

UNAPPROVED

Town of Warner
Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 16, 2020

7:00 PM Warner Town Hall



I. OPEN MEETING at 7:01 PM and ROLL CALL

Martha Bodnarik
Jonathan Lord
David Minton

Michael Cutting (Chairman)
Ray Martin (Water District)
Judy Rogers (BOS) arrived at 8:00

Alfred Hanson
Martha Mical

In Attendance: Diane Ricciardelli – Town Administrator, Clyde Carson (BOS)

II. APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 12, 2019 AND DECEMBER 19, 2019

Motion to approve the minutes of December 12, 2019 made by David and seconded by Jonathan. The Chair moved the motion for a vote to approve the December 12, 2019 minutes as amended. ***The motion passed with unanimous approval.***

Motion to approve the minutes of December 19, 2019 made by David and seconded by Jonathan. The Chair moved the motion for a vote to approve the December 19, 2019 minutes as amended. ***The motion passed with unanimous approval.***

III. JUDY ROGERS (BOS REPRESENTATIVE) FOLLOW UP RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

The Chair read response by Judy to questions. In response to why the **Conservation Commission** is requesting \$25,000 in a warrant article. Clyde stated the commission requested that warrant article be withdrawn.

The committee made a motion in a previous meeting recommending the BOS reduce the **Main Street sidewalk** fund from \$10,000 to \$2,000. The warrant article was not reduced by the BOS. Clyde said they have been considering the sidewalk project for a number of years. The intent is to continue the sidewalks in the village from the CAP/Old Graded School building to the Exit 9 roundabout. He said the town hoped to qualify for an 80/20 matching grant two years ago. They failed to qualify due to a technical issue. Another round of federal funding is becoming available. The town can apply for an 80/20 matching grant for the project. Having earnest money available for this project is part of the qualifying process. For a project that may cost \$800,000 the town's portion would be about \$160,000. Which is better than the matching funds for the round-about project. He is not sure if the grant is due in 2020 or 2021. He said this is part of the CIP plan and already a part of the Master Plan. The Chair held off any comments on this warrant article until a time during the meeting when they will specifically address warrant articles.

The Chair asked Clyde why the Energy committee was purposing the sidewalk project? Clyde said the Energy committee's charter is to identify projects related to pedestrian infrastructure. An individual on the Energy committee offered to write the warrant. Jonathan asked if there was a copy of that charter? Clyde said it was in the Master Plan document.

The Chair asked Diane if salary, stipend and wages have been accurately identified in the budget? Diane said she has made that change.

IV. OPERATING BUDGET 2020

A. Water Precinct – Ray Martin

Ray said they have minor changes from the previous presentation to the committee. The handout he gave members reflects the actual year end numbers. In November, he had presented estimated totals. In summary the precinct came in \$9,149 under budget. These figures are still under audit. Their superintendent has done a great job of taking over a lot of maintenance they used to spend on outside contractors. Resulting in saving a considerable amount of money in those line items.

They have purchased the originally proposed fire station site **property** for \$30,000 for a 10 year pay off schedule. This purchase has not been completed. They will be discussing this at the annual Water District meeting. They have asked the BOS to put off any paperwork until they meet in March. Clyde responded to Martha M. the BOS have approved the sale.

Ray said their **budget** is up 0.88% over last year. If the district's warrant article 4 for \$3,000 is approved that would add a half-a-point to their budget total, for a total of 1.35%.

The **general government** line of their budget consists of phones, a computer issue and healthcare. There is a 7.4% increase in their **health insurance** for about \$2,000. Two years ago, that cost went up 7% and last year it came down 7% and now it is back up. There is a 3% **pay increase** for two employees which amounts to \$1,800 and an increase for himself, as the district administrator.

The Chair asked what do they anticipate the increase in the **tax rate is for water**? Ray said it will go up about \$.04 from \$2.40 to \$2.44. This year the proposed budget would increase that line item by \$3,000 from \$142,233 to \$145,000. The total budget expense is up 0.88%. Their revenue is adversely affected because people are very conservative with water consumption. They are metering less water than in 2009. A result of a combination of water saving devices and less occupants in a household. Their expenses in the past were in the range of \$390,000 and now it is \$452,000. They had to increase their borrowing. They had to upgrade a clarifier, and they installed solar panels. He did a quick audit on the solar and they are breaking even including the loan payments. Considering what they pay for electricity, the loan for the solar minus the net metering minus some carbon credits, they are breaking even.

The **general government** increases were the phone and high-speed internet. This was a 3% increase, including a **stipend increase** for the three commissioners, the treasurer and the clerk each are \$100. The **sewer system** went up 2.39%. The water system line is down a little bit.

Capital Reserve is up \$4,000. They went from \$105,316 paid for principal and interest to \$109,000 next year. Most of that cost is in anticipation of the groundwater discharge system project.

Ray said in terms of their **Revenues** about 70% comes from metered water and sewer charges. The other 28 – 30% comes from real estate tax for properties in the precinct. The liquor store did give them a little bump in revenues, they don't use a lot of water but, it is a nice building and they get tax revenue from it.

David asked about the revenue and the 2% **rate increase**. Are they increasing sewer rates as well? Ray said they are considering it. The last time they increased that rate was three years ago. He just met with the Water Department and Environmental Services. They pointed out that Warner is about average for water and sewer rates compared to other towns in the state.

John McGilvray asked how much did the town originally pay for the **property** the water precinct is purchasing? The Chair said the town paid \$76,000 for that property and is selling it for \$30,000. Ray said it was on the market for at least \$70,000 for three years before it was reduced. In response to Alfred, Clyde said they have an agreement signed with the precinct. Ray said they cannot officially sign the purchase and sales agreement until the district has their annual meeting.

B. Highway Department – Tim Allen

Tim said there have been some adjustments made to his budget. The Chair stated the Highway departments **budget for 2020** is \$1,073,335 or a 2.7% increase. The Chair asked what is the status of the **maintenance person** being added to the department budget? Tim said it was discussed at the previous BOS meeting. They were in favor of the proposal for the new full-time maintenance person. The BOS and Tim discussed holding off hiring someone until April or May which will reduce the cost from \$33,000 to \$22,000. The full-time line contains the new hire and the 27-pay periods. Martha confirmed it contains the new hire at \$22,000. If there is a new hire, there will be a \$15,000 deduction in the part-time line for summer help. He had \$7,488 for office support which has been removed. Deb Moody will be helping out in the office on Friday's.

Martha M. asked if the \$22,000 is not accounted for in the \$217,000 line? Tim responded the \$22,000 is accounted for in line 258 for a total of \$217,000. Martha M. asked why is there \$41,000 under the building supervisor line. Tim said that was requested to be in a separate line a couple of years ago. Ray said the half time building maintenance person was split with the highway department. He said the \$21,000 paid to him is taken out and being added to the building maintenance line for \$41,000. Ray said then you are adding a \$22,000 person.

Martha B. asked about reducing the part-time labor line, because it has only gone down \$6,000. Was that for the clerk position? Tim said originally the **part-time labor** line was \$50,628. When we hire a full-time person, he said \$15,000 will come out of that line. He had \$7,488 in the part-time line for a 416-hour position at \$18 an hour for office work. Martha B. asked if something changed with part-time last year, the department budgeted \$38,000 and spent \$43,000. Tim said they worked more hours. Tim said next year's part-time line is about \$28,000, adding the \$15,000 and the \$7,488.

The Chair said the concerns the committee has with **the new position** at \$41,000, is how is this employee going to travel around to the different locations? Tim stated the employee will use their own truck. The current employee who will be filling this position has never asked for mileage reimbursement and he uses his own tools. He said in the winter he is using one of the F550's to do snow removal. In the summertime he uses his own vehicle.

Alfred handed out a sheet with figures he proposed for removing the full-time maintenance position. He put together this proposal to accommodate future needs. Alfred made a reference to the 2016 budget and the maintenance for three buildings; the Police Department, the Old Graded School building and the Town Hall. He was aware there are currently six buildings to maintain. He noted the labor three years ago to maintain these buildings was between \$14,000 and \$17,000. Alfred said three years later it is going to cost much more. Alfred believes the department head alluded that in the future they would need a third vehicle. He is concerned about the future of this maintenance position. A different employee may need a vehicle and tools supplied for them. A vehicle equipped to do maintenance year-round may cost as much as \$60,000. Outfitting that vehicle with tools could be a \$7,000 to \$15,000 expense.

Alfred stated that probably 75% of the work done on these buildings they will have to be licensed to do. It will probably be done by outside services because of the need for electricians and plumbers, etc. So, this new position will probably fix small things. His concern is the town hasn't grown. The maintenance of town buildings was done through the BOS office in the past. Alfred noted the fulltime labor line is at \$217,000 versus \$196,000 for 2019. He would like to zero-out line 270 which is the building supervisor line for \$41,796. He wants to put \$6,000 in line 145 for maintenance and repair of the Town Hall. That will increase that line from \$1,800 to \$7,800. He then wanted to add \$6,000 to line 156, which is presently at \$2,500 and increase it to \$8,500. He noted these figures represent labor, not parts and materials. He then wanted to add \$4,500 to line 206, for the Police Department maintenance line. The Chair confirmed that line will increase from \$2,200 to \$6,700. Then he wanted to add \$3,500 to a new line for maintenance for the Library. This would provide for labor costs for maintaining three buildings for the year. The sum of these maintenance labor costs is then subtracted from \$41,796 salary for the new maintenance person. That would leave an amount of \$21,796

remaining. That remaining amount of \$21,796 would go back into line 258. The Highway labor line 258 currently at \$217,000 would increase to \$238,737.

Alfred said the estimated cost for the **new position** is \$32,000. This year it will be \$22,000 but eventually it will be the full \$32,000 not including overtime. Alfred said the intention of his plan is to give the Highway department back the person they need in their shop and in turn the BOS can look for part-time people. The part-time personnel would cost less than the proposed \$41,000.

The Chair said the Highway department originally proposed a budget total of \$1,073,335 and this plan reduces it to \$1,052,539 or a savings of \$20,796.

Martha B. asked who would be supervising this person? Will the individual departments? Martha B. said this position was removed from supervision under the Town Administrator and moved to the Highway Department. It was noted that previously, Ed M. filled this position and worked under the Town Administrator, the BOS and worked with all the departments. Martha B. asked the BOS members present in tonight's meeting if they would have a problem overseeing a building maintenance person? Clyde said they need a full-time maintenance person. Then when possible that person could help support the Highway Department. The BOS felt the person who should oversee this position is the Highway Superintendent. It made sense to have that person report to Tim because he needs the ability to shuffle and optimize his work schedule. Martha B. said the concern is this position could escalate financially. She cautioned the needs of a different employee could change relative to the need for a vehicle and tools. Clyde said a part-time employee may also need access to a vehicle and tools, a part-time person may not solve the problem.

The Chair stated the changes that Alfred is proposing gives a **net total savings** of \$913. His proposal removes money from the Highway department but, adds it to other departments. The Chair agreed with Alfred that in the future there could be the potential of escalating costs due to any addition of a vehicle and tools. But, from a bottom-line standpoint in this current budget it is only a net savings of \$913. Martha M. suggested the BOS consider going back to a part-time maintenance person. Tim noted there are more than three town buildings. Tim is aware of the things that need to be done every day. He needs a five-man crew in the highway garage. He has too many things to do rather than having to oversee a part-time person.

Martha B. said our budget is being driven by wages and benefits. If we can avoid adding one more full-time person with benefits that would be ideal. She had no qualms about a full-time highway employee but let's get the building maintenance employee back to a part-time position. In order to keep the budget in terms of wages and benefits down slightly.

Jonathan referenced lines 145, 156, 206, and the library line. There is money in those lines currently. Alfred is proposing adding to those lines for maintenance. What is the money in those lines currently used for? Alfred said he believes that is for materials costs not just labor. Tim said the money in those lines for each department were for whatever was purchased to do a project.

Alfred referenced the 10-wheeler that is going to be purchased this year. Alfred asked Tim if he had previously stated that in terms of the crew he has now, purchasing a 10-wheeler makes sense? Tim said, correct. Jonathan said he thinks Alfred is on to something, but it may need some more research.

Marianne said when moving a person to full-time it is important to consider the need to pay benefits. She has experienced a time in town when one person was dedicated to repairs and was shared. She asked if Tim could tell them what the person did in the Town Hall and in the CAP building this year for projects with the shared person. Tim said he did not have the paperwork in front of him but, he could get it to her. Marianne said if they are not tracking each building individually then they are not truly accounting for the costs of running a building.

The Chair asked the BOS to review this situation and make a recommendation while considering the arguments they have heard tonight. Martha M. urged the BOS to come up with their proposal by next week.

Tim said the biggest reduction they made was in the **sand line**. In the course of working on Pumpkin Hill this summer they ran into a pretty good vein of sand in their own pit. That line is reduced by \$10,500. He wants to try to make all their own sand. He left \$2,500 in there just in case they run out and have to buy some.

The Chair asked if the labor figures include **step increases** necessary for the department's employees. Tim said the figures include the proposed wage increases to be reviewed every anniversary date. The Chair highly recommended that a job performance be completed as part of their review.

David asked about line 285, **diesel gas**, it was budgeted at \$4,500 and they spent only \$3,600? Tim said there are two more invoices pending. Tim spoke with the state and they are paying \$2.32 they recommended budgeting \$2.50.

Alfred referenced line 286, **parts**, in the past four years the highway fleet has been updated with five pieces. With all the new equipment he hopes they aren't buying a lot of parts. Can the department drop the parts line from \$40,000 to \$30,000? Alfred said he is aware part of that money probably went into repairing the loader. The Chair said in 2018, \$40,000 was budgeted and \$51,000 was spent, in 2017, \$40,000 was budgeted and \$40,997 was spent. Tim was unsure about reducing that line and its effect. The Chair encouraged him to discuss it with Diane and the BOS and get back to the committee. The Chair agreed with Alfred that in the past few years the department has bought a lot of vehicles and there doesn't seem to be a savings in parts and maintenance. Buying and leasing vehicles should reduce our maintenance costs. The Chair said they budgeted \$40,000 in 2019 and spent \$33,556 and there are some outstanding invoices. Tim said what was spent matters in terms of setting the budget. The Chair agreed but, with all these new vehicles why are they spending that much. Tim said \$26,000 was spent on the loader. Alfred confirmed the loader in 2018 cost the most out of the parts line.

Martha B. asked if the **grader** really needs to be in the highway department line or should it be placed similar to the Fire Truck in principle and bonds. These are long term financial commitments the town owes money on. The Chair said it doesn't change the bottom line of the budget. Martha B. said it does inflate the Highway departments budget. Martha B. said they didn't put the fire truck principle in the Fire department operating line. Alfred said the intention was to put it in the operating budget so it would be there every year. The Chair said we are leasing it with a service maintenance warranty with the whole idea of putting it in the operating budget. Hopefully, parts and maintenance would go down and start to offset the cost.

Judy said the **overall** increase in the **Highway budget** is 2.7% which includes the full-time person. This includes the additional highway person, paying a building maintenance person a full-time wage and the increase to his staff which results in only a 2.7% increase. She would like the committee to consider that he was able to accommodate what he needed with very little increase to his budget. Alfred's concern is the increase will happen in the future. Judy said she was able to hear the part of the meeting she missed tonight because she heard it over the phone. Martha B.'s concern was that Tim had communicated previously that he was overwhelmed. Having this position under the Town Administrator or the individual departments could take one more thing off Tim's plate. Judy said who oversees this position may be open for discussion. The Chair reiterated this issue will go back to the BOS for them to discuss and make a decision. The Chair said the committee will make their recommendations on February 5 and 6. Judy informed the committee the maintenance person presented a 5-to-6-page paper to the BOS including all the inspections that would be overseen by this position. Alfred asked if there was a job description for this position? Clyde, yes.

Martha M. asked about **highway culverts** and how much has to be spent for a minimum order? Tim said \$3,886. The budgeted number is \$4,000 and it should actually be \$6,000. He said the **hydrant line** is low as well at \$2,500.

C. Fire Department – Chief Sean Toomey

The Chair noted the wage line and salary line has been approved by the BOS. He asked Sean to address those lines and explain what they are trying to accomplish. Sean said the salaries are going to be classified as **stipends**. They are paid to the Fire Chief, the Deputy Chief and the Clerk. The clerk takes care of all the

ordering and administrative duties. Martha M. asked if the stipends and wages included increasing the wage and compensating for all the hours worked? She asked if it was possible to spread these tasks out over two years? Sean said he originally proposed a solution which would do a slight increase in the pay rate. Most everyone is paid the same hourly rate with a few exceptions. He thought it was strange that a brand new EMT is paid the same as an officer who is an EMT. He spoke with the BOS and realized the fire fighters were not in the wage study. The BOS asked him to present a new proposal. He would like to propose a change in the wage line which is \$20,000 cheaper and to try to adjust the pay rate based on his initial proposal. This will address the hourly rate and compensation for hours worked. He said unpaid hours is roughly \$14,000-to-\$15,000 which is what the members of the department are giving back to the town. The rate increase is about \$5,000 in that the initial scenario. This is compared to the wage scale where there is a \$23,000 increase and \$15,000 for the unpaid hours.

The Chair asked what are they recommending? Presently wages are budgeted at \$79,000. The Chair asked if he would reduce that and by how much? Sean said the wages would come down about \$20,000. The Chair confirmed he would be reducing line 213 from \$79,000 to \$59,000. Sean said, yes.

Martha B. commented the **wage study** he sent the committee compares Warner to Newbury, Sunapee and New London. She is concerned those towns get more money from taxation and they have higher valued properties. She wondered why we weren't compared to Webster, Bradford and Salisbury. It is not fair to compare a town of 2,800 people to cities. It is difficult to suddenly jump from the town believing they had a volunteer fire department to suddenly paying a rate comparable to a city. David felt that Newbury and Hopkinton were in the ballpark of what they suggest we pay.

Sean said the purpose of putting those towns in the study was because he was able to capture data on those towns relatively easily. Several of those towns were in the wage study that Thornton did for the town. Sean agrees that adopting this wage study 100% would be a huge burden for the taxpayers. He doesn't think the Fire department has been fully un-paid volunteer for many years. We have a Department of Labor issue with pay we must compensate people for the hours they work. He wants to distinguish between someone who is brand new and someone who has achieved a rank. We have three paramedics making \$4.00 per hour difference over our EMT's and the two Deputy Chiefs. He thinks the Deputy Chiefs should make a touch more than the paramedics. Sean said he did not reach out to surrounding town chiefs, like Bradford, because that was not what he was asked to do. Martha B. asked who directed him to look at the study instead of reaching out to other small towns? Ray responded that Sean had said, the BOS.

He recommended adopting his initial proposal at significantly less cost and have the town phase in the increases. The Chair said that would reduce line 213 to \$59,000 and Sean responded would get the exact number.

The Chair inquired about line 224, **in-house training wages** which is presently \$21,150 would that change? Sean said that would go down by almost \$5,000, to \$11,400.

Sean confirmed line 213 the **Fire wage line** would actually be \$61,050. Sean said the budget for training on line 224 would be \$16,600. He confirmed the committee was referencing the most recently emailed sheet with the 2020 estimates of the initial Fire Department pay rates. Also, the salary line instead of \$15,275 would be \$12,625. The Chair confirmed the departments budget would be down to \$193,040.

Chief Toomey said **Rescue One** has been out of service for about a month. The Capital Improvement Plan has the replacement of the truck at \$150,000 for this year and \$150,00 for next year. The BOS asked them to reduce it down \$100,000. We are considering a smaller truck with a box and funding it at \$200,000 and getting rid of the current Rescue One vehicle. The Chair asked if the current rescue truck would be sold or traded? Sean responded, correct.

The Chair asked If they are considering continuing the use of the **suburban** vehicle? Since they are going to a cab chassis and box style. Sean said they would look at it? One of the reasons they need the suburban vehicle was to be able to respond to areas a little quicker. Martha M. asked if the cab chassis and box style

truck is too big to access covered bridges? Sean said he believed so, but he isn't completely sure. The Chair asked if the ambulance goes over the covered bridges. Sean said they do not. Alfred said he believed the suburban vehicle enabled them to get to areas other vehicles could not. Sean said, yes. Alfred said there are two rescue trucks although they are replacing an existing vehicle, Rescue One. Martha M. said there are instances when there is more than one rescue call at a time. Sean said Rescue Two is the suburban vehicle. The CIP is to replace Rescue One. Alfred noted that Rescue One is also for fires. Sean said when the new engine arrives in late-summer/early-fall of 2020, they will move their rescue tools into the new engine. That will free up space on the Rescue One vehicle. Sean said Rescue One will be replaced in 2022. Their capital reserve has probably \$30,000 left. Sean said the new Rescue One will be \$200,000. In response to Alfred he said Rescue Two is in a CIP program for 2025.

Martha M. asked if the wages, stipends and in-house training compensation are going back to the BOS? The Chair said, yes. Specifically, lines items 213, 224, and 212 have proposed changes. The Chair confirmed that \$160,000-to-\$170,000 a year would have to be put into Capital Reserve for purchases over the next four years for a total of \$675,000. Sean said that is correct. David asked what the forestry vehicle is? Sean said it is a 1984 truck with a flat bed, a tank and pump. Martha M. said if the department's numbers are reduced she expects them to come back next year with the other part of the numbers. The Chair thanked the Chief for his time in putting together a comprehensive plan.

Martha asked about **Radio Maintenance**, in that line is \$4,000 and the department spent \$770, with a remainder of \$3,229. They are asking for \$3,000 could they come down in line 231? The Chair said they budgeted \$4,000 and spent \$1,500 and he has budgeted \$2,000. Alfred asked if there is any possibility of maintenance on the old radios? Sean said we can replace the microphone, the antenna or replace the battery. He believes they were buying radios out of that line and doesn't want to continue that practice. So, they halved the budget in that line. Occasionally radios need to be reprogrammed. He has applied for a grant for that process.

The only other area with potential to carve a little funding out of is the **vehicle fuel** line. Sean would like to do a little more research on that before committing. Alfred asked if they get fuel from the state and does he know the details of the contract? Sean did not know. The Police Chief said he believed the state usually sends quotes for two years.

Sean said the number for the **ambulance** service from Hopkinton is \$82,000. The breakdown is for wages, benefits, ambulance maintenance, radio repair, billing contract, contract for service, training, some diesel fuel, uniforms, supplies for \$787,429 and they add in some capital costs for \$25,000 for a total of \$812,429. They minus the fund balance, insurance payments, bills that have not been paid yet for a total of \$524,100. They have a budget of items not covered by insurance of \$288,329. They take an average of our three-year call volumes and split it between Warner, Hopkinton and Webster, we pay 27.93%.

D. Loans and Bonds Discussion

John McGilvray asked if the interest on the new fire station could be reduced through a refinancing? Ray said it depends on the language in the actual commitment for the bond payment. Ray said the rate was pretty good, 3.8%. He encouraged John M. to follow up.

Alfred said maturity dates used to be noted next to the loans and bonds. This was useful in terms of planning ahead. The Chair told Diane this would affect line numbers 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372. He asked her to include the maturity dates on those items.

E. Parks and Recreation Department

Martha B. asked about line 339 and the **tractor** for Parks and Rec. Could they use the Highway Dept.'s tractor instead of purchasing their own? Tim said he can't find a bucket for the tractor, yet. Although, he said they are welcome to use it May through November. Clyde said the tractor for Park and Rec. was removed from the

operating budget. They are assuming the tractor is coming from the Highway Dept. Tim said the bucket could cost between \$2,300 and \$5,000. Martha B. asked when the \$12,909 would be removed from line 339 in Parks and Rec. since they are not purchasing a tractor? Alfred asked Clyde about the \$22,000 in the capital reserve request. Clyde believes the BOS pulled close to \$38,000 out of the Parks and Rec. original request. We pulled out the tractor, the shed to house the tractor and work to the snack shack, and irrigation for the fields. He believes they put everything back in as a Capital item except the tractor. Clyde said they really need a capital reserve for ongoing projects over the years.

The Chair said the sheet provided to the committee by Parks and Rec. was for total equipment repairs and purchases of \$12,909 out of that \$11,809 was for a new tractor. The backpack blower he said was estimated at \$600. Diane said so let's just pull that out of the budget. Diane said the new total for line 339 will be \$1,109.

F. BOS Budget

The Chair reviewed the BOS budget of \$159,576. Martha M. suggested removing \$1,000 from the **computer expense** line because a lot of computers have been replaced. The new figure for that line would be \$6,000. The Chair believed when Dan Watts presented the budget the \$7,000 was not for equipment but for updates on software and firewalls. Martha B. thought they were moving lines and the router. The Chair was concerned about reducing that line, he thought it may be necessary.

Martha M. proposed taking \$704 out of the **newsletter line** and reduced the number of newsletters to two. The Chair confirmed they had reduced the newsletter line to \$704, prior to this meeting.

Martha M. asked Diane about line 56, **temporary services**. The notation says Land Use meeting minutes. So why isn't Land Use doing their own minutes? Diane said as part of combining the two positions, Assessing and Land Use, we pulled the minutes out of Land Use and are paying someone to do them. Janice, ZBA Chair, added that does not include the Zoning minutes, just the Planning Board minutes.

G. Elections

Martha M. recommended taking \$100 out of meals in the Elections sections, it would be reduced to \$900. Michelle said that was fine, they had already discussed it.

H. Finance Department, Tax Collector Department and Treasurer

There were no questions or comments on any of the departments.

I. Town Clerk

Martha M. recommended removing \$100 from the **postage** line reducing it to \$500. The Chair noted that \$547 was spent in 2019 and the year before was \$473. Martha M. withdrew her recommendation based on updated information.

J. Assessing

Martha M. made the recommendation to reduce the **outside services** line by \$1,000 bringing that line total to \$5,500. Last year they spent \$2,540. Clyde said they have not received all invoices for that expense. Clyde said they encumbered it depending on an invoice and never receive it. The Chair said then it is not encumbered. Marianne said she thought an invoice was received for this expense. Clyde believes there is another invoice outstanding for a larger amount. The Chair said since there are outstanding invoices, he would not recommend cutting that line item. Considering this information, Martha M. withdrew her recommendation.

K. Benefits

No questions or comments.

L. Land Use

Martha M. suggested removing \$1,000 from the **Outside Professional Services** line, bringing the total to \$3,000. Janice, ZBA Chair, reminded the committee the Planning Board wanted to do a parking study in the village. Martha M. withdrew the request because she believes a parking study is a good idea.

Martha M. suggested reducing the **Registry of Deeds** which hasn't been used in at least two years from \$200 to \$100. Diane, Town Administrator, said when she was the Land Use Secretary, she never used that account. Diane said it was for recording a town plan that wasn't paid for by an applicant. The Chair confirmed that line would be reduced by \$100.

Martha M. said the other line to reduce may be **Tax Maps**. We have tax maps in several locations, and we don't seem to use this line in Land Use. She suggested reducing that line by \$200 and leave a remaining \$300 in the account. The Chair said there was \$700 in 2017 and they spent \$328, the \$500 in 2018 and didn't spend anything, in 2019 there was \$500 and they didn't spend anything. The confirmed reducing that line to \$300.

Janice offered taking a \$1,000 out of line 136 for **Advertising**.

Alfred asked if there was a parking study five or six years ago? Judy said there was a parking committee and they did a report at the end of the year. Alfred suggested they may have been drawings as a result of that. Clyde commented George Pelletieri was involved in that process. Diane said CNHRPC (Central NH Regional Planning Commission) will be asked to do the study. Martha M. asked Diane to check with Ben, Planning Chair, if we have to pay for that study if we pay dues to CNHRPC.

M. Town Hall

Martha M. asked who the custodian is at the Town Hall. Michael S. said Sue Matott.

N. Old Grade School

No questions or comments.

O. Old Fire Station

John Leavitt asked even though the station is **leased** is the town somehow limited from selling it? Wouldn't it be easier to sell with a tenant in place? Clyde said the goal is to sell it to the tenant. Although, the town is getting \$18,000 a year from the tenants. John M. asked how much money has the town put into the fire station, since being leased? The Chair said we put in roughly \$10,158. A large part of that cost was for repairs to water lines to bring the building up to code so it could be rented. The Chair said they are budgeting only \$800 for maintenance on that building in 2020. Clyde said the tenants came in June 1st, 2019.

Ed M. noted there was some damage done to the building. Did we recoup that expense from the **insurance** company? Martha M. said they have recouped most of the funds. Diane said all but the flagpole expense.

P. Cemeteries

The Chair asked if the amount budgeted will cover the cost to maintain all the cemeteries? Judy spoke with Gary and he said it would cover all expenses.

Martha M. address **monument repairs**, do they have head stones that need repair? Ray said there is a notation in the budget that says there is a tree root that has to be removed for \$2,000. The Chair said \$1,000 is for head stone repairs.

Q. Police Department

Martha asked Chief Chandler how many **overtime** hours there were in 2019? The Chief said he could find out. He said their budgeted overtime hours last year was overspent. The Chair said their budget was \$7,200 and they spent \$9,040.

The Chief is talking with Ray regarding the **festival** and looking to improve that figure for next year.

Martha B. noted that line 192 for **telephone** has been underfunded for the past two years. The Chief said it was close. The normal monthly invoices would be in the \$230 range. They use cell phones in each cruiser which are all under one line item.

Martha M. asked if they could come down \$500 in **uniforms**? The Chief was hesitant to do that because he is filling a vacant position this year. He will need everything for that new person. Martha M. said that is fine.

Martha M. asked about **equipment maintenance** and purchase. They have previously budgeted \$950 and spent \$332. Can they go down \$100 on that line item? The Chief said, yes. The Chair confirmed the line is now \$850.

Martha M. asked if they can go done on **vehicle fuel**? The Chief was hesitant do that due to a new employee and the amount of mileage they will need.

R. Fire Department

Martha M. referenced the **Fire Prevention line** and if they have used all the education material for youngsters? Sean, Fire Chief, said yes there may only be a couple dollars left in that line.

S. Emergency Management

The Chair noted the funds have been adjusted from \$5,000 to \$5,500 to be in line with the grant.

T. Highway Department

No further questions or comments.

U. Street Lighting

No questions or comments

V. Transfer Station

No questions or comments

W. Health and Welfare

No questions or comments.

X. Parks and Recreation

No further questions or comments.

Y. Library

The Chair noted last week they had added \$3,300 to the library. Diane asked what line does that amount get added to? The Chair thought somewhere around line 351. Michael S. thought it was around \$3,017.

Z. Memorial Day

The Chair said the \$1,500 was for the flags.

AA. Conservation Commission

The Chair noted the total of \$1,038.

V. CAPITAL BUDGET 2020 – Warrant Articles

Article 4: is for \$10,000 for Town Hall improvements. No questions or comments.

Article 5: is for the revaluation for \$20,000. No questions or comments.

Article 6: is for **records retention** for \$5,000. **Discussion:** Michelle, Town Clerk, noted this is for micro-film in the library, a computer and monitor out of capital reserve and they just preserved three books of tax deeds. The cost for the three books is \$9,500 to be preserved. The micro-film, computer and monitor is \$7,712. Martha M. said she would like to see that amount raised to \$10,000 which is what is normally in that account. The Chair said in a capital reserve account for records preservation there was \$40,000. Michelle said they just spent \$16,000 out of that account. Marianne said they were hoping to revamp the downstairs empty room. She said Michelle has found we can do a lot of the record preservation ourselves. Michelle said after meeting with the records preservation company anything from 1996 forward was printed on acid-free paper. Therefore, all we need to do is use better three ring binders and acid-free paper protectors. The sleeve protection will be helpful, so people don't touch the paper. If we can get three years in a binder, we will probably need 40 of them. The Chair said they have \$34,000 left. Michelle spoke with Robert Shoemaker because the historical society has a vaulted room. Michelle said they could gut the Town Hall empty room. Although, there may be a problem with the wires and pipes in the ceiling and the potential for water damage. Where the records are stored now is also vulnerable to water. She is trying to find an approach that would ensure the safety of the documents in that room, cost effectively.

Martha B. asked if \$5,000 was enough for this effort. Michelle said due to a miscommunication with the BOS it got reduced to \$5,000. Although if she could, she would like \$10,000. The Chair asked her to get together with the BOS to discuss this line item.

Article 7: Cruiser maintenance for \$15,000. No questions or comments.

Article 8: Repair bridges fund for \$50,000. No questions or comments

Article 9: Highway Road Construction for \$170,000. No questions or comments.

Article 10: Highway Equipment for \$125,000. No questions or comments.

Article 11: Transfer Station Equipment for \$25,000. No questions or comments.

Article 12: Fire and Rescue Vehicle for \$100,000. No questions or comments.

Article 13: The Kearsarge Mountain Road alternative route for \$5,000. No questions or comments.

Article 14: Transportation Capital Reserve fund for \$10,000. *Discussion:* Ray noted this is for Main Street sidewalks. Alfred asked Clyde if they asked for money for this last year? Clyde said yes and it didn't get approved. Martha B. believes people who do not live in the village do not want the expense of a sidewalk. Martha B.'s concern is this will cost a fortune to construct. It would cost a lot just to move the poles. Clyde said there are a lot of people who want to use it. Noting that vehicle traffic is increasing, and pedestrian traffic is increasing. It is a safety issue and he believes a lot of people want it and that it should be before the Town Meeting. The Chair said building it is only the beginning, then you have the expense of maintaining it. John M. said Clyde had quoted a figure of \$800,000 where is that figure coming from? Clyde said that figure was developed with CNHRP when they did the original proposal, two years ago. Diane said the Planning Board had a meeting about this three months ago and it was standing room only filled with people in support of the sidewalk. John M. was concerned about the potential for mounting costs for this project and the challenges of the terrain. He was concerned mailboxes would have to be moved to the opposite side of the street from where the sidewalk is. The Chair said usually mailboxes are placed between the road and the sidewalk and are accessible from the street. The Chair said all the committee can do is either recommend or not recommend a warrant article.

Judy wondered if this was a new capital reserve fund or related to the infrastructure match fund opened in 2018. Martha M. said they need to do research to determine if this should be a new fund or part of an existing fund. Clyde said there is \$5,000 already in a fund. Jonathan asked Diane to reference the 2017 Town Report of 2018 Warrant Article 21 which creates the infrastructure fund.

Article 15: Parks and Recreation for \$22,000. *Discussion:* Martha B. asked if it is going to be an expendable trust or a Capital Reserve fund they can spend from, regularly? The Chair said it is not an expendable trust. It is a newly established capital reserve fund. Clyde said this is for long term big projects. They have to ask the BOS to expend the funds. John L. said it sounds like this fund is for a bunch of small things they need. Clyde said it would be for work on a small building and a lot of upcoming projects. It makes sense for them to start putting money away for these things. John L. asked what projects will this money be used for? Judy said they had money in their budget for projects for next year. Those projects were taken out and that amount was used to start this fund. She said they have discussed resurfacing the tennis courts. Apryl is trying to develop a maintenance schedule so they can plan for expenses. John L.'s concern is this money needs to be specifically for big projects. It should say expressly what those projects are and how much it will cost. Martha B. said some of those expenses are regular operating expenses such as; resurfacing the tennis courts, redoing the liner for the ice rink. Clyde said you could argue that reassessments are a regularly occurring expense but, we still put money away for it. The Chair said the BOS probably should be prepared to address these issues at the Town Meeting. John L. said he is not saying it shouldn't be done, he just thinks it should have a better explanation of what it is going to be used for.

Article 16: Library Renovations for \$10,000. No questions or comments.

Article 17: Fire Fighter's Equipment Fund for \$6,300. **Discussion:** Sean said the original request was for \$25,600 for four sets of gear and three radios. The gear are good for 10 years, we have 40 members. They were doing four sets of gear at \$2,500 a piece and the radios are \$5,200. They need to get into a cycle of replacement for the 29 radios. Martha B. suggested they discuss this with the BOS. Judy said the BOS discussed this and Sean wasn't in attendance at the meeting until after the discussion had closed. She said based on the \$19,000 in that fund and the addition of the \$6,300 that would get them to the sum of \$25,600. She said they can discuss it at the next BOS meeting. Sean was concerned the funds wouldn't be available until the end of the year. The Chair suggested he meet with the BOS and see if they can fund that account in preparation for purchase by July.

Article 18: Employee Expendable Trust Fund for \$3,000. No questions or comments.

Article 19: Contingency Fund for \$10,000. No questions or comments.

VI. MISCELLANEOUS

Alfred asked if the **Exit 9 improvements** and should it be closed? Judy said, yes it should be closed. Alfred said there is \$11,000 in that account. Clyde said they voted to close it at the last Town Meeting. Judy said they have to go through the process of getting the funds into the general fund. Martha B. said there is \$7,500 in an old fire station fund, won't they have to put it on the warrant to close it? The Chair said, yes.

Martha M. made a motion to request from the Board of Selectmen a complete accounting of the cost of the new fire station. David seconded the motion. Discussion: Jonathan said why can't we just give them a week? The Chair said if they don't get an answer they will put in a formal written request. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. The vote passed with unanimous approval. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.*

VII. ADJOURN MEETING

Motion to adjourn was made by the Chair and seconded by David, the meeting was adjourned at 10:24 PM.

Transcribed and Submitted by: Janice L. Loz