



Warner Board of Selectmen

Work Session Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, January 7, 2020

APPROVED

1. Open Meeting Chairman Carson opened the meeting at 7:04 pm.

Attendance: Selectman Clyde Carson – Chairman, Selectman Kimberley Edelmann, Selectman Judy Newman-Rogers and Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli

Others present: Tim Allen, Varick Proper, Marianne Howlett, Martha Mical, Michael Simon, David Hartman, Sean Toomey, Nancy Ladd

2. 2020 Capital Budget

Clyde said he reviewed the Capital Improvement Program requests and tried to fund those requests for the 2020 Capital Budget. Highlights follow:

- The Fire Department request was spread over 3 years instead of 2 years.
- The Bridge Capital Reserve was scaled back to what was funded last year, \$50,000.
- The Highway Road Construction Fund for \$170,000.
- Establish a Capital Reserve for Parks & Recreation. The Town has a tractor Parks & Rec. can use, Tim will need to purchase a bucket. Kimberley asked Clyde if Apryl Blood from Parks & Rec. responded back to him about that. Clyde said he did and has not heard back yet. Clyde said Apryl's big concern is Capital Reserves are not funded until the end of the year, and Clyde said that's not necessarily the case, reserves that need to be used for purchases can be funded before December.
- Contingency Fund for \$10,000.
- Employee Expendable Trust, Judy wants to discuss phasing this out in the future. With a good benefit package and no employee contribution increase, she thinks not funding the Employee Expendable Trust could be looked at as a savings to keep the benefits the same. The balance in the Trust as of December 19 was \$7,198. Clyde recommends bringing the balance up to \$10,000 for 2020. Clyde said if more is needed, there is always the Contingency Fund. Kimberley asked if the Contingency Fund can support an Expendable Trust Fund. Clyde said yes, if the Expendable Trust has been depleted.
- Capital Budget totals \$610,000.
- Judy asked if any funding needs to be added to the Town Hall Improvements Capital Reserve because of potential electrical and maintenance issues. Michael Simon said the Fall Foliage Festival agreed to donate towards the dishwasher for the Town Hall, there is electrical work needed for that.
- Marianne talked about the sprinkler system and from the August 13 meeting minutes she read the prices for things that have not been done. Fire Suppression - \$55,000, electrical - \$10,000 and offices - \$5,000. She asked if money has been encumbered for those expenses. Clyde said the Board encumbered money based on the invoices received at the end of December.
- Kimberley said for Town Hall Improvements, she noticed tiles have fallen from the roof and she expects repairs will be needed. Tim Allen said a list is being generated for repairs at all the buildings that will be paid from the operating budget. Judy asked if there is a warranty still valid. Kimberley is pretty sure the warranty has expired. The question is, if roof work is needed, would the money come from the Town Hall Improvements Capital Reserve or the maintenance line. Clyde felt the roof repair is on-going maintenance. Clyde brought the discussion back to the Capital Budget.
- Martha Mical asked if improving the the electrical issues in the Town Hall be paid from the Town Hall Improvements Capital Reserve? Tim said there are on-going issues with the IT room as well, something about security. Diane said that room needs to be locked and secured. Martha said if that room is locked and a breaker is flipped after work hours, no one can get into that room to flip the breaker. Marianne talked about all the electrical issues in her office alone, and how the lights in the auditorium can only be shut off or turned on at one location on the stage. Clyde brought the conversation back to the Capital Budget, does the Board want to put money in the reserve for fixing electrical issues at the Town Hall. Judy thinks the Board should and is recommending reducing Record Preservation funding for 2020 because there is enough money available to do the project that is planned. Judy talked to the Town Clerk who was agreeable to reducing the funding to \$5,000. Kimberley asked what about actual record preservation. Judy said a couple of books could still be done and the paper that's used for current reports will be cheaper. Clyde is

recommending \$10,000 for the Town Hall Improvements Capital Reserve. Kimberley recommended researching for a grant that addresses electrical issues in old buildings.

- Judy feels the Conservation Commission for \$25,000 should be presented as a warrant article by the Conservation Commission. Clyde initially disagreed because the request came through the CIP from an organization that is part of the Town, it's for the voters to decide. Kimberley agreed. Judy is not denying it's a legitimate request. Clyde said the Conservation Commission still has to sell it at Town Meeting. Clyde reminded the Board that the Conservation Commission did come before them and presented their budget and capital request.
- Judy asked if the amount for Fire Fighter Equipment was reduced because originally the request was for \$25,600 and then the Fire Chief learned there was \$19,000 in the Fire Fighter Equipment Capital Reserve. Clyde said he didn't pick that up because it was not in the CIP. Judy said the Fire Chief submitted a request for \$25,600 and at the Budget Committee meeting Ed Raymond said the Planning Board took out \$25,000 from the CIP because it was felt to be an operating expense item. Diane asked if the Fire Department is requesting \$9,600? Clyde tends to agree, it should be an operating expense. Kimberley said the equipment may not be a Capital item and by putting the cost in the operating budget will bump the Fire Department budget. This expense should be paid from the Capital reserve that was established for this purpose. The Board tabled discussion for now. Judy's question is if the intent is to spend all the money in 2020, then why put the money in a Capital Reserve. Clyde it may not be all spent in 2020, there are two ways of doing this, if the Board thinks it is something they should support the Board can either put \$6,300 in the operating budget or a warrant article to increase the Fire Fighter Equipment by \$6,300. Clyde is not sure the Fire Chief needs to defend the cost and is in favor of putting the cost into the Capital Budget.

Board Action

Selectman Edelman made a motion to approve the 2020 Capital Budget in the amount of \$611,300.00. Selectman Newman-Rogers seconded the motion, the motion passed.

3. Questions from the Budget Committee Meeting

1. Newsletter - If increased to 4 or 6 Newsletter's per year can it can be done without mailing it out to everyone. Can it be made available at the Town Hall and on the website.

Kimberley asked how will the citizens know the Newsletter won't be mailed. Diane said it could be announced in the first Newsletter. Diane's point is the Town could do more Newsletters if they are not mailed to everyone. Clyde feels it's in the Town's best interest to communicate to the residents, he thinks if it is a document that people pick up at town hall or view on the website, there is a percentage of residents that we do not reach. The Budget Committee wants it reduced to two Newsletters a year. The Selectmen have budgeted for four. Clyde is not in favor of reducing it. Kimberley would be in favor of 3, Judy agreed. Kimberley said there should be a Newsletter going out in February, then a summer and fall issue.

2. The Budget Committee asked about the Economic Development Advisory Committee request for \$2,380.

Diane talked with Charlie Albano, Chair of the EDAC. \$500 is for sending Charlie and one other EDAC member to the Travel Council Conference, \$500 for EDAC members to travel to other towns to learn about their EDACs and \$1,000 towards a \$10,000 mural, the balance for the mural would come from other non-profits. Clyde said he's not in favor of it. Judy thought the original request was for \$2,000, \$380 is for the website hosting. She said Charlie requested last year to go to the conference but it was only for himself, now he's asking for 2 people to go at \$250 each? The conference wasn't authorized in 2019 because there was no money budgeted for it. Judy thought the mission of the EDAC was set up to advise the Board, she's not sure why they would have a budget and if they are just to advise the Selectboard, the mural project would not require any funds from the Town. The Board was in favor of striking \$2,000 from the EDAC request.

3. Temporary Services for \$800 for meeting minutes. The person doing the Budget Committee minutes requested \$4,000 for the 2020 budget. Martha Mical said it is up to the Board of Selectmen on who does the Budget Committee minutes. Diane said she had a savings from combining Landuse and Assessing but that savings is for the Land Use meeting minutes. Planning Board minutes will be contracted. Clyde would be in favor of having a line item that says Budget Committee minutes. Clyde said Temp. Services should be put in Landuse for the minutes. Martha Mical recommended leaving the Temp. Services in the Selectman's budget. Landuse will add a line for minutes in the amount of \$1,200, then a separate line item for Budget Committee minutes in the amount of \$4,200.

4. The Budget Committee wants to know if a stipend needs to be paid for the ballot clerks salary.

Clyde said it is needed, there are a lot of elections this year.

5. The Selectmen need to set the salary for the Trustees of the Trust Funds.

Trustee David Hartman said it has been very confusing for the Trustees. The three of them have a hard time dealing with all the trusts and banks. All 3 Trustees are reorganizing all the funds and learning how to better understand what is going on with each fund. Last year an accountant was hired to create the report for the Town Report which the Trustees needed to still do some work on. Clyde said the question is how is the stipend paid to the Trustees. Judy said the stipend has always been paid at the end of the year to one person and the current Trustees have decided how the \$550 should be paid out between the 3 Trustees.

6. The Budget Committee wants a spreadsheet for salary with benefits for each Department for the last 3 years.

Kimberley asked what will the Budget Committee do with that data. Diane wasn't sure and recommended asking Martha Mical. Martha said she wasn't the one asking for it. Kimberley said it's great to ask for data, but you need to have a plan on what is going to be done with that data. Martha said between Diane and herself, they will ask that question on Thursday. Kimberley said that's a lot of work and there is nothing the Budget Committee can do about wages and benefits. Diane said it borders on an HR issue. Kimberley said it's not what the Budget Committee should be looking at. Martha Mical said all wages in a town is public information. Kimberley said the Budget Committee can't recommend changes. Judy asked do they want to see the wages and benefits pulled out from the budget? Diane said anyone can do that by doing the math. Judy said you can't do that for the Town Hall staff budget, you can for other Departments. Kimberley said it is still doable for the Town Hall.

7. The Budget Committee asked if the custodial salary could be cut.

Kimberley said the feedback she has received is the custodial work is very good and everyone is happy with the Town Hall. Marianne agreed, the person doing the job is very good. Clyde said the answer is no. Martha Mical clarified it's the custodian for the Old Graded School the Budget Committee was asking about. Diane will find out more information on the custodial functions at the Old Graded School.

8. The Budget Committee asked if the repairs were completed on the Fire Station.

Most of the money has been received, a flag pole is still waiting to be installed.

9. The Budget Committee, Martha Mical, wants to know if the Selectmen have talked to the current people that have mowed the cemeteries for years and have they agreed to take on all the other out lying cemeteries for only \$2,000 more.

Judy said she has talked to Gary Young, who is one of the mowing contractors who told her he is negotiating and what was in the budget was going to cover what they are going to do. Martha asked if they are going to do all of them. Judy said it would be worth verifying.

10. Budget Committee wants the final number for ambulance services. Sean said he will make that contact.

11. Budget Committee wants to know if the Fire Department salaries are approved by the Board.

Fire Department salaries are approved by the Selectmen. Judy said the Board hasn't approved the whole budget. Clyde said the Board did. Judy asked why are they changing things? Clyde said the budget will probably be changed after tonight too. Clyde said everything sent to the Budget Committee was approved at that time, the Board reserves the right to revise along the way. Judy asked if the \$15,000 and the \$79,000 is approved? Clyde said it was part of the bottom line of the budget. Judy asked Fire Chief Sean Toomey if those are his numbers from the information he submitted? Sean said yes. Judy said the numbers are submitted without a study or documentation from an un-bias source? Kimberley said that is work to be done in the future, for next year. Judy asked why are those numbers being used this year? Kimberley said it is what the Board approved. Judy doesn't recall doing so, the Board was still discussing it. She said it took 3 years to get a Wage Study applied to the employees that are paid. Clyde said the Board did approve these numbers, but we said we have some time to look at them to do some confirmation work.

Sean said walking away from the last meeting he gave Diane some information, but we are going to look at other Fire Departments. He found a study done in Newport that was done 2018 with 12 towns used in the comparison that Sean put on a spreadsheet and emailed. Then we are going to look at 5 or 6 towns in the Wage Study. Sean

said based on all those numbers, Warner is within \$2.00 of the average on all of what was proposed that he came up with based on the point scoring system that the Town is using to classify all the employee's. Sean said it's \$47,000 in salaries if the Town wants to make that leap in one year, that's up to the Selectmen. He said what is needed is to pay the people by the Federal law. Sean does believe some wage adjustments are needed this year so the new person isn't making the same as the Captain. In the end it's the Board's decision, Sean thinks average is pretty good. Clyde said the Board made a decision in the study for Warner which was to be in the average, and if the confirmation is there, it's good confirmation. Judy said if there is documentation collected the Board should sit down and look at it. Diane at this point has too many questions before she can say, "this is my recommendation". Kimberley said the large part of the wage increase is for training, that needs to be covered, that cost is \$21,000. Clyde said there is money in the budget that covers Sean's recommendations that he put forward, he then asked if there is time between now and the end of the month to confirm the information and do adjustments if needed. Martha Mical said the Board needs to make those adjustments by January 16, the Budget Committee meets on January 23 to finalize the budget.

Judy said the reason the results of the first study were not applied was because there wasn't enough time to do everything. It sounds like we are in that same situation, we don't have enough time to accurately accept the documentation or comparisons. Judy said the Fire Department wasn't included in the Wage Study, only the Fire Chief and she doesn't know why. Clyde asked what should we do with this budget. Judy said she was okay with going forward and reviewing everything, but we don't have the time, she recommended a portion of an increase. She said the Board has never been involved with the Fire Department pay structure, the Fire Department has always done that, the money was always presented as a lump sum that was distributed by the Fire Department. Now, it sounds like the Board of Selectmen are being asked to approve wages per position. Judy said how can the Board say yes, those are good numbers if you don't know what your are looking at. Sean can't verify how the Fire Department handled wages in the past, he thought the dollar amounts were approved by the Town. What concerns Sean is the Town says they want to be fair and equitable with wages throughout the Town, there is a Wage Study and a wage scale built off that study. He feels the Town should stick with that, he said at the last meeting, he begged for someone to check and review his scoring to see if he's accurate, and if he is, that's how the Fire Department plugs into the Town's adopted Wage Scale. Sean said if we have another study done on the Fire Department, the Fire Department will be on wage scale that's not part of the Town's Wage Study. Judy said she doesn't think a new Wage Study is needed, but the positions can be put on the wage scale with the data that's available. She said she hasn't seen any of the data. Sean said he gave the data to the Board the first night he met with the Board. Judy said there has been more data. Sean said the only more is he was using the wrong wage scale which he said would cost the Town more money, almost \$20,000 more. Judy said Clyde said it can be done with more documentation. Martha Mical asked what numbers are in the budget. Sean said the wage scale numbers. Clyde said since Sean has done comparables, that does meet the spirit of what the Board is looking for and feels this is the year the Town gets everyone on the wage scale. Judy said she has a hard time with it because of all the previous studies the Town has tried to do, they never came to anything because the information is coming from within, that's why there was an unbiased study done. Sean asked Judy if she has an issue with the study his data is based off of. Judy said she doesn't have an issue with the data because she's not looking at it right now to say, this position is put into a grade. Marianne asked if there are two issues here, the firemen want to be paid additional time for duties that they have been doing but have not been compensated for and then the wage scale. Clyde said yes.

Sean said almost everyone on the Department is making \$13.75 except for the Fire Chief, 2 Paramedics and the 2 Deputies. This doesn't make any sense to Sean and he doesn't know if we make it right this year like Clyde said or should the wages be phased in. Clyde asked the Board what they want to do. Kimberley is ready to go with Sean's numbers that he presented. Clyde said he would feel comfortable with a confirmation if Sean says Warner is in the same ballpark as other towns. Judy said in listening to Sean, he has inherited this, so it hasn't been progressing the way it should have. She's not saying the wages shouldn't be higher, and definitely hours worked should be hours paid. Kimberley said what Judy had mentioned before is true, the Selectboard never saw an itemized list on who made what at the Fire Department. The Fire Chief would come with a budget showing a total for wages. The Fire Department has always managed their wages. The wages are based on the number of calls and for training. Judy asked how do you weigh a 30% increase in one Department budget against another Department that needs employees and not even sure he will get them.

Clyde said the Board approved the increases in the Police Department that are good size increases based on information that was brought to the Board and the Board approved them. Martha Mical said in the past other Departments received increases where the Fire Department has not. Judy said by their choice. Clyde said as a Board we made the decision to pay people the average going rate, no matter where you're working.

Judy asked Sean who decides how many the Fire Department should staff. Sean said the By-laws state 43. Diane asked what happens when too many people show up to a call that only needs 4 people. Sean said it's rare, but who ever shows up goes on the call.

Kimberley is still in favor of what was submitted by Sean for the wages, Clyde is in agreement as well. Judy wants to see the information and how it fits in with the other employee wages so she is able to defend it. Marianne agrees with Judy, she knows of a taxpayer who said to her that she is out of this Town if another fire truck is purchased.

12. The Budget Committee wants to know if Riverbend Community Health has been approved by the Selectmen.

Clyde said it has. Marianne asked if the Town should have a say in this? Judy thought that too. Clyde said the Board can pull it out of the budget and present the cost in a warrant article asking the voters if they want it funded annually.

4. Library

A. Library Trustee, Michael Simon asked the Board if there was consideration about the additional money the Library requested because of the extra pay period in 2020. Kimberley did not recall such a discussion. Michael said the short fall for the Library is just over \$3,000 for 2020. Judy asked if there wage increases in the Library. Nancy Ladd said yes.

Board Action

Chairman Carson made a motion to add \$3,000 for the Library budget. No second was heard and no vote was heard.

B. Michael Simon said the Bookkeeper needs in writing that the Library Allotment is paid in January and in July.

5. Nonpublic Session

Motion to enter nonpublic session made by Chairman Carson, seconded by Selectman Edelmann.

Specific statutory reason cited as foundation for the nonpublic session: X RSA 91-A:3, II (a) compensation

Roll call vote to enter nonpublic session: Carson - Yes, Edelmann - Yes, Newman-Rogers - Yes

Entered nonpublic session at 9:35 pm.

Other persons present during nonpublic session: Diane Ricciardelli

Description of matters discussed and final decisions made: Minutes were permanently sealed.

Motion to leave nonpublic session and return to public session by Chairman Carson at, seconded by Selectman Edelmann. Roll call vote: Carson - Yes, Edelmann - Yes, Newman-Rogers - Yes.

6. Public Session

Chairman Carson opened the public session at 9:52 pm.

Attendance: Selectman Clyde Carson – Chairman, Selectman Kimberley Edelmann, Selectman Judy Newman-Rogers

Others present: Diane Ricciardelli

7. Sealed Minutes

Chairman Carson made a motion to seal the January 7, 2020 nonpublic minutes permanently. Motion was seconded by Selectman Newman-Rogers, the motion passed.

8. Nonpublic Session - Decision

Chairman Carson made a motion to move forward and investigate doing a semi-monthly payroll for the 5 salaried people on the Town payroll with the potential of coming into play sometime after Town Meeting in 2020. Selectman Edelmann seconded the motion, the motion passed.

9. Adjournment

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:55 pm

Board of Selectmen
Clyde Carson – Chairman
Kimberley Edelmann
Judith Newman-Rogers

Recorder of the minutes: Mary Whalen