

Council Minutes

March 3, 2025

A duly warned meeting of the Newport City Council was held on Monday, March 3, 2025 in the Council room in the Newport Municipal Building immediately following a public informational meeting. Present were council President Chris Vachon, council members Kevin Charboneau, Clerk Curtis, Rick Ufford-Chase, City Clerk/Treasurer James Johnson, PW Director Tom Bernier, Rep. Woodman Page, members of the Press and Public. Mayor Sullivan was absent.

Council President Chris Vachon called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm.

Additions/Deletions to the Agenda

Mr. Vachon added the warrant of February 28, 2025.

Consent Agenda

Mr. Charboneau moved to accept the consent agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Ufford-Chase, motion carried unanimously.

Council Member Conflict of Interest Statement (attached)

Mr. Ufford-Chase provided at conflict of interest disclosure statement for the record.

Special Election Discussion

The council discussed a possible special Election to fill a vacant council seat. Mr. Johnson felt the earliest date for the election would be April 29, 2025

Comments by the Public

None

New Business

Mr. Curtis thanked Mr. Vachon for his years of service to the city.

Old Business

None

Next Meeting Date

Mr. Curtis moved that the next regular council meeting would be on March 17, 2025. Seconded by Mr. Charboneau, motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment

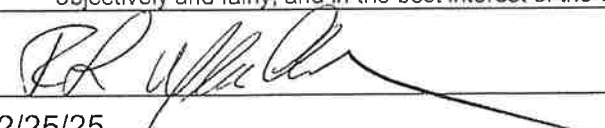
Mr. Charbonneau moved to adjourn at 6:43 pm. Seconded by Mr. Ufford-chase, motion carried unanimously.

Attested _____ This _____ Day of March 2025

_____ Mayor

**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:	Newport City Council
Office Phone:	845 608 4056
Office E-mail:	rick.uffordchase@newportvermont.org
<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p>	
CONFLICT OF INTEREST INFORMATION	
<p>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).</p>	<p>At the City Council meeting on Feb 24, 2025, There were two matters before the Council regarding the work that Newport Downtown Development, the nonprofit agency I direct, is doing on behalf of the City. The first regarded a funding strategies to seek funds through NCIC/NHCLF to support the the initiation of work for which the City has contracted with White and Burke to develop a TIF District Application, and the second is for NDD to pursue a USDA RBDG grant to fund a significant portion of the rest of the work that White and Burke and related entitites will need to do to complete that application over the coming year.</p> <p>At the Mayor's request, I explained the two strategies to the Council and made a separate motion regarding each of those strategies. I then participated in the unanimous vote to authorize NDD to pursue each of the strategies. There is no potential material benefit to me personally or to Newport Downtown Development. In fact, NDD is doing this work on behalf of the City and with no administrative fee beyond the annual support of \$30,000 that the organizations receives from the City.</p> <p>The second matter was simply to codify that the formal relationship between the City and White and Burke is to be handled by the Mayor, the President of Council, or by the Council's designee. Here as well, I chose not to recuse myself because there is no potential benefit to me personally or to Newport Downtown Devp.</p>
<p>Explain your relationship to the person or organization at issue.</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Self</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Immediate family member</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Business I am associated with</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business a family member is associated with</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Business partner</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Property I own or co-own</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Property owned or co-owned by a family member</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other [Explain]:</p>

<p>State the action(s) you intend to take, and how your action(s) may affect the person or organization at issue.</p>	<p>I chose to vote in favor of both actions explained above.</p>
<p>Explain why, despite the relationship, you will act on the matter (Check at least one box)</p>	<p> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> The conflict is de minimis in nature <input type="checkbox"/> My action on the matter is ministerial or clerical <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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 <input type="checkbox"/> The conflict is amorphous, intangible, or speculative <input type="checkbox"/> I cannot legally or practically delegate the matter to another person <input type="checkbox"/> I have received advice from the Ethics Commission that permits my action(s) <input type="checkbox"/> Other [Explain]: </p>
<p>Confirmation and Signature</p>	
<p>Confirmation</p>	<p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 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.</p>
<p>Public servant signature:</p>	
<p>Date:</p>	<p>2/25/25</p>

Attach additional pages if necessary.