

**BOROUGH OF NEWTOWN
NEWTOWN, CONNECTICUT**

Minutes of the regular meeting of the Borough of Newtown Board of Burgesses on **Tuesday, January 9, 2024** in the Lower Meeting Room at Edmond Town Hall, Newtown, CT. Warden Maher called the meeting to order at 7:30 p.m.

Present: Warden Joseph Maher, Senior Burgess Chris Gardner, Burgess James Gaston, Burgess John Madzula II, Burgess Sarah Phillips, Burgess Maureen Crick Owen, Burgess Jared Modzelewski, Tax Collector Jodie Enriquez, Treasurer Paula Brinkman and Clerk Ann Scaia

Absent: Tree Warden Rob McCulloch and Zoning Enforcement Officer Joe Chapman

Also Present: There were 6 members of the public.

Senior Burgess Gardner made a motion to accept the December 12, 2023 regular meeting minutes, seconded by Burgess Madzula II and unanimously approved.

Warden's Report: Warden Maher invited Judit DeStefano, who is the Grant Specialist for the Newtown Public Schools, to return and re-present items needed at the Hawley Elementary School and Middle School to purchase with possible ARPA funds from the Borough (see attached). The Board of Burgesses discussed the various proposed items and approved the request.

Senior Burgess Gardner made a motion to appropriate, from the ARPA line item, \$54,942.00 as requested by the Newtown Public Schools for the outlined items in the presentation, seconded by Burgess Gaston and unanimously approved.

Warden Maher invited Jody Eldredge, Vice President, and volunteer Rob Nimkoff from the Newtown Forest Association (NFA) to discuss their fundraising efforts to acquire Deep Brook Farm and soliciting a donation using ARPA funds (see attached). Each Burgess offered their perspective on utilizing ARPA funds for this project as to the appropriateness of using Borough ARPA funds for a property outside of the Borough but yet utilized by Borough residents given its proximity to the Borough. The Burgesses asked if the NFA has approached the Town for ARPA funding. Ms. Eldredge stated there have been preliminary discussions and will be discussing the town's possible donation in the coming months. The Burgesses have asked for Ms. Eldredge to contact Warden Maher when they have a clearer idea of the funding they would like to propose to the Burgesses. Ms. Eldredge will contact Warden Maher during the first quarter of this year.

Tree Warden's Report: Due to the Tree Warden McCulloch absence there was nothing new to report.

Tax Collector's Report: Tax Collector Enriquez reported that for the December 2023: Taxes Collectable \$226,778.53; Current Taxes: \$220,855.36; Back Taxes: \$315.35; Interest: \$645.75; Liens & Fees: \$48.00. Total Submitted to Treasurer to Date: \$220,000.00. Current Taxes Collected: \$219,885.35 representing 96.96%. Please review attached for December 2023.

Burgess Gaston made a motion to accept the Tax Collector's Report for December 2023,
seconded by Burgess Phillips and unanimously approved.

Treasurer's Report: The December 2023 report presents: A deposit of \$496.00 was made from the Borough Zoning Office. A deposit of \$15,000.00 was made from Tax Collector, Jodie Enriquez. A transfer of \$26,287.63 was made to cover last month's invoicing and payroll. There was a transfer of \$15,496.00 made into the ISC Account from the Borough Operating Account. A transfer of \$26,287.63 was transferred from the ISC Account to the Borough Operating Account. Interest on the 13 mo. CD was \$163.85 making a total of \$69,755.04. Please review the attached report for December 2023.

Senior Burgess Gardner made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report for December 2023,
seconded by Burgess Crick Owen and unanimously approved.

Treasurer Brinkman reported the CD is due for renewal in this month. She presented the best rates for renewal as 3 month @ 4.75% APY or 3 year @ 4.5% APY. The Burgesses discussed these options and agreed upon the 3-month rate.

Burgess Gaston made a motion to renew the CD in the amount of \$69,755.04 for a 3-month term at 4.75% APY, seconded by Burges Crick Owen.

Zoning Enforcement Officer's (ZOE) Report: Due to Zoning Enforcement Officer Joe Chapman absence, he submitted the following report:

1. Church Hill Rd #11, (previous non permitted apartments issue) owner has requested an application for a text amendment to allow apartments below professional use.
2. Queen St #6, Bank of America lighting plan application has been withdrawn by applicant.
3. Church Hill Rd #53, inquiry about I-2 use from Realtor.
4. Boulevard Dr #7, damage fence issue resolved by adjacent property owner at Church Hill Rd #33.
5. Church Hill Rd #29, water from this property continues to affect adjacent yards. Several complaints received, referred to DPW.
6. Main St #55, several questions and concerns from abutters concerning rebuilding

of fire damage garage. No accessory apartment is permitted there without a permit, owners and abutters are aware of this requirement.

Heldover from prior reports:

1. Church Hill Rd #27, construction underway, rough interior inspections approved (HVAC, plumbing, electric), insulation approved, ready for sheetrock.
2. Main St #4, ZBA application for garage setback variance was denied, owner considering reapplication, nothing received at this time.

Historic District: Burgess Phillips had nothing new to report since the Historic District has not met in a couple of months. She updated the Bicentennial Committee has agreed to create smaller family friendly events to celebrate the bicentennial and continues to plan the major celebratory event at Marygold's. The committee will be meeting next month and she will report their progress at the next borough meeting.

Sidewalks: Warden Maher reported of meetings held with the Town Purchasing Agent to discuss the two projects – Queen St/Church Hill Rd intersection and the Sugar St. sidewalk. He anticipates the RFP being released in March. The Town Engineer, John Curtis, has offered his assistance regarding these projects.

Warden Maher reported he would like to realize a sidewalk project that was previously discussed and approved to restore a sidewalk in disrepair at 35 Main Street. The project will consist of two stages: 1. Demolition and 2. Repair which will match the existing style of sidewalk.

Streets & Parks: Warden Maher had nothing new to report.

New Business: None

Old Business: None

Public Participation: None

The regular meeting of the Board of Burgesses will be held on Tuesday, February 13, 2024 at 7:30p.m.

There being no further business, Burgess Gaston made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 8:32 p.m., seconded by Senior Burgess Gardner and unanimously approved.

Respectfully submitted,

Ann Scaia
Borough Clerk

NEWTOWN BOROUGH TAX

MONTHLY REPORT THROUGH: DECEMBER 2023

TOTAL TAXES DUE FOR GRAND LIST 2022:	\$226,830.85
LAWFUL CORRECTIONS:	INCREASE \$2.07
	DECREASE -\$54.39
TAXES COLLECTABLE:	\$226,778.53

AMOUNTS COLLECTED TO DATE:

CURRENT TAX:	\$220,855.36
BACK TAX	\$315.35
INTEREST:	\$645.75
LIENS & FEES:	\$48.00
TOTAL COLLECTED TO DATE:	\$221,864.46

TOTAL SUBMITTED TO TREASURER TO DATE:	\$220,000.00
REFUND GIVEN FROM CURRENT YR TAX	\$0.00
REFUNDS FROM PRIOR YEARS	(\$123.58)
BOUNCED CHECKS	\$0.00
	\$219,876.42

TAX COLLECTION SUMMARY:

GL 2022	TAXES COLLECTED	\$220,855.36	
	TAXES SUSPENDED	\$0.00	
	TRANSFERS	\$0.00	
	BOUNCED CHECKS	\$0.00	
	REFUNDS	-\$970.01	
	TOTAL CURRENT TAX COLLECTED	\$219,885.35	96.96%
	UNCOLLECTED TAXES	\$6,893.18	3.04%
	OVERPAYMENTS	-\$64.77	

NOTE:

BACK TAXES OUTSTANDING FOR LIST 2020 AND PRIOR:	
UNCOLLECTED TAXES	\$1,311.61
OVERPAYMENTS FROM PRIOR YEARS	-\$100.71
ADJUSTMENTS	\$0.39
TRANSFER (TO CURRENT YEAR)	\$0.00
BOUNCED CHECK FROM BT PAID	\$0.00

DATE:

8-Jan-23

SIGN: *Jodie Enriquez*
BOROUGH TAX COLLECTOR

BOROUGH OF NEWTOWN

Treasurer's Report Month Ending December 31, 2023

		ACCOUNT 673	ACCOUNT 2470-D	ACCOUNT 873	TOTAL
		Operating Account	Insured Cash Sweep	American Rescue Plan	
BEGIN 12/1/2023		\$250,102.76	\$290,059.92	\$197,982.67	\$738,145.35
Interest Transfer		-\$102.76	\$102.76		\$0.00
Transfer to Clerk's Account	Check #355	-\$22,000.00			-\$22,000.00
	Check #354	-\$4,287.63			-\$4,287.63
Transfer in from ICS Account		\$26,287.63	-\$26,287.63		\$0.00
Deposit from Tax Collector	YTD:\$220,000	\$15,000.00	\$0.00		\$15,000.00
Deposit/cemetery assoc				\$6,620.48	
Deposit Bldg/Zoning/Misc		\$496.00			\$496.00
Transfer out to ICS Acct.		-\$15,496.00	\$15,496.00		\$0.00
Interest Earned 12/31/23		\$99.34	\$1,246.70	\$56.14	\$1,402.18
ENDING BALANCE 12/31/2023		\$250,099.34	\$280,617.75	\$204,659.29	\$728,755.90
		CD ACCOUNT 814			
		matures 1/15/24			
BEGIN 12/1/2023		\$69,591.19			
Interest earned 12/31/2023	3% APY	\$163.85			
ENDING BALANCE 12/31/2023		\$69,755.04			

Respectfully submitted 1/9/24



Newtown Public Schools

3 Primrose Street

Newtown, CT 06470

Phone: (203) 270-4867 Fax: (203) 270-6110

Borough Grant Request Newtown Middle School and Hawley

Information

Newtown Board of Education
3 Primrose St.
Newtown, CT 06470
District EIN: 06-6001643

Grants Specialist Contact: Judit DeStefano 203/426-7600 x 7505 destefanoj@newtown.k12.ct.us	Business Director Contact: Tanja Vadas 203/426-7600 x 7619 vadast@newtown.k12.ct.us
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Project Request

The Newtown Board of Education is requesting funding for furniture, materials, and equipment at Newtown Middle School and Hawley Elementary School.

Project Need

Newtown Middle School and Hawley Elementary School need books and shelving for their Library Media Centers. Newtown Middle School is also in need of equipment upgrades to its PE Fitness Room.

Hawley Elementary School, which was closed for HVAC renovations for the 2022/23 school year, needs funding to upgrade its book collection, as well as to purchase shelving suitable for picture books to capture the interest of the learning community's youngest readers.

With 287 students grades K-4, two mobile, double-sided shelving units will compete the enhancement of the Library Media Center. Funding for one is requested here. Current and relevant books are needed to continually reinvigorate the interest of budding readers during their formative years when reading habits are developing and young learners are inspired to become lifelong readers. During this seminal period it

is critical for readers to engage with age appropriate and accessible books. Schools can support reading by providing a wide array of materials covering diverse topics and spanning a range of reading levels.

According to the American Association of School Librarians, “over 21 state studies confirm that school libraries support students in academic achievement, lifelong learning, 21st century skills, and reading.” Further, “research consistently shows that when children have access to good libraries with plenty of good books and with adequate staffing, they read more, and thus do better on reading tests.” (www.aasl.org)

Newtown Middle School serves 609 students grade 7 and 8. As growing adolescents, middle school students can struggle with managing strong emotions, coping with social and academic pressure, making good decisions, and building strong relationships with supportive adults. Nationwide, mental health issues such as anxiety and depression have been on the rise for adolescents.

Our Middle School students need shared learning experiences, opportunities to connect with each other and with school staff, and the time and space to engage on some of the difficult issues and topics that they face as young teens. Students also needed to reconnect with books and reading for learning and pleasure - and see the power of books to transport us to other worlds and experiences.

Newtown Middle School's library has undergone a transformation in recent years. With new furniture received through a grant from Steelcase, the space is now a model for the district as an Active Learning Center. The multi-use, flexible space is accommodating to classes when educators need an 'alternative classroom' and by students before and after school as well as during lunchtime. The check out rate of books has increased over the past three years as well; but the reading materials are in desperate need of an upgrade. Library staff strives to build a collection that is age and developmentally appropriate for students; diverse and multicultural in scope; addresses subjects of interest to the students served; and is reflective of current and classic literature.

In addition to updating the book collection, steel shelving and end panels are needed to house new materials in this vibrant space.

Newtown Middle School also seeks to upgrade equipment in its PE – Fitness Room. Per state mandate nearly all NMS students take PE class, with classes allotting time in the space approximately 4.5 months of the year. The CDC cites that “regular physical activity can help children and adolescents improve cardiorespiratory fitness, build strong bones and muscles, control weight, reduce symptoms of anxiety and depression, and reduce the risk of developing health conditions” (cdc.gov) and Newtown Board of Education prioritizes the physical health and well being of its students.

Currently, during the fitness unit, classes must be split between the gym and the fitness room because the fitness room equipment cannot accommodate 25 students. With treadmills are being phased out due to safety concerns and the age of some equipment being 20+ years, funding is needed to upgrade the space with rowers and cross training machines.

Description

Hawley Elementary School

A mobile double-sided shelving unit with two levels of picture book browsing bins, with approximately 200 picture book capacity per unit will be purchased. The structure is 45"H x 36"W x 32"D configured in one row of five units with two end panels, one row of two units with two end panels, accommodating 12" picture book bin on top level and 15"D picture book bin on bottom level. End panels to be Wilsonart laminate construction. Books will be purchased.



Newtown Middle School

In the library, books will be purchased, along with a new steel shelving unit and end panels to accommodate the expanded collection. In the Fitness Center, three Commercial Rowers and three LifeFitness/Precor full body cross trainer machines with arms and legs will provide additional access for increased student activity. Advantage Fitness, the preferred vendor for equipment, maximizes value by offering refurbished commercial equipment where possible.

Budget

School	Item	Cost
Hawley	Book Budget	\$10,000
Hawley	Media Center Shelving	\$11,755
NMS	Book Budget	\$12,000
NMS	Media Center Shelving	\$11,087
NMS	Fitness Room Equipment	\$10,100
Total		\$54,942



Newtown Forest Association, Inc.

P.O. Box 213
Newtown, CT 06470
860.426.0100
WWW.NEWTOWNFORESTASSOCIATION.ORG

A Company of Conservation

FOUNDED 1964

THOMAS MCCARTHY
Executive Director

Board of Directors

Bart Smith, President
Andy Edwards, Vice President
Libbair Gentry, Secretary
Scott Baggitt
Dan Cohen
Bob Eckhardt
Edward Miller
Marty Wilson
Clay Wilson

Deep Brook Farm

The Goal: Preserve 32 & 21 Deep Brook Rd, 63 acres of meadows, woodlands, and wetlands for public use in perpetuity.

What is the NFA:

- Private 501(c3) land trust, largely funded by members, donations, & grants.
 - Largest private landowner in Newtown, preserving over 1400 acres, 76 properties.
 - The NFA is celebrating 100 years of conservation this year, 2024!

Key Benefits of Preservation:

- These parcels will **NEVER BE DEVELOPED**, retaining the rural character of Newtown for generations to come.
- Maintain a wildlife habitat and green corridor.
- Enhance property appreciation.





**Newtown Forest
Association, Inc.**

P.O. Box 213

Newtown, CT 06470

860.261.1000 FAX 860.261.1001

A Chapter of Connecticut

Foresters 1954

Deep Brook Farm... If Acquired

- A Nature & Wildlife Preserve, open to the public with trails for passive recreation, dawn to dusk.
 - No motorized vehicles.
 - Comparable to Cherry Grove.
 - Anticipate that the residents of The Borough will use regularly.
- A maintenance plan will be defined & tailored to the topography and open space for the benefit of the plants, animals, and people... meadows, wetlands, trails, invasives... and scheduled into our larger stewardship program for all NFA properties.
- The barns and outbuildings will be in conversation, preserved... restricted for use to keep consistency with historic nature.
- The ultimate goal will be to ensure that long after all of us are gone, people will still be able to see these parcels in the same way we see them today...
 - a beautiful farm property, surrounded by dirt roads connecting us all to the rural character of Newtown... a 1 mile, 20 min walk, to the flag pole!
- Similar to The Borough's goals, the NFA shares pride and responsibility to the historical charm of Newtown.





Newtown Forest
Association, Inc.

2013 Box 2113
Newtown, CT 06470
860.223.0000
A 501(c)(3) non-profit organization
Incorporated in CT
Fiscal Year 2023

Newtown Forest Association, Inc. is a
501(c)(3) non-profit organization.
EIN # 03-079949

Deep Brook Farm... Fundraising Status

- Close to our fundraising goal.
- We do have outstanding pledges and grant applications pending.
- Both the NFA and The Estate have conducted separate, independent, appraisals of the property's value.
- We have had strong community engagement... the immediate neighbors on Deep Brook, Point o Rocks, & Valley View... have been outstanding supporters and advocates.
- The key next step is coming to an agreement with The Estate to acquire the property.
- The NFA would be grateful for any donation from The Borough, given the farm's close proximity to The Borough boundary line.

