



# Town Council Meeting Minutes



Thursday, July 15, 2021, at 7:00 PM, in the Matthew Thornton Room

## Call to Order

Chairman Koenig called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm. Present at the meeting were Chairman Koenig, Vice Chair Rothhaus, Councilor Harrington, Councilor Healey, Councilor Hunter, Councilor Murphy, Councilor Woods, and Town Manager Paul T. Micali.

## Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Koenig led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## Announcements

The Merrimack Town Council would like to express our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of Norman V. Carr, who passed away on July 12, at the age of 76. Norm served as the Emergency Medical Services Director for Merrimack Ambulance as well as a Selectman on the Board of Selectmen from 1997-2004. He retired as a Physician Assistant from Dartmouth Hitchcock Family Practice in Merrimack after practicing for over 35 years. Norm’s dedication and contributions have had a positive effect on our community and are sincerely appreciated.

## Upcoming Town Council Meetings:

- Thursday, August 19, 2021, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, September 9, 2021, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, September 23, 2021, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, October 14, 2021, 7:00 PM Regular meeting
- Thursday, October 28, 2021, 7:00 PM Regular meeting

The Town-wide long line striping of our main roads will begin tonight (Thursday, July 15<sup>th</sup>) and is expected to take two nights to complete, weather permitting.

The next Household Hazardous Waste Disposal event will take place on Saturday, August 7, from 8:00 AM to Noon at the City of Nashua Park and Ride located at 25 Crown Street. For more information on the event please contact the Transfer Station at 424-2604, or visit the webpage of the Merrimack Solid Waste Division or the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.

Save the Date - National Night Out will be on Tuesday, August 3, 2021 from 5:30 – 7:30 pm at Abbie Griffin Park. National Night Out is an annual community-building campaign that promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood camaraderie to make our neighborhoods safer, more caring places to live. National Night Out enhances the relationship between neighbors and law enforcement while bringing back a true sense of community. Furthermore, it provides a great opportunity to bring police and neighbors together under positive circumstances. Visit the Parks & Recreation Department website for details:

[www.merrimackparksandrec.org](http://www.merrimackparksandrec.org)

Come and join Merrimack Parks & Recreation on select Friday Nights this summer with our free movie nights in the Park. What better way to enjoy a beautiful night out than to relax in Wasserman Park and enjoy a night out with family and friends. All movies will be held at Wasserman Park (on the baseball field next to the Tennis Courts). The Park is located at 116 Naticook Road, Merrimack. Movies are open to both Residents and Non-Residents and are free.

- **Friday, July 9th - Ferris Bueller's Day Off - POSTPONED TO FRIDAY AUGUST 27TH**
- **Friday, July 23rd - Finding Dory**
- **Friday, Aug 13th - Beauty & The Beast**
- **Friday, Sept 17th - Raiders of the Lost Ark**

### Comments from the Press and Public

None.

### Recognitions, Resignations and Retirements

#### **1. Recognition of Town Committee Member**

*Submitted by Town Council Chairman Tom Koenig and Vice Chair Finlay Rothhaus*

The Town Council to present a certificate to the following individual for their volunteer service to the Town of Merrimack:

➤ **Drew Duffy** – Zoning Board of Adjustment

### Appointments

#### **1. 2021 Town-wide Revaluation Update**

*Submitted by Avitar Associates President / Town Assessor Loren Martin*

The Town Council to receive an update related to the 2021 Town-wide revaluation as required by law under RSA 21-J:11.

Avitar Associates President / Town Assessor Loren Martin was present to share details regarding the town-wide revaluation. She shared that the hearing process is close to being done. Notices were sent out the last week of June, and there have been a lot of responses from residents. About 170 taxpayers have scheduled meetings to talk to staff over the phone, and staff is available to do interior inspections and collect and correct data. After residential is complete, they will move on to commercial properties. Residents can sign up online or call the Assessing Department and Tracy and Maureen will help them schedule their appointment. Ms. Martin then shared that the biggest question she receives from residents is how their taxes have increased/doubled, in which she shares that this is an estimate as the values are not finalized yet to determine what the final tax rate will be. Another major question involves amenities in cluster subdivisions. She stated that during a previous revaluation, it was determined through sales analysis that some cluster subdivisions with fractional acreage lots were selling similarly to parcels in a conventional subdivision, so they added amenities to account for the difference.

Vice Chair Rothhaus asked if the amenities were undervalued in the past, in which Ms. Martin stated that they were not undervalued, but rather more value was being attributed to the land. Some neighborhoods were listed higher to bring their land value up, and now that's been lowered down to be more consistent with similar neighborhoods, which means they have to capture a portion as an amenity to ensure fairness across the board. Vice Chair Rothhaus then asked if the values for commercial/industrial and residential went up similarly, in which Ms. Martin stated that they are currently just looking for the total change but she can retrieve the data for him to review.

Councilor Harrington asked if this was the first time the amenities were redistributed, in which Ms. Martin replied that this was the first time for the subdivisions. Councilor Harrington then asked if this was a state regulation or if there is a standard that assessors use to equalize, in which Ms. Martin shared that there is no state methodology, but rather assessors can use various methodologies or standards that result in the same outcome.

1 Ms. Martin then shared that they are on track to have everything finalized and turned back over by the end of  
2 August so that they can do the MS1 and submit it on time to avoid any delays.

### 3 4 **Public Hearing**

#### 5 **1. Public Hearing – Acceptance of American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Funds**

6 *Submitted by Finance Director Thomas Boland*

7 The Town Council will hold a public hearing to consider the acceptance and expenditure of up to  
8 \$2,773,229 from the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds distributed by the State of NH through the  
9 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15. The funds  
10 will be expended in accordance to the guidelines set forth in the ARPA.

11  
12 Town Manager Paul Micali began by stating that this was the money approved by President Biden back in  
13 March for Covid relief in communities, and there have been many seminars in the state to determine what the  
14 money can and cannot be spent on. Finance Director Thomas Boland then shared that all the municipalities  
15 in the state, minus larger communities such as Nashua and Manchester who received their own separate  
16 funding, were granted money from this funding. If accepted by the town, this funding would be received in  
17 two payments, with 50% available almost immediately and the other 50% to be delivered in approximately  
18 one year from now. There are five available categories of allowable uses for these funds, in which Mr.  
19 Boland has summarized: to support public health expenditures, to address negative economic impact caused  
20 by the public health emergency, to replace lost public sector revenue, to provide premium pay for essential  
21 workers, and lastly to invest in water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure. If the town chooses to accept  
22 these funds, they are subject to federal reporting requirements and the town will also have to make a report  
23 of expenditures every October until the funds are spent. Mr. Micali then shared that the school has their own  
24 separate funding from this, but MVD is included in this funding and does not have their own separate  
25 funding. Chairman Koenig asked if the reporting requirements are of concern, in which Mr. Boland stated  
26 that this is standard and the requirements are perfectly understandable to ensure the town is in accordance  
27 with the guidelines for the funding.

28  
29 Chairman Koenig opened the public hearing for public input at 7:48 pm. No public input was given.

30  
31 Chairman Koenig closed the public hearing at 7:49 pm.

32  
33 **MOTION made by Vice Chair Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Harrington to accept and expend  
34 up to \$2,773,229 from the Local Fiscal Recovery Funds distributed by the State of NH through the  
35 American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15, and authorize  
36 the Town Manager or his proxy to sign any necessary documents. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

### 37 38 **Legislative Updates from State Representatives**

39 My fellow Merrimack Residents,

40  
41 As the senior member of the Merrimack Delegation, I am pleased to report that we passed a budget that will  
42 help our town to thrive and flourish. From tax cuts to increasing education funding, the budget is jam packed  
43 with reforms and policies that will benefit every single citizen of our town.

44  
45 The new State budget will cut the State-wide Education Property Tax by \$100 million dollars, meaning that  
46 residents will see lower property tax bills the next time they go to pay. In order to ensure that towns will not  
47 see a loss in revenue due to this tax cut, the state will reimburse the town for any decrease in funding due to  
48 this property tax relief.

1 That's not all. The State Budget that we passed will directly invest in Merrimack and it's citizens. Not only  
2 did we cut the meals and rooms tax, we also created a fund that will send 30% of the money collected from  
3 that tax back to towns like Merrimack to invest back into our community. This protects a valuable revenue  
4 source from being siphoned off by the state for funding. To help our local businesses even more, we cut the  
5 Business Enterprise and the Business Profits tax, helping our local businesses from Los Primos to Able  
6 Ebenezer to the Village Eatery, to name a few. Furthermore, our Republican representatives kept their  
7 promise to guard the New Hampshire Advantage by fully phasing out the Interest and Dividends tax, which  
8 is widely known as a hidden income tax on our citizens.  
9

10 In addition to all the tax cuts, the State Budget invests in Merrimack's top priorities. This budget allocated  
11 \$15.6 million for grants in wastewater projects to help us improve our water quality around town. This  
12 budget also increases education funding by \$100 million, and provides an extra \$17.5 million for free and  
13 reduced meals for students, assuring that every Merrimack student has the opportunity to pursue a quality  
14 education regardless of income.  
15

16 In total, our state is going to save \$172.5 million dollars from the budget that was passed.  
17

18 Let me end this letter with one more bit of good news: We have Senator Daniels to thank, for the most part,  
19 for his efforts to make sure that tolls at Exit 10 will be taken down and become history.  
20

21 We thank the voters for entrusting us to work for you in the State Legislature, and we will continue to do so.  
22

23 Respectfully,  
24

25 Representative Jeanine Notter  
26 House Majority Whip  
27

### 28 **Town Manager's Report**

- 29 • The drainage improvement project on Joppa Road near Derry Street is expected to be  
30 substantially complete tomorrow, July 16.  
31
- 32 • Repairs to the Abbie Griffin Bandstand are scheduled to begin on Thursday, July 22 and run  
33 through Sunday, July 25. The work will include replacing all of the railings and ballisters in the  
34 bandstand, rebuilding the steps into the bandstand and adding hand rails on each end of the  
35 entrance up the steps. The Bandstand will be closed during these repairs.  
36
- 37 • The Phase III Upgrade construction project officially began on July 5, 2021. The construction  
38 contractor, Methuen Construction, has begun mobilizing construction trailers. The \$17M upgrade  
39 project will be completed by October 5, 2023.  
40
- 41 • Effective July 1, 2021 the residential flat sewer rate was increased to \$304 per year, a 12%  
42 increase. The commercial sewer rate also increased by 12%.  
43
- 44 • Fire Chief Matthew Duke has tendered his resignation and will be retiring as Fire Chief effective  
45 July 30<sup>th</sup>. The town is currently searching for a new fire chief and will be posting advertisements  
46 shortly. The town wishes Chief Duke all the best in his future endeavors.  
47  
48

1 Councilor Healey asked how the tennis courts at Wasserman Park are coming along, in which Mr. Micali  
2 stated that the tennis courts have been delayed due to the weather, but hopefully they will be opened up by  
3 the end of next week if everything goes well.

4  
5 **Consent Agenda**

6 None.

7  
8 **Old Business**

9 **1. Trustees of Trust Funds Vacancy Discussion**

10 *Submitted by Town Council Chair Tom Koenig and Vice Chair Finlay Rothhaus*

11 The Town Council to discuss filling the Trustees of Trust Funds vacancy left by the passing of John  
12 “Jack” Balcom, in accordance with RSA 31:22 and Charter Article 6-2.

13  
14 Town Manager Paul Micali began the conversation by stating that there are two options to fill this position:  
15 first, the Secretary of the Trustees of Trust Funds or the Chairman, Chris Christensen, can bring a name  
16 forward and the Council can vote on that name and appoint the person, or the Council can run the vacancy  
17 like they do for any other Committee, interview the candidates, and then make a determination in which the  
18 Council will vote on the appointment. The candidate will be on the Trustee of Trust Funds until the next  
19 election, which is April 2023. Chairman Koenig asked the Council what they think the best way to approach  
20 this is. Councilor Woods asked if there is any time sensitivity regarding either option, in which Mr. Micali  
21 replied that there legally is no time limit, but there are now only two members on the Trustees of Trust Funds  
22 and Chairman Christensen is requesting that this position get filled as soon as possible so they may resume  
23 meetings. Councilor Woods then replied that he believes the vacancy should be advertised, and Vice Chair  
24 Rothhaus agreed with this. Chairman Koenig also agreed, stating that he would like to have Chairman  
25 Christensen encourage any of his potential candidates to apply, as well as open it up to the public and have  
26 anyone who feels they would like to be on the Committee apply for the vacancy. Mr. Micali asked if the  
27 Council would like a 30 day time limit for the posting, in which the Council agreed to have the deadline for  
28 the position to be filled set for September, with interviews occurring the last week of August.

29  
30 **2. Town of Merrimack and Merrimack Youth Association Agreement Review**

31 *Submitted by Town Manager Paul T. Micali*

32 The Town Council to consider the renewal of a 3-year agreement between the Town of Merrimack  
33 and the Merrimack Youth Association.

34  
35 Town Manager Paul Micali provided an update from the last meeting, sharing that two areas of the contract  
36 have been updated to add language to provide clarity. The first area of the contract was the portion related to  
37 funding, particularly the last sentence on page 4- the language was changed to add in that payment will not  
38 be made on the following year on July 1<sup>st</sup> if an audit is not received by July 30<sup>th</sup> based on a mutual agreement  
39 of a payment schedule for the following year. The second item clarified was on page 1 regarding giving  
40 priority to Merrimack residents in the sports programs and that no residents will be turned away. MYA’s  
41 bylaws will need to be amended if this contract gets passed as their bylaws do not include outside  
42 participation. Rick Greenier, Vice President of MYA, was present to discuss this, stating that MYA is  
43 comfortable with making this a permanent change in their bylaws if the Council is in agreement. He then  
44 shared that the intention of this is to make a better experience for Merrimack kids, not recruit players from  
45 other communities that have these programs in their towns. Vice Chair Rothhaus asked how the bylaw  
46 change will be notified to the public, in which Mr. Greenier stated that they can notify the public on their  
47 website of the changes.

1 Councilor Murphy asked if any programs will be open to outside residents or just specific sports, such as  
2 football and lacrosse, as previously mentioned. Mr. Greenier clarified that this change will allow any  
3 program but they may not all participate in this. For example, the wrestling program is very small so he  
4 anticipates they will utilize outside players. He then stated that last year was a trial run with lacrosse and  
5 football to see how this change would work, and since it worked out well, MYA is opening this up to include  
6 all sports programs. Councilor Murphy then asked that if there are enough participants in Merrimack to make  
7 up a team if this mean that there will be no out-of-town participants, in which Mr. Greenier stated that  
8 Merrimack residents will come first and out-of-town participants will only be utilized if there are extra spots  
9 with no interested Merrimack players.

10  
11 Councilor Woods asked Mr. Greenier to clarify the compulsion for the quality of programming that the  
12 MYA feels is necessary. Mr. Greenier replied that for example, in football there may be an 80lb player  
13 playing against someone considerably larger because of a shortage of players. By allowing out-of-town kids  
14 to fill open positions, it alleviates this type of situation from happening and ensures a safer and fairer sports  
15 environment. Councilor Woods then asked if there is any guarantee that an out-of-town player would be the  
16 appropriate size to ensure fairness, in which Mr. Greenier stated that MYA would be accepting players on an  
17 individual basis, meaning that if they do not fit the proper criteria then they would not be invited to play.  
18 Councilor Woods then asked if some of the more popular programs, such as soccer or football, have a formal  
19 association with state or national associations (such as the AAU) and if the funds go towards an associate fee  
20 for leagues, in which Mr. Greenier stated that yes, MYA does pay a fee to be a part of a program, such as the  
21 Cal Ripken league.

22  
23 Councilor Murphy asked if there is a plan for making the public understand the importance of deadlines for  
24 programs since out-of-town kids will be able to participate if there is low enrollment, in which Mr. Greenier  
25 stated that they will not turn away a Merrimack child, so if a parent misses the enrollment deadline or  
26 registers late they will find or create a spot for that child. As far as advertising this goes, he thinks the best  
27 thing they can do is post on their website to ensure parents understand these changes.

28  
29 **MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Councilor Healey to accept the renewal of**  
30 **a 3-year agreement between the Town of Merrimack and the Merrimack Youth Association as**  
31 **presented effective last July 1, 2021. MOTION CARRIES 6-1-0 with Councilor Woods in opposition**  
32

### 33 **3. Transfer Station Swap Shop Re-opening Discussion**

34 *Submitted by Town Manager Paul T. Micali*

35 The Town Council to discuss re-opening the Swap Shop located at the Transfer Station.

36  
37 Town Manager Paul Micali began the discussion by sharing that when Town Hall was opened with the new  
38 mask guidelines, it was agreed that more time was needed to review safely opening the Swap Shop at the  
39 Transfer Station. Now that some time has passed, Mr. Micali is asking that the Swap Shop be opened with no  
40 limitations put on it other than signage on the doors stating the current mask guidelines from Town Hall and  
41 social distancing. Additionally, this area will not be policed, but rather the residents will be responsible for  
42 following the guidelines. He would like to reopen this Saturday, sharing that he has received several emails  
43 from residents stating that they would like the Swap Shop to be opened so unused items can be repurposed  
44 and not thrown away. Councilor Harrington is in agreement with this, stating that she thinks it's time to  
45 reopen and people can decide if they want to go or not. Councilor Murphy supports the reopening, and hopes  
46 that residents will be respectful of personal space and the time limit. Chairman Koenig would like to  
47 encourage people to be civil and stressed that if people can't behave and issues come up, they will have to  
48 shut it down again. Mr. Micali stated that they do have a camera that points towards the area in which the  
49 person at the scale can monitor, so if they see any issues they can call the police to handle the situation. It  
50 was agreed upon the Council to open the Swap Shop for normal hours this Saturday, July 17<sup>th</sup>.

1  
2 **New Business**

3 **1. Acceptance of Donations to Parks and Recreation Department Scholarship Fund**

4 *Submitted by Parks and Recreation Director Matthew Casparius*

5 The Town Council to consider the acceptance and expenditure of a donation in the amount of \$4,000  
6 from Merrimack Friends and Families to the Parks and Recreation Department to be used towards the  
7 Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter Article 8-15.  
8

9 Town Manager Paul Micali stated that Merrimack Friends and Families often donates money to the town and  
10 actually raised \$8,000, half of which went to the schools. Councilor Harrington asked if they will be hosting  
11 a yard sale this year, in which Mr. Micali said he will check with Mr. Casparius.  
12

13 **MOTION made by Councilor Hunter and seconded by Councilor Woods to accept and expend a**  
14 **donation in the amount of \$4,000 from Merrimack Friends and Families to the Parks and Recreation**  
15 **Department to be used towards the Camp Scholarship Fund, pursuant to RSA 31:95-b and Charter**  
16 **Article 8-15. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**  
17

18 **2. Approval of the Merrimack Hazard Mitigation Plan**

19 *Submitted by Police Chief Brian Levesque*

20 The Town Council to consider a request to approve the Merrimack Hazard Mitigation Plan developed  
21 with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.  
22

23 Police Chief Brian Levesque was present along with Cassie Mullen, a Regional Planner from NRPC to  
24 discuss the Merrimack Hazard Mitigation Plan, which is a collaborative effort from the Fire Department,  
25 Public Works, Merrimack Village District, and Community Development and is done at least every 5 years  
26 as part of a requirement for FEMA funding. Ms. Mullen then spoke on some highlights, sharing that there  
27 have been some updates to reflect recent developments over the past years, such as including pandemic  
28 planning and space weather. Some new actions that have been included to mitigate potential hazards are  
29 maintaining cooling shelters during heatwaves for vulnerable populations and maintaining surge protectors  
30 to protect from lightning and thunder storms. Councilor Healey asked if the town is responsible to hold  
31 activities towards the mitigation activities, in which Ms. Mullen stated that most of the actions are  
32 educational and falls to the people on the hazard mitigation team, such as the fire department posting on their  
33 social media accounts. Mr. Levesque shared that these actions are already being done in the community and  
34 this update just writes them into the Hazard Mitigation Plan. Mr. Micali then stated that the Council has to  
35 read and sign a Certification of Adoption for the Hazard Mitigation Plan and vote to have these changes put  
36 into effect.  
37

38 **MOTION made by Vice Chair Rothhaus and seconded by Councilor Harrington to adopt the**  
39 **Merrimack Hazard Mitigation Plan developed with the Nashua Regional Planning Commission.**  
40 **MOTION CARRIES 6-0-1 with Councilor Healey abstaining.**  
41

42 **3. Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve Account Withdrawal Request**

43 *Submitted by Deputy Public Works Director / Town Engineer Dawn Tuomala*

44 The Town Council to consider a request to release of the remaining drainage funds for 2020-2021  
45 from the Road Infrastructure Capital Reserve account to perform needed drainage improvements on  
46 various projects.  
47

48 Deputy Public Works Director / Town Engineer Dawn Tuomala began by stating that her team would like to  
49 do their drainage projects now as opposed to early next spring as this year they ran into issues with their  
50 contractors being busy and not being able to meet deadlines, which pushed their paving projects back as

1 well. She would like to avoid this issue by completing the drainage projects this fall to have the paving  
2 projects being on schedule next year. Ms. Tuomala then stated that she has three drainage projects on South  
3 Baboosic Lake Road: one down near the town line which started back in 2018 to replace three cross culverts  
4 with an estimated cost of \$98,000-\$120,000, one up near Trowbridge Drive with three failing catch basins  
5 with metal pipe, and one cross culvert further up towards Baboosic Lake Road with metal pipes that needs to  
6 be changed before another upcoming project. Chairman Koenig asked what the metal pipes get replaced  
7 with, in which Ms. Tuomala stated they will be replaced with RCP concrete pipe.

8  
9 Additionally, there is another project on Thornton Road West that includes three culverts that need to be  
10 replaced. Chairman Koenig asked if there needs to be anything done regarding treatment or contamination as  
11 one of the culverts runs into Pennichuck's water supply, in which Ms. Tuomala stated that there is, and she is  
12 going to put a separate application in to NHDES. She then stated that the materials for these projects, such as  
13 the new pipes, will take several weeks to order so she would like to get this started as soon as possible to  
14 have completed before winter. Vice Chair Rothhaus asked if these projects are critical or if they could wait  
15 until next year when the cost of supplies and availability of contractors might be a bit better, in which Ms.  
16 Tuomala stated that some of them are critical issues that need to be addressed sooner rather than later, and  
17 she is working on bundling some projects together to help reduce the overall cost. Town Manager Paul  
18 Micali asked if completing these projects would help the MS4 project, in which she stated yes, it absolutely  
19 would help out.

20  
21 **MOTION made by Councilor Woods and seconded by Councilor Harrington to approve the release of**  
22 **\$252,500 from the remaining drainage funds for 2020-2021 from the Road Infrastructure Capital**  
23 **Reserve account to perform needed drainage improvements on various projects presented tonight by**  
24 **Town Engineer Dawn Tuomala and authorize the Town Manager or his designee to sign any**  
25 **expenditures as necessary. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

#### 26 27 **4. American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 Funds Discussion**

28 *Submitted by Town Manager Paul T. Micali*

29 The Town Council to review and discuss how to spend \$2,773,229, Local Fiscal Recovery Funds,  
30 that the Town received from the State under the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA).

31  
32 Town Manager Paul Micali shared that in looking at the needs of the community and shovel-ready projects,  
33 he suggested using some of this funding to complete the Screenings Building for the Wastewater Treatment  
34 Facility. Another topic he wanted to discuss was revenue shortfalls. Currently, the town does not have a  
35 revenue shortfall, however there is a shortage of car inventory which could impact interest rates in the future.  
36 Lastly, he thinks that some money could be used towards the stormwater drainage projects in the future. He  
37 believes the top priority is the Screenings Building, which would take up a good amount of the funds as the  
38 total cost of this project is \$2,327,764, which would leave the remaining funds at roughly \$445,000 to be  
39 used towards other projects. Mr. Micali then stated that this funding will have its own separate operating  
40 account, and they should be getting the first installment of the funds, which is \$1.3 million, by next Friday,  
41 July 23, if not sooner. Councilor Healey shared that she has two other possible needs that she would like to  
42 consider as well: adding to the budget for social services, and supporting new businesses that had opened  
43 during the first quarter of last year and were not able to get any relief funding for Covid. Mr. Micali stated  
44 that there is money at the state level to help for social services, but the application process takes time.

45  
46 Councilor Hunter asked if there is an urgency to approve this funding or if it's safe to wait a few months to  
47 see if the Wastewater Facility is able to secure any additional funding to complete the Screenings Building  
48 project, in which Wastewater Facility Assistant Director Sarita Croce stated that there is an increase in  
49 commodities prices, such as steel and wood, and the timeline to get materials is much longer than originally  
50 anticipated, so they would like to start the project sooner rather than later. Councilor Hunter feels that this is



1 being rushed and he wonders if it would be better to wait 6 months and revisit to see if there are any federal  
2 grants or additional funding that could be obtained to reduce the costs of this project, or if the costs of  
3 materials could go down by then. Ms. Croce then shared that the original project estimation two years ago  
4 put forth in the preliminary design was \$1.9 million and some of the equipment has further deteriorated since  
5 then due to damage from flushable wipes and other items that damage the equipment. Chairman Koenig  
6 shared that he is in favor of moving forward with this project, sharing that the price of materials may go  
7 down, but the price of labor and availability of contractors will most likely stay up and increase over time.  
8 He then stated that if federal grants do become available, there are more sewer projects that the funding can  
9 be put towards.

10  
11 Councilor Murphy then shared that at the most recent HB737 commission meeting on June 11, one of the  
12 commission members asked if ARPA funds could be used to assist private well owners and if the funds  
13 could be used to filter contaminated wells. She wanted to bring this idea to the Council, stating that they  
14 should be considering addressing the water issues in the town. Mr. Micali then stated that MVD had their  
15 own private call regarding ARPA funding, but they have not brought any ideas forward to the town. He then  
16 stated that he is aware of various funding and grants for water issues, but the amounts are typically on the  
17 lower end and can vary. Councilor Harrington is agreement with using the funding for the Screenings  
18 Building but would also like to reserve the leftover amount and actively look into the water issues that  
19 Councilor Murphy suggested. Councilor Murphy asked if there is a known date for which the funds have to  
20 be obligated, in which Mr. Micali stated that they have until 2024 to obligate the money, and 2026 to spend  
21 it.

22  
23 **MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Vice Chair Rothhaus to fund the Sewer**  
24 **Screenings Building expansion in the amount of \$2,327,764 out of the American Rescue Plan Act of**  
25 **2021 (ARPA) funds. MOTION CARRIES 6-1-0 with Councilor Hunter in opposition**

### 26 27 **Minutes**

28 Approve the minutes from the following Town Council meetings:

29 ♦ June 24, 2021

30  
31 **MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Councilor Healey to approve the minutes**  
32 **of June 24, 2021 as amended. MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

33  
34 Councilor Healey made the following amendments:

- 35 • Page 4, Line 27: “FL Merrill” should be written as “F.L. Merrill”.
- 36 • Page 9, Line 8: Change wording to say the PFAS Facts sheet was “submitted” by, not “created” by.

37 Chairman Koenig made the following amendment:

- 38 • Page 1, Line 12: Change “please join us in a moment of silence” to “Chairman Koenig requested a  
39 moment of silence”.

### 40 41 **Comments from the Press**

42 None.

### 43 44 **Comments from the Public**

45 None.

### 46 47 **Comments from the Council**

48 Vice Chair Rothhaus wanted to wish Chief Duke the best on his retirement, stating that he was a wonderful  
49 gentleman and appreciates him and his family. Additionally, he wanted to share that the website  
50 [www.Merrimack275th.com](http://www.Merrimack275th.com) is fully active now and encouraged everyone to check it out.

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**Adjourn**

**MOTION made by Councilor Harrington and seconded by Councilor Healey to adjourn the meeting.**

**MOTION CARRIES 7-0-0**

The meeting adjourned at 9:44pm.

A copy of the backup material for each agenda item is available for review in the Town Council’s Office located at the Merrimack Town Hall.

Posted: July 9, 2021  
Amendment posted: July 14, 2021

Respectfully submitted by Jennifer Steagald

