

Town of Warner
Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 2, 2020

7:00 PM Warner Town Hall



I. OPEN MEETING at 7:02 PM and ROLL CALL

Martha Bodnarik
Jonathan Lord
David Minton

Michael Cutting (Chairman)
Ray Martin (Water District)

Alfred Hanson
Martha Mical

In Attendance: Diane Ricciardelli – Town Administrator

II. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 5, 2019

Motion to approve the minutes of December 5, 2019 as amended made by David and seconded by Martha B. Passed with unanimous approval.

III. INTRODUCTION OF MEETING BY CHAIR

The Chair said tonight the committee will be reviewing the Operating and Capital budgets. The most recent operating budget has been handed out to members tonight and was sent electronically 1.5 hours prior to the meeting. The Chair said the committee will review the budget by department. He asked Diane to help the committee with questions.

IV. BUDGET INCREASE DISCUSSION

Ray noted on the spreadsheet the third column from the right total is **\$3,506,000** which represents a **4.89% increase**. The following pages were a breakdown of each department. He asked if the 10% adds in the Capital figures? The Chair said, no, that is where the budgeted started although, now the percent increase is 4.8%. Ray said it has been adjusted by \$148,000. Martha M. said that is due to BOS cuts to the budget.

The Chair said **\$1,308,075.82 of the total \$3,506,000 is wages**, which roughly equates to 37%. Ray commented that figure includes wages and stipends. Martha B. asked how much would the cost increase if **benefits** are added to wages? The Chair said that has not been calculated. Martha B. said with benefit costs calculated we would have a better understanding of personnel costs? Ray said health and retirement figures are missing from the spreadsheet. Ray surmised it would be roughly \$215,000 with those figures added to personnel costs. Ray said that would potentially bring wages to \$1,500,000. Martha M. asked Diane when we may anticipate those numbers? Diane said she did not realize they weren't in there until 3:00 PM and was told they didn't have them yet. Martha M. reiterated they would need to include benefits, life insurance, short-term disability and NH retirement.

Kelly said the figures should be in there, and referred the committee to the second page, line number 120. Martha M. said the figure is faint (grayed-out) because it is not finalized. Kelly said short-term disability and insurance is less than \$15 a month per employee. Martha M. asked if the figure for life insurance next year is \$320? Ray responded that he believes those rates remain the same until July. Kelly said some of the departments have benefits broken down. Diane said that Kimberley told her they didn't have the numbers for that information. Kelly said the shaded figures may be going up slightly. Diane said she and Kimberley will work on them tomorrow.

Alfred asked if the town employees are current relative to **wages**? Diane asked if he meant are there any increases coming? Martha clarified is everyone on an appropriate step in the wage scale? Diane said she hasn't looked at it in any detail. She just started the Town Administrator job today (January 2, 2020). She made a note to check on that information. Alfred said there have been increased wages across the board. Kelly said there are 30 regular

employees and then you add the **Fire Dept.**, and it varies. The \$1,308,075 figure for 2020 includes part-time and full-time employees and stipends. Diane said as she understands it, the Fire Dept. wages are not yet approved by the BOS. In response to Martha M.'s question Diane said the BOS are discussing the Fire Dept. wages at next Tuesday's meeting.

Martha B. asked if the **Librarian's salary** is included in the personnel figure? The Chair responded, no. Martha B. said the Library is given an allotment and the Library sets the wage for the Librarian. She gave an example of how money is allotted to the Highway Dept. while the BOS set the wages. Martha M. said it is not the same for the Library. They are subject to a formula for an allotted amount, for example, they would receive \$190,000 which they can allocate how they choose. The Trustees of the Library decide what to do with that money. Martha B. said this is one more department in the town with a department head. She believes it should be included under personnel costs. Martha M. said although it needs to be noted somehow that figure includes the Librarian salary. Ray said the town is required by the trust to put a certain amount of money towards the library. If we separate out her salary and move it to include in town personnel would we reduce her salary from the amount allotted to the library? Martha B. said, no. She believes it is no different than money allotted to any department and a portion of the money is for salary. Martha B. said while you still give an allotment to the Library you would stipulate so much of that money is for personnel costs. The Chair said he understood Martha's point and the reason it was not included was because the BOS do not have a role in setting the Library salaries. Relative to other town salaries they do. **Martha B. said in the interest of accounting for the money and how it is used this would be beneficial. The Chair said he would follow-up. Diane asked why only the Library Director's salary and not all the library salaries? The Chair said he will include all the library part-time salaries in his follow-up. Martha B. said the benefits package needs to be accounted for as well.**

Alfred asked how much has **wages increased the budget**? Ray said in order to get everyone on the pay scale correctly and the new hires the increase is probably considerable. Martha M. doesn't believe it is considerable especially considering for six months we did not pay a Town Administrator. **Alfred said since the wages have been adjusted, we should find out the cost to the town. Ray said we may have to go back two years because the wages were increased over time. Diane said it should be easy to do, we have all the numbers that were budgeted for the past two years. She said we could get the numbers to the committee shortly.** Alfred said he doesn't care about benefits, just salary. Martha B. disagreed and said we should consider benefits they can be expensive.

V. BOS BUDGET – 2020

A. EDAC, Newsletter, Budget Secretary, Budget Increase, Administrator's Salary, Elections

The Chair moved the conversation to the **BOS budget**. The total increase is \$16,913 or a 11.93% increase. Martha B. said in line 48 she would take \$2,000 out of the **EDAC** (Economic Development Advisory Committee) funding. David asked if the public communications for the **EDAC** for \$2,000 is a one-time expense or on-going? Martha B. said she feels they appear to function more like a chamber of commerce. Martha M. concern is they are a committee comprised of businesses in town and maybe they should be funded privately and not by the town. Ray said they may argue they were established by the BOS. Ed M. said he believes the committee was created by the BOS. Martha B. said they produced a brochure that was available at rest areas and grocery stores. It promoted existing businesses in Warner and outlined why you should come here and shop. Which seems more in line with the mission of a chamber of commerce. She was concerned it does not bring industry and businesses in to town.

Martha M. stated that keeping the \$380 for the **webmaster** is necessary in the BOS budget. The Chair asked Diane to take these comments to the BOS for discussion next week. Diane said, yes there is a meeting on Tuesday.

Martha M. addressed the **newsletter**. The town doesn't always get four newsletters out in one year. She would propose cutting the budgeted amount from \$2,815 to \$1,408. This equates to two newsletters. Martha M. said it is printed using the copier upstairs and the cost of postage. Diane felt that number seems high for printing and postage. Martha B. said supply costs could be part of that number. Diane asked are most people reading it online? Martha M. said, no, it gets mailed out to all of Warner residents. Martha B. said there are

people in town who do not read it online. Diane said she wants to do more than four a year but, she is not planning on printing them. She would like to make them available in the town hall for people who want them and put them on the website. Diane said we aren't going to be able to send it out for \$704 every month. Diane said while in the interview process it came up that people want more communication from the town on a monthly basis. Martha M. noted people who do not have computers, need to be accounted for. Also, she said elderly may not be able to travel to town to get a copy. Diane wondered how many people in town that would affect. Martha M.'s concern was that some people would be left out of the communication. Martha B. suggested the BOS pose the question at Town Meeting. They could ask if constituents would like to have the information on the website monthly or spend the money on a quarterly basis to deliver newsletters by mail. The Chair suggested the BOS look at this issue. He said do we really need to print four a year and distribute them. The Chair offered as a solution that Diane does the monthly in the way she described and then two newsletters mailed twice a year. Martha B. suggested that one goes out before Town Meeting with the Chair's budget percentages and tax rate noted.

Martha M. said the committee had asked for a line to pay the **budget secretary**. The Chair spoke with Clyde and he said the BOS were looking at alternatives. Diane said they are looking at several people who only do minutes. They have a lap top and they would process the minutes for any board that needs them. They have a laptop and recorder and we pay them for only three hours. One hour of meeting attendance and two hours to process the minutes. She said they are starting to contract for minutes for the Planning Board this following Monday. They have someone lined up to do it. Martha B. wondered if the BOS could put in a line for the budget committee and the committee in turn gives it to someone who does minutes. Martha B. suggested it stay under the temporary services line in the BOS budget. Martha M. said for 2020 the amount of \$800 is not enough, we will spend it by April. Alfred asked what it cost for Janice to do the minutes last year? The Chair said she provided the committee with a quote of \$4,000 for minutes for 2019. Janice said it equates to \$0.25 a minute for transcription and \$15 an hour for attendance at meetings. Martha M. said it has been paid out of temporary services. Ray said just make it a more realistic number. Martha B. said they are very satisfied with Janice's minutes. The Chair said technically it is the BOS's responsibility to provide minutes for the Budget Committee. They can adjust line 56 to whatever they feel is appropriate.

Referencing the **BOS budget**, David said a 11% increase in any one department is pretty rich. The Chair said 66% is in computer expenses. David asked if that is a one-time expense? The Chair said he believed it is partially a one-time expense. While partially an ongoing expense due to the nature of computers and their cost and need for replacement including software upgrades, firewall upgrades, storage and back-ups, etc.

With no disrespect to Diane, Martha B. mentioned the increase of \$4,000 a year to the **Administrator's salary**. She inquired as to what was the determining factor for that decision? What skills did Diane have that her predecessor did not have? Diane offered to send her resume to the committee. The Chair said the BOS took the grade that was established by the wage committee and outside contractor Thornton. When they hired the new Town Administrator, they started her off on the first step of that grade. The Chair asked if that was correct and Diane said, yes that is correct. Martha B. said that was the explanation she was seeking. Martha M. asked if the salary was \$78,000? Diane said, yes.

Alfred said having this type of information, helps the committee determine where money is being spent and where it doesn't have to be spent. Alfred said he would like to know the increase in salaries this year, in order to know what is needed. The Chair said this year the Police Department did their own wage adjustments. Therefore, we didn't have to hire an agency to figure out the wage adjustments for that dept. When we were looking to hire a Town Administrator rather than using an outside agency to do the advertising and interviewing, we did it internally. The Chair recalled when we last replaced the Town Administrator, we paid roughly \$10,000 to search for a candidate. The Chair said now we have Diane, and he thinks we did a good job. He said the BOS are looking at where we can solve our own issues in-house.

VI. ELECTIONS – 2020

The Chair moved the conversation on to the **Elections** portion of the budget. There is a substantial increase in this category, although we have up to five elections this year. Martha B. said she has worked as a ballot clerk before and she would be willing to forgo her **stipend**. She believes the \$1,000 for a stipend for elections could be cut out. Michelle, Town Clerk, said this was determined before she became clerk and the committee can do what they feel is right. Martha M. asked if most people take the stipend? Michelle said there is one participant who has commented they donate their stipend to a charity. The Chair said the previous Town Clerk said it was becoming difficult to fill the ballot clerk positions. So, it became necessary to start paying for it. Michelle said some people are very appreciative they call and thank her for the stipend. The committee confirmed that in 2020 there are four elections and one Town Meeting. Alfred asked if there is a difference between the level of involvement of a primary versus a town election? Ray said, yes and said for the primary election, the presidential election and any national election we double the staff tasked with checking people in and out. Ray said if we didn't do that the line would extend down to Foothills. We have two tables checking in and two tables checking out. There could be between 400 and 600 voters for a town election, a national election could be as much as 2,000 voters.

VII. FINANCE – 2020

The Chair moved the committee on to the Finance dept. There is a 2.92% increase in Finance salary of \$2,003.90 noted on line 73 on the spreadsheet. No further questions.

VIII. TAX COLLECTOR – 2020

The committee moved on to Tax Collector. The Chair noted that budget was down by \$0.20. Martha M. said they need to change line 82 from \$70 to \$80 for dues which are determined by the state. Martha B. noted the Tax Collector's salary line 76 says last year it was \$43,753 and this year it is \$0.20 less is that correct? Martha B. said everyone else in the town is affected by the **27-pay periods** and yet this salary went down. Ray said the BOS decided to take salaried employees' annual amount and divided it by 27. They would be paid that amount every two weeks. Although, anyone who is designated hourly will be paid an extra two weeks. Martha M. said to her knowledge that is not what has been done. Diane said they just changed it today and they will be paid semi-monthly. She said if employees were paid twice a month then it will be worked into their salary instead of an extra pay period at the end of the year. Diane said nothing has been voted on, yet. Martha M. hoped that method is the same for all salaried individuals, because the PD appears to be handled differently. Diane said that has changed today. There was a meeting with all salaried personnel, and they all agreed to it. Martha M. asked if this includes the Police Dept. Diane said, yes. No further questions or comments.

IX. TREASURER – 2020

The Chair moved on to Treasurer. The Chair noted some grayed-out lines with figures for the Deputy Treasurer and Treasurer why is that? He was referencing lines 85 and 86 of the spreadsheet. The Chair said one figure is \$300 and the other \$4,700. Those figures were not grayed out on Diane's spreadsheet. Diane said this may be due to Libra to Microsoft Excel conversion resulting in some items being lost or formatting differently.

X. TOWN CLERK – 2020

The Chair moved on to Town Clerk. Martha B. noted line 98 has no figure. She asked Michelle if she is not going to participate in conferences and education? The Chair said those figures are in line 97 of the spreadsheet. The decision was made to eliminate conferences and education and merge them into meetings and seminars. Michelle said relative to the Deputy Town Clerk they did not add her pay increase. They adjusted her salary for the 27-pay periods, but they didn't add her pay increase. This would be an extra \$550 in line 89, it should be \$29,496. The total budget should be adjusted to \$79,517. David asked why did the Deputies salary increase from 25,900 to \$29,496? Michelle said last year hours were cut and this year we are back up to 30 hours a week. Martha M. asked about meetings and seminars which was \$120 and increased to \$750? Michelle said last year, 2019, she was asked to make cuts and that line was decreased. The \$700 is for a three-day convention in November for the Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk. No further questions or comments.

XI. TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUNDS – 2020

The Chair went on to Trustees of the Trust Funds. He asked if the \$550 has been established it is appearing as a grayed-out figure. Kelly said that was the amount for 2019. The Chair said the BOS need to set a pay schedule for that line 101. Ray said even though the figure is grayed-out it is being added to the total figure. The Chair said, yes but, it has not been approved yet. No further questions or comments.

XII. ASSESSING AND LAND USE – 2020

The next subject was Assessing. The Chair asked Diane to explain the new position created to combine the assessing and land use clerk responsibilities. That position has been moved from two part-time positions to one full-time position for 35 hours a week with benefits. Diane said, yes that is correct. She said the town has saved several thousand dollars by doing this reorganization. Martha B. asked even when benefits are account for? Diane said, yes. Martha B. said that is good. Her concern was this was originally proposed by Michelle and Diane and there was considerable concern about the cost of full-time benefits for the Town Clerk and the Land Use position taking over assessing duties. Diane said at that time it would have saved money too. Although, this time we are taking the responsibilities of the new position and adding filing as needed for other departments. So, Tim Allen had in his budget \$7,000 for an extra clerical person on Fridays. The meeting minutes were pulled out of this new position to allow time to combine these two positions. The meeting minutes will be on a per meeting basis. If we don't have a meeting, we don't pay for a person. Therefore, the person can be focused on what they do all year long.

Diane said the other issue is the land use clerk leaves every two years, it is expensive to train someone again. We have someone now in a full-time position that will be staying and will be cross-trained. Diane said she is already cross-trained in land use so should anything happen to this position she can step in and do the work. Martha B. asked if there will be a conflict in time running between the two offices? Diane said the combined position will occupy the current downstairs land use office. Diane said when she worked in land use, she and assessing overlapped every day. They deal with the same RSA's and the often the same piece of land. She believes it is a very natural fit for those two positions to be combined. Martha M. said both of those positions were 27 hours a week, and this new position is 35 hours a week. The Chair said essentially it went from 54 hours to 37 hours. Martha said from covering one department to two and a little bit of the Highway Dept. clerical needs is that enough hours a week? Diane said, yes. Martha M. suggested they start with two combined positions and then help with Highway if there is time. Diane said that Tim needs the help now. There will be Friday hours until he gets caught up. Alfred said this person is now doing two jobs. We took a \$50,000 for the two separate positions and dropped it to between \$32,000 and \$35,000. Martha B. asked to revisit line 132 in Land Use. She asked Diane is she still willing to make the trip to Concord for the registry? Diane said, yes.

Martha M. asked what is the **software** necessary for assessing for \$3,600? Diane noted there was a question mark beside the figure, and she doesn't know why. Jonathan asked if the PC needed to be replaced? Martha M. responded no, it has been replaced. The consensus of the committee was, it was for software. Martha M. said she believes the bridge software has been encumbered. Diane said she will find out what the \$3,600 is for and she will make an identifying notation on the spreadsheet. No further questions or comments.

XIII. LEGAL/EVERSOURCE – 2020

The Chair said the Legal section of the budget was dropped from \$53,000 or \$54,000 down to \$11,000. He said the BOS have decided rather than paying \$51,000 a year for three years to Eversource, they will use it as a tax abatement to Eversource. It essentially cuts revenue. Alfred asked if this had to do with the assessing sum? The Chair said, yes. He asked did we put money away for that purpose? Ray said this isn't for the assessing it is for the Eversource lawsuit and the issue of paying too much for poles. Alfred said we were told that money could not be touched, so where is it now? Jonathan said we weren't supposed to touch that money. Although, \$200,000 was spent on the fire station in order to bring down the cost. Martha M. said they used it for **fund balance** purposes which she believes would be part of the effort to bring down the **tax rate**, each year. The Chair said the money was not in a capital reserve fund or a specific account, it was in the general fund. He said \$200,000 was supposed

to be in there in case they had to pay off Eversource. Although, over the last couple of years the BOS decided to use that money to reduce the cost of the **fire department** from \$2,750,000 to \$2,500,000. He said last year they applied \$140,000 to reduce the tax rate. Martha B. said the BOS applied the money to bring down the amount to be bonded. She believes they spent the money to make it a bit more appealing for the voters. Her concern was this wasn't approved by the voters. No further questions or comments.

XIV. BENEFITS – 2020

The Chair went on to the section of the budget on Benefits. David asked why is there a 40% increase in social security costs in one year? Alfred said only \$57,000 was budgeted last year and now it has jumped to \$81,000. Diane said the line below indicates \$1,308,000 and then a formula takes 0.062% of that for social security. Martha B. said it went up because salaries went up. Ray said a small percentage of 5% or 8% is because of the 27-pay periods. Ray said it is like giving hourly personnel an extra two weeks of pay in a year.

Martha M. said on line 120, 121 and 122 are all grayed out. Diane said they appear that way on her spreadsheet, as well. Martha M. said it is noted they need to be calculated, but she thought they have already been calculated. Ray said those numbers are included in the total even though they appear grayed-out. **Diane asked if those numbers for life insurance, Short Term Disability and NH retirement are real numbers? Kelly said no one has asked her for social security or Medicare numbers. Martha M. asked if Kelly and Diane could determine if those are real numbers? Diane said, yes.**

XV. GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS – 2020

The next section was Government buildings and the Town Hall. Martha M. would like to reduce the custodian's salary line in the town hall by \$1,500. We have expended \$1,385 so she thought it would be feasible to take it down to \$2,000. David questioned the need because last year we spent \$33,000. Martha B. said we have spent all of the allotted amount each year. Kelly said we didn't have someone for a period of time. Alfred felt that because of the increase in the amount of elections this year, they may want to leave that amount untouched. Martha M. said, okay. No further questions or comments

XVI. OLD GRADED SCHOOL BUILDING – 2020

The Old Graded School was the next subject. The Chair asked is there a breakdown of what the town collects for income from the grade school building? Kelly said, yes. The Chair said we are spending \$17,159 to maintain the building what are we taking in for income? Martha M. said the entities that occupy the building are Headstart, the Food Pantry, Home Schoolers and CAP. **The Chair has asked for a breakdown of revenue and services.** No further questions or comments.

XVII. OLD FIRE STATION – 2020

They moved on to the Old Fire Station section. The Chair noted \$800 for building maintenance, what does that involve? Ray said we are the landlords if something breaks, we are responsible to fix it. The building is leased. David asked if they are paying utilities? Ray said, yes. The Chair asked if the money for building maintenance is for what we have to perform, or a contingency fund based on what might happen? Diane said she will ask Tim. He said we spent \$6,013.43 in maintenance. Although, part of that is to fix the drainage system before the tenants moved in. Martha M. said we have collected a few months of rent that should show up as revenue. Ed M. inquired about receipt of the insurance money? The Chair clarified there was damage to the sidewalk and wondered if we paid for that or did the insurance? Kelly said she will check to make sure. **Although, the town did pay for expenses and the insurance company did send us a partial check and withheld 10%. She doesn't remember exactly how much it was, although she recalls it may have been over \$5,000. The Chair asked Kelly to find out and to let the committee know.** No further questions or comments.

XVIII. AMERICAN LEGION, CEMETERIES AND MONUMENT REPAIRS – 2020

The next section was the **American Legion**. Martha M. said the legion is \$1,200. The Chair said that needs to be adjusted and not grayed-out.

The Chair mentioned the \$23,000 for **cemetery** and \$3,000 for **monument repairs**. Martha M. asked Diane to check with the current cemetery maintenance people that mow the lawns and ask if they caring for all the cemeteries in town? The town has approximately 20 outlying cemeteries as well as the larger ones. The **Legion** used to take care of the outlying cemeteries. Alfred thought there was an ongoing discussion about this subject. Diane will follow-up. Martha B. noted in line 167 in the comments section it is noted the American Legion's \$1,200 was included. Martha M. believed the \$1,200 is for the flags. Martha B. said yes but, isn't that in line 166? The Chair said the \$1,200 should be put in line 166. Martha M. said there needs to be a discussion between the BOS and the maintenance people to clarify this issue. Ed M. said the Cemetery Trustees establish the numbers not the BOS? They asked Diane to clarify this issue with the Trustees of the Cemetery. No further questions or comments.

XIX. UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE – 2020

The Chair discussed the gray line for unemployment insurance, line 173 for \$1,555 which is included in the \$93,000. Diane was unfamiliar with that line. The Chair asked her to find out if the line has been finalized. They discussed line 174 for \$28,927. The Chair said in 2017 workman's compensation insurance was \$37,114 and the following year it was \$34,234. That was a result of injuries sustained by employees. The Chair said hopefully with the safety program in place we have reduced injuries and can substantially reduce workman's comp. He said without the holiday, it has still gone from \$37,000 to \$28,000.

XX. CENTRAL NH REGIONAL PLANNING – 2020

The Chair asked if there were comments on Central NH Regional Planning. He noted it was the gray line 177. The Chair asked Diane to find out if that is an accurate number in line 177?

The Chair said they are leaving \$1.00 in line 179 (labeled Other Gen. Gov't – Donations/Contribution) to keep it active.

XXI. POLICE DEPARTMENT – 2020

The Chair moved on to the Police Department. No questions or comments.

XXII. AMBULANCE – 2020

The Chair moved on to the Ambulance line for \$82,000 noting that Ed had said he was checking with Hopkinton to verify the number.

XXIII. FIRE DEPARTMENT – 2020

Ray commented on a previous committee meeting with Sean Toomey and Ed R. in reference to the change in how the town pays the volunteer fire fighters. Diane said the Fire Dept. wages are not approved by the BOS. Martha M. asked if these issues are going to be addressed by the BOS. Diane said they are meeting on Tuesday. The Chair recalled an issue which arose with the Police Dept. previously which was similar. He said they were advised they could no longer volunteer. A problem that arose if they got hurt or injured while performing their voluntary duties some conflict with workman's compensation may arise. The Chair presumes the same issue is happening now with the Fire Dept. volunteers.

Ray said there is a \$50,844 increase in the Fire Dept. and \$41,000 is in salary adjustments. Ray said in response to David there are 40 volunteers. David asked are all those 40 getting wages? The Chair said, yes, when they are working. Martha M. said the Chief and the two deputies and a clerk, are a salary or a stipend for a total of \$15,275. David said if 40 volunteers is a lot for a town the size of Warner? Diane said she is working on that with Sean. David asked why training is broken out? Martha M. believes it is because they wanted to track it separately. The Chair said they were paying for only two hours of training and now they pay them for the entire training session.

Martha B.'s concern is that the town cannot afford a 40-man paid work force. The increase in salary for the PD and Fire is over \$50,000 which will increase social security funding. Diane said when a pager goes off however many want to respond to a call, respond. She said you could get 10 or 2. The BOS can set the wages but, not how many people respond. The Chair recalls a time when a certain dollar amount was set and at the end of the year it was divided by the number of man-hours used. He believes they were told by the Dept. of Labor they could not use that system. He believes at the time, four or five years ago the BOS set a rate of pay. No more questions or comments.

XXIV. BUILDING INSPECTOR – 2020

The Chair moved on to the Building Inspector. No questions or comments.

XXV. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT – 2020

The next subject was Emergency Management. The Chair said the \$4,999 increase is for the purpose of a grant. Ed M. said the BOS signed the application to be forwarded to the state. It is a \$5,500 grant, the bottom-line total for the project is \$14,125. It is for updating the town's emergency operations center, plan and creating a continuity of operations plan. It is federal money administrated by the state. No further questions or comments.

XXVI. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT – 2020

The committee moved on to the Highway Dept. Martha B. said it looks like they are getting the full-time employee but, not the part-time position. Jonathan said it appears they will not get the full-time person until the second quarter of the year. Diane said she and Tim are meeting to go over his needs for positions.

Alfred said the department wants a **full-time person**. Alfred wished Tim was present at this meeting, he did not want to speak in a way that was disrespectful to Tim. Alfred's concern is the town has not grown and the maintenance needs are the same. In 2016 the buildings were maintained part time. He feels the description of the position needs to be planned out. Whether it is the maintenance of the buildings the lawns/grounds or plowing. Alfred recalled a statement made that contracted services for plowing was removed and put into this new position. The contract services were \$26,000, he believes one-third is labor, and two-thirds was equipment. The amount the department has for maintaining the buildings is \$20,000, which should be labor costs. The last couple of years only cost him \$20,000 which is about \$3,000 more than it used to cost. His concern is this is going to escalate.

Alfred referenced a previous meeting where capital was discussed and a third F550 truck. Currently we have a maintenance person with no vehicle and tools. He disagrees that we need a full-time person for \$41,000 and is concerned that person will need a vehicle and equipment which could be an additional cost. He went on to say in three to four years this job could add costs that are cost prohibitive to the town. Jonathan asked if the responsibilities of maintenance of the buildings should be moved back to the Town Administrator. Alfred said he believes the BOS need to review this issue. He said in a previous meeting a department head noted there wasn't any money for town hall maintenance. Somewhere along the line communication either lapsed or was not followed. Martha M. would like to see the BOS and the Town Administrator discuss this issue. She said all the buildings were previously maintained for 12 hours a week. The Chair said this does not include custodial duties.

Martha B. said with the hours the department currently works they don't have time to address maintenance problems with the Highway dept. building. She doesn't think they should be fixing their own roof or fixing the furnace. Although they have indicated they want to fix these items and don't have the time to do it. Alfred said 75% of the work to be done on town buildings have to be done by outside services. We would need outside services because we don't have a licensed electrician or a licensed plumber or HVAC person.

Alfred said the Highway dept. head said with the crew he has now the 10-wheeler makes sense. Alfred wondered if according to this rationale if he buys a six-wheeler then the department will need another employee. He said before anything is added to the Highway dept. there needs to be careful consideration and long-term planning. Martha B. said the department head is frustrated he cannot find the time to take care of the building, roof, heating situation, cistern and sprinkler system. Even though money has been set aside for some of those items. Martha

B. wondered if the department retained an outside service, they wouldn't necessarily need to hire another full-time employee.

David discussed **Highway labor** on line 258 to 259. The department has full time, overtime and part-time labor. He asked is it better to have more part-time than overtime, especially if overtime is time-and-a-half? The Chair said part-time work is summer help. The Chair believes overtime is primarily in the winter months for plowing. Alfred said a previous dept. head told us more part-time people than full time would create a savings for the town. He feels it would be beneficial to break down the costs for this department into two categories summer and winter. When it is reported to town's people in the Annual Report it is more understandable that way.

The department has received more new **equipment** in four years than in previous years. Ray asked if that is because equipment has worn out. Alfred said leasing the grader was a good move. Making it unnecessary to plan for obsolescence. The Chair said the leased grader was moved to the operating budget, but we have not decreased the capital budget and the maintenance and parts/supplies line hasn't been decreased.

Alfred said a **depreciation scale** will help realize a daily, monthly, yearly cost of operating a specific machine and when to replace it.

The Chair said last year we budgeted \$30,000 for supplies, this year we are budgeting \$35,000. Last year in parts we had \$40,000 and the same amount this year. The Chair said leasing equipment really hasn't reduced the funding amounts for these items. Alfred said there are still 5 trucks to maintain.

Martha M. said personally she is opposed to a full-time **maintenance person** for the Highway dept. The job was done for 12-to-18 hours a week and it was well done. Diane said she and Tim are meeting next week to go over his staff needs, allotment of time and tasks. Alfred said as he understands it a full-time position has been granted to the Highway dept.

Martha B. said lines 270 to 273, there is an increase in salaries, but benefits are not calculated. Kelly said the numbers were given before all the benefits were figured out. Ray said there are two or three departments with benefits embedded in their section. The ones that are embedded should be moved to the section where the other salaries are accounted for or moved all the others into their own departments with benefits embedded. He suggested there be a standard method. Martha B. said they could be accounted for in each department and with a note saying they are accounted for in the separate departments. The Chair said the reason the benefits were broken out for highway and the police was because of the dollar amounts involved in those departments. The committee wanted to track those two departments to understand the cost to the town in terms of benefits. Diane confirmed what the committee wants is for them to be available in two ways, but, only calculated once.

David wanted to revisit the Highway line 293 why is the budget for sand way down? The Chair said he has a stockpile of sand.

Martha M. commented the Highway dept. probably has the lowest increase of all the departments.

XXVII. STREET LIGHTING – 2020

Martha M. brought up the next topic of street lighting. No questions, no comments.

XXVIII. TRANSFER STATION – 2020

The Chair raised the topic of the Transfer Station. Martha M. asked has there been a discussion on separating the Transfer Station from the responsibility of the Highway Department? Diane has not been in any discussions pertaining to this subject. Martha M. asked if she could motivate them to make a decision about this? Diane responded, yes. Ray asked if line 301 for wages full-time is that for Varick? The committee's consensus was, yes. Ray said he is a wage employee not a salaried employee? The Chair responded, yes, it is wage because he is not classified as a department head. Jonathan said the benefit of separating the two entities would give the

Highway dept. head less to be concerned about. Then if the building maintenance person is moved to the Town Administrator it could also be less taxing for the Highway dept., as well.

Martha B. said if we had to find extra money line 322 and the hazardous waste disposal event, do we have to do this? The committee and the Town Administrator stated that it had to be done. Martha B. asked what happens if we don't do it? Martha M. said it encourages the hazardous waste to be disposed of properly and not along with regular trash. Martha B. said Varick did say there were other places to take the waste. David said, yes like Goffstown.

XXIX. HEALTH OFFICER – 2020

The Chair said there were substantial gray lines in the health section of the budget (326, 327, 328, 329). He noted those numbers will have to be finalized. Diane said, okay.

Martha M. asked if the BOS had approved \$2,500 for Riverbend. Diane will check.

XXX. PARK AND RECREATION – 2020

The Chair moved on to Parks and Rec. The Chair asked about line 338 and the request for a tractor for Parks and Rec. Diane, the Town Administrator, said it has been discussed and they could use the Highway Dept's tractor. The Chair noted it is in the budget for \$12,909. Diane thought it was taken out. Jonathan said at the last BOS meeting there was a discussion to take the tractor out and moving some money over to a warrant article. Martha B. said she thought the pertinent line was line 342 where the projects were at \$39,000. She believes that is where the newer item was removed. Martha M. said there was a backpack blower, but it wasn't \$12,000. The committee tried to determine what the \$12,909 figure in line 338 was for. Martha M. asked Diane to revisit line 338. Diane made a note. Martha M. thought the tractor was under improvements and maintenance which was \$39,806 which is now \$1,800. Martha B. said the shed to house the tractor is not in the budget. Martha M. believes the shed and tractor were in maintenance and are now removed.

The Chair referenced a total equipment repairs and a project sheet with a total of \$12,909. Martha B. said she believes that is where the tractor is accounted for. The Chair referenced their project sheet and noted the price of the tractor was \$11,809. Diane asked of that \$12,909, \$11,809 was for a tractor? Martha M. said, yes. Diane said that line will change. The Chair said the price for the backpack blower is \$600. The Chair said if they are able to use the Highway Dept.'s tractor we will have to budget for the cost of a three-point hitch. Alfred said they also need a bucket on the tractor. No further questions or comments.

XXXI. CONSERVATION – 2020

Conservation was the next topic. No questions or comments.

XXXII. LIBRARY – 2020

The Library was the next topic. Martha B. said they presented to the committee and noted they were short by less than \$4,000. She believes they should add it to their budget. Ray responded to Alfred it is in reference to the grayed-out Line 351. Martha B. said all other department employees were put on the appropriate wage steps. Martha M. said she can propose that change at the next committee meeting. Julie B. from the audience said she would like to see the library actually have some money to operate properly without having to worry about raising the own funds off bake sales.

XXXIII. HOPKINTON LANDFILL – 2020

Jonathan asked if line 372 made sense to anyone? There is a budgeted figure of \$38,000 and an expended \$6,539 and the line reflects a total of minus \$529.04? The Chair said it is the Hopkinton landfill line which is an ongoing expense in perpetuity. Martha B. said it is mainly for testing and maintenance. Alfred said when the project was completed then the maintenance would take place. He recalls the town would have to pay \$20,000 for the

monitoring of that system for the landfill. Martha M. said \$6,000 is what we must pay annually for testing. The Chair said they didn't know why there is \$38,000 budgeted, the only cost is the monitoring fee.

XXXIV. COMMUNICATIONS

Martha B. said that she has been very happy with the cooperation received from Diane, as new Town Administrator.

Next week we will review the Operating budget and start making recommendations. The Chair asked if they can get corrections with more lead time before a meeting.

XXXV. ADJOURN MEETING

Motion to adjourn was made by the Chair and seconded by David, the meeting was adjourned at 9:27 PM.

Follow-up with Budget Committee on items noted in the minutes:

Person Responsible	Action Item
Chair Mike Cutting	Library Salaries: Tracking Library salaries similar to other departments. Martha B. said in the interest of accounting for the money and how it is used this would be beneficial. The Chair said he would follow-up. Diane asked why only the Library Director's salary and not all the library salaries? The Chair said he will include all the library part-time salaries in his follow-up. Martha B. said the benefits package needs to be accounted for as well.
Town Admin. Diane	Alfred said since the wages have been adjusted, we should find out the cost to the town. Ray said we may have to go back two years because the wages were increased over time. Diane said it should be easy to do, we have all the numbers that were budgeted for the past two years. She said we could get the numbers to the committee shortly.
Kelly-Finance and Diane	Diane asked if those numbers for life insurance, Short Term Disability and NH retirement are real numbers? Kelly said no one has asked her for social security or Medicare numbers. Martha M. asked if Kelly and Diane could determine if those are real numbers? Diane said, yes.
Mike	The Chair said we are spending \$17,159 to maintain the Old Graded School building. What are we taking in for income? Martha M. said the entities that occupy the building are Headstart, the Food Pantry, Home Schoolers and CAP. The Chair has asked for a breakdown of revenue and services.
Kelly	Although, the town did pay for expenses and the insurance company did send us a partial check and withheld 10%. She doesn't remember exactly how much it was, although she recalls it may have been over \$5,000. The Chair asked Kelly to find out and to let the committee know.
Diane	Martha M. asked Diane to check with the current cemetery maintenance people that mow the lawns and ask if they caring for all the cemeteries in town? Diane also to follow up with the Trustees of Cemetery's.
Diane	The Chair asked if there were comments on Central NH Regional Planning. He noted it was the gray line 177. The Chair asked Diane to find out if that is an accurate number in line 177?
Diane	Martha B. said lines 270 to 273, there is an increase in salaries, but benefits are not calculated. Diane confirmed what the committee wants is for them to be available in two ways, but, only calculated once.