

Minutes of the

Weare Finance Committee

Wednesday, 18 December 2019

The meeting was called to order at approximately 6:35pm.

In attendance were (from right to left as seen by the audience): Nicole Herbst, Matt Whitlock (secretary), Christine Hague, Gary Evans, Tom Clow, Lori Davis (chair), Tom Downing, Dennis Aubin, Keith Erf. James Drury and Neal Kurk were absent. Tammi Hagman arrived at 6:46pm and took a seat at the far right. Megan Thellen arrived at 7:01pm and took a seat to the left of Matt.

Chris moved to approve the minutes from the previous meeting, as amended. Tom Clow seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Bob Vezina presented the warrant articles for the Fire Department and answered questions from committee members.

Benji Knapp presented the warrant articles for the Department of Public Works and answered questions from the committee members. Tom Clow emphasized the importance of not regarding the Bridge Reconstruction question as closed after this year, as other bridges will need reconstruction after the three currently red-listed bridges.

Chris Moore presented the warrant articles for the Police Department and answered questions from the committee members.

Naomi presented the remaining warrant articles for the town. The committee requested additional information about the library's warrant article, regarding whether the amounts in the article reflect the passage of the 40% raise for the library director included in the town's proposed operating budget. There was a brief discussion about the Parks & Rec article regarding an engineering assessment of Ineson Field and East Road and whether WAC might be bringing forth a separate article by petition addressing Ineson Field only. Naomi offered to look up the actual cost of the repair to the town hall's bell tower.

Naomi presented the town's proposed budget and reminded the committee that most of the 7.88% budget increase is a consequence of warrant articles that passed at the last town meeting. The next Board of Selectmen's meeting is scheduled for December 30. The town's public hearing is scheduled for January 20. Deliberative Session is scheduled for February 8.

Eileen Meaney reported her findings regarding Neal Kurk. From a process perspective, she stressed that committee members should not be collecting information from department heads individually without bringing it back to the full committee.

Keith reported on the Weare School District's budget. Two warrant articles: a short-term article to move the preschool from Center Woods to the upper elementary school building and switch to full-day kindergarten, and a long-term article to build a new building that will house the preschool and the SAU.

The proposed budget is a 4.3% increase over the current approved budget. The Weare School District's public hearing is scheduled for January 15.

The next Finance Committee meeting will likely be on January 2 or 3 at 6:30pm, depending on when the SAU is available, or January 6 or 7 as a fallback. A further Finance Committee meeting to discuss the town budget and articles is scheduled for January 15.

Eileen shared that she had requested of department heads and administrators in the town and school districts that they include her when responding to requests for information by Finance Committee members, and she would share with the committee all information thereby obtained.

Lori adjourned the meeting at 9:59pm.