

DRAFT



WEARE BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 24, 2023

**PRESENT:** FREDERICK W. HIPPLER, CHAIRMAN; JONATHAN H. OSBORNE, VICE CHAIRMAN; KEVIN J. CAHILL, SELECTMAN.

**ABSENT:** SELECTMAN SHERRY BURDICK; SELECTMAN JON VAN

**TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:** Naomi L. Bolton

**GUESTS:** Frank Campana; Steve Roberts, Tom Clow

Chairman Hippler called the meeting to order at 6:34 PM and lead those present in the pledge of allegiance.

**WORK SESSION:**

Chairman Hippler stated that tonight's meeting is a work session to complete the 2023 budget and warrant articles. Some articles were changed because of feedback during last week's public hearing. The Board will be going down article-by-article and once done discussion a recommendation will need to be made.

Proposed Operating Budget: Since the public hearing last Monday evening, the Board has gone back and revisited the budget. Reductions were made to the diesel fuel going from \$7/gallon to \$6/gallon; reducing the salt down a little as we purchase ordered some for the year end; and reducing the tool purchase from \$58,000 to \$15,000 as at year end money was allocated to get some tools. The new proposed 2023 operating budget is \$7,977,540. **Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman Osborne seconded to recommend the operating budget as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Police CBA: This article now reflects nine (9) months of the cost and not twelve (12), which was shown on the article at the public hearing. **Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman Osborne seconded to recommend the Police CBA article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Non-Union Raise Pool: The amount in this article represents a "pool" of money based on a 5% wage increase. Wages are still low in a few departments, making it difficult to retain help. The Board discussed making increases merit based, but needed a way to come up with the pool. Distributing the "pool" if approved will be up to the Board. Reviews were done for the majority of the employees except the Department Heads, a second review will be done in August for preparation of the 2024 warrant article. The Board asked the Town Administrator to do some further wage research before the recommendation is done.

Fire Department Radios: This article was presented to the CIP Subcommittee and recommended to the Board. This article asks to replace 25 aging pagers and chargers with the funding from the Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle Special Revenue Fund. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill seconded to recommend the Fire Department Radio article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Fire Department Utility Truck Replacement: This is to purchase one (1) fully equipped utility truck for the Fire Department. It was presented and approved by the CIP Subcommittee for a total cost of \$105,000 with the funding from the Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle Special Revenue Fund. **Vice Chairman Osborne, Chairman Hippler seconded to recommend the Fire Department Utility Truck Replacement article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Police Cruiser: This is to purchase one fully equipped front line police cruiser. There was a little change in the radio update, but the Board felt that it could offset this purchase by using \$30,000 from the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money, making the taxation less. **Selectman Cahill moved, Chairman Hippler seconded to recommend the Police Cruiser article using the \$30,000 towards the cruiser purchase as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

10-Wheel Dumptruck: There was additional money received in September 26, 2022 for additional Highway Block Grant Fund in the amount of \$241,941 that could be added to the Highway Truck and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. There is additional funds in there from the last few purchases. If this is approved this additional, money added to the current balance there is enough funds to purchase a \$260,000 10-wheel dumptruck. This is an approved use of the additional funds per SB401. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill seconded to recommend the 10-Wheel Dumptruck article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Government Building Maintenance Fund: The current balance in the Capital Reserve fund is approximately \$23,000, which is significantly lower than the Board felt should be in there. This fund covers any maintenance that comes up during the course of the year. Without have any long-term maintenance plans, this is a crucial need. The Finance Administrator felt that \$30,000 from the undesignated fund balance would be okay but not anymore. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill seconded to recommend the Government Building Maintenance article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Road Reconstruction: The original request with the CIP Subcommittee was \$640,000. At the end of 2022 there was a balance of around \$140,000 left in the Capital Reserve, to this was reduced to \$500,000 and when added to the left over balance the total of \$640,000 would still be able to be used. **Vice Chairman Osborne moved, Selectman Cahill seconded to recommend the Road Reconstruction article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

New CRF for Tennis Court Replacement: This article has not changed since the public hearing. It is to create a new capital reserve fund to start putting money away from a total replacement being about 5 years away. The total cost is unknown but this \$20,000 would start the fund. **Selectman Cahill moved, Vice Chairman Osborne seconded to recommend the new CRF fund for Tennis Court Replacement article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

New Parks and Recreation Revolving Fund: There have been a few changes made by Town counsel and DRA. The agents to expend has been changed from the Parks and Recreation to Board of Selectmen. This fund will have the money received from the Chase Park fees to be used on any of the recreational fields. **Vice Chairman Osborne moved, Selectman Cahill moved to recommend the new Parks and Recreation Revolving Fund article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0.**

Cemetery Cy-Pres: At the public hearing, it was mentioned to look into the possibility of hiring someone to come into the cemeteries and lay them out for lots for sale and to verify the locations of vaults. The was looked into and cannot happen so the article remains the same for \$10,000. **Chairman Hippler moved, Vice Chairman Osborne seconded to recommend the Cemetery Cy-Pres article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

**Town Forester:** This article is the same as written for the public hearing last week. Each year this is on the ballot to fund the Town Forester. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill seconded to recommend the Town Forester article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Re-adoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit per RSA 72:28: This article and the next article are two that the State are mandating that the communities readopt. If they are not readopted the amount of credit goes from \$500 back to \$50. Both need to pass. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill moved to recommend the re-adoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Re-adoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit per RSA 72:28-b: This is same as above, no further discussion needed. **Chairman Hippler moved, Selectman Cahill moved to recommend the re-adoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit article as presented tonight. Passed 3-0-0**

Composition of the Board of Firewards: This article does not involve money. It is a new article. Steve Roberts, speaking as an individual tonight and not as a member of the Board of Firewards. The Board of Firewards have not seen this article or voted on it. The current composition as voted by the Town is three members of the department, three non-members of the department and the Fire Chief. In the last few meetings of the Board, in his opinion there seems to be some conflicts and in some cases an appearance of bias. The Town Attorney was approached because of these conflicts and biases and provided a statement that was read at the last Board of Firewards meeting. The proposed article changes from three persons from the department; three non-departmental members and the Chief to six non-department members and the Chief. Chairman Hippler stated that he understands Mr. Roberts stance and perception, but he is not comfortable putting it on the warrant without the Board of Firewards weighing in on it. As is it now it would be considered a petition article from an individual. The consensus of the Board was that they are not in favor of moving forward without approval/input from the Board of Firewards.

Petition to Pave Orchard Hill Road & Apple Way: As this is, a petition article that has no funding tied to it the Board makes no recommendation.

Petition to Take Action on Climate Pollution: This is also a petition article with no funding so no recommendation is made.

#### **CORRESPONDENCE/OTHER BUSINESS:**

Legislative Bulletin: Town Administrator Bolton provided the Board with a current copy of the Legislative Bulletin. The NH Municipal Association releases the bulletin and it gives Boards updated information on upcoming bills being proposed, dates of hearings and an overview of what each bill may have for an effect on the communities. The immunity protection bill is returning this year and could be very detrimental for some communities. It will dramatically increase the legal line.

Piscataquog River Local Advisory Committee (PRLAC): A nomination form was provided for signature that reinforces the nomination for Keith Erf. The Board members present signed the form. Town Administrator Bolton will send it to NHDES in the morning.

Board of Selectmen Town of Report Article: Chairman Hippler sent the Board of Selectmen's draft annual report to all to read and approve. The Board took a minute to proof the article. The consensus of the Board was that it appears fine.

Email from resident regarding tools: A resident emailed questioned the Board, asking them to reconsider or revisit the tool amount as he felt it was too low. The Board felt that putting \$15,000 in the proposed budget would allow the department to get additional tools on top of the 2022 amount that was purchased ordered at the year-end.

**NONPUBLIC SESSION:**

**Chairman Hippler moved; Selectman Cahill seconded to enter into nonpublic session @ 8:15 p.m. pursuant to the authority granted in RSA 91-A: 3II (a & c). A roll call vote was taken, Selectman Cahill – yes; Chairman Hippler – yes; Vice Chairman Osborne - yes. Passed 3-0-0**

**Chairman Hippler moved; Vice Chairman Osborne seconded to exit this nonpublic session @ 8:18 p.m. A roll call vote was taken, Selectman Cahill – yes; Chairman Hippler – yes; Vice Chairman Osborne – yes. Passed 3-0-0**

**Chairman Hippler moved; Selectman Cahill seconded to seal and restrict these nonpublic session minutes. Passed 3-0-0**

**Being there was no further business to come before the Board, Vice Chairman Osborne made a motion, Chairman Hippler seconded to adjourn at 8:19 pm. Passed 3-0-0**

**ADJOURNMENT**

A True Record.

*Naomi L. Bolton*

Naomi L. Bolton, Town Administrator