

Town of Warner, New Hampshire

NEWS FROM THE TOWN

Winter 2018

Selectmen's Office
(603) 456-2298 ext. 2
selectboard@warner.nh.us

Monday - Wednesday - Thursday
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
Tuesday 8:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.
www.warner.nh.us

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Town Administrator
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Future Fire Station Update

The 4th and final vote for the new Warner Fire & Rescue station takes place at Town Meeting this year. The warrant article will be the first of the morning. The ballot box will be open for an hour.

In 2015, voters voted to establish and seed the fire station site & construction capital reserve fund with \$165,000.

In 2016, citizens voted to add another \$100,000 to the CRF. That year, we purchased Gordon Smith's property at 148 W. Main Street and hired an architect and a construction manager.

In 2017, another \$182,000 for the CRF was approved at Town Meeting, funds which covered surveying, site testing, civil engineering and complete architectural drawings. Later that year, Gordon's house was sold and moved to its new location on Kearsarge Mountain Road. It is currently being renovated. Soon it will be someone's home and back on the tax roll.

In 2018, the citizens of Warner will be asked to vote one more time about the new fire station. They will be asked to vote on funding of the final phase of this long running project, construction.

Since 2010, when the first team of citizens gathered to address the need for a new fire station, residents have come to understand why the current fire station is sorely inadequate. That our 13 pieces of fire apparatus are spread across 4 different locations. That the building is too small and the doors and ceilings are too low. That the Town pays a lot more for custom built fire apparatus that fits in the building. That the building is not and can not be made ADA compliant. That the building does not meet National Fire Protection and other safety codes. That there is limited office space, little space for emergency operations, and no parking.

Teams of Warner citizens worked on identifying the best fire station solution for the Town. They identified a great location and have come up with a building design that addresses the needs of Warner Fire & Rescue. The building lives up to the priorities set by the public, including:

- Energy efficient, low maintenance
- Durable over 25+ years
- Safe daily operations for emergency personnel

- Attractive, fits into the neighborhood with low impact
- Expandable for future growth, if needed
- Efficient design with minimal waste

For the past several months, the fire station committee has worked closely with SMP Architecture, the construction management team from North Branch Construction and civil engineers at Northpoint Engineering, to fine-tune the architectural design, civil engineering plans, and construction plans. That activity is now complete.

In January, contractors bid on various divisions of the construction work. Costs have been calculated. The Guaranteed Maximum Price of the construction is set at \$2,610,496. With mandatory materials testing and utility costs & fees, the "hard costs" come to \$2,633,996. "Soft costs" include our owner's contingency and administrative costs of \$114,500.

The total project cost for construction is \$2,748,496. If citizens vote in favor, construction will begin soon after and Warner Fire & Rescue could be moving into their new home this year.

In terms of finance, over the past few years the Town only set aside enough funds to cover the work done to this point. The alternative approach would have been to set aside half a million dollars every year. For Warner, that was simply not feasible as the tax impact would have been too much to bear.

Instead, we have opted to pursue long term financing. Borrowing construction funds over 15 or 20 years. This approach minimizes the tax impact considerably. Recent estimates showed a 20 year bond at 3.25% would cost the average household about \$130 per year. That's 36 cents per day.

What will happen to the current fire station? That's still up for discussion, but getting it back on the tax rolls seems like a smart goal.

For those interested in reviewing the long history that brings us to this final crucial vote, please feel free to browse the meeting minutes which are available for viewing at the Town Hall or online at <http://warner.nh.us>

Thank you for the support you've shown Warner Fire & Rescue, so far.

TOWN WARRANT
For the Town of Warner
The State of New Hampshire

To the inhabitants of the Town of Warner in the County of Merrimack in the state of New Hampshire qualified to vote in town affairs, you are hereby notified and warned that the Annual Town Meeting will be held as follows:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Warner Town Hall in said Warner, NH on Tuesday, March 13, 2018 beginning at eight o'clock in the morning and ending at seven o'clock in the evening to elect officers of the Town by official ballot and to act upon the following subjects:

Article 1

To choose Town officers for the ensuing year.

Article 2

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the planning board for the town zoning ordinance as follows: Add definition of "essential services" to Article III Definitions? Recommended by the planning board by a vote of 7-0.

Article 3

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the planning board for the town zoning ordinance as follows: Accessory Apartments - prohibit accessory apartments with townhouses or manufactured housing? Recommended by the planning board by a vote of 7-0.



The following warrant articles are presented, discussed, and voted on at the Town Meeting held at the time and place listed below. A brief commentary is offered to provide background and explanation on a number of the articles coming before the voters.

ADJOURN TO SATURDAY MARCH 17, 2018 AT 9:00 AM AT THE TOWN HALL

Article 4: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,750,000 (Two Million, Seven Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) to construct and equip a fire station on town land, up to \$200,000 (Two Hundred Thousand Dollars) of which will come from unassigned funds balance and \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand Dollars) of which will be raised through taxation; and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$2,500,000 (Two Million Five Hundred Thousand Dollars) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 (Ten Thousand Dollars) through taxation for the interest payment on the bond anticipation note. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen, Recommended by the Budget Committee (6-1), (2/3 ballot vote required.)

By law, bond articles are listed first on the Town Warrant and requires voting by paper ballot. While most other warrant articles simply require a simple majority (51%) of the voters in favor of the article, At least two thirds (2/3) of the attending voters must vote in favor of a bond article in order for the article to pass, because the article pertains to long term borrowing.

The Board of Selectmen, working with members of the Budget Committee, set the bond amount at \$2,500,000, in part, by appropriating unassigned (surplus) funds from the General Fund in order to reduce the amount of money to be borrowed.

Article 5: Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,153,115 (Three Million, One Hundred Fifty Three Thousand, One Hundred Fifteen Dollars) as the 2018 Operating Budget for general municipal operations? This amount does not include appropriations contained in special and individual warrant articles addressed separately. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

This article is requesting funds to operate the town and all the town departments. This year's proposed budget is 1.97% higher than the 2017 operating budget. The town operating budget has not increased above 2% from the previous year operating budget in the last 4 years. Typically, not all the funds budgeted are spent for various reasons such as actual costs of road repairs, materials and supplies are less than what was budgeted. At the end of the year unspent funds return to the general fund.

Article 8: Shall the Town vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate the amount of \$10,000 (Ten Thousand Dollars) to be placed into the fund? This sum is to come from the General Fund. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the General Fund. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

The NH State Legislature passed a law allowing municipalities to create an "emergency fund" each year, which allows the Board of Selectmen to access these funds in the event of an emergency or unplanned expense. Any money used from this fund will be reported in the town report as to the amount used and reason for needing these funds.

Article 10: Shall the town vote to discontinue the following CAPITAL RESERVE/EXPENDABLE TRUST FUNDS? Said funds and accumulated interest to date of withdrawal are to be transferred to the municipality's general fund.

1. Capital Reserve Fund for Hazard Mitigation of the Odd Fellows Building. (approximately \$8,700)
2. Expendable Trust Fund for Radios & Pagers for the Fire Dept. (approximately \$102)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required)

Article 10 is a “housekeeping” article that comes up from time to time when the project or purchase for which the capital reserve fund (CRF) was created is completed. This housekeeping action insures that unused balance in the CRF is reverted back to the general fund and not left in limbo.

Capital Reserve Funds (CRFs) are savings accounts that the Trustees of the Trust Funds control. Each CRF has a specific purpose for which the funds are used and these funds cannot be used for any other purpose without the consent of the voters. These CRFs are set up to pay for big ticket expenses like highway equipment or a major construction project. The Town adds some money to these CRFs each year prior to the planned expense so that most or all the funds needed at the time of the purchase is available. This practice allows the Board of Selectmen to plan and execute large town expenses so as to not have an adverse impact on the tax rate by trying to raise these large sums in one year.

The following articles are for appropriating money to various capital

ARTICLES FUNDING CAPITAL RESERVE FUND ACCOUNTS:

Article 6: \$20,000 added to the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 7: \$4,000 to be placed in the Employees Expendable Health Trust Fund and furthermore, to name the Board of Selectmen as agent to expend from said fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; recommended by the Budget Committee, 6-1). (Majority vote required.)

Article 9: \$25,000 added to the Police Department Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 11: \$50,000 added to the Fire and Rescue Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 12: \$5,000 added to the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 13: \$140,000 added to the Highway Road Construction Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 0-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 14: \$90,000 added to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen;

Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 15: \$20,000 added to the Bridge Repair/Replacement Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 16: \$160,000 added to the DPW Facilities Improvement Capital Reserve Fund? Of this amount, \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand Dollars) would come from unassigned fund balance, and \$110,000 (One Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars) from taxation. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 17: \$15,000 placed in the Capital Reserve Fund for the Preservation of Town Records? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

Article 18: \$4,000 placed in the Library Building Capital Reserve Fund? (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen; Recommended by the Budget Committee, 7-0). (Majority vote required.)

The next article is a petition article. Petition articles are those articles that are presented to the Board of Selectmen from town residents who wish the Board of Selectmen to address an issue that is important to them. Petition articles require signatures from 25 registered voters and submitted prior to a deadline in order to be included in the Town Warrant.

Article 19

To see if the town will vote to direct the selectmen to appoint a three person Procurement Committee. The Procurement Committee shall independently assist the Selectmen in reviewing estimates, costs, proposed contracts and financial impact to the town of Warner on all proposed expenditures exceeding \$25,000. Each committee member will have a three year term with the exception of the first year where terms will be for one, two and three years respectively. One appointment shall expire on April 1 of each year. Prior to all appointments, department heads shall submit their candidate suggestions and/or recommendations to the Selectmen. The members of the Procurement Committee shall be registered voters of the town of Warner. Prior to any commitment to expend funds being reviewed by the Procurement Committee, a report detailing their findings and recommendations shall be submitted to the Selectmen at a regular evening Selectmen’s meeting or at a public hearing concerning the expenditure. (Submitted by Petition) (Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen)

Article 20

To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

*****Town Election*****

Tuesday, March 13

8:00 am to 7:00 pm

**Located at the Town Hall
(5 East Main St.)**

*****Town Meeting*****

Saturday, March 17

beginning at 9:00 am

**Located at the Town Hall
(5 East Main St.)**