

**UNAPPROVED**

Town of Warner  
Budget Committee

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, January 23, 2020

7:00 PM Warner Town Hall



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

Martha Bodnarik  
Ray Martin (Water District)  
Judy Rogers (BOS)

Alfred Hanson  
Martha Mical (V. Chair)

Jonathan Lord  
David Minton

**Absent:** Michael Cutting (Chairman)

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

**II. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 2, 2020**

**Motion to approve the minutes of January 2, 2020 made by Jonathan and seconded by David.** Discussion: Committee members made edits to the minutes. *The Martha M. (acting Chair herein referred to as Chair) moved the motion for a vote to approve the January 2, 2020 minutes as amended. The motion passed with unanimous approval.*

**III. MISCELLANEOUS**

The Chair said she will be reviewing the Operating Budget and voting only to make changes as appropriate.

Ray distributed a hand-out to committee members. The budget is an increase of \$175,629 over last year's budget. He looked at items that are increases. These items would be difficult to remove from the budget. The Budget Committee minutes line is a \$4,000 increase. In Elections there is a \$4,600 increase due to the five elections in 2020. There is a \$38,000 plus increase to the benefits line. There are also increases in the Highway department and Police department. In Workmen's Compensation there isn't a bonus holiday this year so that number has increased. The Hopkinton ambulance cost increased \$5,000. We are also putting \$5,500 toward a grant which will be matched. The Transfer Station is hosting the Hazardous Waste day for an increase of \$7,000, also tipping fees increase \$2,000 for a total of \$9,000. The principle and interest on the bond payments are tough to cut. The total of those items adds up to \$100,000 which is 57.5% of the \$175,000 increase. He took the \$1,000,003 in wages and divided it by 27-pay periods for a sum of \$48,000. Now you are accounting for 85% of the increase. That leaves a \$26,500 increase in the budget, which is less than 1%. In his mind they are increased by 5.3% but it is really 1% that is in all the other departments.

Clyde asked if the 5.3% is based on what the town approved, not necessarily what the budget committee approved and brought to Town Meeting? Ray said, yes, this is what we are considering tonight in this budget. Last year approved at Town Meeting was \$3,310,000. We are adding \$3,486,000 which is an increase of \$175,000 which equates to 5.3%. Clyde said they must consider the \$32,000 reduction at Town Meeting last year. Ray asked if that is reflected in the \$3,310,000 amount approved at Town Meeting. Some committee members believed it was taken out afterwards. Clyde said if you took what the budget committee approved and brought to Town Meeting before it was reduced, it was actually \$4.3 million. Ray's point was there are budget increases that can't be touched. There is a small part of the budget that will need to be reduced to affect the 5.3% increase. His concern was they have continually flatlined the budget and are now paying for it. David said because of the unavoidable increases they should review where they can cut.

Alfred asked about the 27-pay periods and where does the town stand on this issue. Clyde said the town has accommodated for the increase pay periods in the budget. Martha B. said the salaried personnel are not getting an extra pay period. Ray said these are estimates, the \$48,000 number could be a lower value. Martha B. said she account for the capital costs of buying trucks that we are now leasing. The lease shows up in the Operating budget, it used to be in the Capital Reserve fund. That has increased the Operating budget numbers. We are not putting money in a capital account and buying the vehicle outright. Now we are making time payments on the vehicles.

#### IV. OPERATING BUDGET

##### A. Board of Selectmen's 2020 Budget

1. The Chair started with Line 40 Town Offices, Executive (BOS) for \$9,300 does anyone want to make a change? No comments or questions.
2. Line 41, Telephone for \$5,600 – No comments or questions.
3. Computer Expenses for \$7,000. Martha B. asked why did we spend double what was budgeted in 2019? Clyde said if they bought computers this year they would get a better deal opposed to waiting another year. Judy said that \$7,000 is an adjusted figure, it would have been higher. Diane, Town Administrator, said as someone who has worked in Information Technology, her entire career, that is a low number.
4. Town Report printing and postage for \$3,600. No comments or questions.
5. Newsletter for \$1,408 for two printed issues. No comments or questions.
6. Dues and Subscriptions for \$2750. No comments or questions.
7. Office Supplies and equipment for \$3,000. No comments or questions.
8. Postage for \$2,500. No comments or questions.
9. Public Communications for \$380 for Webmaster Services. No comments or questions.
10. Martha B. revisited Office Supplies and Equipment. Why do they expect to spend only \$3,000 this year? Judy said Mary does the purchasing and she felt \$3,000 was a good number. In the past \$2,500 has been budgeted which has been overspent. Diane would like to review what we are ordering, to see if we can get it 10% to 20% cheaper.
11. Mileage for \$390. No questions or comments.
12. Town Offices Expense for \$1,000. No questions or comments.
13. Meeting and Seminars for \$600. No questions or comments.
14. Advertising for \$800. No questions or comments.
15. Town Administrators Salary for \$78,852. No questions or comments
16. Secretaries Salary for \$37,315. Martha B. asked about the increase to 33 hours. Judy said the hours are the same, the increase is in salary. Her salary was less than 2% last year and has been adjusted this year.
17. Temporary Services for \$1,080. No questions or comments
18. Budget Committee minutes for \$4,000. No questions or comments.

Total for Board of Selectmen of \$159,576. ***The Chair made a motion to approve the Board of Selectmen's budget for a total of \$159,576. Martha B. seconded the motion.*** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

##### B. Elections 2020 Budget

Ray stated there are four elections and one town meeting for a total of five elections in 2020.

1. Moderator and Assistant moderator for \$750.
2. Ballot Clerk wages for \$1,050.
3. Checklist Supervisor wages for \$4,100.

4. Mileage line, Jonathan noted there should be \$1.00 in that line. Martha M. agreed. Martha B. asked what was the purpose of the line. Judy said for election training.
5. Supplies for \$100.
6. Postage for \$150.
7. Meals for \$900.
8. Advertising for \$100.

Total in Elections of \$7,150. **Jonathan made a motion to approve the Elections budget for a total of \$7,150. Ray seconded the motion.** Discussion: Martha B. noted it should be adjusted to \$7,151. The Chair agreed. **Jonathan made an amendment to the motion to approve the Elections budget for a total of \$7,151. Martha B. seconded the motion.** The Chair moved the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed to approval the Elections 2020 budget of \$7,151.

### C. FINANCE 2020 Budget

1. Wages for \$47,268.
2. Technical support is \$4,070.
3. Meeting and Seminars is \$270.
4. Auditors expense is \$19,000

Total budget for Finance is \$70,608. Alfred asked if they are using the same auditors or looking elsewhere? Clyde said the auditors they have do most of the communities in the state. They have rotated the auditor on our account, so we get different personalities. Clyde believe they are a good auditor company. The new auditor representative got the town through some rough spots in regards transitions to the Town Administrator's office and Finance office. Alfred asked if they are contracted or is it billable. Clyde said they contract with them, but it is a billable number. Sometimes there are extra services that are needed, such as, IRS and payroll reporting.

**Ray made a motion to approve the Finance budget for a total of \$70,608. The Chair seconded the motion.** No discussion. **The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.

The Chair asked the committee whether to proceed line-by-line or by section. The consensus of the committee was to review the budget by department.

David asked Clyde about the increase of a few thousand dollars for auditors. What exactly do they sign a contract for? Clyde said we do not contract for a fixed price with the auditors. The Chair asked if there is a price or an hourly rate? Clyde said it depends on the person doing the audit, a lower level auditor is a different rate than a partner.

### D. TAX COLLECTOR 2020 BUDGET

Total budget for \$53,890. **Martha B. made a motion to approve the Tax Collectors budget for a total of \$53,890. Ray seconded the motion.** No discussion. **The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.

### E. TREASURER 2020 BUDGET

Total budget for \$5,000. **David made a motion to accept the Treasurer budget for a total of \$5,000. Martha B. seconded the motion.** No discussion. **The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.

#### F. TOWN CLERK 2020 BUDGET

Total budget for \$ 79,513. **Jonathan made a motion to accept the Town Clerk budget for a total of \$79,513. Alfred seconded the motion.** Discussion: Judy asked if the total included the adjustment to the Deputy Town Clerk's wages. Diane said, yes. She confirmed it with Michelle yesterday. The Chair asked Diane to adjust the notation section to reflect that change. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### G. TRUSTEE OF THE TRUST FUND 2020 BUDGET

The total budget of \$550. **Ray made a motion to accept the Trustee of the Trust Fund budget for a total of \$500. Alfred seconded the motion.** No discussion. The Chair moved the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.**

#### H. ASSESSING 2020 BUDGET

The total budget of \$30,317. **Jonathan made a motion to accept the Assessing budget for a total of \$30,317. Ray seconded the motion.** Discussion: Alfred asked about the status of the revaluation at this time? Clyde said it has started. He is not sure what percent has been completed. He said David Marazoff of M&N Assessing is coming to the next BOS meeting to give an update. The Chair said the revaluation is not in this line. Alfred thought occasionally it has been in the outside services line. Clyde said Warner Power took the town to the bureau of lands appeals and have asked for a large tax abatement. They are trying to sell the building while staying in the building. This may result in a lesser value for the building. The town may owe some sort of an abatement. He said they should know more in a week or two. David asked Clyde if he had any idea what we would owe them. Clyde responded somewhere south of \$10,000. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### I. LEGAL 2020 BUDGET

The total budget of \$11,000. **Alfred made a motion to accept the Legal budget for a total of \$11,000. Jonathan seconded the motion.** Discussion: Ray asked about the difference expended last year of \$19,000. He asked if most of that was due to the Eversource case relative to poles? Clyde said, correct, they are still in litigation although, not to the same degree. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### J. BENEFITS 2020 BUDGET

The Chair asked Diane if the benefits numbers are current. Diane does not touch those numbers she said they are calculated. The Chair said the benefits total is \$176,869. **Alfred made a motion to accept the Benefits budget for a total of \$176,869. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion on the motion. *The Chair moved the vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### K. LAND USE 2020 BUDGET

The total budget is \$29,573. **Ray made a motion to accept the Land Use budget for a total of \$29,573. Alfred seconded the motion.** Discussion: The Chair suggested decreasing the outside professional services line by \$1,000. Janice commented as Zoning Board Chair, originally that \$4,000 was set aside for a planner to be shared between a couple of towns. The Zoning Board decided they didn't want a layer between themselves and the applicant. This was something the Planning Board wanted to pursue. The position was not filled. The \$4,000 has since been appropriated towards the village parking study. She would suggest

taking \$1,000 out of advertising, that number seems high to her. She felt it would more appropriate to remove it from advertising than outside services. The Chair said if the committee takes \$1,000 off the bottom line, they could move money around as they see appropriate. Martha B. suggested they take it off advertising. **The Chair made a motion to remove \$1,000 from the Advertising line of the Land Use budget. Martha B. seconded the motion.** *The Chair moved the motion to remove \$1,000 from the Advertising line in the Land Use budget. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion to remove \$1,000 from the Advertising line passed. The original motion to accept the Land Use budget for a total of \$29,573 was amended to read a total of \$28,573 made by Ray. Seconded by Alfred.* No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.* The amended motion for a total of \$28,573 for Land Use passed.

#### **L. GENERAL GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS – TOWN HALL 2020 BUDGET**

The total budget is \$18,586. **Alfred made a motion to accept the General Government Buildings – Town Hall budget for a total of \$18,586. Ray seconded the motion.** Discussion: Martha B. stated the Heating and Fueling line has consistently been over. She noted Diane was going to look into the thermostat situation. Diane noted they have electric heaters running all the time because everyone is cold. Chief Chandler said the Police Dept. put thermostat locks in the sally port and garage port. When washing cruisers, the heat would get turned up and they would forget to turn it back down. Now the thermostats in those areas are locked to 55° degrees. They have noticed a decrease in heating fuel. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### **M. OLD GRADED SCHOOL BUILDING 2020 BUDGET**

Martha B. said the Heating and Fuel situation should be investigated at the Old Graded School building. Judy said the amount of time it is occupied versus the Town Hall, the fuel number is high. The Chair also suggested the BOS consider changing the rent charges for the tenants. Judy will pass the message on to the BOS. Martha B. suggested they consider adjusted rent rates in line with fuel consumption. The Chair asked about the scraping of the fire escape and painting. Is the maintenance person doing that work or outside services? Tim, Highway Dept., responded the maintenance person.

*The Chair noted that seven committee members were in favor of the established total of \$17,159 for the Old Graded School building budget. No motion was made.*

#### **N. OLD FIRE STATION 2020 BUDGET**

The total for this budget is \$800. The Chair asked is a warrant article being considered to sell this property? Clyde said they are negotiating with the tenants for a potential sale. He doesn't know if that will be settled by Town Meeting. The Chair said there needs to be a warrant article stating if the tenants do not purchase the building it can be sold. Clyde believes that is already stated in the lease. The Chair asked Diane to confirm that information is in the lease. Clyde said they have a 12-month lease and that we would negotiate a selling price. The lease matures in the summer of 2020.

*The Chair noted seven committee members were in favor of the established total of \$800 for the Old Fire Station budget. No motion was made.*

Clyde stated for the record the town receives \$18,000 in revenue for rent on the building. Clyde said it will be part of the revaluation process.

#### O. AMERICAN LEGION 2020 BUDGET

The total budget is a \$1.00 place holder. **Alfred made a motion to accept the American Legion budget for a total of \$1.00. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### P. TOWN CEMETERIES 2020 BUDGET

The total is \$26,000. **Martha B. made a motion to accept the Town Cemeteries budget for a total of \$26,000. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### Q. INSURANCE 2020 BUDGET

The total is \$93,784. **Ray made a motion to accept the Insurance budget for a total of \$93,784. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### R. CENTRAL REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION AND OTHER GOVERNMENT 2020 BUDGET

The total is \$20,820. **Ray made a motion to accept the Central Regional Planning Commission and Other Government budget for a total of \$20,820. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### S. POLICE DEPARTMENT 2020 BUDGET

David asked if a wage study was done two years ago? He asked if department was in that study? Also, what brought about the increase in the Police Chief's salary? Martha B. said he didn't get anything last year. David thought maybe he did. Clyde said, no, there was a select group of employees who received increases last year. The Chief said several people were put on the closest step to what they currently made. The people who were addressed received an additional 3%. The 3% was not figured into anybody who was placed on the closest step to their current pay.

David noted that in 2018 the Chief was \$77,439 and in 2019 he was \$78,053. Martha B. recalled the study compared the chief to other towns and he was below 50%. Judy said the wage scale was 24 steps. Although, the study by Thornton actually had 11 steps. The difference between each step was higher than the BOS wanted. They asked the Town Administrator at the time, to put 2% between each step. Therefore, creating 24 steps. She said unfortunately what happened is they started at the top and his 24<sup>th</sup> step equaled Thornton's 11<sup>th</sup> step. The Town Administrator worked back from that point. Some of the steps were \$0.80 higher. The positions that were first identified as not on the wage scale and were going to be put on a step were consequently going to get more due to the correction. They did not use the original wage study that Thornton presented in September. The wage study that was accepted was not only higher, but it included the 3%. The people put on the wage scale benefited. The people who were placed on the closest step did not. Judy said that she felt that anybody who got less than 2% should be adjusted. She had presented to the BOS a couple of months ago and purposed that longevity also be considered.

The Police Dept., Judy said, presented a state survey. Most police chiefs have less longevity than Bill and were making more. David asked which towns were used for a comparison? The Chief said the wage study had a listing of towns. David's said Hopkinton, Concord and some cities were on that study. The Chief said those towns were considered comparable to Warner. The wage study also considered towns that were

competitive. Nobody is our competitor or is the same as we are geographically. Also considered was if you could potentially lose employees to close towns with little or no adjustment to their lifestyle in terms of relocating. The Chief said the figures were from a 2017 wage study. This salary adjustment places him just over the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile after 32 years. Clyde said the high-priced towns were in the study for comparison but weren't used in putting together the blended rate they chose.

Alfred asked are they settled on how to manage wages for the next four-to-five years? The Chief understands this to be the second and final phase of the wage study. He said everyone is where they should be and is current with the 24-pay scale that was adopted. Anyone who comes up for a step increase next year, will be based on their anniversary date of hire. This will spread out employees throughout the year. The state does it that way and it is financially more beneficial.

Alfred asked how long is this wage scale going to last and when would they have to consider another study? Clyde said generally every five years, potentially 2022. The matrix will have to be updated at that time. Ray said people move up the pay grade based on performance and time. On an annual or biannual basis, the wage scales could be addressed with a 2% increase in all steps. The benefit is those at the top of their scale will be allowed a small pay raise. That action would have to be voted on at Town Meeting. Alfred was concerned the town can only pay so much. The Chief said the reason so many wage studies were done were because of a failure to maintain the wage studies. This wage study is a good product and should be maintained.

The Chair asked how many overtime hours did the department have in 2019? The budget indicates the department needs 230-to-250 more hours in 2020. The Chief said no, that is in total. The \$11,000 will equate to a total of 230 hours. Although, that is an estimate based on overtime expended in 2019.

The Chair asked if the decrease in contract services is that due to dispatch costs? The Chief said in that line \$578 is for dispatch. He just received that budget spreadsheet and noticed the line was overspent by \$2,970. He will have to check into that number. Prior to Kelly's arrival regarding the department's IMC software contract, annual fees were somewhere close to that number. He said there was a schedule issue that was paid incorrectly. The \$2,900 overspent figure is about the cost of the IMC software. Kelly was in communication with the auditors trying to get that resolved for this year. That line should be back on track in 2020.

The Chair wanted to reduce the vehicle fuel line by \$400. ***The Chair made a motion to reduce the Vehicle Fuel line in the Police Department by \$400. Martha B. seconded the motion.*** Discussion. The Chief concern is the new person hired to fill the vacant position will need to fuel. The Chair said when they had all personnel in 2019 they used \$4,230. He said they had two officers leave midway through the year. Alfred asked if he has figured out how much the full-time employees use in fuel? The Chief said, no. Jonathan said vehicle fuel is a fluid number, he didn't see the value in reducing that figure by \$400. Ray said Chief Chandler's explanation is this year could be different with the new hire. The Chair said the new position will not be filled for the first two to three months of 2020. Martha B. said he may not be policing the interstate or the back roads. The Chief said he will be on the back roads. The Chief said he personally goes on back roads every day. Alfred said the new hire will probably log all the miles the two officers who left midyear did not drive. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 2 to No – 5. The motion failed.*

David referenced line 120 for benefits and health insurance. He asked if they use different companies for different departments? Clyde said they use one company. David asked why on line 120 is health insurance down? Clyde said it all depends on the type of plan each employee needs. Clyde said there are new rates, everything went up 7.4%. David asked why are were health benefits in 2019 \$60,000 and in 2020 it is \$38,000? He noted the benefits amount for the Fire Dept. and Police increased. Judy said due to different

plans for personnel, individual plans vs. family plans. Diane said a family plan costs about three times more than a single plan.

The Chair said the Police Department total is \$554,150. **The Chair made a motion to accept the Police Department budget for a total of \$554,150. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### **T. AMBULANCE 2020 BUDGET**

The total is \$82,000. **Alfred made a motion to accept the Ambulance budget total of \$82,000. Jonathan seconded the motion.** Discussion: Martha B. said this is something they have no say in what the price is. *The Chair moved the for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

#### **U. FIRE DEPARTMENT 2020 BUDGET**

The total is \$195,435. **Jonathan made a motion to accept the Fire Department budget total of \$195,435. The Chair seconded the motion.** Discussion: David referenced line 218 equipment maintenance. In 2018 they had \$3,500 this year \$10,000 was expended and in 2020 \$6,000 is budgeted. David asked what was involved in that increase? David said they have more equipment to maintain and he would like clarification on this line. Clyde said they would need to speak with Sean, or Ed, who are not in attendance tonight. The Chair believes part of that \$10,000 had to do with moving the air bottle. Judy thought that was correct. It was supposed to be moved during the 2018 budget but, didn't get moved until 2019.

Martha B. had a question about line 223, new and replaced equipment. The department keeps mentioning radios but, isn't there a warrant for radios. The Chair said she believes there are radios mentioned in the capital budget. Martha B. didn't like the idea of asking for the same thing in two different areas. Judy thought he changed it and there are no radios in that line, because radios are a capital item. Judy said radios should be taken out of the notation in that line.

The Chair asked about the increase in the dispatch services. That line has been raised by \$1,865 and it says it is based on town evaluation. Although, she questioned whether it is, or not. Diane said that town evaluation notation may be a clerical error. Martha B. suggested it may reference town usage instead of valuation? The Chair asked Diane to follow-up on how that line is configured.

John L. said it doesn't seem the committee has concerns about the fire fighter wages. Martha B. said the committee doesn't have any control over the wages. He said there are questions that have not been answered relative to these wages. He said the committee can reduce the amount they are going to approve. The BOS will still be in position to make a decision on wages. Martha B. said the information is based on 40 fire fighters with above average to maximum turnout on a call and what they would need to be paid. She feels it is a bit excessive, but it is not something the committee can control. The BOS have gone over the regulations at several meetings with the fire fighters. John L. said he intends to bring it up at the Town Meeting. The Chair said there are two major portions of the increase. One is the rate the other is the hours. She said the Fire Chief felt they could phase it in. Clyde said the BOS decided they were going to phase in the fire fighter wages and that reduction is reflected in the line item. Ray said when the wage line first was purposed it was \$47,000 and it has been dropped to \$24,000.

Alfred purposed making an amendment to postpone the acceptance of the Fire Department budget until after the public hearing. The Chair said the goal tonight is to accept totals to put forward for the public hearing. Alfred's concern is they need more information. Martha B. said when this comes before the public hearing they can alter numbers the committee deems necessary. Judy requested that the notation column on the

budget either be removed or accurately reflect the BOS vote of 2 to 1. Diane said, yes. Alfred withdrew his amendment.

*The Chair moved the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 5 to No – 2.** The motion to accept the Fire Department budget total of \$195,435 passed.*

Ray pointed out to John L. the increase in the salaries/wages were reduced by \$20,000. John L. said he is still concerned about questions that were never answered.

#### **V. BUILDING INSPECTOR 2020 BUDGET**

The total budget is \$4,700. **Ray made the motion to accept the Building Inspector budget total of \$4,700. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion: *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.*

#### **W. EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT 2020 BUDGET**

The total budget is \$14,125. **David made the motion to accept the Emergency Management budget total of \$14,125. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.*

#### **X. HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT 2020 BUDGET**

The total budget is \$1,072,276. **Ray made a motion to accept the Highway Department budget total of \$1,072,276. Jonathan seconded the motion.** Discussion: The Chair proposed decreasing the full-time employees' line by \$32,000 by removing the new position. She confirmed with Tim Allen the amount of \$32,000 for the full year was not in the budget. Tim replied, correct. The Chair noted that line number 258 should be amended to \$21,500. Martha B. asked if it is line 270 for a Building Supervisor? The Chair said she was referencing line 258 to be reduced to \$21,500. Clyde said when the BOS approved the extra position Tim had reduced the departments summer labor line by \$15,000. He asked if she intends on reinstating the summer labor line? The Chair said, no. Clyde was concerned this would affect their ability to do maintenance this summer. The Chair felt he had other crew members to do the work. Clyde stressed that without the summer labor and the new person the departments staff would be reduced to what they had two years ago. He said they lost a person and the position was never filled; this change would set them back. Clyde said in order to get a new person, Tim agreed to eliminate the summer maintenance position. Clyde's concern was this would leave them shorthanded. Tim said they have always had a \$15,000 summer part-time person.

The Chair said in the current version of the budget the department has \$28,000 in the part-time line. Tim said that is minus the \$15,000 for summer part-time help. The Chair asked if at this point, they have any part-time employees? Tim said in the winter they have part-time snow removal people, for sidewalks, two snowplow people and the loader person. Ray said it is difficult to get part-time help. This change brings the department back to where they were two years ago. He said they reduced one line by \$15,000 and reduced the sand line. He said their overall budget is up 2%. Ray feels that a full-time person would be more committed to the job. This effort will bring the department back up to a full-time compliment.

The Chair said this reduction would put the full-time building maintenance person back to part-time building maintenance and part-time Highway Dept. Martha B. said it would make sense to leave the full-time person under labor and cut the building maintenance person back to part-time. It is being purposed as a full-time Building Maintenance position and an additional full-time position as well. She proposed keeping the full-time position in the Highway Dept. where it belongs. She suggested putting the building maintenance position back

to half time. Therefore, they would still only have one full-time person, which would give them enough people on the crew. The Chair said you would reduce the budget by \$20,000.

Ray noted there was also a reduction on line 264 for the outside plowing contractor of \$26,000. The department's proposal would put the building maintenance person to full-time and they would do the plowing. Alfred asked what is he using for a truck? Tim said he is using the old F550. Alfred was concerned the F550 will be removed from another use in the department in order to be used by the full-time maintenance person. Tim said right now the pickup is sitting. Tim was more concerned whether they can replace all the dump trucks when necessary. If he cannot financially replace a dump truck then he would consider replacing it with a F550. Tim said that was basis of his previous comment that he would consider a third F550 truck. He referenced a meeting with the committee two years ago at the Highway garage. It was his intention at that time to have two 10 wheelers, two six wheelers, and two 550's. The old 550's may or may not have to be replaced in the next year or two. Although, he has no intentions of outfitting this maintenance position with a brand-new set of equipment/stuff. Alfred was concerned that in order for that position to be effective they would have to be outfitted with equipment.

Ray said he doesn't see any indication that Tim is going to be adding trucks. Ray asked who is presently taking care of building maintenance. Tim said Tim Hayes is taking care of the buildings and the grounds. Martha B. shared her concern that the library sidewalk still has a crust of snow on it. Whereas, the sidewalk in front of the book store was clear. The Chair said to her knowledge when the sidewalks are clear they usually been shoveled by someone from the business's along Main Street. Ray said that Tim has said the sidewalks need repairing because the concrete curb is much higher than the brick pavers. The sidewalk tractor has one wheel on the curb and one wheel on the sidewalk which creates a ridge.

*The Chair asked for show of hands for all those in favor of removing \$21,500 from the full-time employee line. Yes – 2 to No – 5. The majority of the Budget Committee were not in favor of removing the \$21,500 from the full-time employee line in the Highway Department. The Chair confirmed the full-time employee line for the Highway Department is \$217,737.*

David asked Tim if on line 270 are the Building Supervisor wages included in the \$15,000 for summer help? Tim said no, line 270 for the Building Supervisor last year was \$20,000 and this year it is budgeted for \$41,796 which is the full wage for Tim Hayes. That figure was taken out of the full-time line and put in a separate line for tracking purposes. Clyde said he is a full-time employee already; it is just where we have allocated labor. The Chair said currently he is either working for the Highway Department or working for building maintenance. Ray said when he plows the town has a \$26,000 savings in outside services. Martha B. cautioned they consider that a benefits package has been added. The Chair stated building maintenance has gone from a part-time 20-hour a week job to a 40-hour week job. Ray has heard concerns shared by town's people over the years about maintenance of the buildings and general repair.

Ed M. asked how much time was spent in 2019 on building maintenance? Tim said roughly \$25,000 was spent. He would estimate it to be between 1,000 and 1,100 hours, he could find out. Ray asked if making the position full-time would increase the scope of hours? Tim said, yes. Jonathan asked if his job description will change, because he will be taking on some other duties. Tim said, no, the building maintenance job description is the same, although, he could not remember specifically how it is worded.

Martha B. asked if this person would be responsible for cleaning up the Highway dept. meeting room that was reported by Tim to have soot on the wall? Tim said, no, they are getting someone to look at the whole ventilation system.

Ed. M. asked what is the outside contract snow removal line of \$2,000 for? Tim said they pay Henniker \$1,750 a year to take care of some snow removal.

Alfred said in 2018 the committee appropriated \$29,000 for line 270 and \$13,000 was expended. Last year the committee dropped \$9,000 out of that appropriation to \$20,000. He said this year \$25,600 was spent out of that line. What was the difference between 2018 and 2019? Tim said there were more hours spent doing maintenance. Judy said didn't the department lose an employee in 2018? Tim said, yes for a couple of months. The Chair said there was a period of time they went without a building maintenance person. Alfred is concerned this position will grow from a \$15,000 position just three years ago to a potential of being a \$60,000 to \$70,000 position. This is something he feels the town cannot afford. He was supportive of this position when it was part-time and managed through the BOS office. Alfred said there were presentations and we were well informed as to what was going to happen in each building. Alfred stated that due to the nature of the repairs a majority will probably be done by outside contractors. Judy said if there was a large project that would be identified in the budget in outside services.

Martha B. said Alfred is more concerned with the potential snowball effect of this position. Judy said the BOS are going to look at this position for a year and then reevaluate. Clyde said the BOS has asked Tim for a monthly report which will be included in our minutes stating the maintenance items that were done. They are not going to make up projects to fill up the maintenance person's time. If they have spare time, they will help out in the Highway Department. Clyde said there are enough projects to be done that conveys to a full-time person for this position.

Rick Bixby asked when Ed M. did the part-time building maintenance position was it paid \$15,000 a year? Alfred said it ranged between \$13,000 and \$17,000 a year. The Chair said for 12 to 18 hours a week. Rick said if you add the outside contract services you would come up with probably just over \$40,000. He said that would be cheaper than a full time Building Maintenance person especially when you consider benefits. Martha B. didn't question whether they need it or not, but rather the position should be supervised by the Town Administrator. She is concerned that Tim could put his time and energy into the Highway Dept. instead of the building's in town. Clyde said the BOS considered it and decided the position will remain under Tim's management. Therefore, he could decide if he needs maintenance or highway work completed. Alfred questioned when there was six people in this department? Tim said possibly just before he started here.

Alfred is uncomfortable with starting up something new without enough information for him to make a decision. He was concerned about not seeing a job description for this position. He would like to see the department take a year and gather more information and project their needs.

Alfred proposed changes to the department's budget with the goal of removing the new full-time position. He asked the committee to review line 286 for \$40,000 for parts. He purposed taking \$8,000 out of the \$40,000, with a remainder of \$32,000 in parts. He then said take that \$8,000 and add it to the part-time line 260 which increases that line to \$36,452. Then take line 270 and fund it at \$20,000, which leaves \$21,796 that goes into the full-time labor line 258. Line 258 has increased to \$239,533. He said take the \$239,533 and subtract the new hire at the eight months of \$22,000 which leaves \$217,533. Alfred's intent was to ask the department to repeat the year they had and come back with more information for a future plan. He cautioned that once we create this position there is no turning back. He is not saying he doesn't agree with it, he is just not convinced. David asked why did he take \$8,000 out of parts? Alfred said with the five pieces of new equipment and what they are spending this year, he felt it was a safe plan. David asked Tim if the parts number was accurate? Tim said that expenditure was within a couple hundred dollars. Tim was concerned there is at least a \$7,000 shortfall somewhere in Alfred's proposal. Ray said Tim had taken out \$15,000 from the budget in the part-time line. Ray said Alfred put in \$8,000 which means there is still a shortage of \$7,000 not accounted for. Martha B. said she likes to cut money but while listening to Tim and Ray she has heard it is more difficult to

find a reliable part-time employee. Tim A. said he wants a full-time person to go along with Tim Hayes because there is a lot of ground's maintenance to be done. He feels a full-time person sinks his teeth into the job and is more responsible.

Jonathan asked how will this be tracked going forward? Are we going to have a report to the BOS on what the maintenance is and rewrite a job description? Tim said they are going to track as much as possible. Tim said last year they had \$24,000 for outside services and plowing. He was not happy with the services and wanted someone responsible for the walkways and doing maintenance. Jonathan asked if in Alfred's proposal was that \$24,000 replaced in the budget? Tim said, no. Jonathan proposed tracking this change for a year. Alfred said he thinks they need more information before going forward with the new position and possibly a job description.

Diane said there is a procedure in place for new positions and job descriptions. Diane said she is hearing the need for a reorganization of the Highway Dept. She believes Tim would know what is best for his needs. She said Tim spent a lot of time on this proposal. Diane likes working with and collecting data, she can provide ample reports once they start tracking the position. Clyde said they got a list of the projects that Tim Hayes has planned. The Chair said that list was done at 18-hours a week. Everything on the list with the exception of snowplowing was done by the first part-time maintenance man and that is why she doesn't feel they need a full-time maintenance position. Ray said the snow plowing is significant it eliminates \$20,000 from the department's budget. The Chair said it was done originally by the Highway department. They had recently contracted outside services. Diane said the new position will refinish the floors which is a costly and will not have to be done by outside services.

Ray said currently there is a 2.6% increase. Judy said which is probably due to the 27-pay periods in 2020. He said they have a Highway dept. head whose job is to run the department. The BOS's job is to supervise the department head. The committee job is to provide funds for them and let them manage it. Ray noted he has the lowest increase of any department. Jonathan felt the BOS are going to hold him accountable.

Rick B. said he would like to see something happen here so they can move forward. The past three years this has been discussed and he thinks ultimately it has affected the Highway department. Rick works in the department and responded to Martha B. that another full-time person would help them out. He said if Tim Hayes does building maintenance we are going to need this other full-time employee.

Ed M. asked if this new full-time position will be posted? Judy said they do not have to post it, the BOS can promote employees from within.

Alfred said just one month ago on line 257 the amount was \$228,476 for full-time labor. That line has been cut to roughly \$217,000. The labor part-time line 259 that number was almost \$51,000 and now is \$32,000. He is concerned they cut these two lines drastically, while adding a new hire. Tim said the BOS asked the department to reduce their budget. They had \$7,500 for a clerical person; it was removed. Deb will help him on Friday's as part of the Assessing/Land Use position. The Chair said the work she does for the Highway department needs to be accounted for and charged appropriately. Diane said Tim will use that position in order to catch up, he may not need it for the entire year.

Ray restated the previous motion to accept the Highway Department budget total of \$1,072,276. Discussion: **The Chair proposed a motion to remove \$2,500 out of the supply line 283 which is currently \$35,000.** David noted last year and the year before they spent \$34,000. **Martha B. seconded the motion.** Discussion: Martha B. said they were \$2,500 under last year and it was increased by \$5,000 this year. This cut will still leave \$5,000 more than they used last year. Diane referenced the expenditure page from Kelly, all of the department's items have not come due for payment yet. Therefore, the actuals for what was expended in

2019 is not accurate. The Chair said the number for 2020 would be \$32,500 instead of \$35,000. She said the budget indicates that \$27,651 has been spent in 2019. *The Chair moved the motion to remove \$2,500 out of the supply line 283 for a total of \$32,500. **Vote tally: Yes – 4 to No – 3.** The motion passed.*

**The Chair made a motion to reduce the \$40,000 parts line by \$2,000.** Diane said the numbers are what was spent and are not final. Clyde said without having the final numbers, the department could be short for parts. Martha B. asked if they are referring to vehicle parts? Tim said whatever it takes to fix something that is broken. Rick said they have four trucks that are pretty tired, he wouldn't recommend cutting any parts line. **The Chair withdrew the motion.**

Martha B. inquired about the \$900 for training sessions. Tim said this is something he has not pursued in the past and would like to this year. Especially, in terms of preparing to evaluate employees and what training they have pursued, i.e., flagging, chain saw training, backhoe classes, loader classes, etc.

**Ray made a motion to accept the reduced Highway Department budget total of \$1,069,776. The Chair seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair moved the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 5 to No – 2.** The motion passed.*

#### Y. STREET LIGHTING 2020 BUDGET

The total is \$11,500. **Martha B. made the motion to accept the Street Lighting budget total of \$11,500. Ray seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.*

#### Z. TRANSFER STATION 2020 BUDGET

The total budget is \$249,270. **Ray made the motion to accept the Transfer Station budget total of \$249,270. Martha B. seconded the motion.** Discussion: The Chair noted that disposal costs were \$10,000 for 2019. We have only expended \$9,000, on line 306. **The Chair made a motion to add \$1,000 to the disposal costs due to the fact those costs tend to increase.** Martha B. felt that Varick, Transfer Station dept., has reviewed those figures thoroughly. Tim, Highway Dept., said he feels it should be increased to \$11,000. The Chair spoke with Varick today and he felt going up \$1,000 would be appropriate. **Jonathan seconded the motion to add \$1,000 to the disposal costs.** *The Chair move the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 5 to No – 1 to Abstention - 1.** The motion to increase the disposal costs line by \$1,000 passed.*

The new total for the Transfer Station budget is \$250,270. **Jonathan amended the motion to accept the Transfer Station budget for the increased total of \$250,270. Martha B. seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 6 to No – 0 to Abstention - 1.** The motion passed for the increased Transfer Station total of \$250,270.*

#### AA.HEALTH AND WELFARE 2020 BUDGET

The total is \$18,863. Martha B. asked if we have a Welfare Director? Clyde said Mary is doing it, but, we do not have a Welfare Director. **Martha B. made the motion to accept the Health and Welfare budget total of \$18,863. Ray seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. **Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0.** The motion passed.*

## **BB. PARKS AND RECREATION 2020 BUDGET**

The Chair asked the committee if they had \$1,050 in line 338? Ray said he has \$1,100 on line 339. The Chair asked what projects are involved in the \$13,615? Diane said she did not know. She can ask Apryl to come to the next committee meeting.

The Chair said the new total for the department is \$40,566. **Jonathan made the motion to accept the Parks and Recreation department budget total of \$40,566. Martha B. seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

## **CC. LIBRARY 2020 BUDGET**

The Chair noted that line 351 will be added to the budget for the amount of \$3,300. The total for the Library is \$193,546. Martha B. asked Michael S. if \$3,300 is enough for them to cover expenses for the Library? Michael S. said, yes, it will allow them to continue the same as for the last couple of years. Nancy said It will not cover collections, they plan on using donation money for that expense. Jonathan asked if this figure was calculated at 1/16<sup>th</sup> or 1/15<sup>th</sup> of the town's total value? The Chair said the total figure of approximately \$190,000 is the allotment. Michael S. said it should be 1/15<sup>th</sup> of 1%.

**Martha B. made the motion to accept the Library budget total of \$193,546. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

## **DD. MEMORIAL DAY 2020 BUDGET**

The total is \$1,500 for flags. **Ray made the motion to accept the Memorial Day budget total of \$1,500. Alfred seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

## **EE. CONSERVATION COMMISSION 2020 BUDGET**

The total is \$1,038. **David made the motion to accept the Conservation Commission budget total of \$1,038. Martha B. seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 6 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

## **FF. HOPKINTON LANDFILL CLOSURE**

Martha B. asked if line 374 for \$7,000 is an actual figure or an estimate? The Chair recalled they budgeted \$7,000 because the bill was for \$7,100. Clyde said it is a budgeted number. Not necessarily what was spent. The total budgeted is \$246,429. **Ray made the motion to accept the Hopkinton Landfill budget total of \$246,429. Jonathan seconded the motion.** No discussion. *The Chair move the motion for a vote. Vote tally: Yes – 7 to No – 0. The motion passed.*

## **GG. TOTAL OPERATING BUDGET FOR 2020**

The total is \$3,484,100.

## **V. CAPITAL BUDGET 2020**

David asked what has changed in the Warrant Articles from last week? Diane said Riverbend and Article 19 which is the Contingency Fund. Martha B. noted that Article 19 is written incorrectly. Diane said Mary thought we had to

establish it every year. Ray said they do have to establish the Contingency fund each year because it disappears. Martha B. thought the money disappears not the fund.

Judy noted that Article 6 should be \$10,000.

The Chair said that Article 3 is the total Operating Budget of \$3,484,100. Ray said we could probably leave that article open until after the public hearing.

Alfred said the committee should review just the changed articles. They won't vote until after the public hearing.

Martha B. suggested that Diane go over the wording of all the articles and make sure the names of the existing capital reserve funds are correct. Diane said she would review them. Martha B. suggested the amount already existing in the funds be noted in the articles.

Martha B. did not recall that there was a previously established Riverbend fund. There isn't a Capital Reserve it was a donation to Riverbend. The Chair said that warrant article needs to be reworded.

## **VI. ADJOURN MEETING**

***Motion to adjourn at 10:00 PM was made by Ray and seconded by Jonathan. The motion passed unanimously.***

Transcribed and Submitted by: Janice L. Loz