



Warner Municipal Budget Committee

PUBLIC HEARING - Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 2, 2017

APPROVED

Committee members in attendance:

- ◆ Mike Cutting - Chair
- ◆ Kimberley Edelman - Vice Chair
- ◆ Allan Brown - Selectmen's Rep
- ◆ Alfred Hanson
- ◆ John Leavitt
- ◆ Jonathan Lord
- ◆ Martha Mical
- ◆ Pete Newman - Water Precinct representative

Also present: Town Administrator Jim Bingham, Selectman Clyde Carson, Director of Public Works Tim Allen, Police Chief Bill Chandler, Selectman John Dabuliewicz, Librarian Nancy Ladd, Water Precinct Administrator Ray Martin, Emergency Management Director Ed Mical, Fire Chief Ed Raymond and approximately 40 other citizens.

1. Agenda

Mike started the meeting at 7:03 pm by sharing the agenda for the evening:

- ◆ Open Public Hearing
 - ✓ Warner Village Water District (WVWD) Budgets
 - ✓ Town of Warner Warrant Articles
 - ✓ Town of Warner Operating Budget
 - ✓ Town of Warner Revenue
- ◆ Close Public Hearing
- ◆ Budget Committee May Vote to Recommend or Not

Mike asked people to identify themselves when asking questions and making comments. He also asked to keep side conversations quiet.

Secretary's Note: Whenever possible, questions will be identified in **Green** and answers in **Blue**.

2. Open Public Hearing

Mike opened the Public Hearing at 7:05 pm and yielded the floor to WVWD Administrative Assistant Ray Martin.

3. Warner Village Water District

Ray said that the overall budget was increasing 2.72%. One main reason was because one of the wells was operating at about 50% capacity. \$6,000 was set aside in the budget to investigate possible alternatives and investigate ways to make the well more productive. Ray noted that the had recently been refurbished. It used to need to be refurbished every 3

years, then every 2 years, then annually. Now it needed refurbishment every 6 months. Horizon Engineers from Norwich, VT was involved in helping investigate the problem.

The second increase was due to a need to meet new regulations. Ray noted that about a year ago, the Federal regulations were changed, significantly reducing the allowed levels of phosphorus and copper that could be returned to the river after processing. To address the new regulations, the WCWD would conduct a Ground Water Discharge Study as part of the investigations into how to satisfy the regulations. The budget had been increased to cover that expense.

Ray noted that the WWWD's solar array has generated significant savings in the electrical bills, offsetting other increases in the budget.

Overall, the WWWD has been fairly flat, staying around \$412,000 to \$418,000 for the past few years. Now it was set to \$423,383.

For the past few years, the WWWD had enjoyed a payment holiday on the Worker's Compensation Insurance with Primex. That was now over and was why the insurance line of the budget was increasing by \$2,675.

3.1 WWWD Bonds & Loans

Referring to the list of bond debts, Ray noted that there was an increase of \$14,724. The Mill Street bond matured in April 2016. A new loan for the pickup / plow truck replaced it, but cost less. The majority of that increase was due to the payments for the new solar array which involved a \$280,000 loan. It won't be until 2022 when another bond matures.

3.2 WWWD Revenue Estimates

Ray noted that there was a proposed 5% increase in the water & sewer charges, which would bring in approximately \$300,000 in revenue. The proposed rates would have to be passed at the WWWD Annual Meeting on March 21.

Revenues from carbon credits was expected to be \$5,000.

Ray said approximately 25% of the revenue comes from the Precinct Tax. The amount to be collected was expected to drop slightly.

Total revenues are estimated to be \$423,323, matching the operating budget.

3.3 WWWD Water Usage Trends

Ray noted that the metered usage of water in the WWWD had recently dropped by 300,000 to 500,000 gallons per quarter, comparing 2012 to 2016. The rated had not changed since 2009. In 2012, the WWWD billed \$315,000 for water / sewer bills. During the past year, that figure was \$275,000. Why? Ray had some theories.

- ◆ The number of residents living in the District has reduced. He believed there were less children living in the homes. As an example, on his street, there used to be 24 kids. Now there were 3.
- ◆ Conservation as a side effect of citizens using more efficient washers, toilets, etc.
- ◆ Conservation efforts in general.

Ray added that a front washer machine, the new models, use about 15 gallons per wash. The old top loaders use 46 gallons.

Ray noted that the rates would have to increase to cover expenses. Ray noted that the new liquor store would not be using a lot of water or sewer. He added that Aubuchon, another low user, only pays \$80 per quarter.

Mike encouraged the public to ask questions, make comments.

John McGilvray : Will the new liquor store pay the precinct tax, and if so, how much?

Ray Martin : Yes, but the value of the building isn't known yet. If the tax were around \$1.80 per \$1,000 and the value of the building was around \$300,000, the tax would be about \$600. Also, the District would receive revenue of \$11,000 in the form of a commercial building hookup fee.

3.4 Budget Committee Vote

Mike asked the Budget Committee if they wanted to vote on the WVWD budget while Ray was present or wait until later.

Martha Mical made a **MOTION** to accept the WVWD budget as presented. Jonathan Lord seconded. No discussion followed. All voted in favor.

Allan Brown made a **MOTION** to accept the WVWD revenue estimates as presented. Jonathan Lord seconded. No discussion followed. All voted in favor.

3.5 WVWD Solar Array

Mike asked Ray to talk about the WVWD solar array.

Ray said the array went into full operation on July 1, 2016. A year before that, the Energy Committee in Town went through a long process which resulted in the decision to have two solar arrays in Warner for two key reasons:

- ◆ The WVWD is a separate political unit.
- ◆ The PUC (Public Utilities Commission) offered a rebate of \$75,000 for each 100kWh array. Instead of having one large 200kWh array, having two 100kWh arrays would allow both to qualify for the rebate.

The solar array passed at the 2016 WVWD Annual Meeting. Chuck Rose cut the timber, removed the stumps, then took away the chips and lumber at no charge. Harmony Energy Works built the array in 4 to 5 weeks. The land didn't need to be flat or level.

Seven months into production, the array was over producing. They were hoping to average 12,000 kWh production per month. It was closer to 15,000. During winter, production was slower, but it would pick up again as daylight hours increased.

The solar array was located next to the plant. The monthly bills at the plant were in the region of \$1500 - 1900. Now it was \$300 for distribution and peak demand charges, which you can't get away from. Ray said the solar power generated goes directly into the plant with excess going onto the grid. The excess from the first three months wiped out the total electrical bill for the plant. They received \$337 in December and look forward to larger amounts in summer.

Ray noted that the fallacy was that the excess would reduce the bills for the other meters. That was not the case. Eversource sends a revenue check. That money could then be applied to the bills.

Ray said that the carbon credits take about 6 months to receive. They expect to receive \$5,000 per year.

Instead of paying \$29,000 per year for electricity, there were going to be paying closer to \$5,000 per year.

Maintenance wise, no problems. There are 378 panels. One can go down without shutting down the others. There are 5 rows. If one inverter at the end of the row goes, that row goes offline; the others stay online. There was a 25 year 100% guarantee on all components. After 5 years, there would be some labor charges. In the winter, snow slides right off. If there was a lot of snow, they would just plow it aside.

In summary, it was easy to build. Harmony was great. Chuck Rose was great. The array was working. They were already cash positive. There had been zero maintenance so far. They froze their electric costs.

Mike asked if there were any questions.

Marty Vincent : What is the duration of the loan?

Ray Martin : 20 years.

Marty : In 20 years, you would expect to see a considerable increase in your income?

Ray : The panel and system is covered under warranty for 25 years, but typical lifespan is 40 to 50 years. After the loan is paid off, that's \$17,000 that falls to the bottom line as saving.

Marty : Are there batteries to replace?

Ray : There are no batteries on this system and there were no plans to add them.

Barb Marty : After offsetting payments by revenue, the array is still cash positive? By how much?

Ray : \$10,000 per year. That's including carbon credits. A sheet on the table describes the savings. The electric costs were \$28,356 per year. With the cost of the loan and the new costs per meter, the cost was \$22,858. Reduce that by \$5,000 for income from carbon credits, the net expense was \$17,858. That was a savings of \$10,498 over what they had been paying for electricity. Was all that money accumulated yet? No, because they had not run for a year yet.

John Leavitt : The payback on the electricity from Eversource, was that equal to what they charge for electricity?

Ray : Right now, we get 20 cent for the first 500 kWh, 16 cents for the next 1,000 kWh, and 13 cents for everything over that. We are paying around 10.5 cents. That was an incentive to go with the array. The rates were very good.

Jeanne Hand : Do you carry insurance on the array?

Ray : Yes, we pay about \$500 or \$600. The panels are built to handle golf ball sized hail. A damaged panel can be replaced easily and won't take down the array.

No other questions were raised.

4. Town of Warner Warrant Articles

At 7:33 pm, Mike moved attention to the Warrant Articles.

4.1 - Article 5 - Solar Array

Mike Cutting read the article:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$338,530 to construct a solar panel array on town land near the transfer station, of this amount \$64,935 to come as a rebate from the NH Public Utilities Commission and further, to authorize the issuance of not more than \$263,595 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the municipal officials to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the first year's bond payment.

Mike asked Selectman Clyde Carson to speak to the article.

Clyde noted the price of the array presented at Town Meeting in 2016 was \$10,000 more than it was this year. The rebate from the PUC was \$10,000 less this year. The Town was in discussion with the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA) for financing at 2% for a maximum of 12 years.

The difference between 12 and 20 year financing presented in 2016 meant the annual net revenue would be less, but the loan would be paid off more quickly.

In the last year, the Town had been able to reduce electricity consumption by about 11%. However, the cost of electricity rose by about the same amount.

The array as proposed would be cash positive in the first year.

Clyde noted that the numbers shared did not include a possible Rural Development grant for which they were applying. Any grants received could further reduce the amount that would need to be financed.

Mike asked the budget committee if they had any questions.

Jonathan Lord : How much do you expect the Rural Development grant to be for?

Clyde : They advised us to apply for \$25,000 to \$35,000. We applied for \$35,000.

Alfred Hanson : Why is the financing not set up yet?

Clyde : CDFA will be looking at the numbers on either the 14th or 21st of February. We'll have the numbers by Town Meeting. It's just a matter of timing. The one that's in the bag is 2% for 12 years. That leaves us cash positive in the first year, whether it's Sugar River or Lake Sunapee, something that allows us more flexibility.

Jonathan : Cash positive? Where does the money go?

Clyde : The municipal array will be a net metering host which means the array will produce enough electricity to offset the usage at all of the Town municipal buildings and sites. The array will be associated with the Transfer Station which uses about 18,000 kWh per year which is about 10 to 15% of the Town's total usage. The rest goes into the grid. The Town will be compensated for that electricity by Eversource in the form of a check which will be recognized as revenue for the Town.

Jonathan : Revenue for the Town, after making payments where does the extra go?

Clyde : The revenue comes into the Town. The Town will still be paying electric bills. The State does not give the Town an option of being able to dedicate the revenue and applying it to the solar array.

Jonathan : So there is no Expendable Trust Fund ...

Kimberley : ... as discussed earlier?

Clyde : We've been looking into this for the past several weeks. The answer is that there is no easy way to do that.

Jonathan : Can it augment a Capital Reserve Fund?

Clyde : You can't dedicate revenue to a Capital Reserve Fund. The State has very specific rules about what you can and can not do with revenue.

Mike : You could vote each year at Town Meeting to apply the revenue into a specific Capital Reserve Fund ...

Clyde : ... or the Solar Array or electricity or whatever.

Jeanne : What are the costs to hook up to the other buildings?

Clyde : The panels are at the Transfer Station. The electricity is used there. The rest goes into the grid. We get a check for the electricity put into the grid. The array is sized to cover the electricity used by the municipal buildings.

Jeanne : How much will this reduce the electric bill for the library?

Clyde : Initially, we continue to pay for electricity as done now. In terms of the library, I think we could come up with an appropriation for the library. However, initially, we are paying off the array. Once it is paid off, we can talk about how to share revenue. Until then, all departments will have to continue paying their electric bills.

Joe Mendola : Is the project cash flow positive from day one, and if not, when will it be?

Clyde : The goal is to make it cash flow positive from day one.

John McGilvray : What is the rate that will be charged for the cost of electricity?

Clyde : Think of it as freezing our electric rate when we put the array in.

John : So if the electric company raises their rates, it won't affect the payments, it won't affect the interest?

Clyde : As the rates go up, so will our compensation rate.

John : So the ratio stays the same?

Clyde : Yes. I just met with the PUC last week to confirm this. We have a customer charge and a demand charge. If we run the crusher up at the Transfer Station on sunny days, we keep the demand charges low. If we run it at night when the solar array isn't producing, the demand charge can go up.

John : What's the difference?

Clyde : Most of the electricity goes back into the grid for which we get compensated.

John : At what rate?

Clyde : The Precinct gets about 10 cents. We might get better ...

Ray : ... Our electricity costs 10.5 cents, that's a municipal rate. Right now, for the excess we get paid 20 cents for the

first 500 kWh, 16 cents for the next 1,000 kWh, and 13 cents from that point. We are being compensated more than we pay out. If the rates go up, so do the compensation rates.

Mike : Is that guaranteed, that if the rate goes up so does compensation rate?

Clyde : That's the way the PUC rules are written today.

Mike : PUC could change the regulations at some point in time.

John Leavitt : *(Directed to Ray)* It sounds like they are charging you a utility rate but paying you on a commercial rate. The same would not be true for the Town since the Town does not have a utility rate.

Ray : The WWWD is at Rate G, but is compensated back at a higher rate.

Clyde : The way I think of this project is that we are going to buy a solar array that is going to give us our electricity in 12 years. In the meantime, the cost of financing the solar array will be compensated and will be cash positive over the 12 years regardless of what electricity does.

John : It will develop enough electricity for the Town from day one. However, the loan costs money. The electric will be taken care of.

Andy Bodnarik : Will the Town be paid for carbon credits?

Clyde : Yes.

Andy : So, there is a revenue stream.

Marty Vincent : I'm trying to understand this.... We paid \$4,700 at the Transfer Station in 2016. So, what we will be doing is saving \$4,700 a year and making an investment that will produce nothing for the Town other than saving \$4,700 for 12 years. In 12 years, we will have a 12 year old array and 12 year old equipment. That is when we hope to see real benefit. Is \$4,700 all that we are saving each year?

Clyde : No. If it costs \$20,000 per year for the loan, and we get revenue of around \$26,000, the Town will see a positive cash flow of about \$6,000. That would be for a period of time. After 12 years, when the loan is paid off, the array will be producing enough electricity for the Town.

Marty : So we would be saving approximately \$10,000 less per year?

Ray : We used to have an electric bill of \$27,000 per year. Now we have a \$17,000 loan. We have \$5,000 of carbon credits. Our electric bills will all be reduced to about \$6,000. The savings from the combination of what is used at the Transfer Station, what we receive back in the form of a check for the overproduction of electricity via net metering, and money received for carbon credits, that whole total of means that the Town will be spending \$6,000 less per year for electricity, including the loan.

Clyde : It is an investment. After 12 years, electricity will be free.

David Hartman : I congratulate the Board of Selectmen for bringing this proposal back to the Town Meeting. I hope the budget committee looks favorably on it. Personally, I invested in a solar array for my house three years ago. And I know one member of the budget committee has an array, as well. And I'm aware that many homes in Warner have arrays. It is time for Warner to take this step, investing in solar. The WWWD voted 43 to 1 for their array.

John McGilvary : How will the solar array project affect the tax rate?

Clyde : Not at all. We will received checks from Eversource that cover the cost of the bond.

John Leavitt : A point of clarification. The WWWD solar array is different from the Town's proposed solar array. The District's electricity production directly offsets the biggest bulk of their electricity usage. The Town's system will offset a very small portion of that usage. That was a difference last year. That's why it was 43 to 1 in the District and why it was questionable for the Town. What has changed this year is the information about the Eversource buyback seems to be higher than it was last year. Last year, it was a percentage of what the Town was using.... I don't know what the numbers were. Let's just say if the Town was paying 18 cents, they were going to get buy back at 13 cents. This year, that seems to have changed. I'm still a little skeptical about that. You were going to look into that. I think some of the confusion may be due to the new meters that Eversource has which measure the amount of electricity you're producing and the electricity that you're using at the same time. I don't know how they do that, but the meter measures both at the same time. You don't want to run the meter backwards.

Clyde : The key difference is how you recognize the revenue. The WWWD gets theirs recognized as a credit on their bill, the Town gets it as a check.

Ray : We get a check, too

John : ... For over usage. Because the wells are on different meters.

Ray : We take what we get as a check and credit it, in theory, against usage at the well.

Martha Bodnarik : This is like buying electricity on layaway. First, we have to pay off the solar array. After that, we get free electricity. The layaway payments take 12 years and don't cost anything extra. After that, we have free electricity for another 20, maybe 30 years.

Marty Vincent : Are we saying that the check we expect to receive from Eversource will be \$6,000 more than our loan payments?

Clyde : There are two components: The checks from Eversource and the sale of the renewable carbon credits. Those two things will exceed the cost of the loan payments.

Marty : So when we build this, there will be no effect on our taxes and after 12 years, it's like manna from heaven?

Clyde : That's one way to look at it.

Andy Bodnarik : If you are being charged less than you are being paid for the electricity you are producing, and you are getting paid to produce it, you will be cash positive. And that's not including carbon credits.

Clyde : The revenues will cover the cost of the loan.

John Leavitt : That is the difference in what was presented last year. It sounds like a better deal this year.

Andy : There's more than one difference. I'm hoping we do this this year because the rebate went down. If the cost of the array hadn't gone down, the overall cost would be more.

Clyde : And the cost of electricity increased 11%.

4.2 Article 6 - Operating Budget

At 8:01 pm, Mike noted that the operating budget would be discussed later in the meeting. Kimberley noted that the article involved \$3,000,000 and that there may be people waiting to hear the big ticket items so that they could go home. John Leavitt said the plan was to cover warrant articles first.

Mike noted that while the warrants on the supplied printouts showed "Recommended by the Budget Committee", the budget committee had not yet actually voted.

4.3 Article 7 - Property Revaluation CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the previously established Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund.

Rebecca Courser : When is the next reval?

Martha Mical : 2020, probably will start in 2019.

Jonathan : Some Towns do a fifth of the Town at a time? What is the advantage of doing it that way?

Martha : In my opinion, there is no advantage. It keeps the Town in turmoil for five years. The assessor would love us to do it cyclically.

4.4 Article 8 - Employees Expendable Health Trust Fund

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate \$7,000 to be placed in the previously established Employees Expendable Health Trust Fund? This Fund is used to partially reimburse participating town employees for deductible health expenses.

No comments or questions were raised.

4.5 Article 9 - Police Department Vehicle CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the previously established Police Department Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund?

Police Chief Bill Chandler spoke about the article noting that in 2017, they plan to replace the SUV. Adding \$25,000 to the CRF will bring the balance to \$45,825. A new vehicle was expected to cost between \$38,000 and \$40,000 fully equipped. The next vehicle was scheduled to be purchased in 2019. In the previous three years, requests for additional funds were reduced by \$5,000 each year, creating a gap.

4.6 Article 10 - New Fire Station Construction CRF

At 8:05, Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$182,000 to be added to the previously established New Fire Station Construction Capital Reserve Fund? Of this amount, \$82,000 to come from the General Fund (unassigned fund balance) and the balance amount of \$100,000 to be raised through taxation.

Martha Mical said she wanted the public to understand that the budget committee had already asked all of their question in previous meetings. That was way it seemed like the committee seemed quiet. Allan Brown concurred.

John McGilvray : Is this money for the plans for the new fire station?

Allan Brown : This money is so that we can bring to 2018 Town Meeting the plans and full costs of every aspect of the building.

John : Are the plans changeable?

Allan : This money is for plans are for the conceptual drawings. We're having another Listening Session on February 15. We'll show you were we are at this point in time. We need to hear what people want or don't want. The money provided last year was spent to hire the architectural firm who is providing the conceptual drawings. Just so you know, we are at the point where we believe we know what the building will look like.

John : If the building comes in at 3 or 4 million dollars, we want to skinny this building down. Will that be possible?

Allan : We set a target between 2.2 and 2.5 million. The Construction Manager is on board now. They will help identify the costs. By next December we will have a maximum guaranteed price. If the Town provides this money, during the summer of 2017, the committee will be working with the Architect and Construction Manager (CM) to put every aspect of the building out to bid. If the costs are too high, the building will have to be scaled back. The meeting on the 15th will be the 34th meeting of the Fire Station Building Review Committee.

John : It is open to the public?

Allan : Absolutely, we want the public there.

Mike: All FSBRC meetings are open to the public.

Kimberley: (To Mike) John is one of the people who has attended our meetings.

Martha Bodnarik : Why are we using a Construction Manager instead of a Design / Build firm?

Allan : We had a company come in and give a presentation about four different construction approaches. After that, the committee felt the best control would be maintained using the construction management methodology.

Mike : Using the construction management approach, instead of bidding out the whole project, the committee would be bidding out various aspects. Electrical. Mechanical. Plumbing.

Martha : My observation over the past 30 years, historically Design / Build firms give the most bang for the buck, keeping prices lower.

Allan : We interviewed 5 architectural firms and did the same with construction managers. Everyone told us going with construction manager was the way to go.

Mike : It's a lot more work for the FSBRC. The committee will have to review everything.

Allan : The CM will send out the bids, select a few, and bring a short list to the FSBRC, everything will be discussed, and the committee will decide with the help of the Architect and CM. What we don't want to do what we did with the Police Station; going as cheap as possible to save money only to have to pay more later.

Nancy Martin : What is the status of the strip of land on Split Rock Road?

Jim Bingham : It is still under review. The landowner is still in favor of doing it.

Nancy : Is the goal to get access to the new fire station via Split Rock Road?

Allan : The station will be facing Rt 103. The main exit for the trucks will be on Rt 103. When they return, they may travel 150 feet down Split Rock to come back to the back of the station. The strip of land is 1500 square feet, just over 5 feet wide, 260 feet long.

Jim : We are only getting an easement, we are not buying it.

Barb Marty : Will the \$182,000 be completely used for development of the plans?

Allan : The money is for several things. There are 9 engineers involved. Part of it is for the architect, part is for a civil engineer, and some is for a geotechnical survey. We didn't put much extra in there, but did add \$10,000 contingency. There is \$20,000 in the CRF.

Alfred : \$182,000 covers the design of the building. You hired a CM. You said he is working this year. How is he being paid?

Allan : His fee for Phase 2 is included the \$182,000. This money is just for Phase 2.

Martha Mical : At the end of Phase 2 ...

Allan : ... You'll have the guaranteed maximum cost of the fire station.

Martha : Will the plans be complete?

Allan : Yes, they will be bid plans.

Debbie Farrell : What is the status of the land on East Main Street that was originally purchased? How aggressively is that being marketed?

Mike : It is for sale.

Jim : I believe we had it listed for \$75,000.

John McGilvray : Is the money we spent on the plans for the fire station on that piece of property gone?

Allan : As much as it breaks my heart to say this, yes, it's gone. We did use some of the floor plan. We even interviewed the architect who designed it. But that building could not fit on the new lot. We all wanted to salvage something. Since then, we have reduced that footprint by 3,700 or 3,800 square feet.

John : What is the size of the proposed building?

Allan : Around 10,088 square feet. But if we see that the costs are too high, we will have to reduce it. And what we are designing is a building that can be expanded later without tearing it apart.

Alfred : You plan to have Phase 3 ready to propose to the Town at 2018 Town Meeting?

Allan : Yes.

Jeanne : What is the plan for the yellow house?

Allan : We have someone interested in it, jacking it up and moving it. But since we are applying for some FEMA grants, we can't do anything to the site until the grant paperwork is filed. I think we're requesting \$100,000. Ed?

Ed Mical : Maximum of \$100,000.

Jeanne : Are we going to keep the garage?

Allan : We are using it right now, but it will have to go.

Jeanne : What about the current fire station?

Allan : That will be up to the Board of Selectmen at that time. I will not be one of them.

4.7 Article 11 - Fire & Rescue Vehicle CRF

At 8:21 pm, Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$90,000 to be added to the previously established Fire & Rescue Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund?

Fire Chief Ed Raymond said that fire apparatus was very expensive. This addition would bring the CRF balance up to a little over \$300,000. The engine due to be replaced in 2016 was still being used. He wanted to hold off on a new

purchase, if possible, as any new fire engine built for the current station would cost 20% more than a standard fire truck. A new fire truck would cost close to \$500,000 and would be expected to last 20 to 25 years.

Allan noted that the public should be aware that many of the CRF requests go through a Capital Improvements Program. The capital budget being presented was much less than from the original requests made by the departments. This article had been cut back from what was requested. Ed added that requests for the CRF had been cut a couple times, putting the fund behind.

4.8 Article 12 - Fire Equipment CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the previously established Fire Equipment CRF?

Chief Raymond had put in for \$25,000, but it was cut back to save money. Unfortunately, two weeks ago, the heart monitor / defibrillator started to have problems. The unit was purchased used ten years ago for \$20,000. The printouts are not coming out correctly. A new one would cost \$39,000 and will deplete the fund. The unit can not be repaired.

The Chief said that after chasing grants for three years, a \$138,000 grant came allowing the Fire Department to purchase all new Scott packs.

The defibrillator printout allows the department to provide a short history of the patient to the ambulance. That strip of paper moves with the patient. It is an important piece of equipment. The machine is working, however the printer function is failing.

Rebecca : How much would the machine cost new?

Ed : We found one for \$39,000.

Rebecca : And the life expectancy of the machine?

Ed : They can last over 15 years.

Rebecca : You have no money in your operating budget for this?

Ed : No.

Rebecca : So the \$10,000 being requested would go to the unit?

Ed : Yes, depending on what our needs are. We need to replace some turnout gear, as well, which costs about \$2,000 per set.

Allan : This request was originally \$25,000 and included a list of things they needed. That was before this machine started to break down.

Rebecca : I would ask the Budget Committee to consider that and perhaps amend the article.

Mike : The Budget Committee can only recommend or not recommend. We would someone to stand up at Town Meeting to recommend increasing the amount.

Ed : I feel terrible requesting this, but this is a life saving unit. If we don't get the money, we will do our best to get funding via raffles or something.

Alfred : How much is in the CRF right now?

Jim : There is about \$28,000.

Michael Simon : I would also support seeing this fund increased. In my experience, having information travel with the patient is critically important.

4.9 Article 13 - Highway Road Construction CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the previously established Highway Road Construction Capital Reserve Fund.

Director of Public Works Tim Allen said that in 2016 he requested \$110,000, he got \$10,000. This year he requested \$185,000. The fund had a couple hundred thousand in it. There are three projects waiting to get done, two pieces of Pumpkin Hill Road and finishing North Village, each of which will cost between \$400,000 and \$500,000.

The sections of Pumpkin Hill Road that need to be addressed are from Mason Hill to Pumpkin Blossom Farm and from the buffalo farm to the town line.

4.10 Article 14 - Highway Equipment CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the previously established Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

Tim said that in summer 2017, they need to address a loader / back hoe issue. And in the past week, one of the pickup trucks will need \$10,000 of maintenance. The funds will help address both issues, extending the life of both vehicles.

Mike noted that when a piece of equipment dies without funds available to replace it, it could force the Town to go into a lease.

Alfred : What's the interest rate and warrant period on the grader lease?

Tim : 2.3% and 7 years, 7000 hours.

4.11 Article 15 - Bridge Repair / Replacement CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the previously established Bridge Repair / Replacement Capital Reserve Fund.

Tim said maintenance work needed to be done on the North Village bridge, the Melvin bridge, and the Lang bridge. Funds were needed for those jobs.

Allan said he believed the original request was for \$40,000.

4.12 Article 16 - DPW Facilities Improvement CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the previously established DPW Facilities Improvement Capital Reserve Fund.

Tim said the money would be put towards a sprinkler system. It was expected the system would cost \$200,000.

Mike noted that over \$1,000,000 worth of equipment was in the building, but no sprinkler. Tim said there were heat sensors and an alarm system.

4.13 Article 17 - CRF for the Preservation of Town Records

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be placed in the previously established Capital

Reserve Fund for the Preservation of Town Records?

Town Clerk Judy Newman-Rogers said that the CRF had been established in 2016. The Town had been spending about \$10,000 per year on record preservation. Mike added that record preservation is required by statute. There were years and years worth of records that required preservation.

Barb : Do the records get digitized?

Mike : They are printed onto acid free paper. They are also put onto microfiche.

Martha : They are also put on CDs.

4.14 Article 18 - Contingency Fund

Mike read the article.

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 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.

In 2016, none of the contingency fund was used.

John Leavitt : When have we every used it?

Jim Bingham : We have not used it and we don't plan to use it. We have it in case something unplanned happens and we need funds without going to a special Town Meeting.

John : \$10,000 won't pay for much. And we're running with \$50,000 to \$150,000 surplus every year... \$140,000 this year ...

Jim : ... \$118,000 after encumbrances.

John : Wouldn't it be better to give this money to the Fire Department?

Martha : The money was used for furnaces before Jim's time.

4.15 Article 19 - Transfer Station Equipment CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the previously established Transfer Station Equipment Capital Reserve Fund? This sum is to come from the General Fund and no amount needed to be raised through taxation.

Allan noted that a \$21,000 refund had come in from the solid waste co-op.

Debbie Farrell : How much is in the General Fund?

Jim : Just under \$1,000,000. The General Fund is all of the revenue we need to run the Town. There is a portion of the General Fund which is called the "Unassigned Fund Balance". It is not earmarked for any expenditure or appropriation. It can be used by the Board of Selectmen to reduce the taxes.

Debbie : How much is in the Unassigned Fund Balance?

Jim : We try to keep that at around 17% or \$890,000.

Debbie : And that can't be used to buy a defibrillator?

Jim : It can, but the State Department of Revenue Administration strongly recommends that Towns maintain a certain level of reserve.

Debbie : Isn't there excess?

Jim : There is and this year the Selectmen have recommended using some of it for the Fire Station article.

Debbie : As a former nurse, I can tell you that if you ever have a heart attack, you want to have a defibrillator.

John Dabuliewicz : We used \$100,000 to reduce the taxes last year.

John Leavitt : In fairness to the Selectmen, the defibrillator issue only just came up. It is high priority.

Martha : Speaking for the Budget Committee, we are in favor of it. However, it needs to be changed by the Selectmen or

we change it on the floor. It will be presented to the voters at the appropriate amount of money.
Martha Bodnarik : It should have no problem being passed for the higher amount at Town Meeting.

Ed Raymond : I just text the guy who checks prices for us. He says we can get a new unit for \$29,400.

4.16 Article 20 - Library Building CRF

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$24,000 to be placed in the previously established Library Building Capital Reserve Fund?

Librarian Nancy Ladd spoke about the article. The \$24,000 would go towards leveling the floor and making repairs caused by water damage. There is also a ceiling that needs work, the result of which will result in revealing two stained glass windows which are currently not in view.

4.17 Article 21 - Transportation Improvement Grants from State & Federal Agencies

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of setting aside Town funds to use as "matching funds" for Transportation Improvement Grants from State and Federal Agencies as well as funding repairs and improvements to town walkways, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in this fund and furthermore, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund?

John Dabuliewicz said that over the years, there had been a lot of talk about putting in sidewalks. But when applying for grants, the fact that Warner didn't have matching funds set aside meant the requests went nowhere. Allan said they were talking about "multi-use pathways", not just 6 foot wide sidewalks.

Jonathan : Do you have to be agents for this?

John : All CRFs have that so that the Board of Selectmen can use the money when the time comes up ...

Allan : ... Or you would have to have a special Town Meeting to be able to expend it ...

Martha : ... Or you would do it at a regular Town Meeting.

Allan : But then the timing for the grant could be gone.

Barbara Annis : Another printout refers to this article as "Sidewalk Grant Match". The warrant says "Transportation Improvement" which means it could be the corner at Old Main and Rt 103, it could be the intersection of Rt 103 and Rt 127.

Mike : I view one as an informative sheet, but we will vote on warrant article as written; "Transportation Improvement".

Alfred : John, you spoke of a couple projects. What is the second one?

Allan : TIP and TAP.

John : The one at Rt 103 and Rt 127 as well as sideways.

Alfred : What is the State's right of way at the CAP Building?

Allan : Probably 66 feet, add another 16. Could be 77. Never measured it. It is State jurisdiction.

Barbara : As chairman of the TAC (*Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission Transportation Advisory Committee*), when applications come in, we look to see if any Town has set aside money for any projects. We just went through Henniker, Bradford, Allenstown, Concord. Bradford had something like \$75,000 already set aside in their fund and they were going to get more money to do their sidewalks from the traffic light up by the Town Hall. They were number 2 on the list. Concord was going to do from Manchester Street to Loudon Road by the park, a path like you're talking about. Allenstown was a school, they were looking for a school meeting to get money.

Kimberley : Barbara, does the amount of money a Town has set aside influence the decision making of the TAC?

Barbara : To a certain degree as it shows the Town has been thinking & planning.

Kimberley : Is \$5,000 a good start?

Barbara : It's a start. You'd want to add \$5,000 or \$10,000 next year depending on the finances of the Town.

4.18 Article 22 - Assist Warner Fall Foliage Festival Committee

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to assist the Warner Fall Foliage Festival Committee in paying for the cost of the site work on the new town parking area adjacent to the school? The owners have granted a permanent right of way easement to the Town in use this developed section of their property for additional parking as well as during the Fall Foliage Festival.

Ray Martin, President of the Fall Foliage Festival, said the festival had struggled in the years when the festival had been split across two locations. So he approached Ron & Deb Moore about the parcel. They agreed to a permanent easement for the Town. With Weaver Brothers, Chuck Rose and the Moores, the work was done for \$36,000. It included drainage which needed to be addressed.

Ray was asking the school to provide \$11,000 for the drainage aspect. The Town would cover \$20,000. The Festival would contribute \$5,000. The land would provide a place for the Festival, would provide parking for down town, would provide access to the conservation easement back there. There was also more land in the easement than what was being used. The parking area could be expanded. It was paid for and done. All that needed to be done was registering of the easement.

At \$20,000, the Town was getting parking. In the past, numbers as high as \$500,000 had been talked about for additional parking. This was a great deal.

The \$20,000 would go directly to Weaver Brothers to cover the invoice. If the warrant article did not pass, it would take the Festival four or five years to pay the invoice; that's money that would have otherwise been used to provide funds for local organization and non-profits and such. Ray noted that two years of Festival profits were used to help fund the current fire station back in 1961, 1962.

Allan said the description of the easement was non-exclusive. If the Moores wanted to park there, they could. The terms and conditions were that the parking could be used any time of day or night, it could be used for the Festival, no building of a road or highway could be done, no buildings could be built on it, and the Town could authorize use by the Kearsarge Regional School District on specific occasions.

Kimberley : Does the Town maintain it?

Allan : If we want winter parking, yes.

Martha Bodnarik : Is it only accessible via the school parking lot?

Allan : You can get to it via the driveway next to Foothills.

Martha : It would be good to put signs up alerting citizens to the new parking for Town Meeting.

Alfred : You talked about the same about of land as also available. Is the festival thinking about the same idea?

Ray : Not at this time, but it is an option. We could go up a level and have more space for the Festival or parking. The easement is twice as big as what you see up their.

Alfred : So is your idea to ask the Town to contribute to the next one?

Ray : I'd ask in advance. This came up quickly and was too good of a deal to pass up.

4.19 Article 23 - All Veterans Tax Credit

Mike read the article.

Shall the Town vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:28-b, All Veterans Tax Credit? If adopted, the credit will be available to any resident, or the spouse or surviving spouse of any resident, who (1) served not less than 90 days on active service in the armed forces of the United States and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably

separated from services and is not eligible for or receiving a credit under RSA 72:28 or RSA 72:35. If adopted, the credit granted will be \$500, the same amount as the standard or optional veteran's tax credit voted by the Town of Warner under RSA 72:28.

Mike invited Paul Violette to address the article. Paul read from a prepared statement, shown here:

A new Law was passed by the NH Legislature June 9, 2016; was signed by the Governor; and became effective on August 8, 2016.

Any Municipality in New Hampshire may vote at their Annual Town or City Meeting to extend a Property Tax Credit to all Veterans who have honorably served and meet the criteria.

Previously, the Veterans who qualified for this special credit were those that served on Active Duty during certain dates related to wartime periods as established by the US Congress. Those veterans who served honorably on Active Duty during any periods outside the established dates were not eligible for the Property Tax Credit. They were "in between wars". However, there were and are many veterans who were in harm's way or directly supporting those veterans who were, or served all over the globe during the Cold War Years, from 1946 through 1950, from 1955 through 1961, and from 1975 through 1990.

It was a notable and creditable act that the New Hampshire Legislature performed to pass this new law.

I am Paul Violette, Adjutant of Wilkins-Cloues-Bigelow-Pearson Post 39 American Legion here in Warner. Our biggest job, which we consider a responsibility, is to support our veterans and their families in any way we can.

American Legion Post 39, in the cause and support of all veterans, respectfully requests your support for passage of this Article at the same level of \$500.00 credit to all qualified Veterans.

Paul added that he personally knew Veterans who had missed the previous credit by a matter of days. This would cover them.

Mike : (To Martha) What is potential financial impact to the Town?

Martha : Currently, 140 Veterans are signed up for the tax credit. According to two sources (the Census Bureau and a calculated figure based on state wide percentages), Warner has 340 Veterans. If all 200 Veterans who will become eligible file for the credit, it would be an impact of \$99,000. That's around 5 cents per \$1,000.

Martha Bodnarik : What happens if a married couple are both Veterans?

Martha Mical : They can both get the credit.

4.20 Petitioned Article Regarding Odd Fellows Building

Mike noted that a petitioned article had been submitted, had the required number of signatures, and was validated by the Selectmen's office. He read the article, twice.

To see if the Town of Warner will direct the Selectmen to develop and implement a plan to dismantle the Odd Fellows Building in 2018. The lot would be developed as a combination parking lot and green space. The plan should also include the salvage of the clock tower as an architectural feature to display on said lot.

Barbara Annis : Where are the funds going to come from to dismantle it?

Martha Mical : It says to come up with a plan.

David Hartman : It says to dismantle it.

Rebecca Courser spoke to the petition. She noted that the building didn't need to be dismantled in 2018. They were petitioning for an action plan. Martha Bodnarik thought the Selectmen were working with a potential buyer. Rebecca said that could have been the case, but that discussions had been in closed sessions and the status was unknown.

Rebecca had been on the Odd Fellows Building Committee for many years. The committee had come up with many

plans and been through many scenarios. She expressed concern, especially after a recent fire in Webster, about the condition of the building. If it should catch fire, it would go whoosh and be a dangerous fire putting other properties in the area at risk. When she was on the committee, she had high hopes for the building; she no longer did. The building footprint was very small. She doubted there would be a good return on investment renovating the building. Also, it would require an elevator. Things were falling off the building. It had been broken into. She felt the building had become more of a hazard to the community than a benefit.

David Hartman felt that without a reference to the cost, it would be unfair to ask the Town to vote on the article. His interpretation of "implement" was to carry out the plan to dismantle. If the intent was to just come up with a plan to present, he felt that could be done for a modest amount. But to take down the building, that would cost \$200,000 or more.

Discussion about the wording followed. Rebecca noted that the intent was not to dismantle the building in 2018. Instead, they were seeking a plan, with costs, to present at 2018 Town Meeting. She said over the years there had been various estimates of what it would cost to dismantle the building.

Jonathan thought one number had been in the Capital Improvement Program of about \$185,000. Martha noted some of the work had been done. Mike added that the soil removal had been done, for example.

Allan noted that there were so many aspects of work involved. It was not a matter of just taking down the building. There would be a big hole in there ground that would have to be excavated. And there was asbestos. And lead paint. And they would need a crane to remove the clock tower. He felt it was going to be a \$300,000 project.

Martha noted that the budget committee does not vote on articles that don't involve money. Mike said the article was read just for information.

It was agreed that the wording of the article needed to be modified at Town Meeting.

Allan said he appreciated the hours that Rebecca and Jim McLaughlin and others had put into trying to save the building. However, he had spent the past 3 years trying to get the little piece of land from the school so that the building would have a parking area. If the building were being torn down, then his efforts were just a waste of time. He said he was not in favor of tearing down the building.

4.21 Article 24 - Polling Hours in the Town of Warner

Mike read the article.

Polling hours in the Town of Warner are now 8:00 am to 7:00 pm. Shall we place a question on the state election ballot to change polling hours so that polls shall open at 7:00 am and close at 7:00 pm for all regular state elections beginning in 2019 (To go into effect)?

Town Clerk Judy Newman-Rogers noted that there were always people who arrived at the polls before 8:00 am and were frustrated by the fact that they had to wait to vote. While people could use the absentee vote instead, some just don't. By opening an hour early, there were a lot of people who could vote on their way to work.

Ray Martin, speaking as the Moderator, said there were a lot of people who showed up between 7:00 am and 8:00 am for the national elections. The Selectmen opted to open the polls early. It can be done that way. But by voting it in as a rule, the polls will always be open at 7:00 am.

5. Town of Warner Operating Budget

At 9:36 pm, Mike read Article 6.

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,079,486 as the 2017 Operating Budget for general municipal operations? This amount does not include appropriations contained in special and individual warrant articles addressed separately.

Mike noted that everyone in the audience had a copy of the budget.

Martha Mical made a **MOTION** to make an amendment to the amount, reducing it by \$9,000 to \$3,070,486. Of that, she said she would recommend reducing Line 80, "*Benefits - Social Security Costs*" by \$8,000 and Line 81, "*Benefits - Medicare Costs*" by \$1,000. She said she added up all of the wages lines of the budget and calculated what the SS and MC costs would be. Martha noted that the totals spent in 2016 were \$53,589 and \$15,501 for the two lines. She felt that requesting \$65,014 and \$17,600 was too high. Instead, she was recommending \$57,014 and \$16,600. According to her calculations, the total amount requested for 2017 wages was \$888,541. That would mean \$55,089.54 would be needed for Social Security.

Kimberley noted Martha's recommendation was brand new information to the budget committee. Kimberley asked why Martha was suggesting the change.

Martha said that the \$53,589 spent on social security in 2016 did not include social security for the Library. That was approximately \$8,000 and had come out of their allotment. The budgeted amount for 2016 was \$60,300 and at the time included SS for the Library. Line 294, "*Library SS & Medicare Year End Transfer*", reflected that posting of those funds.

Alfred seconded the motion.

Andy Bodnarik : In 2015, the spent amount was \$57,234.

Martha : That included the Library.

Jim Bingham said they struggled with this. The Town does the payroll for the Library. That was why the operating budget included the SS and Medicare costs for the Library. You don't want to cut those two items short. Martha said she was recommended \$2,000 more than needed. Jim recommended taking the \$9,000 out somewhere else.

Kimberley referred to Line 294 again. The 2016 amount spent showed the \$8,873 that had been the Benefit lines before as described. However, the 2017 Requested amount was \$0 because it was coming out of Lines 80 and 81.

Martha suggested that the Library could take their SS and Medicare out of Line 293, "*Library - Allotment Balance*" since that is where it comes out of eventually.

Jim said the Town had agreed with the Trustees to do it the way they've been doing it as it helped the Library with their cash flow. If the budget committee decided to reduce the operating budget, he would advise the Board of Selectmen to find the \$9,000 elsewhere and keep the current arrangement in place.

John Leavitt shared with those in attendance that the budget committee could reduce the budget, based upon Martha's suggestion, however the Selectmen could decide how to expend the budget.

Allan and Jim both noted that the Selectmen had been through the budget many times.

Martha Bodnarik agreed that the budget should be adjusted and if there was a problem the contingency fee could be tapped. Her husband Andrew disagreed suggesting that cutting the budget too tight was not wise.

David Hartman asked for an overall assessment of the budget comparing 2016 to 2017. Mike noted that the proposed budget was up by 1.77%. That included 2% raises for all employees. David congratulated the Selectmen, Town Administrator, budget committee and staff on an excellent job keeping control of the finances.

Allan noted that there was also a \$42,000 lease. \$8,000 had been added to maintain a cemetery. He felt it was a flat budget. Mike added that if you consider that, the budget was only increasing by \$3,436.

John pointed out that last year, a number of expenses were reduced. The \$42,000 for the grader was voted as an article. It can't be compared.

Barbara Annis said that \$25,000 had been encumbered and the actual spent column didn't show it. Kimberley clarified that when talking about the 1.77% budget increase, that was a comparison of the 2016 budget to the 2017 budget. It had

nothing to do with the amounts actually spent.

Mike asked for a roll call vote on the motion to reduce the budget to \$3,070,486.

John Leavitt - Yes
Alfred - Yes
Martha Mical - Yes
Kimberley - No
Jonathan - Yes
Allan - No
Peter - Yes

The budget committee voted to reduce the budget in the article to \$3,070,486.

5.1 Cemetery Maintenance

Alfred asked Jim if there was any additional information regarding the Pine Grove Cemetery, the trust funds and the questions that had come up before. Jim said the cemetery trustees were working on it.

Alfred asked about the cemetery trustees. Jim said the trustees manage the maintenance of the cemeteries and oversee the trust funds. However, the trusts are held by the trustees of the trust funds.

Alfred wanted to know how much available funds are in the cemetery trust funds. Jim said he hoped to have that information after Town Meeting.

John noted that the Pine Grove Cemetery amount spent in 2016 was \$10,602. He felt it was expended in one year but covered two years of expenses. Martha explained that they ran out of money in 2015, so the Town had to cover them. Mike said that when the Town took over care of Pine Grove, it came with \$22,000. That money ran out sometime in 2015. John felt \$8,500 for 2017 was too high. Martha noted that was the contracted amount.

Allan said he spoke with Gerry Courser recently. Gerry said they would need about \$22,000 for maintenance of all of the cemeteries. Pine Grove was \$8,500 and Other Town Cemeteries showed \$13,000; that's \$21,500.

6. Town of Warner Revenue

At 10:04 pm, before discussing the estimated revenues for 2017, Mike called for a short break in the proceedings. The Public Hearing resumed at 10:11 pm.

Mike noted that the 2017 estimated revenue was \$1,125,609. Kimberley added that revenues were always conservative.

Martha said that Jim would get to update the estimates two more times: September and October.

Martha asked if the refund from the roundabout had arrived yet. Jim said it had not. Martha wanted to know where on the revenue sheet it would appear. Jim said the warrant article covered two years. Following the advice of the Department of Revenue Administration, some of the refund was counted in 2015 and applied towards the tax rate. Some was counted as estimated revenue in 2016, artificially inflating revenue and the actual fund balance. Jim said he was still talking with the DRA. Meanwhile, the auditors will likely advise putting the revenue against the year it was measurable even if it arrives in 2017. Kimberley added that she had sent an email to the budget committee about posting of revenue during the year it was measurable versus the year it arrives.

Kimberley commented about FEMA funds for the new fire station; those would be 2018.

Martha Bodnarik : Where was the grant for the Scott Packs recorded?

Jim : It is listed under "Federal Grants / Reimbursements" where it shows \$138,179.

Ed Mical : Where is the EMPG \$4,000 grant we received listed?

Jim : Problem under "Other Grants" as part of the \$295,834.

Martha Bodnarik suggested that it would be nice if some of the grants received were listed in the Annual Report. Kimberley agreed that was a good idea.

7. Adjourn to Continue Meeting

At 10:18 pm, Ed Mical recommended keeping the Public Hearing open until the following week as Petitioned Articles could still arrive before the February 7 deadline.

Martha Bodnarik reiterated what David Hartman had said earlier, commenting that it looked like the Selectmen, the Town Administrator, Department Heads and Budget Committee did a good job on the budgets this year.

John Dabuliewicz said that one of the reasons the budget is flat is because of the good work done by our Departments to stay within their budgets; they do a good job of doing that!

At 10:20 pm, due to the late hour, Mike recommended continuing the Public Hearing at a **Continued Meeting** on Thursday, February 9 at 7 pm. Since the Public Hearing was still open, voting would have to take place at the Continued Meeting. A **MOTION** was made, seconded, and the meeting was adjourned to the Continued Meeting.

Secretary's Note : The Public Hearing's Continued Meeting was rescheduled to Thursday, February 16 after a couple of snow storms!

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberley Brown Edlmann
Recording Secretary