



**Warner Board of Selectmen
Work Session Meeting Minutes
Thursday, October 20, 2016
APPROVED**

Selectman Carson opened the meeting at 9:30 am.

In attendance: Selectman Clyde Carson - Chairman, Selectman Allan N. Brown, Selectman John Dabuliewicz, Jim Bingham – Town Administrator

Others present: Judy Newman-Rogers, Marianne Howlett, Howard Kirchner

1. Tax Rate

A. The Board had time to think about what was discussed on October 19th. Allan said he is ready to apply \$75K for the overlay (abatements) and \$100K from surplus towards the tax rate, John also agreed. This scenario would bring the municipal tax rate to \$8.87 per thousand, last year it was \$9.24. The overall tax rate will be \$27.34 per thousand. Overall the County went down by .02 cents, town decreased by .37 cents, school increased by \$1.06 and state education portion increased by .09 cents. The total breakdown is as follows:

- Municipal \$ 8.87
- County \$ 2.70
- Local Education \$13.52
- State Education \$ 2.25
- Total \$27.34 per thousand
- Precinct \$ 1.88

B. Clyde asked for public comments:

- Marianne said she is happy with the time frame, the bills will be due December 1st.
- Judy wanted to comment on the fact, and she said she already had this discussion with Jim upstairs, that setting the tax rate was not an item on the agenda and she understands the Selectmen have the choice to add things at the last minute, but she feels setting the tax rate is important enough to have it posted so that the townspeople can hear what's going on. There are people who look at the website and check it to see what's going on and decisions are made to attend based on the posted agenda. When other things are added and not posted it doesn't help people to come in and hear what's going on. Judy feels an effort should be made to make sure everything that is planned for a meeting is posted on the agenda. She said she didn't know the tax rate was being set. And she said the discussion she and Jim had upstairs, the two taxpayers sitting in her office were not happy with his response and they did say so. Jim said he's not happy for the fact she brought it up in the first place the way she did, he said to Judy if you had an issue he thinks she should bring it before the Board because the Board works with him to set the agenda and there are times when things come up that have to be dealt with in an immediate fashion. Jim said the fact that you brought it up in front of the taxpayers in the first place he thinks was unconscionable and really unprofessional. Chairman Carson brought the discussion to a close. Judy said it was just the reaction from the town official they did not like, the things he was saying. Jim said to Judy that is your opinion. Clyde brought the meeting to order.

Board Action

Selectman Brown moved to apply \$75K to the overlay and \$100K from surplus towards the tax rate which results in a municipal tax rate of \$8.87. Selectman Dabuliewicz seconded the motion, motion passed 3-0.

2. 2017 Tax Collector Budget - Highlights

A. Tax Collector, Marianne Howlett, explained her budget is basically the same as last year. The only two changes are a 3% increase in software support and the other is under Tax Lien Research which has had a steady price for several years, but this year the service may see an increase of any where from 5% to 7%. But Marianne did not increase the Tax Lien Research line because the amount budgeted is an estimate based on the number of liens that are done. Marianne is hopeful the lien number will stay low and will be able to absorb the 5% to 7% increase.

- B. Marianne explained the printing line for the tax bill forms is what it actually cost her this year. She understands there's going to be a change in how exemptions are indicated on the tax bill, this may be a changed next year. She said there is a court case going on now and they feel the font size needs to be consistent throughout the state, she said there may be a small charge for the change. The tax bills are pre-printed, she only prints on portions of the bill. John asked if it would be advisable to increase that line. Marianne said we could, but she expects the charge to be small, she said who she deals with is very reasonable. This year she had the vendor include something about solar exemptions and they were very reasonable and she is basing her budget cost on that.
- C. Marianne recommended not reducing anything in line 8 in case the amount of liens increases.
- D. Marianne left Binding of Books blank because last year there was a warrant article, she asked what the Board wants to do. Clyde said the Board hasn't discussed that yet, last year it was a warrant article.

3. 2017 Town Clerk Budget - Highlights

- A. Town Clerk, Judy Newman-Rogers, explained her budget is basically the same as last year. She said record preservation will be a warrant article so that expense is no longer in her budget.
- B. Judy said there is a new cost for supporting the credit card security on line 24. The credit card company pays us when people use a credit card, debit or ACH transactions. Another company was recommended by the software company because they pay quicker, a lower interest rate and their recording is clearer than the company they use now.
- C. There is a \$100 reduction in the postage line. Instead of sending the dog fines out by certified mail for \$6.50 each she now uses a certificate of mailing that costs \$1.00.

4. 2017 Land Use Budget – Highlights

- A. Jim said he sent the budget out to the Chairs, the budget is basically the same as last year. There's a minor reduction in mileage.
- B. John said the Planning Board voted to ask for a warrant article for \$15K to be able to access the tax maps on-line.

5. 2017 Selectman's Office – Highlights

- A. Newsletter increased by \$200.
- B. Advertising was increased to \$400.
- C. Clyde would like the ability to search on the website. Jim said there is a bookmark search mechanism that is being utilized. He said he will talk to the webmaster. Jim is also comparing prices for fiber optics.
- D. The Board agreed to continue purchasing the supplements for the RSA books.
- E. John asked why \$1 in line 20. Jim said in case the Board hires a consultant service. Clyde asked where is the temporary help for the Selectman's office and Land-Use being charged. Jim said at this time to the Land-Use salary. Clyde asked if that cost should be broken out separately. Jim said the cost can be indicated in line 20.

6. 2017 Miscellaneous Accounts - Highlights

- A. The Board wants an amount placed in the Cemetery budget for headstone restoration. Jim said he will talk to Gary Young.
- B. Streetlights increased slightly due to usage and a rate adjustment.

7. Architect – Fire Station

- A. The top four architect's were Samyn & D'Elia, Warrenstreet, Cowan Goudreau and SMP. The two architect's recommended by the Fire Station Building Review Committee is Samyn & D'Elia and SMP. Howard who is a committee member said the committee did not take a vote on who was their first choice.
- B. The Board and Howard talked amongst themselves about which of the two they would choose. Clyde asked if there is any reason to do a follow-up with the two firms chosen or does the Board have enough information to make a decision.
- C. The Board decided to meet with SMP on October 25th at 1:15 pm.

8. Old Grade School

At this time the Board left and went to the Old Grade School to talk to CAP about relocating downstairs.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn (no time indicated).

Board of Selectmen
Clyde Carson
Allan N. Brown
John Dabuliewicz

Recorder of the minutes: Mary Whalen