

**Officially Approved by the Board**  
**Town of New Castle Board of Selectmen Meeting**  
**Public Session: 7:00 p.m.**  
**September 21, 2020**

**Board Members:**

Mr. William Stewart, Chair  
Mr. Thomas Maher  
Mr. Dave McGuckin

**Others:**

Ms. Jennifer Smith, Administrative Assistant, Select Board  
Ms. Amelia Trapp, Board Secretary, Town of New Castle Select Board

**Public Members:** Derrick Hill, Jim Burns, Curt Springer, Tom Smith, Ken McDonald

Chairman Stewart called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. 3 members were present, and a quorum was established.

**Approval of Select Board Minutes:**

September 1, 2020, September 9, 2020 – Selectman Maher made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. Selectman McGuckin seconded. A roll call vote was taken, and all members were in favor.

**Public Comments:**

**Tom Smith** – He asked why the Board chose to meet in person in the recreation building instead of using the Zoom platform. He asked for a response from each member. Selectman McGuckin said he had received feedback from the community to meet in public. He had expected more people to be present this evening. Selectman Maher said he had not received public comment about the live meeting but is happy with to consider Zoom or a hybrid approach using Zoom and in-person meetings. Chairman Stewart said they could only hold a meeting via Zoom during a state of emergency. They may have had more people attend Zoom, but they needed to attempt a live meeting to see if they could move forward. He is not opposed to Zoom meetings. Selectman McGuckin asked if they could only do Zoom under the Governor's order. Chairman Stewart said it was required under RSA, when not under a state of emergency, to have a meeting in-person attended by a quorum of the Board. Mr. Smith said the Recreation building echoed and he could only hear 50% of the discussion. He asked if there was a better idea. Selectman McGuckin said that 5 years ago, the CIP list had the possibility of insulating the Rec building but it was declined because of the cost. Mr. Smith thanked them for their response and asked that they consider holding the meetings on Zoom.

**Jim Burns** – He agreed with Mr. Smith about having Zoom be used. He agreed with meeting in-person with the right equipment (microphone and speaker). Selectman Maher said they could attempt this hybrid model without the Governor's emergency order. He had two building permits that he submitted and has yet to receive a response. Selectman McGuckin said he was working with the new building inspector and they would check it tomorrow. Mr. Burns

said the planning Board has been meeting in the Rec center for some time, but the soundproof system would greatly help.

**Curt Springer** – He agreed with the other comments and would be sending certain links to the members on RSA 91 and another town's BOS meeting. He felt that the Zoom platform forced the members to explain each document.

**Derek Hill** – He said restaurants used sound absorber tiles to help with noise balance. Selectman McGuckin said it was a good idea but the proposal they received for \$400,000 was a lot for one building. Mr. Hill said that was an outrageous amount and may know an individual who could assist the Board.

**Ken McDonald** – He said there are no trained staff for the cash register in the Common. He will be programming the new register this winter and needed the Board to allow him to close out the money for the treasurer to return to the general fund. Mr. Smith said he will verify the funds at that time.

### **New Business:**

- ≠ **The Common** – Chairman Stewart stated that the current policy stated the Town would only charge for parking at the Common when an attendant was on duty and collecting. Given, the Common is not currently staffed and is not planned to be staffed this year, the Town in effect will not be charging the rest of this calendar year. Mrs. Smith said the website said they would only charge if there was a park attendant. Selectman McGuckin asked if they were charging for events, i.e. weddings. Mrs. Smith said the events were pre-Covid and their costs were upfront. They are not accepting any new reservations. The Board agreed that they would not be charging for daily use for the remainder of the year. Mr. Hill asked why they were accepting cash and not card transactions. Mr. McDonald said they would be doing it on the new system.
- ≠ **Covid-19 Update** – Selectman Maher gave the update. He left a message for Jim Zuckerman today about having a health officer for the town. At the end of August, there were 231 cases and as of September 21, there are 308 active cases. The active spots are on Rte. 93 and the Seacoast area has fewer active cases following the trend that has existed for several months.
- ≠ **Consolidated Communications Update** – Ken McDonald said the technology services in New Castle are in a few different companies. They are looking to consolidate everything under Consolidated Communications. The Police and Fire Station's internet systems are now under Consolidated. On September 28, there will be a conference call about the Police/Fire's phone system being switched as well as town hall receiving internet. The Rec Building and the Library will also be switching over to internet on the same day. It will be password protected on voting days. The Fiber Optics black box near the Town Accountant's office is loud due to the fans running inside of it. Mr. McDonald wanted to make sure the community knew it was fine and it was supposed to be that way.

The phone service estimate for the DPW building is \$2,000. Mr. McDonald told CC that was not acceptable, so they are working on bringing a better cost-efficient contract. Jim Burns said they should consider using 5G capable bandwidth.

- ≠ **Town Hall Projects** – Selectman Maher said they would be working on painting three sides of the town hall this week. Russ Bookholz scheduled the maintenance. Mrs. Smith gave the BOS the bid on the project. Nicely Done Contracting is doing the project. Mr. Tabbutt said this company was the most detailed and available as well. Mr. McDonald said his family has used this contractor before and they were pleasant to work with.
- ≠ **Town Buildings** – Selectman McGuckin said they may not be opening the town hall or facility in the near future. The Macomber Room would be only open for small town meetings. Chairman Stewart asked about indoor gym for the school. Selectman McGuckin said he has not given them an answer. Selectman Maher said there are community spaces open, but with firm requests for the cleaning of the building after use. Chairman Stewart would like to read the guidelines on indoor recreation. Selectman McGuckin said Portsmouth would not be holding their traditional Halloween parade but rather a Trunk-or-Treat. The Board chose to place this discussion on the agenda on the 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting in October. The Town Hall has not had any issues with serving the community.
- ≠ **Water/Sewer Update** – Chairman Stewart gave the financial update. The total estimated project cost for the water main installation is \$4,550,000. The water main portion of the project is substantially complete, and the full paving will be started on October 5. It is expected to take 3 weeks. If there are any settling issues, it will be taken care of in the spring. Selectman Maher thought it was going to settle before paving. Chairman Stewart said the DOT wanted it paved before snow plowing occurred. The Board discussed the balance of the DOT jurisdiction and the town's responsibility.
- ≠ **New Castle Neighborhood Water Improvement Program** – Chairman Stewart spoke on the program and said it was a loan system to improve the private water lines in New Castle. Mr. Smith asked how many areas were under consideration. Chairman Stewart said it is a question of homeowners' interest. Mr. Smith asked if there was a timeline for the town to borrow under the 2.4% program. Chairman Stewart said that once the project reached substantial completion, the loan would be closed out. Mr. Hill asked if the town was going to post any reminders about being in a drought. Mrs. Smith said the town did not have any signage. The BOS would investigate.

### **Committee Reports**

Chairman Stewart read the Police Department's monthly report into the record. Mr. McDonald asked if they could speak about the new water flow enhancements at a future meeting. Chairman Stewart said they would be doing a flow test and color code the hydrants. They will have an update soon. Mr. Hill asked if the back gate to the Common could be open for pedestrians.

**Future Meeting Dates: Remote Platform @ 7:00 p.m.**

October 5, 2020      7:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting

October 19, 2020      7:00 p.m. Regular Board Meeting

**Meeting Adjourned:**

Selectman McGuckin made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Selectman Maher. A roll call vote was taken, and all 3 members were in favor. The Selectmen Board Meeting on September 21, 2020 was adjourned at 8:45 p.m.