

# TOWN OF WARNER

Board of Selectmen  
Clyde Carson, Chairman  
Jonathan Lord  
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Town Administrator  
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January 19, 2021

## Board of Selectmen

3:30 pm

### APPROVED - Work Session Minutes

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

#### Preamble/Roll Call/Attendance

**Preamble, read by Chairman Clyde Carson:** Good Afternoon, as Chair of the Select Board, 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. The rules of usual conduct and decorum apply. Please note that all votes at this meeting will be done by roll call.

ROLL CALL: Clyde Carson; Jonathan Lord. (Sam Bower was absent.)

Also present: Varrick Proper, Transfer Station Facilities Foreman; Tim Allen, Director of Public Works (DPW)/Road Agent; and Diane Ricciardelli, Town Administrator.

Chairman Carson said that the primary reason for this work session is to settle on a bottom-line figure for the Transfer Station to use in the Board's proposed 2021 Operating Budget. The Board will met with Proper at this session, then continue the meeting until 6:30 p.m., when it will reconvene for a nonpublic session under RSA 91-A:3 (II)C. At 7 p.m., the Board will then reconvene in public to address any other issues that may need to be discussed.

#### 1. New Business Transfer Station Budget

Carson said the only remaining budget issue is related to Part-time Labor costs, particularly related to the cost of an additional person to work on Wednesdays. (The facility is now open on Wednesdays, as it has been since shortly after the coronavirus pandemic began in March 2020; previously, it was closed on Wednesdays.) Carson said that the Budget Committee raised the issue at its meeting last week.

Proper said he had originally estimated that part-time labor would total \$34,675 going into 2021, but later determined that adjustments for staff vacations and sick days would require the figure to be raised to \$46,728.

Proper also noted that the facility is not operating in the same way as it was before the pandemic. The Recycling Building is closed, and he suggests that it may stay closed for some time due to ongoing safety and productivity issues (even if the pandemic is under control later this year). Proper said that during the last few months, he's been evaluating several issues, including the costs of processing fees. He's found that those transactions take between 80-100 labor hours per year. Given that, the Town may want to evaluate whether to resume the same fee schedule.

"I can't see reopening that (Recycling) Building," Proper said, because the structure has "too much degradation" regarding operational efficiency. There are also significant safety concerns, especially as related to the staff interacting with the public.

Carson asked Proper that, if the Town decided to reopen the Transfer Station later in 2021 under the same operational procedures as before the pandemic, would the \$46,728 be sufficient to cover part-time labor costs. Proper estimated that it would be, but he advocated for the Town to move forward on the idea of doing a complete redesign and rehabilitation of the facility.

Selectman Lord asked Proper if, since the Board decided to open the Transfer Station on Wednesdays as a temporary measure during the pandemic, it might be suitable to now go back to having the facility closed on Wednesdays. Proper said he wasn't sure how much that would impact operations because, with the Recycling Building closed, the staff is usually able to service both the retail business out front and the wholesale processing operations in the rear.

Carson said that one of the primary reasons for adding more hours to the Transfer Station during the pandemic was to avoid having too many people there at the same time.

Lord said he's not seen paperwork information in Town Hall indicating that the facility has had the required two staff members on duty on any recent Wednesdays. Proper said he's hoping to have a part-time person with him tomorrow; he also noted that, with fewer visitors on Wednesdays, that can be a good day to train part-time workers on the equipment.

Carson explained that Lord is asking if the Transfer Station should not be opened on Wednesday if there are not two workers there. "It's just common sense," Lord said.

Proper asked the requirement that two workers be at the Transfer Station whenever it is open, because it's not in the U.S. Department of Labor rules. Lord said the recommendation is related to the Town's contract with Primex, its insurance company. Proper said that there is no major processing of wastes occurring on Wednesdays (only compactor use). He also noted that there are other Town departments that operate at times with a single person engaged in work.

Ricciardelli said that she communicated with Primax recently about the two employees requirement at the Transfer Station. The company suggested that the Board of Selectmen decide how many people should be on duty at the Transfer Station at any time.

Carson said that Proper's new suggested budget figure does include money to have a second person on the site on Wednesdays. So, the Board can move forward with the budget proposal, bringing its recommendation to the Budget Committee. The group can work out the details with Proper at a later date.

Ricciardelli said that supplementing the budget with the new Part-Time Labor figure, the overall bottom-line of the Board's 2021 proposed budget is approximately 1.6% higher than the 2020 budget.

DPW Director Allen asked if Proper has a cell phone, and the foreman said he does not. Allen said he's had some health issues in recent years and that several times he's used his cell phone to reach someone for help. He said that Proper may want to have a cell phone and suggested that the Town might want to consider providing all department heads with cell phones and service.

Carson made a motion to adjust the Transfer Station's part-time employee wages line in the Board's proposed 2021 annual budget to \$46,728. ROLL CALL: Carson, yes; Lord, yes. Motion passed unanimously.

## **2. Adjourn**

Without objection, Carson adjourned the meeting until 6:30 p.m.