



TOWN OF WARNER

PO Box 265
Warner, New Hampshire 03278-0265
Telephone: (603) 456-2298 Fax: (603) 456-2297
warner.nh.us

Board of Selectmen
Clyde Carson, Chairman
Sam Bower
Christine Frost
selectboard@warner.nh.us

Diane Ricciardelli,
Town Administrator
administrator@warner.nh.us

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES APPROVED

**Tuesday, 6:30 pm
January 18, 2022**

**Town Hall
Lower Meeting Room**

I Open Meeting/Roll Call/Attendance

Chairman Clyde Carson opened the meeting at 6:35 p.m. and recognized the presence of the full board: Carson, Sam Bower, and Christine Frost. (Bower left at 8:16 p.m.)

Also in attendance: Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; Administrative Assistant to the Select Board Judy Newman-Rogers; Town Clerk Michele Courser (remote).

Others, all remote: Nancy Ladd, Librarian at Pillsbury Free Library with several members of the Library's Board of Trustees; Mary Flynn; Peter Flynn; Nancy Martin; and Ken Cogswell. **No members of the public physically present. [??].** (Recording Secretary Ray Carbone compiled minutes from a recording.)

II Appointments

None.

III Old Business

A Use of American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds

Town Administrator Ricciardelli reported that there was no Town news regarding the federal funds related to the Covid-19 pandemic.

B Selling Town Owned Property

Carson explained that previously the Board had forwarded three properties to the Conservation Commission and the Planning Board for consideration before putting them up for an auction sale. Carson suggested that the Board move ahead with the auction, with the timing to be set by the auction firm.

Carson made a motion to ask Newman-Rogers to contact the auctioning company for its counsel on when the best time would be to hold the auction. Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C Town Holiday Schedule – Approve

The 2022 schedule for Town employees was reviewed. Carson made the suggestion that Monday, Oct. 10, be listed as Indigenous People Day rather than Columbus Day.

Carson made a motion to approve the schedule as amended. Bower seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

D Fish and Game Raffle Permit (RSA 287-A)

Administrator Newman-Rogers said she contacted Dennis Crawford, who is managing the raffle. Crawford said the request is required by RSAs and that it will cover any raffles that are not held on the same day that tickets are sold. Crawford told Newman-Rogers that this process has been used for many years.

Carson made a motion to approve the permit; Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

E Church Street Drainage

Carson said that the project is now completed and water won't drain down to the Town Hall but rather towards the old adjacent Odd Fellows building, which is now owned and being refurbished by Burrington Builders. The original estimate for the project was \$10,000 but the final cost was a little less than \$12,000. The Town's original agreement with Burrington was that it would pay \$6,000 and the builder would pay a share of the remaining costs. With the final figure now more than \$10,000, the question is how to resolve the financial disparity, Carson said.

Bower suggested that Burrington may be willing to split the difference between the original estimate and the final cost, i.e., roughly \$1,500. (Bower noted that the Town does have the funds set aside to pay for the project.)

Carson said he would talk with Burrington about Bower's suggestion. Ricciardelli asked that a separate invoice be sent to Burrington to make the paperwork easier to follow.

Frost said she still doesn't understand why the Town is paying any of these costs. Carson noted that the building was sold by the Town to Burrington and that the sales agreement included freezing the structure's assessed value. This work is simply shoring up the structure's foundation and it is important to the village area to have the work complete.

Frost said she understands the sale and the value of having the building renovated but she's concerned about the Town not knowing exactly what is happening with the overall renovation project.

Bower agreed that it would be good to get more information about Burrington's plans, but he encouraged the Board to move forward with the issue currently under consideration.

Following the Board's consensus, Carson said he would speak to Burrington about splitting the difference on the higher cost of the Church Street project.

F Capital Budget, Review Warrant Article Wording

Chairman Carson said that, sometime in the next few weeks, the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) would provide the approved wording for the warrant articles that will be presented at the next annual Town Meeting. The Select Board members are then required to sign the warrant.

At the March 2022 Town Meeting, voters will see the warrant articles including the annual Operating Budget, including the recommendations of both the Select Board and the Budget Committee.

Previous to the Operating Budget, the Bond for the loan will be considered; bonds need to receive a two-thirds majority vote in favor to pass.

After the Bond and the Operating Budget are considered, the other warrant articles will be considered. Carson noted that the Board could still consider whether the cost items on the individual warrant articles should be funded by property taxes or by money in the Town's Fund Balance.

Frosts questioned the increase in funding for work on the Parks & Recreation Department's Skateboard Park. Carson said he understood it to include improvements that will allow the facility to last longer, and an enlargement that will accommodate BMX bicycles. Carson said that supporters of the proposal would have to convince Town Meeting voters, so he would prefer to leave the item in the voters' hands.

Bower asked how much money is in the Fund Balance. Carson said the Town was "sitting good" with about \$1 million. In addition, there may be other revenue coming into the Town in 2022. Carson said he would support adding language to the Skateboard Park warrant article that would fund the work from the Fund Balance. (Otherwise, the article would be funded by taxation.)

Frost said that she would be more in favor of using the Fund Balance to pay for the proposed sidewalk project. (The sidewalk would connect the village area to the commercial area by Interstate 89's exit 9.) Frost said that many citizens don't understand that a significant amount of grant money could be lost if that project doesn't move ahead at this time. "Not following through on something that this Town has worked on for four years – and how it's going to make it really difficult to deal with the DOT (NH Department of Transportation) in the future... That's my concern," she said. Town Administrator Ricciardelli agreed.

Carson said that there is enough in the Fund Balance to pay for both the Skateboard Park and the sidewalk project. In addition, those actions would follow Budget Committee's suggestion in recent years to use the Fund Balance to pay for individual projects. Using the money for the two projects would still keep the remaining Fund Balance well above the recommended level. "This is the best we've been in the last dozen years," Carson concluded.

Carson made a motion to fund two of the warrant articles – one for the multi-use path (sidewalk) and one for improvements to the Skateboard Park – from the Fund Balance, rather than taxation. Bower seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

G Wording for Warrant Article concerning Pillsbury Library

Moved to later in the meeting.

IV New Business

Bower asked if there is an upcoming deadline regarding the idea of establishing Electrical Vehicle Charging Stations in Town. Chairman Carson that there are at least three people in Warner looking into the idea: Charlie Albano (Chairman of the Economic Development Advisory Committee), Tim Blagden (Friends of the Concord-Lake Sunapee Rail Trail) and Neil Nevins (MainStreet Inc). Based on his conversations with them, Carson said that getting government funding for the facilities would require the stations to be on a Town-owned property or road.

Frost said that the funding Carson is referring to would be for 100% of the costs; without that, the Town would have to match about 20% of the bottom line.

“So the question is, where would be the best place to put these things in Town,” Carson said. He suggested that the Board discuss the idea at its next meeting.

Bower agreed, and noted that Nancy Ladd, Librarian at the Pillsbury Free Library, has indicated that putting the stations on Depot Street (adjacent to the library building). Carson said that may be a good spot but parking in the village area is always difficult because the space is so limited; Carson said that any public parking space on Main Street could be used for a charging station.

Frost said the ideal space would be in the Park-and-Ride, but that is owned by the DOT, not the Town. Ladd’s suggested spaces would still be better than the parking lot around the Police Department, which supporters of the charging stations have previously suggested.

Bower said that specifics could be discussed at the next meeting, but he likes the idea of using the charging station to attract drivers off Interstate 89 to the center of Warner; Carson agreed.

Frost noted that there are hundreds of charging stations in Vermont and in southern Maine, but they’re few and far between in New Hampshire.

Carson asked Town Administrator Ricciardelli to put the item on the next meeting agenda and that she notify the three men.

Ricciardelli asked if the Board would also like to notify Dan Watts; Watts, who owns Dimetech, the local Internet company that provides services to the Town, is also looking into the idea of providing charging stations.

Ricciardelli said she’s done some research on the idea and discovered that station owners are free to set the rate on their facilities; sometimes the profits are split with nonprofit organizations, like the Kearsarge Area Chamber of Commerce. The biggest question may be whether the stations are Town-owned, owned by a non-profit organization, or privately owned, she said. The manager can then decide where to put the charging stations, how a grant application is written and submitted, and how the money that comes is processed. The whole process is complicated and includes the work of an engineer.

V Select Board Other Business

A Frost asked if there was an update on the status of the pending sale of the old Fire Station building downtown.

Carson reported that a purchase and sale agreement with the current leasee, Olde Window Restorers, is currently being written and that the agreement could be consummated in February. He noted that the current lease agreement, which contains an option to buy, would terminate at the end of March.

VI Administrator's Report

Administrator Ricciardelli submitted revised projected revenue figures for 2022 to the Board, noting some minor changes. Carson said the Board usually keeps these figures conservative; the numbers will be presented at the annual Town Meeting.

Frost asked about the estimated income the Town might see from the State's Rooms & Meals Tax. Ricciardelli said the 2021 estimate was very close to what was received, and Carson said the 2022 estimate should be reasonably accurate.

Frost asked when the Transfer Station was going to again begin charging for demolition materials. Carson said that Foreman Varick Proper has indicated that might happen early this year. Bower said that Proper has said that it might not be worth charging for certain materials, because it saves the facility time and money.

Carson said he would like to meet with Proper again to get an update on the issue. In addition, it would be a good idea for the Board to review the recycling materials that are treated at the Transfer station.

Carson said that, even while being conservative – and not including any money from expected auction sale of the Town-owned properties – the Town is projecting a good increase in expected revenue in 2022.

The Board and Town Administrator Ricciardelli discussed specific revenue lines, including income from the Solar Array.

Carson made a motion to approve the projections with a minor amendment. Bower seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

III Old Business (Cont.)

G Warrant Article Wording, Pillsbury Free Library – Ralph Parsons, Library Board Trustee/Treasurer, Update Capital Reserve Request

Librarian Nancy Ladd spoke on behalf of the Board of Trustees (instead of Parsons). Ladd said that several other trustees were with her at remote location.

Ladd said the original figure in the Library's Capital Improvement Program (CIP), to pay for needed improvements projects to the Town-owned library building, was now found to be incorrect. That figure was based on the assumption that the Trustees would be getting a \$55,000 Community Grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). But in fact, the highest amount of grant money available would be slightly less than \$25,000. In addition, the Trustees may not get any of the USDA grant fund because they've missed the December application deadline; so when the application is now submitted, any amount awarded would be based on how much money is left in the fund, and how competitive the grant process is at that time.

Therefore, any USDA grant award would likely only be about \$24,500. That means that the original \$39,000 listed in the warrant article wouldn't cover the current estimated costs. "I don't know where we want to go from here," Ladd said.

Carson asked which renovation project the reduction would immediately impact. Ladd said the funds are for the heating/cooling (HVAC) system. The Board of Trustees has not proposed any expenditure for the needed carpeting and flooring work. Without the expected amount of grant money, the proposal would need to be increased from approximately \$39,000 to close to \$90,000.

Carson said that this was to be the third and final year of funding the project and that it had already been stretched out one year from the Trustees' original request.

Bower asked if ARPA funds could be used for the project; Carson said they would be.

Carson asked if it would be possible to stretch out the project one more year, i.e., a fourth year. Ladd said that the air conditioning work is the most severe need. In addition, the entire HVAC has cost more than \$3,000 in maintenance costs over the last three years. "It's getting obsolete," she explained.

Carson asked Ladd if the Town were to approve a larger dollar figure for the Library, and grant money came through, could the Town-approved funds be switched over to the carpeting/flooring project? Ladd said that it could. Bower said that the Town should start to put aside some funds for the carpeting/flooring project.

The estimated costs of the entire renovation project would be \$160,000; the Board of Trustees currently has \$69,731 available for the work (including \$47,000 approved at the 2021 Town Meeting). The latest estimated cost of the HVAC is \$161,900. That means that the total needed in the warrant article would have to be \$93,000, not \$90,000, the Board noted. Ladd added that the Trustees recently tallied up the results of their second annual fund-raiser (after skipping 2021); the final figure donated was \$8,642, but "it's possible that we could fundraise some more," she suggested.

Bower said the Board could amend the warrant article to \$93,000 or use the amount that would be needed if the USDA grant comes through; that way, if the grant money doesn't come in, the project could be pushed out one more year.

Carson said the Board could use the \$93,000 figure and allow the Town Meeting voters to discuss the issue on the floor; they may pass the full figure or they may choose to lower it. Another option would be to use \$50,000 as the new figure. "At the end of the day, it's up to voters to decide how much money they want to spend," Carson added.

Bower asked Ladd and the Trustees if they would prefer to amend the warrant article to the total of \$93,000, or to \$50,000 (with the goal of adding another \$50,000 in 2023). Ladd said that it may be better to amend the article to \$69,000; if the grant money comes through the project could be completely funded and, if the grant money doesn't come through the remaining costs could still be brought back for consideration at the 2023 Town Meeting.

Based on that information, **Bower made a motion to amend the figure in the Library's Building Repair Maintenance CRF request from \$39,000 to \$69,000. Frost seconded. The motion passed unanimously in a voice vote.**

VI Other Business

At 8:15 p.m., Bower left the meeting.

A The Board held a brief discussion with Administrator Ricciardelli about the wording of some of the warrant articles. Ricciardelli said she's already sent all the articles (except the zoning articles) to the Department Revenue Administration (DRA) to be sure the wording is correct.

Carson said the Board should hold a work session to review all the articles. He said the most important one, regarding wording, is the Highway Construction Capital Reserve Fund item of \$300,000; it needs to say that if the Highway Construction Bond article passes, the Town Meeting will pass over the article.

B Frost asked if the Board would review the Operating Budget. Ricciardelli said she's made most of the changes that the Board's recently requested, including an increase in the Emergency Department grant line. (Carson noted that that individual cost item is reimbursed.)

Frost made a motion to increase the Emergency Management Department's grant line in the Operating Budget from \$17,705 to \$18,635. Carson seconded. In a voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

C Carson suggested that the Board consider increasing the Contingency Fund's legal and welfare budget lines.

D Frost said that there is no agenda posted for the Board's meeting on Friday regarding the Warner Community Center (Warner Community Center, aka the Old Graded School). Carson said that Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC) Chairman Albano knows what needs to be discussed.

Frost said that Albano believes it's the Board's meeting so the Board should set the agenda. She added that the participants want to be able to connect to the meeting remotely, rather than being in the Town Hall.

Carson said that the meeting is to simply get a general overview of how the WCC could be used in the future. It should particularly address how the building could accommodate a childcare facility while still meeting the needs of other organizations currently using the space.

Carson said that Albano is apparently considering applying for a grant to fund improvements to the WCC and that the Board's meeting will provide him with data needed for a grant proposal.

E Frost discussed the Budget Committee meeting that she attended. She briefly reviewed some of the Committee's remarks, noting that the issue of the Parks & Recreation Department's tractor issue was still unresolved. Carson said the Department doesn't need a tractor; it simply needs a bucket for the tractor.

F Carson suggested that the Board hold a Non-public session on Friday to address a specific issue. Frost agreed to hold the meeting at 4 p.m., with the WCC discussion scheduled for 5 p.m.

VII Consent Agenda

Motion to Approve the following as read into the record, signed previously or at this meeting:

1. Building Permit Applications: Map 13 Lot 030-1

Frost read, Carson seconded. In a voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

VIII Manifest

Motion to authorize the Select Board to sign manifests and order the Treasurer to sign:

<u>Check Nos</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Category</u>
• 59525	\$108,712.46	Accounts Payable, first half of 2022 allotment

Carson read, Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the motion was approved unanimously.

IX Meeting Minutes

None.

X Public Comment

None.

XI Non-Public Session

Carson thanked members of the public for participating in the meeting.

Motion to go into Non-public Session by: Carson Bower Frost

Non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (hiring)

1. Second: Carson Bower **Frost**

2. Vote by roll call: Carson-Yes Bower-(Absent) Frost-Yes

3. **Motion: Passed** Failed

4. Enter Non-public session at: 8:33 pm

Motion to Return to Public Session by: Carson

1. Second: Carson Bower **Frost**

2. Vote by roll call: Carson-Yes Bower(Absent) Frost-Yes

3. **Motion: Passed** Failed

4. Return to Public session at: 8:42 pm

Motion on minutes by: Carson Bower Frost

Available **Seal for: Permanent-Personnel**

1. Second: Carson Bower **Frost**

2. Vote on minutes by roll call: Carson-Yes Bower(Absent) Frost-Yes

3. **Motion on Minutes: Passed** Failed

The meeting adjourned at 8:43 pm.