

**FINAL**



**WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
March 12, 2018**

**PRESENT:** TOM CLOW, CHAIRMAN; FREDERICK W. HIPPLER, VICE CHAIRMAN; JOHN (JACK) MEANEY, SELECTMAN; AND JAN SNYDER, SELECTMAN.

**RECORDING SECRETARY:** Naomi L. Bolton

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Naomi L. Bolton

**GUESTS:** Katie Sizemore; Donna Osborne; Sherry Burdick; Frank Campana; Beth Rouse, Finance Administrator; Bob Vezina, Fire Chief.

Chairman Clow called the meeting to order at 6:32 PM, welcomed everyone present and watching, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Chairman Clow stated that our agenda is a little different tonight, because we have phone lines open for people to call in with any questions regarding the Town warrant articles for voting tomorrow. Chairman Clow reminded everyone that the phone line to call is 529-7527. The Board will still continue on with the rest of the agenda but when a phone call comes in we stop and take that question. Chairman Clow stated the Town is still voting regardless of the weather. He encouraged everyone to get out and vote. Voting will take place at the Weare Middle School Gymnasium from 7 AM to 7 PM. Chairman Clow pointed out that if anyone present tonight has a question please feel free to come up and ask.

**CALL-IN PROGRAM: allows people to call into the Board with questions about the Town ballot (ends at 7:30 PM)**

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, pointed out that when Article 6 for the additional officer, Article 10 for Road Reconstruction and Article 11 for the part time highway person were presented at the budget hearing the dollar amount in each of those articles only specified what is needed for the balance of the 2018 year. He asked that night that the Board consider including the total dollar amount for 12 months. The Board did not do that. The amendment was made by Mr. Campana on the floor at deliberative session. It took someone from the public to tell people what the full years cost is for these articles. His question is, this word transparency gets thrown out quite a bit, not only from the Board but from people in the public, but more so from the Board, why didn't the final article include the total cost. It would have saved time at deliberative session. It's kind of unrelated for tonight. Chairman Clow stated that anytime we put together a warrant article we run it by DRA and our attorney. They are done by standards and the Board didn't have an issue with the amendments that were made. This could be kept in mind for the future but at this point we don't have an answer. The articles were drafted and they were run through DRA and the town's counsel. They have a standard way of developing the articles and whoever is sitting on the Board next year will have to decide how the articles are done. Chairman Clow stated that the Road Reconstruction article has been discussed over the years and DRA has recommended that the way we do it is without including that third number is the appropriate way to do it. Town Administrator

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Bolton added that it was mentioned at the budget hearing that full 12 month cost was going to be explained in the mailer versus the article. The Board did not put it in the mailer because it is already in the wording of the article. The Board wasn't avoiding informing the taxpayers the full 12 month cost it was stated it was just going to be done in the mailer and not on the article. Mr. Campana stated and agreed that was the Board's decision, but to him that is not good enough and he felt it really should be in the article because everyone that comes to vote is going to read the article.

Chairman Clow reminded the viewers that if they a question to call 529-7527.

Frank Campana's second question was about the proposed budget that is on the warrant. It is a 6% increase. He wanted to hear from each selectman their reason of how they justified the 6% increase. Mr. Campana wanted to remind everyone that this town has done okay with anywhere from a 1 to 3% increase. This year it is doubled. Chairman Clow stated that we don't go to the department heads with a recommendation of a % increase. We ask them to present what they need. The Board reviews it and sometime changes get made. Chairman Clow talked about the tax rate but that 6% doesn't come out to that when the tax rate is set. Last year if we had done nothing the Town would have seen a 7% increase, but only saw a 1% because the Board applied funds from the undesignated fund balance. We always estimate our revenues low and have been getting more than we estimated at year end. The revenues are looked at and revised in early September and can be looked at again before we set the tax rate in October. We are's tax rate is the lowest town tax rate when compared to some neighboring communities. Mr. Campana stated that, that 6% will always be in that budget the only factor that makes it not the 6% is the money that is used to return to reduce taxes. Selectman Snyder stated that part of it is about a \$50,000 increase for the extended coverage for the EMT's that was part of last year's proposed budget for part of the year. Mr. Campana stated that he didn't need the Board to be that specific. Selectman Snyder stated that increase she spoke of goes to the public's safety. Another part is that when warrant articles like the non-union raises get approved (3% last year) or the collective bargaining agreement (3.5% last year) those get added to the operating budget now for 12 months. Vice Chairman Hippler stated there was an increase in the retirement percentage with the police department. He stated that it is because of warrant articles and increases for our public safety employees. Selectman Snyder added that new hires are taking different insurance plans. Some new hires are taking insurance plans, some are now family plans, where some were taking the buyouts. Selectman Meaney stated that when the cut was made to the operating budget last year we staggered hiring to make that adjustment and now there are a full 12 months of these employees.

Donna Osborne, South Stark Highway asked about Article 6. Ms. Osborne stated that she sat on the Board years ago and she would like the Board, whoever it is moving forward to try to keep it clear and putting more numbers in the article creates confusion at times. Article 6 for the one additional officer, she would like to know if the police chief's contract states that he does not patrol. She understands that he is part time and she has not seen him out patrolling. She felt that he could be that one additional officer to help out his department. Ms. Osborne stated that she was once told from Les Knox that "don't ask your people to do something that you won't do". She would like to see the Chief out on the road and some patrolling with his men. The Board stated that there is nothing in his contract that states that he can't patrol. She would like to see him out there. Ms. Osborne asked if there were additional officers included in the operating budget. She recalled hearing there were 2 officers. Chairman Clow and the Board stated that was discussed but was changed throughout the year. There are no new officers included in the operating budget. The department is currently down only one officer to make the full roster of 11.

Town Administrator Bolton explained that there was a mistake in the mailer. The mailer shows Connie St. Clair as Trustee of Trust Fund. That is incorrect. Connie St. Clair is running for a one year term as a Cemetery

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Trustee. Sarah Dinwoodie is running for a three year term as the Trustee of Trust Funds, but it was omitted by mistake in the mailer. It is correct on the ballot, but the mailer is wrong.

## MEETING MINUTES:

March 5, 2018 Minutes: The Board voted to table these until next week.

## MANIFESTS:

**Chairman Clow moved, Selectman Meaney seconded to order the Treasurer to sign accounts payable and payroll checks dated March 15, 2018 as included in the following manifests:**

**Payroll Manifest** \$ 63,346.91 (Weekly payroll)

<b>Accounts Payable Manifest</b>	<b>\$ 70,064.21</b>
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**John Stark School Accounts Payable Manifest      \$    250,000.00**

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 383,411.12</b>
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**Passed 4-0-0**

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT:** Town Administrator Bolton went through the upcoming agenda items as follows:

*TA Office Roof* óServPro will be here tomorrow between 10-11 AM to look at the roof(s) at the Town Office

*Custodian Position Details-* reminder that this is continued for next week's agenda, March 19<sup>th</sup>

*Town Meeting Election Day* –Tomorrow's voting will be at the WMS gym from 7 AM ó 7 PM regardless of the weather

*Hazard Mitigation Plan Update* – next week there is a public hearing scheduled for the update to the Hazard Mitigation Plan

Chairman Clow asked again for any callers with questions to call as we are going to extend the time frame.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, stated that he is still a little confused with the recent change of the default budget. It sounds like the Board put back in about \$60,000, a bit less. One of those items is under insurances under general liability and is a little under \$47,000 from last year. That amount in the 2018 new default number. That \$47,000 got added back into the amount by the Board. He is wondering why it was done specifically because it was a contract, noted by a double asterisk by it. There is no specific contract signed by Primex. We purchase the insurance through Primex. Chairman Clow stated that we have an obligation as a board to create a default budget to cover all the expenses. At the Finance Committee meeting on January 3<sup>rd</sup> there were questions about our insurance and it was agreed upon by the Finance Committee by the person that petitioned the suit that yes that higher number is the one that should be carried over. Vice Chairman Hippler stated he asked the question and he looked it up to verify and it is about the hour and eight minute mark. Town Administrator Bolton stated that we agreed to buy our insurance for 5 years with Primex. Each year the insurance cost is based on the Town's performance on a 5 year sliding scale. Mr. Campana added so the Board is comfortable taxing the taxpayers for \$47,000 that you don't need? Secondly, does the board have any idea of that roughly \$60,000 that was put back in is going to be spent? Is it going to fund the two contracts? Chairman Clow responded that there are a lot more contracts not being discussed here. There are two specific positions that are getting all the

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focus here, the Town Administrator's contract and the Police Chief's contract. They are getting all the attention but supposition that was made in the suit was that there are no contracts that we can sign during the year and bring those funds into the default budget. We disagree with that and that is why it's being appealed. Our attorney disagreed with the court decision along with us and it has been done this way for years. Chairman Clow stated that if you go back to 2006 the board at that time signed a contract for Fred Ventresco to be the Town Administrator in June of 2006. The next year his contract was in both the proposed and default budget. Nobody mentioned it then and we have done it that way ever since then not just for that but the trash hauling contract, the recyclable hauling, lawn care contracts, the assessing contract and the prosecutor's contract. All these have been handled the same way every year for years and this year there is a suit brought against the town. We have a legal obligation to pay the signed contracts. It's not just two contracts that are part of the issue. Our assessors have to have the properties valued for April 1<sup>st</sup> so a contract was signed. Mr. Campana stated that he felt the Board should work toward using the start date of contracts to be town meeting date. He felt that if you want to be transparent and you don't want to be a gotcha okay then let the voters have a say on a day like tomorrow. Mr. Campana felt that it should be narrowed to a personnel contract. We approve contracts for teachers and the police at Town meeting. Donna Osborne pointed out that when we hired Fred we paid his moving expenses as well, which wasn't cheap to move him here. Chairman Clow stated that he had a \$74,000 contract when he left. Mr. Campana stated that he feels it is a process of finding things out as well as the adage that people grow too.

**CORRESPONDENCE:** Selectman Meaney stated that he would like to address a piece of correspondence that was addressed to Chairman Clow individually. He would like to read it into the record but warned that there is some very vulgar and crude language in it, but felt it should be read with the obscenities. Everyone talks about the issue of transparency he felt that people should know what type of correspondence the Board gets. The email was read as follows:

Subject: Proposed budget lawsuit

What the hell is going on with this board??? What are you doing to our deliberative session amendment on the operating budget??? I hope Neal puts the shit to you! I usually don't say much cause I have lost all faith in the board lately, I try to find good smarts, wisdom, and transparency in what you do but it's been slipping away fast. I can't even watch anymore cause it just ticks me off. My example of the weare board of selectmen smarts and wisdom is this following scenario.

Town DPW garage passes. Old garage torn down (not wise, great cold storage use). Town of weare takes tax back property (old next gen garage). We spend money to fix it up temporarily house DPW during construction. DPW garage finished, should be moving in shortly. Now we might keep the tax reclaimed property for storage!? Or the best one I heard was a fucking impound lot for the cops?!?!? So now here we are, money spent to tear down old DPW garage, Spent money to fix up temporary garage, may keep it and not get a SALE out of it. So now our reason is it would be great storage for DPW or an impound yard? If there was any smarts on this board a simple scenario like this would have played out 180 degrees differently and saved the town money in demo, rebuilding a property that is tax repossessed, and the fiasco of temporarily of housing the DPW. Also selling the property to get our tax money back!!!

See how you all look like you don't know how to earn the trust of the people!??

Get your act together

Eldon Townesö

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Selectman Meaney replied to the part of cold storage. The DPW garage has not completely vacated the building because of the winter conditions and time. We have talked about it as an impound yard because we now are depending upon neighboring communities to hold onto our property. But all in all the Board has not made any final decision about the next plan for this property as of tonight.

**OTHER BUSINESS:** Vice Chairman Hippler stated that voting is tomorrow with another nor'easter, depending upon how things go. He wanted to thank the Town of Weare and the other members present and past. He hopes to continue but tomorrow will dictate that.

Donna Osborne asked for one last minute before the board adjourned. She stated that she was really sad to think that someone would write that. She feels that everyone has their opinion but she stated that she has lived here all her life and she is really disappointed with how the townspeople treat the Board at times. She wants to be proud of this town and she is not right now. She was disappointed that the future generation can write something like that, even though he is welcome to his opinion the facts should be researched first.

Chairman Clow stated that he would like to say one thing. We have all heard about this word transparency over and over. He has been part of the Board for 12 years and over those years there have been differences of opinion but at the end of the day the Board worked united and together.

Selectman Snyder stated that she wonders why we are here. We have to have job descriptions to hand out. We are being micromanaged and it just doesn't seem to make sense to her. The department heads have more leeway than the Board does.

**Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Vice Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Meaney seconded to adjourn at 8:09 PM. Passed 4-0-0**

## ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

*Naomi L. Bolton*

Naomi L. Bolton  
Recording Secretary