



Town Council Meeting Minutes



Thursday, May 11, 2023, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

Call to Order

Chairman Rothhaus called the meeting to order at 7:02 pm. Present at the meeting were Chairman Rothhaus, Vice Chair Harrington, Councilor Healey, Councilor Hunter, Councilor Koenig, Councilor M. Murphy, Councilor N. Murphy, and Town Manager Paul Micali.

Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Rothhaus led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Announcements

Upcoming Town Council Meetings:

- Thursday, May 25, 2023, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, June 8, 2023, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, June 22, 2023, 7:00 PM Regular meeting

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector's office will be closed on Wednesday, May 17th for staff training. The office will resume normal operations on Thursday, May 18th.

The Merrimack Public Library Board of Trustees is seeking a Merrimack resident to fill a one-year term on the Board. To apply for this position, please submit a letter of interest and qualifications to Town Manager Paul Micali at pmicali@merrimacknh.gov.

To qualify, you must be a registered voter in Merrimack. The candidate's application materials will be forwarded to the Trustee Chair for Board review. Candidates completing an open term are appointed by the Town Council on the Trustees' recommendation.

The Merrimack Historical Society will be holding their First Annual Open House on Saturday, May 20th & Sunday, May 21st from 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM at 10 Depot Street (Former PTA building). Stop by to check out the new museum, research room, meeting room and all of the upgrades that are preserving the treasures, artifacts and history of our Town.

Seeing a need for affordable after school child care; the Parks & Recreation Department is starting a new After School Program for Fall 2023. Registration is now open for the 2023 – 2024 School Year. The Naticook After School program offers a safe, supportive alternative between school and home for children in grades K – 4; which will operate on the Merrimack School Year Calendar daily from 2:45 – 6:00 pm. Monday – Friday. For the initial year, Bus Transportation from Thornton's Ferry Elementary School will be provided. As this program grows, we hope to eventually expand to the other elementary schools in Town. For details, visit the Parks & Recreation Department website at www.merrimackparksandrec.org or call 603-882-1046

Public Works Week is May 21st through May 27th.

Wednesday, May 24th all Public Works employees will be at a training session for the day. The Transfer Station, Wastewater Facility and Highway will be closed to the public for the day. Please plan accordingly.

Comments from the Press and Public

None.

Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

None.

Appointments

1. Hillsborough County Tax Rate Discussion

Submitted by State Representative Bill Boyd

The Town Council to be presented with the details of the current Hillsborough County tax rate.

State Rep Bill Boyd was present to share that the county is still experiencing a nursing shortage which is impacting the tax rate, and the state is looking to build a new prison. County-wide, there will be about a 20% increase on the county tax rate just to fund these existing services and retain staff. He shared that there are certainly challenges ahead, and it's difficult to staff positions when other counties have competitive salaries and better opportunities.

Public Hearing

None.

Legislative Updates from State Representatives

None.

Town Manager's Report

- The Community Development Department has released updated versions of the Town's Development Guide and Development Guide Brochure. The Brochure is available at Town Hall (Community Development or Town Manager's office), the Merrimack Public Library and online on the Town website. The Guidebook is available at Town Hall (Community Development or Town Manager's office), the Merrimack Public Library and online on the Town website.
- Thank you to all the Adopt-A-Road sponsors that have completed their Spring clean ups! If you are interested in becoming an Adopt-A Road Sponsor please call our Highway Maintenance Complex at 603-423-8551
- Wastewater Phase III Upgrade has roughly reached 50% completion. The Main Pump Station is going to be bypassed for the next several months. They will be moving into trailers in the next couple of weeks so that the main operations building will be upgraded.
- The Town of Merrimack's Media Division (Merrimack TV) has been notified by the Alliance for Community Media that our segment "Merrimack Moment: Celebrating Patricia Cunningham" has been named 2022's best "Web Based Program" by a Public Access TV Professional. **This is the first time that Merrimack TV has won a national award from the Alliance for Community Media.** Prior awards were acknowledged by Northeast chapter of the ACM. Media Division staff will be accepting the award at the ACM's 2023 National Conference in New York on June 28th. Congratulations provided by Town Councilors to the Merrimack TV staff for this momentous achievement.

Consent Agenda

None.

Old Business

None.

New Business

1. First Female State Wrestling Meet of Champions Proclamation

Submitted by Town Councilor Nancy Murphy

The Town Council to honor and present a proclamation to the Merrimack Tomahawks Coed Wrestling Team for the female wrestlers' achievement at the Meet of Champions.

WHEREAS, the first All Girl's Division Meet of Champions was held on Saturday, February 25, 2023; and **WHEREAS**, Emily Angelo, Avary Berardinelli and Charlene (Leenie) Haddad competed in the Meet of Champions for Merrimack High School; and

WHEREAS, Emily Angelo, a junior at Merrimack High School and a member of the Merrimack Tomahawks CoEd Wrestling Team has been wrestling since she was a young child; and

WHEREAS, in the 132# Bracket, coached by Bryan Dine, Emily placed 1st in her weight class becoming the First Female State Wrestling Champion and the first for MHS.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT PROCLAIMED, that we, the Town Council of the Town of Merrimack hereby recognize the achievements and congratulate Emily, Avary and Charlene (Leenie) for their participation in the First Female State Wrestling Meet of Champions.

Proclaimed this 11th day of May 2023 by the Merrimack Town Council.

2. Safety Manual Review

Submitted by Joint Loss Management Committee Chairman Nicholas Lavallee

The Town Council to review any recommended changes to the Town-wide Safety Manual by the Joint Loss Management Committee. This review is required every 2 years.

Joint Loss Management Committee Chairman Nick Lavallee was present to share his updates to the Town-wide Safety Manual. He began by sharing that the goal of this committee is to bring workers and management together to work cooperatively and to promote workplace safety. Additionally, their safety policy highlights the goal of promoting safe and healthy working environments and conditions for all town of Merrimack employees. Mr. Lavallee then shared that after consulting with their Risk Management consultant at Primex, there are no recommended changes necessary to the current safety policy. He encouraged the Council to review the document as required every two years, with one slight change- on page 1, under Town Manager, Mr. Micali's name need to be listed. The Council reviewed the policy, asking clarifying questions and discussing some of the language used, particularly the section about how and when to call 911 for emergencies.

MOTION made by Councilor Koenig and seconded by Councilor N. Murphy to accept the Town of Merrimack Safety Manual with the changes that were discussed as well as reviewing Section C, Page 5 with Primex to see about the ordering and for the Town Manager to bring back any significant changes that Primex needs to be made.

MOTION CARRIES 6-1-0 with Councilor Healey in Opposition

3. Withdrawal Request from the Daniel Webster Highway Capital Reserve Fund

Submitted by Public Works Director Dawn Tuomala

The Town Council to consider the request to withdraw and expend \$375,000 from the Daniel Webster Highway Capital Reserve Fund for the Treatment/Paving of a section of Daniel Webster Highway.

Public Works Director Dawn Tuomala began by sharing that this particular section is from Greeley St up to where the Rite Aid light is, and is about 7,100 ft. She then explained “pavement preservation”, which is a program employing a network level, long-term strategy that enhances pavement performance by using an integrated, cost-effective set of practices that extend pavement life, improve safety and meet motorist expectations. For this area, they are looking to do a “bonded wearing course” which has several benefits such as:

- Waterproofs and seals pavement, including small cracks, minor rutting, and surface imperfections
- Superior bonding allows for thin application that preserves curb reveals
- High skid resistant wearing surface that will not de-laminate
- Quick construction and curing process allows for minimal traffic impact
- 8-14 year life extension on good candidates

MOTION made by Councilor Hunter and seconded by Councilor Healey to withdraw and expend \$375,000 from the Daniel Webster Highway Capital Reserve Fund for the Treatment/Paving of a section of Daniel Webster Highway, and authorize the Town Manager to sign any and all necessary documents.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

4. Withdrawal Request from the Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund

Submitted by Public Works Director Dawn Tuomala

The Town Council to consider the request to withdraw and expend \$130,000 from the Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund for the various drainage improvements on South Baboosic Lake Road. Work is to be completed prior to paving the road.

Ms. Tuomala began by stating that this request is so that they are able to fix the drainage issues before paving can begin. This has been on the list of improvements for several years, but has been bumped and this work needs to get completed. She then shared that there are three phases to this, and this area is for South Baboosic Lake Rd from the Amherst town line all the way up Baboosic. Ms. Tuomala then presented a map to the Council showing three 3ft concrete culverts that are in failure and need to be replaced, in which Ms. Tuomala said she is going to replace them with 4ft concrete culverts to have a better flow through. Ms. Tuomala then shared a map highlighting that around Trowbridge there are catch basins that need to be replaced and have additional piping, and Four Seasons needs a cross culvert and catch basin replaced as well. Because of these additional projects, she would like to increase the withdrawal request from \$130,000 to \$150,000.

MOTION made by Councilor M. Murphy and seconded by Councilor Healey to withdraw and expend \$150,000 from the Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve Fund for the various drainage improvements on South Baboosic Lake Road, and authorize the Town Manager to sign any and all necessary documents.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

5. Safety Improvements at the Transfer Station

Submitted by Public Works Director Dawn Tuomala

The Town Council to consider the request to install safety improvement measures throughout the facility. To also change the location of several payable items such as refrigerators and TVs to one central location for better oversight.

Ms. Tuomala shared that this project is important to her as a majority of the staff in the public works department doesn't feel safe in their current environment. She presented a drone picture of the transfer station, highlighting that the path residents take along the station is not well labeled, and residents are driving throughout the station and cutting across the area, which is unsafe. She then shared that she had a speed data analysis conducted, and on one Saturday alone there were 819 cars driving through the area, with an average of 20mph in the facility. She also proposed moving the electronics trailer to use it as a barricade to block off an area residents shouldn't be accessing. Ms. Tuomala also referenced some movable barriers to help restrict access and direct the vehicles into one stream of traffic, and discussed some areas that need the most improvements-such as the construction debris and scale traffic. She is proposing bright red bollards with some retractable barriers, but she is going to do some research to make sure the bases are sturdy enough to keep them in place. Ms. Tuomala then presented a safety summary, which included the following:

- Goal- keep the public and employees safe
- Keep the public traveling on the outside perimeter
 - Put up cones, barriers
 - Place restricted signage
 - Stripe the lanes better
 - Use arrows and placement markings
 - Move commodities together for better control
 - Move the representative location to a safer location
 - More parking spaces at swap shop
- Replace old and faded signs
- Remove excess pavement
- Cover public sand and salt pickup

6. Withdrawal Request from the Communications Capital Reserve Fund

Submitted by Police Chief Brian Levesque & Captain Eric Marquis

The Town Council to consider the withdraw request of \$30,358 from the Communications Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a new ComLog Recorder for the Merrimack Police Department for the purpose of recording radio communications for Police and Fire.

Police Captain Marquis shared that this request would replace their current software, which is used to record radio and phone communications in their dispatch center. These recordings can be used for discovery in criminal cases, administrator performance reviews, right to know requests, etc. Currently, they use ComLog Reproducer, which is about 10 years old and outdated. They had three companies demo their products, and they ended up going with Exacom, which is located in Manchester. Mr. Micali shared that this was budgeted for in the CIP for \$25,000.

MOTION made by Councilor N. Murphy and seconded by Councilor Healey to withdraw and expend \$30,358 from the Communications Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a new ComLog Recorder for the Merrimack Police Department for the purpose of recording radio communications for Police and Fire, and for the Town Manager to sign any and all necessary documents.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

7. Acceptance of Donations to Parks & Recreation Department Scholarship Fund

Submitted by Parks & Recreation Director Matthew Casparius

The Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of a donation of \$600.00 from the Merrimack Lions Club to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used towards the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.

MOTION made by Councilor Healey and seconded by Councilor N. Murphy to accept and expend a donation of \$600.00 from the Merrimack Lions Club to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used towards the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15, and for the Town Manager to sign any and all necessary documents.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

Minutes

Approve the minutes from the following Town Council meeting:

♦ April 20, 2023

MOTION made by Councilor Healey and seconded by Councilor Koenig to approve the minutes from April 20, 2023 as amended.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

Amendments: Page 10 add in Councilor N. Murphy for the 737 Committee, and change “National” to “Nashua” Regional Planning Committee

Comments from the Press

None.

Comments from the Public

None.

Comments from the Council

None.

Adjourn

MOTION made by Councilor Koenig and seconded by Vice Chair Harrington to adjourn the meeting.

MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0

The meeting adjourned at 9:14pm.

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Steagald