

FINAL



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES
January 18, 2021

PRESENT: JOHN (JACK) MEANEY, CHAIRMAN; FREDERICK W. HIPPLER, VICE CHAIRMAN; JONATHAN H. OSBORNE, SELECTMAN; SHERRY M. BURDICK, SELECTMAN; JOHN VAN LOENDERSLOOT, SELECTMAN

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR: Naomi L. Bolton

GUESTS: Finance Administrator Beth Rouse, DPW Director Benjamin Knapp, Police Chief Chris Moore, Fire Chief Robert Vezina, Finance Committee Chairman Tom Downing, Finance Committee Member Tom Clow, Finance Committee Member James Drury, Finance Committee Member Bill Anderson, Finance Committee Member Chris Hague, Richard Butt, Frank Campana, Tom Flaherty, Janice Mathews, Steve Bartlett, Christine Maglio, Sue Morin

ZOOM GUESTS: Jess & Tom, Finance Committee Secretary Leah Borla, Finance Committee Member Tammi Hagman, Finance Committee Vice Chairman Meghan Thellen, Finance Committee Member Nicole Herbst, Town Moderator Eileen Meaney, Ricky Houde

Chairman Meaney opened the meeting at 6:38 pm., welcomed those present and via zoom to the January 18, 2021 Weare Board of Selectmen Meeting and proceeded with the pledge of allegiance.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Frank Campana, 322 Quaker Street, started by thanking the Selectmen and everyone involved in tonight's setup. Next, he expressed his concern over the MOU signed in public by the Board. He is interested to know what it was and how it could affect taxpayers.

DEPARTMENT HEAD/COMMITTEE ITEMS: none

MANIFEST:

To order the Treasurer to sign the payroll and accounts payables checks dated January 21, 2021 as included in the following manifests:

<i>Payroll Manifest</i>	\$	<i>60,339.49</i> (Weekly payroll)
<i>2020 Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	<i>68,332.36</i>
<i>2021 Accounts Payable Manifest</i>	\$	<i>11,470.05</i>

2021 Supplemental Accounts Payable Manifest \$ 385.00

Total \$ 140,526.90

Chairman Meaney moved, Vice Chairman Hippler seconded to accept the manifest as follows, which passed. Passed 5-0-0

MINUTES:

January 11, 2021 Minutes: Vice Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Van seconded to accept the minutes of January 11th as written, passed 5-0-0

ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT:

2021 Deliberative Session – Saturday, February 6, 2021 @ WMS Gym
Motorola Solutions – January 19, 2021 @ 6:00pm via Zoom

CORRESPONDENCE & OTHER BUSINESS:

BOS Site Walk – January 17, 2021 on Jewett Road, Final decision for BOS February 1, 2021 meeting.

Chairman Meaney moved, Selectman Van seconded to recess until 7:00pm. Passed 5-0-0

7:00pm – Chairman Meaney reconvened the meeting opening the Public Hearing for the Warrant Articles to be brought forth at the Deliberative Session.

Article #9

Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Seven Million One Hundred Fifty-Four Thousand One Hundred Forty Dollars (\$7,154,140)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Seven Million Nine Thousand Five Hundred Ninety-two Dollars (\$7,009,592), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen)

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Richard Butt, 90 Old Town Road, questioned lines #282 Police- Vehicle Management & 283 Police-Vehicle Equipment, both lines unfunded and new to the budget this year, for what purpose.

Chairman Meaney responded Chief Moore added these lines for future fleet management. Eventually, add two separate line items, a cruiser and equipment in his budget, no longer a warrant article. Chief Moore confirmed.

Mr. Butt replied typically in the town of Weare, a Capital Expense is not an Operating Expense. Initially, going to CIP for three cruisers, reduced to one, it should not be in the budget. This circumvents the voters by burying it in his Operating Budget. Disappointed the Board allowed this, what prevents the Chief from

using excess funds in a Default Budget to purchase a cruiser within the Operating Budget. Can he transfer funds into this line and purchase a cruiser this year.

Chairman Meaney stated he does not believe he can. As a Capital Expense, he would need Board approval and go before the town.

Mr. Butt would like legal confirmation.

Frank Campana would like a confirmed dollar amount for the Budget Surplus for this year. What is the difference between the dollar amounts, percentage from this year's proposed, and last years adopted budget. As a large number, over \$305,000.00 @ 4.5%, it is important. At the Deliberative Session last year, the Board and the Moderator committed to providing the Police 3-year contract figure total impact. That commitment was forgotten. People should know everything as Selectman Van often uses the word transparency. Make the tax impact known, and percentage between last years approved budget and this years requested budget.

Chairman Meaney directed Mr. Campana to the booklet that gives the Estimated Tax Impact for both Proposed and Default budgets. Mr. Campana replied that does not compare what is requested this year vs. last year's approved. Chairman Meaney explained last years is the default budget. Mr. Campana stated there is no relation to last year's actions, it is strictly this years.

Chairman Meaney to provide that information.

Tom Flaherty, 35 Sunrise Lane, stated the tax impact for Article #9 has a \$4.62 tax impact for Proposed and \$4.45 for Default. Is this in addition to the town portion from last year or the total impact? Last year's town portion was \$4.79. Vice Chairman Hippler stated the \$4.79 was the total impact including all warrant articles. The \$4.45 and \$4.62 do not include the warrant articles, just Operating Budget. Tom Flaherty stated if everything passes this year, with all the warrant articles, the total impact would be \$5.06 vs. \$4.79 from last year. Vice Chairman Hippler explained the difference lies within the number of warrant articles from year to year.

Mr. Butt stated there is a decreased difference in lines items between what was requested in the Proposed Budget and the same line item in the Default Budget. The Default includes \$191,508.00, of individual line items that are larger than what was requested in the Proposed Budget. Mr. Butt is concerned that there are contracts in the default that have been eliminated or decreased but they do not reflect a decrease in the default, only in the proposed. Mr. Butt also inquired why the wages for the Police Department are larger in the proposed than the default. Chairman Meaney and Police Chief Moore both stated it was because of the need to hire certified, experienced Officers. The wages that were offered were higher than budgeted.

Tom Clow, 125 Concord Stage, agrees with Mr. Butt. If new hires were done with the contract approved by the voters, the salaried total cost should be in the Default Budget and the Proposed Budget. Line 235 should be the same.

Mr. Butt questioned the Prosecutor line, eliminated, Patrol Officer in place. Chairman Meaney stated the Town opted out of the Prosecutor contract. Instead, a prosecutor from Goffstown is used on a case-by-case basis, supplemented by one of our Patrol Officers. Mr. Butt asked if that is why \$10,000.00 was left in that line. Chairman Meaney responded correct.

Article #10

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Three Dollars (\$59,953) to be used for raises for non-union Town and Library personnel? If approved, this addition would become part of the annual budget. (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.07

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Frank Campana, asked how was the 3% raise determined for non-union personnel? Chairman Meaney explained to align with the Police raise. Mr. Campana challenged to be fair if you align a raise with the union then some of their benefits should also be considered for non-union personnel. The bargaining unit and the non-bargaining unit should not be getting equal raises.

Chairman Meaney explained non-union benefits are not the same as the Police union employees because they have specific items, not applicable to non-union employees.

Bill Anderson, 137 East Road, stated that in the past this article was 1 or 2%. Chairman Meaney reminded Mr. Anderson it has been 3% the past couple of years. Mr. Anderson stated comparing non-union to a Police contract at 3% is like comparing apples to oranges. In a year of Covid, and school budgets coming in high, it should be less, not tied to the Police contract.

Mr. Butt stated there should have been more justification. Police Officers are at a different level, hence the CBA. It is easier to replace a truck driver than it would be a Police Officer. Chairman Meaney stated the town is currently having a hard time hiring truck drivers. Mr. Butt replied from a safety standpoint he'd rather have an Officer on duty. Three percent is too high.

DPW Director Benjamin Knapp, 108 Perkins Pond Road, would like to speak on behalf of his department and himself. The attention this article gets is more than any other. If you work your whole life, you work hard to move up the ladder, being rewarded for your work every year. From his department, 3% on average equates to \$0.50 cents an hour. At one point, awhile back, they went seven years with no raises. Addressing the Covid situation, the town of Weare has had the least amount of Welfare requests this year than in the past few years. Using Covid for a reason to disagree with a 3% raise is not a strong leg to stand on.

Article #11

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Ninety-One Dollars (\$99,291) to hire two (2) full-time Firefighters/EMTs? This represents the wages, taxes, and benefits for six (6) months, and certain one-time expenses. If approved, the Fire Department Operating Budget will be reduced by Thirty-Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty-Three Dollars (\$37,783); and this addition would become part of the annual operating budget with an estimated annual cost of One Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Seven Dollars (\$182,557). (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.07

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Butt stated this is a great program that the Fire Chief started two years ago. Transitioning from on-call to fulltime services. Well planned supported by the voters. Nothing hidden, costs are up front on the warrant. Not hidden in the Operating Budget, he has done a great job.

Article #12

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Three Hundred Eighty-Two Dollars (\$5382) for the cost of increasing the hourly wages for the employees of Chase Park within the Parks and Recreation Department. This represents the wages and payroll taxes affiliated. If this Warrant Article is approved, this would become part of the annual operating budget. (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.01

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Campana asked if this is a 3% raise. Chairman Meaney responded no, estimated \$1.00/hour raise for roughly 12 to 15 people. Mr. Campana then asked how many non-union employees are in the town. Chairman Meaney stated 52 employees, plus 34 rescue responders.

Article #13

Building Inspector to fulltime – no comments

Article #14

Fire Engine Pump – no comments

Article #15

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty One Thousand Dollars (\$61,000) for the purchase of on (1) fully equipped front line police cruiser? (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.07

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Police Chief Moore stated the vehicle is composed of systems, computer, radio, lights, sirens, prisoner area, storage, graphics and radar. This request at \$61,000.00 is not a fully equipped police vehicle. The MDT, \$6000.00, is in a separate budget line, not included in the request because of their 5-year life cycle. With five cruisers, one replacement is needed every year. Life cycles of different equipment affect the rotations needed, which in turn, affects how vehicles are requested.

Mr. Butt asked if the added equipment is in the Operating Budget. Chairman Meaney stated he believes yes. Mr. Butt then asked if it is in the Default Budget. Chairman Meaney stated he would have to ask the Chief, if it's a Default Budget, he would have to find the money.

Article #16

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$230,000) to be added to the previously established Highway Truck and Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing a new fully equipped 10-wheel plow truck for the Highway Department? The purpose is to replace an existing plow truck. (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.26

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Campana asked for the current balance in the Capital Reserve Fund and has any money been withdrawn in the last two years. Chairman Meaney responded \$164,500.00 and yes, appropriated money goes in and then it is withdrawn to pay for the truck and equipment. Mr. Campana asked after the truck/equipment is purchased is any other money withdrawn. Chairman Meaney stated no.

DPW Director Knapp added the number provided does not include all payments yet.

Mr. Butt stated this Department Head established a plan. Having gone a number of years without new vehicles, now replacing vehicles every year. It is a good program, combined with Road Reconstruction; our DPW Director is doing a great job. Mr. Butt continued will there be a time when the fund were to build up and funds could return to the taxpayer.

DPW Director Knapp stated that has been discussed, one day to buy a truck that way, saving taxpayers. This year he still needs to purchase needed equipment to be deducted from this fund.

Article #17

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$115,000) to be added to the previously established Transfer Station Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing a new trash trailer for the Transfer Station? The purpose is to replace an existing transfer trash trailer.

(**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.13

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Campana asked for the balance in that fund. Chairman Meaney stated \$23,021.00

Article #18

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the previously established Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of erecting, repairing and/or replacing bridges? (**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.03

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Butt asked what the plan is. Chairman Meaney responded the town is waiting on the State for engineering cost, because they pay 80% and the town pays 20%. The fund now is \$422,000.00. Vice Chairman Hippler stated initially the fund was for the River Road Bridge at Buzzell Hill and the culvert on Lull and Francestown Road, saving up to establish \$420,000.00. The costs rise over the years. The town needs to be ready with the appropriate amount of funds. DPW Director Knapp agreed stating a number of things happen that alter how projects are chosen. Sometimes the State runs out of money, staff changes on the State level, DES determinations affect how things run. This money is put aside for the 20% portion, but also for anything that could fail between now and then. Currently, we have been pushed back to 2026, switching priority from Lull Road to River Road as it is failing astronomically.

Article #19

Road Reconstruction – no comments

Article #20

Government Building Fund – no comments

Article #21

Cemetery Cypres – no comments

Article #22

Licensed Forester – no comments

Article #23

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Forty Thousand Dollars (\$140,000) for the Conservation Commission expenditure toward the purchase of new town forest land, and fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of that sum from the Town Forest Account?

(**Recommended** by the Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.00

The Chair asked if there were any questions.

Mr. Campana asked if there was any land available that the Board has a plan for. Chairman Meaney replied not at the present time.

Article #24

To see if the Town will vote to enact a Noise Ordinance, restricting the use of Tannerite or any other type of binary rifle target, within a residential area that results in a potent explosion? BY PETITION

Mr. Butt asked if the Town had a definition for Residential Area. Chairman Meaney explained whatever is in the Zoning Ordinance, residential, commercial or agricultural.

Article #25

Petition to redraw political districts – no comments

Article #26

Transact other business – no comments

Mr. Butt came forward to thank Chairman Meaney for running tonight's meeting, one of the most organized public hearings for warrant articles. He appreciated the time it took and stated the Chair did a great job.

Chairman Meaney thanked Mr. Butt.

Mr. Campana referred back to the Police cruiser line stating he may have understood the Chief's explanation regarding fully equipped, but suggests changing the dollar amount if the \$61,000.00 does not represent fully equipped. Vice Chairman Hippler clarified Mr. Campana's suggestion, is his intent to suggest bringing the dollar amount to \$68,000.00 for fully equipped? Because some equipment expires, on a different rotation schedule than a car, needing updating whether in a new vehicle or not. Chairman Meaney elaborated equipment is no longer interchangeable from one car to another like years past; design affects fit adding additional cost.

Chairman Meaney closed the public hearing at 8:15pm.

Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Selectman Van made a motion, Vice Chairman Hippler seconded to adjourn at 8:16 pm. Passed 5-0-0

ADJOURNMENT

A True Record.

Karen Nelson

Karen Nelson transcribed from

TA Bolton notes & You Tube recording