

TOWN OF WARNER

Board of Selectmen
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Town Administrator
Diane Ricciardelli,
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January 12, 2020

Board of Selectmen

7:00 pm

APPROVED – Work Session Minutes

No physical location for this meeting; it was conducted via Zoom.

I. Preamble/Attendance/Roll Call

Chairman Carson read this announcement: “Good Evening, as Chair of the Board of Selectmen, I am declaring a state of emergency exists and I am invoking the provisions of RSA 91-A:2, iii (b). Federal, State, and local officials have determined that gatherings of 10 or more people pose a substantial risk to our community in its continuing efforts to combat the spread of COVID-19. In concurring with their determination, I also find that this meeting is imperative to the continued operation of Town of Warner government and services, which are vital to public safety and confidence during this emergency. As such, this meeting will be conducted without a quorum of this body physically present in the same location. At this time, I welcome members of the public access the meeting remotely. Please note that all votes at this meeting will be done by roll call. The rules of usual conduct and decorum apply.

ROLL CALL: Clyde Carson, one other in residence; Jonathan Lord, alone Sam Bower, two others present.

Also present: Ken Cogswell; John Leavitt; Martha Mical; Michelle Courser, Town Clerk; Darcie Buskie, Deputy Town Clerk; Marianne Howlett, Tax Collector; Kelly Henley, Bookkeeper; Judith Newman-Rogers, Administrative Assistant to the Board of Selectmen; Diane Ricciardelli, Town Administrator; and Ray Carbone, Recording Secretary.

II. 2020 Operating Budget/Revenue Review

A. Budget

Chairman Carson noted that this is a work session where the Board will review its proposed 2021 operating budget and its 2021 revenue projects in preparation for the next meeting with the Budget Committee.

Town Administrator Ricciardelli began by addressing the projected budget for the Select Board, suggesting that the figure should be \$5,000. Much of that is related to the increased costs related to the coronavirus pandemic and Carson noted that, while those costs may eventually be covered by a grant from the State, the Town has to cover the expenses up front. Lord and Bower said the figure sounds reasonable.

The Board then addressed some of the stipends paid to some Town positions, including the Deputy Tax Collector's position; the group discussed increasing that annual figure for from \$1,250 to \$1,450.

Lord and Bower agreed with Carson about the increase, because the figure hasn't been increased in some time, but the pair also asked if there was a single list of all the positions that are paid by stipends. Bower said the list would be helpful to determine if, when and how any of those positions see an increase in payment.

Ricciardelli and Newman-Rogers said the Moderator, the Treasurer, the Deputy Treasurer, the Trustees of the Trust Funds, the Welfare Director and the Emergency Management Director are paid by stipend.

Carson suggested that since some of the other workers in stipend positions, like the Deputy Tax Collector, have not seen an increase in some time, they receive a similar increase: Treasurer, Deputy Treasurer, Heath Officer and Trustees of the Trust Funds could get an increase of \$200 per annum. The other two Board members agreed.

Before the final decision however Ricciardelli reviewed how the increases impact the proposed 2021 Operating Budget. She noted that the Board had earlier increased the Welfare Director's stipend from \$1,500 to \$2,500 (due to increased responsibilities related to the coronavirus) and that \$1,500 for the Memorial Day activities was not in the budget and had to be added. In addition, approximately \$8,700 needs to be added back into the Transfer Station budget to pay for additional employee hours, because the facility is now opened on Wednesdays (due to the coronavirus pandemic).

Overall, the bottom-line of the Board's proposed 2021 budget is higher than the 2020 budget by approximately 1.8%. Carson concluded the discussion by saying that the Board had put together a good budget.

Bower made a motion to send the proposed changes to the 2021 annual budget on to the Budget Committee; Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

B. REVENUE

Ricciardelli said that she and Carson had received the latest figures from Tax Collector Marianne Howlett earlier in the day and the figures are close to what had been previously estimated. She said that she and Howlett had worked together on the projections and, for several categories of revenue streams, they used a projected figure that's an average of the last three years, reduced by 10 percent. This method was used for the Timber Tax, Payments-in-Lieu-of-Taxes, Excavation, Interest & Penalties and Forest Land Reimbursements,

With input from Michele Courser, Town Clerk, the Motor Vehicle Permit Fees projected figure was raised from \$511,000 to \$550,000. Courser said that people are buying newer cars now.

Bookkeeper Kelly Henley said she was not sure there would be any Shared Revenue from the State in 2021. Carson agreed and the line was reduced to \$0.

For the Meals & Rooms Tax income, the Board decided to reduce the three-year average by 30%.

"Other State and Federal Grants" is projected to be \$0.

For the Land Use Office income, Ricciardelli projected 90% of the 2020 income; the previous two years were unusually high.

There was a brief discussion about how Land Use Fees and escrow accounts, which can hold a developer's projected fees, interact in the budget. At Henley's suggestion, both items were moved into the budget, which raised the projected bottom-line expenditure line of the 2021 Project Budget up to roughly 2% above the 2020 budget. One board member asked about the expansion project at MadgeTech, which may be the largest project in Town in 2021; the thought was whether it is possible that the project's "fees" can be paid directly to the Town's contractor, rather than having the billing and payment pass through the Town's budget. Ricciardelli said she is unsure, but she would ask Ben Frost when she meets with him on a separate matter tomorrow. (Frost is Chairman of the Planning Board and well-versed in land use issues.)

Transfer Station fees are set at 90% of the last year or two years.

Sale of Municipal Properties is increased by \$100,000 due to the prospective sale of four properties, Lord said.

Interest on Investment is 90% of last year.

Rental of Town Properties is 90% of last year.

Cable Franchise is 90% of last year.

Carson noted that the total of 2021 projected revenue of \$1.8 million is close to the 2020 figure of \$1.13 million, and he expressed confidence in the overall Board of Selectman's budget. "There's nothing really high," he said. He made a motion to amend the 2021 revenue estimates as discussed and to submit the entire budget proposal to the Budget Committee; Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

III. Manifest & Consent

Lord made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to approve previously signed manifests dated Jan. 12, 2021, and order the Treasurer to sign:

- Payroll check numbers 6588-6600 in the amount of \$39,744.28 (this includes 22 direct deposits).
- Accounts Payable check numbers 58293-58348 in the amount of \$192,344.75
- Automatic withdrawals in the amount of \$10,991.28 for payroll taxes and NH Retirement.

Carson seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Bower made a motion to authorize the Selectmen to approve previously signed manifests, dated Dec. 22, 2020, and order the Treasurer to sign:

- Payroll check numbers 6552-6587 in the amount of \$64,313.69 (this includes 24 direct deposits).
- Accounts Payable check numbers 58216-58292 in the amount of \$636,631.60 (this includes a KRSD payment of \$365,000.00).
- Automatic withdrawal in the amount of \$17,989.88 for payroll taxes.

Carson seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

Carson made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda, dated Jan. 12, 2021, previously signed by the Warner Board of Selectmen:

1. The Amended Promissory Note with Sugar River Bank to reduce the interest rate from 3.87% to 2.875% on the existing loan for the Warner Fire Station.

2. Approve and then request that the Trustees of Trust Funds pay to the town the amount of \$5,000.00 from the Highway Construction Capital Reserve Fund for payment to Moser Engineering.
3. Approve and then request that the Trustees of Trust Funds pay to the town the amount of \$788.02 from the Employee Expendable Health Trust Fund.
4. Approve and then request that the Trustees of Trust Funds pay to the town the amount of \$283.15 from the Employee Expendable Health Trust Fund.
5. The contract for 2021 with Sanders Searches, LLC for research at the Merrimack County Registry of Deeds for lien and deeding process, the cost of which is included in the Tax Collector's Office Budget.
6. Building Permits for:

Map 30 Lot 043	Map 17 Lot 003-5	Map 33 Lot 001
Map 9 Lot 019	Map 10 Lot 010-2	Map 07 Lot 036
Site # 775309 Kearsarge Tower		

Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

IV. Review

a. 2021 Holiday Schedule

The Board reviewed the proposed holiday schedule. Carson made a motion to accept it; Lord seconded. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes; Bower, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

The Board again addressed the review and approval of its meeting minutes. Chairman Carson asked all member to commit to reading over the drafts of the previous minutes so the group can review and approve them at the next meeting. Ricciardelli asked if she could post the draft minutes to the Town website but Carson said it would be appropriate to wait until the next meeting.

V. Selectmen's Other Business

Carson said he will schedule to do a walk-through of the Warner Community Center (AKA "Old Graded School) with Michael Tabory, Dept. Director of the Community Action Program (CAP) of Belknap and Merrimack Counties, to discuss the office space the group will be renting from the Town. The ADA compliance issues in the building have been resolved, Carson said. The meeting coming up on Tuesday (Jan. 12), at 2 p.m. will address network connectivity needs for the CAP office, so both Tim Hayes, the Department of Public Works Building Maintenance employee who works on the building, and Dan Watts, Town Webmaster, will be present.

Lord said that he's spoken with Eversource ,the energy company that services the building, and that he's expecting a detailed report in the next couple weeks about the structure's energy used.

V. Public Comments

None.

VII. Adjournment

Without objection, Chairman Carson adjourned the meeting at 8:33 p.m.