to be some sort of train station. This type of study would inform neighborhoods and what can happen.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Parks and Recreation. Previously proposed projects. Increases in cost.
- Councilor Manke asked about the synthetic turf replacement reserve.
- Ms. Murphy stated it is \$171,500; uses fund to repair; cost to replace is between \$700,000 - \$1 million.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked if improvements included security systems or cameras.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Board of Education. Included this year is School Bus replacement.
- Mayor DelBuono asked if the school entrances was for one specific school or all schools. Is this ongoing? Do they have a list; area any completed and more to go?
- Mr. Murphy stated that she thinks they are looking to do all the schools.
- Councilor Page asked for information on the busses, etc.
- Ms. Murphy stated that she does have a list of busses. Can ask them when they come on Tuesday.
- Councilor Donahue asked if this means there are no busses in their budget.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that typically they have some sort of bulk proceeds that they have to purchase busses.
- Councilor Nagel stated that busses used to be in town CIP, is this for replacement or is it entirely different.
- Ms. Murphy stated that they always asked us to do it this way and we just didn't fund it.
- Councilor Nagel stated that this was always in place, monies from other places.
- Ms. Murphy stated that they didn't fund this over the past several years.
- Mayor DelBuono asked Mr. Murphy to find out how many busses were purchased last year.
- Councilor Manke stated that this is the only place for busses to be purchased; not out of operational.

- Debt Service 1000 -5.37%

- Ms. Murphy reviewed the long-term debt schedule. Table only reflects current outstanding debt. Have been fiscally conservative. Haven't completely gone out to bond for town hall monies. Can't do that until we get the grant monies for Transition Academy; BOE is looking into status. Estimated to be \$1.45 million; first bonding for BOE project next June. Interest rates at last bonding was 1.88, next looking at 3.55. June 2023 and June 2024. Cost for debt increased.
- Councilor Page asked about bonding. How does bonding affect mil rate and household expenditure?
- Ms. Murphy stated that before we go out to bonding we provide an analysis.
- Councilor Page asked how that effects our bond rating.
- Ms. Murphy stated that we have to with many factors. Don't like to see special appropriations. Going out to bid does not adversely effect our rating.

- Equipment Reserve 2000 +0.47%

- Ms. Murphy reviewed Equipment Reserve. Having problems with reserve; haven't been funding balance properly; all projections want to have funding.
- Councilor Manke asked about the vehicles.
- Councilor Donahue stated we are getting rid of a 2013 Explorer and keeping
- Mr. Hillman stated we will be keeping the 2013 and sending the older vehicle to auction.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Police Department. Cruisers are now here.
- Mayor DelBuono asked if these were cars or SUVs.
- Councilor Manke stated that we will move the oldest one down.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Fire Department. Nothing new this year, but 2023/24 year get funding in place.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Highway.
- Mayor DelBouno stated she had a resident ask why we still sweep our streets if we use salt instead of sands.
- Mr. Hillman stated it is all part of our MS4 permit. Don't want debris going into catch basins and waterways.
- Councilor Manke stated he and Councilor Page want to know what an MS4 permit is.
- Mr. Hillman stated that is maintenance of waterway and catch basins in town.
- Ms. Murphy reviewed Parks.
- Councilor Page asked if there are set rates for purchases.
- Ms. Murphy stated that are lot of these are purchased under state contracts.

Mayor DelBuono called a recess at 10:39.am.

Mayor DelBuono called the meeting back into session at 10:49 a.m.

- Revenues

- Mayor DelBouno asked Janet to provide list of changes she has.
- Councilor Manke asked about Indian Hill Country Club under rentals
- Ms. Murphy stated that own it, that is their payment to us yearly
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked out Other Town Property rentals
- Ms. Murphy stated that this the cell tower
- Councilor Page asked about investments
- Ms. Murphy stated that we can only invest in certain funds
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about blighted premises, snow removal fines, zoning citations fines
- Ms. Murphy stated that nothing has been collected. Refunds for town; reduced recycling rebates.
- Councilor Page has a questions regarding Human Services-Counseling Fees

- Ms. LaBrecque stated that we have been using virtual meetings; reduction in staff.
- Councilor Donahue asked about Educational Cost Sharing. Does that pass through the BOE.
- Ms. Murphy stated that stays with us. This grant comes directly to us.
- Councilor Manke asked if the \$14,436,217 has been approved.
- Ms. Murphy stated not yet, but they usually don't like to change.
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about the FEMA storm assistance
- Ms. Murphy stated that is one time for August storm, covered regular time, overtime, equipment usage
- Councilor Page asked about the federal monies
- Ms. Murphy stated that is not in here that is listed under grants. State legislatures have proposed to cap vehicle taxes at 29 mils, but the state will reimburse and make whole.

- Health Services (CCHD) 511 +4.23%

- Councilor Nagel stated fees are based on population and are per person.
- Ms. Murphy stated that we did give them an additional \$30,000 last year and we got reimbursed by state

- Environmental Health 512 No change

- Human Services 610 +5.16%

- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about "secure space for administration of holiday food and gift program"
- Ms. LaBrecque stated that they need space to provide food / gifts during the holidays
- Councilor Manke asked about Consultants/Special Contractor
- Ms. LaBrecque stated that is for additional consultants
- Councilor Page asked if need is met
- Ms. LaBrecque stated she is anticipating increased needs.
- Councilor Page asked if it is feasible to use licensed clinicians
- Councilor Manke stated that no one is being denied services, they are just being sent to outside services
- Ms. LaBrecque stated that is correct; our in house clinicians are at max
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about students
- Ms. LaBrecque stated that we work on more social aspects of students.
- Ms. LaBrecque provided a Summary of Services Provided by Newington Human Services (attached hereto).
- Councilor Manke stated that he's been involved with the department; totally amazed at the number of volunteers and volunteer hours and the generosity of this community.
- Councilor Radda had a questions regarding substance abuse and housing, what resources are in place.
- Ms. LaBrecque stated that we are on the Opioid Coalition, seeing more and more now that people are getting out. Housing is the least solvable issue at our door. Wish we had a magic wand and could house everyone; always scrambling to connect people to safe place and stability.
- Councilor Radda stated at the end of the month shelters and warming facilities will be closing.

- Senior and Disabled Center

- Center Operations 644 +1.03%

- Dial-A-Ride 645 +1.84%

- Commission on Aging & Disabled 671 +1.49%

- Human Rights Commission 673 No change

- Youth Adult Council 674 No change

- Library

- Library Administration 711 +1.43%

- A lengthy discussion was held regarding full time employees
- Councilor Nagel stated that full time positions have been brought up time and time again.
- Ms. Murphy stated unless they requested it and the town manager did not change their budgets at all.
- Councilor Nagel stated that we have reinstated Sunday hours.
- Ms. Murphy stated that time for Sunday hours are listed under each department.
 - Library Children's Services 712 +3.72%
- Councilor Page if national standards / ratios apply to libraries.
 - Reference and Community Services 713 -1.77%
 - Building 714 +5.03%
- Councilor Manke asked if this was for cleaning
- Ms. Murphy stated that is for a part time worker during day hours
- Councilor Page asked if they had any figures on theft, etc.
- Councilor Radda asked how does overtime compare to having an employee
- Ms. Murphy stated an employee would cost more
- Councilor Nagel stated that the overtime is because of the Sunday situation and number of people with different contracts required to be there.
 - Collection Management 715 +2.98%
 - Circulation 716 +8.98%
 - Hubbard Book Fund 730 No change
- Parks and Recreation/Grounds
 - Parks & Recreation Administration 810 -0.14%
- Councilor Manke asked Ms. Murphy to explain the enterprise fund
- Ms. Murphy stated when people pay for programs that goes into the enterprise fund
 - Grounds Maintenance: Parks and Public Grounds 831 +0.43%
- Councilor Radda asked what Other Contractual Services was.
- Ms. Murphy stated for resurfacing of the tennis courts, stuff like that.
- Councilor Page asked about the environmental impact of agricultural supplies is it done for maintenance or aesthetic reasons.
- Ms. Murphy stated that they take care of not just town owned, but school owned properties as well.
- Councilor Radda asked about community garden space.
- Ms. Murphy stated that that senior center takes care of their own gardens.
 - Grounds Maintenance: Cemeteries 832 +6.57%
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked if agricultural supplies would be more
- Ms. Murphy stated that is part of the trust
- Councilor Manke stated that this is budget neutral because money comes out of the trust
- Ms. Murphy stated that the trust generates revenue
 - Grounds Maintenance: Historical Properties 833 No change
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is just for ground maintenance
- Councilor Nagel stated the town takes care of the exterior, especially Kellogg Eddy House where the town can rent and hold events. Historical Society takes care of and funds the maintenance of the interior. Most things are funded outside of this budget.

- Grounds Maintenance: Tree Maintenance 834 +1.63%
- Insurance/Misc.
 - Municipal Insurance 910 +1.71%
- Ms. Murphy stated that updated premiums have not been provided, not until May. 2% increase
- Councilor Page asked about the increase in General Liability
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about the agent fees
- Ms. Murphy stated that was per contract
- Councilor Donahue stated that he's looking at 5.14% and 8.40%
- Ms. Murphy stated she will be asked the town manager about that and if anything was added
 - Greater Hartford Transit District 930 +3.84
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is based on per capita; seventeen cents per person.
 - Employee Benefits 940 +0.70
- Ms. Murphy stated that the will be putting a wellness program in place; difficult with union contracts to have them pay less; thinking of additional amounts in HSA fund.
 - Donations & Contributions 950 -27.27%
 - Manager's Contingency 961 No change
- Councilor Page asked if this was like a slush fund.
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is for unanticipated things that might come up; discretionary
 - Special Contingency 962 +47.52%
- MDC 1051 +2.69%
- Ms. Murphy stated this is based on the grand list.
 - Employee Leave Liability 3000 -6.14%
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is an old program in place; payout of vacation time when retiring. This is for employees hired before a certain date.
 - Special Revenue Funds/Other Funds
 - Cemetery Fund 5001
- Ms. Murphy stated that Capital Improvements for \$60,000 is for expansion
- Councilor Manke asked how we will fund the cemetery when we run out of space
- Ms. Murphy stated that is something that you will need to have Bill come in and discuss with you
- Councilor Manke stated that we will still need to maintain the cemetery even though no income
- Councilor Page stated it would be nice to have money for historical cemetery
 - Road Aid Maintenance 5002
 - Local Capital Improvement Program (LoCIP) 5003
 - Recreation Enterprise Fund 5004
- Ms. Murphy stated that this fund cannot exceed \$1 million; additional funds go to recreation CIP; cannot pay for any capital items out of this fund
 - Human Services 5005
- Ms. Murphy stated they just set up payment of donations through Paypal.

- Senior and Disabled Center Donations 5006
- Insurance Reserve Fund 5007
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is for retro workman's comp claims; keep reserve of 1/3.
 - Public School CIP 5008
- Deputy Mayor Budrejko asked about tuition receipts
- Ms. Murphy stated that this is reimbursement from the state. She also stated that they provide list of what they will be using the monies for each year.
- A lengthy discussion regarding actual/budgeted expenses/line items took place
 - Health Benefits Fund 5009
- Ms. Murphy stated that both the town and BOE came in under budget; very healthy fund
- A lengthy discussion regarding the current MOU in place with the BOE regarding refund of \$701,490.
- Mayor DelBuono stated that this is something we need to discuss as a council.
- Ms. Murphy stated that the BOE has no risk.
- Councilor Radda asked for a copy of the MOU.
- A continued discussion of the Health Benefits Fund took place.
 - Land Acquisition Fund 5010
 - Recreation CIP 5011
 - Technology Fund 5012
- Ms. Murphy stated that this was a new fund set up this year. IT trying to make things more telework friendly.
- Ms. Murphy stated that Joe provided me information regarding the Chapman fire storage. Proposed demo is \$185,000. Per Owens' Report, budget to repair existing building was approx. \$334,000 and Owen's Report to replace the building as new was \$446,000. Owen's estimates to do not include soft costs and are from 2020.

6. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION – ON AGENDA ONLY (Via Zoom Application or Telephone)**
 (3 MINUTE TIME LIMIT PER SPEAKER ON AGENDA ITEMS ONLY)

- None

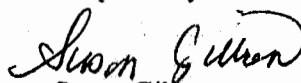
7. **REMARKS BY COUNCILORS**

- Deputy Mayor Budrejko – thank you Janet, easily understandable.
- Town Manager Chapman apologized for being absent; under medical direction; optimistic to be at Tuesday meeting. Want to compliment Janet and the entire staff for a great presentation.
- Councilor Radda - thank you Janet, very clear.
- Ms. Murphy stated that departments were very, very good in providing detail.

8. **ADJOURNMENT**

Motion by Councilor Manke to adjourn the meeting at 12:54 p.m. Seconded by Councilor Donahue. Motion passed 9-0.

Respectfully submitted,


 Susan Gibbon
 Council Clerk