



TOWN OF WARNER

PO Box 265 5 E Main St
Warner, New Hampshire 03278-0265
Telephone: (603) 456-2298 Fax: (603) 456-2297
warnernh.gov
selectboard@warnernh.gov

Selectboard Chair Christine Frost
Jody Sloane
Harry Seidel
Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli
administrator@warnernh.gov

TOWN OF WARNER

Selectboard DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, April 11, 2023, 6:30 p.m.

Town Hall- Lower Meeting Room

I. 6:30 pm Open the Meeting/Roll Call

At 6:34 p.m., Standing Board member Christine Frost opened the meeting, and recognized the presence of fellow members Harry Seidel and Jody Sloane.

Also present: Arlon Chaffe (owner of Kearsarge Classic Bicycle Ride); James Gaffney; Ken Cogswell; Sam Bower; Clyde Carson; Martha Mical; Karen Coyne; Planning Board Chair Ben Frost; Land Use Administrator Janice Loz; Assessing Clerk Elizabeth Labbe; Selectboard Administrative Assistant Judith Newman-Rogers; Town Administrator Diane Ricciardelli; and Recording Secretary Ray Carbone.

II. Meeting Minutes: March 7, 2023

C. Frost explained that because she is the only sitting Board member who had participated in the March 7 meeting, no vote could be taken.

III. Welcome New Selectboard Members Harry Seidel and Jody Sloane

C. Frost asked Seidel and Sloane to introduce themselves.

Seidel said his professional career was chiefly in building construction and design. He lived in Newbury for 36 years and was very involved in a variety of town roles. He moved to Warner seven years ago and wanted to serve this Town in a similar way. He's particularly interested in community development as it relates to building, housing, and energy efficiency issues.

Sloane said that she grew up in Sutton and first had a career focused chiefly on maritime law enforcement. She later worked as a manager of a subsidized housing project in the Boston area for many years. She moved back to the Sunapee area and to Warner about three years ago. "I've always been involved in service to the community and to people," she said.

C. Frost welcomed the new members. She shared printed information with them to help them understand how the Selectboard serves the Town.

IV. Board Vote for Selectboard Chair

Motion by Harry Seidel and Jody Sloane at the same time to nominate Christine Frost as Chair. All in Favor. Motion Passed.

V. Appointments

a. Arlon Chaffe, Kearsarge Klassic Bicycle Ride

Chaffe told the Board the start of the KKBR previously was in New London, 2011. But it uses several routes that go through Warner. When he took over the event several years ago, he moved the start and end of the race to Warner. The event is now staged on the green in front of Café One East.

Chaffe said he limits the ride to 350 riders, although it's not yet reached that number. He said he works with Police Chief Bill Chandler and the Town to insure safety for riders and others. There is a mass start to make sure all riders are out of the immediate village area as swiftly as possible. The event has raised roughly \$7,000 over the years for local charities, he said. It is scheduled this year for Saturday, Aug. 5.

b. Clyde Carson, Community Power Update

Carson, Chair of the Community Power Committee and the Energy Committee, told the Selectboard that, subsequent to the Town Meeting vote, the Power Committee's energy plan has been submitted to the NH Public Utilities Commission (PUC). It has since been posted on the PUC's website where it invites comments for 60 days.

The next year will be a "quiet period" for the committee as it awaits comments and it observes the first group of municipalities that begin community power operations this year; their experiences will prove helpful for Warner when it begins moving forward with its program after April 1, 2024.

Carson suggested the Selectboard consider dissolving the older Energy Committee since it has been somewhat dormant for several months. The appointed terms of most of its members have expired, and virtually all the members were also part of the Community Power Committee.

C. Frost said she was hesitant to dissolve the Energy Committee because there may still be issues related to solar energy, wood, etc., that the Town will need to address. She asked Carson to provide the names of people who may serve on a reconstituted Energy Committee.

c. Elizabeth Labbe, Assessing: Veteran Tax Credit, Intent To Cut, Intent To Cut Yield Tax

Assessing Clerk, Elizabeth Labbe, began by discussing the Town's equalization rate, which is related to the Town's overall land values and, therefore, its annual tax rate. She told the Selectboard she has been working with the NH Department of Revenue on providing the MS-1 and other information it needs.

Labbe also addressed the Optional Veterans Tax Credit, which was approved by Town Meeting voters last month. She said anyone who may be eligible would fill out a work sheet; she will review the information based on defined qualifications and bring eligible applications to the Selectboard for approval.

Labbe discussed the Current Use provision, which allows property owners who own more than 10 acres of undeveloped land to put 10 (or more) acres into “Current Use” to receive a reduction in property taxes. The Board asked how much of the Town’s land is in Current Use. Labbe said she wasn’t sure, but that it was “significant.” She said she would bring that information back to the Board.

Labbe also talked about the Timber Yield Tax and the initial “Intent To Cut” permit. She explained how the program works and said Tax is on the estimated “board feet” that the property owner can realize. Processing is through the Assessing Office and documents are brought to the Board for signature approval including the warrant to collect the yield tax which is then given to the Tax Collector.

VI. Public Comment

James Gaffney noted that now that the Town has entered into a legal agreement regarding Community Power as was approved at Town Meeting, there was still some questions about how the agreement could be legally managed by the Town since it states responsibilities under a Town Manager, not a Town Administrator which Warner has, who has statutorily defined authority.

C. Frost said she understood the wording in the agreement was questioned by members at a Selectboard Meeting and resolved before Town Meeting. Former Selectboard Chair Sam Bower said the language in the approved and signed agreement was edited before the Town Meeting vote. Gaffney insisted language was still tied to a Town Manager government. C. Frost asked Town staff to look into the issue.

VII. New Business

a. Agreement for Payment in Lieu of Taxes, Kearsarge Elderly Housing, Inc.

Board Administrative Assistant, Judith Newman-Rogers, explained that Kearsarge Elderly Housing is tax-exempt, but the organization pays a property tax calculated with out the school portion included to help defray the cost of emergency, etc., at the facility. At this time the agreement with the 2023 calculation has not been completed. C. Frost asked that the item be moved to another agenda.

b. Simonds School Request for Bartlett Funds

The \$600 request is to pay for a scheduled appearance by the East Bay Jazz Ensemble that will be part of a cultural experience event at the Simonds Elementary School, in the park on Tuesday, May 30, at 12:45 p.m. The Board is invited to attend; if the weather is inclement, the event will be staged at the school.

Martha Mical asked the Board if there is enough money in the fund to pay for the event. Town staff said they would verify prior to issuing the funds.

Seidel made a motion to approve the request, providing that there is \$600 in the Bartlett Fund. C. Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

VIII. Old Business

a. RSA 79-E, Community Revitalization Tax Incentive Form Review

Board Administrative Assistant Newman-Rogers said there was a request for participating in this tax reduction program, but the Board denied it because the property owner's land was not in the prescribed district. The Town's application is before the Board for review.

C. Frost said it would be beneficial for the Board to review this situation and come back to its next meeting with suggestions about how to best proceed in the future. In addition, the information should be forwarded to the Economic Development Advisory Committee (EDAC), she said.

b. Discretionary Preservation Easements, Approve Easement Deeds to be Registered for:

C. Frost explained the process for this tax easement program to the new members, as well as the special work that the Selectboard did on these applications last year:

- i. 9 West Main St, Barn
- ii. 21 School St, Barn

However, one application was missing some information. The Board gave approval for the 9 West Main St. Discretionary Preservation Easement and asked Town staff to follow up so that the other application could be approved.

c. Corridor Committee Presentation, Status

C. Frost said that, in view of the citizens' petition warrant article that voters approved at the annual Town Meeting, she considers the Corridor Committee to be "essentially defunct." But the question remains about whether the Selectboard should allow the Committee to present its final findings to the Town at a Board meeting.

Seidel said he was somewhat conflicted. He respects the vote, but the Town still has an obligation to maintain a certain level of safety and quality on its roadways. "I'm not sure," he said, if the vote didn't have the Town "going in a different direction" and could be viewed as "improper (and) irresponsible." He suggested Town Counsel review the issue.

Sloane said the Board could be confident it was "going in the right direction if we go with the Town's direction."

C. Frost said she was mostly concerned with the Committee and suggested allowing a presentation of the Committee's findings, "so they have some sense of completion of their process." She added that she didn't support moving forward with the Committee's work.

Gaffney pointed out that the Board should consider notifying the NH Department of Transportation (DOT, which administers the relevant federal grant) about the Town Meeting's vote, so it could allow those funds to be used in another municipality.

Bower said he thought the Committee did a “commendable job,” and allowing the group to present its findings could be helpful to the Town as it considers “walking and biking accessibility” issues around the community, i.e., the possibility of widening shoulders on some roads.

After a brief discussion, C. Frost, who chaired the Committee, said she would come back and allow the group to make its final report.

IX. New Business (Cont.)

a. 2023 Selectboard Committee and Board Assignments

After some discussion, the Board decided on these assignments:

C. Frost – Budget, Parks & Recreation, and Roads.

Sloane – Mink Hills Recreation and Municipal Records. [She will also continue to serve as a member of the Conservation Commission, and take a seat on the Agricultural Commission; those boards do not require a Selectboard’s representative.]

Seidel – Highway Safety, and Energy & Community Power.

There was some discussion about how many groups the Board members could serve on. Former Selectboard member Bower said he’s spoken with EDAC Chair Charlie Albano in the past and Albano said he would be glad to appear before the Selectboard periodically to update on his committee’s work; that way, the Board will not need to assign a representative.

There was some disagreement about who would serve on the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (ZBA); a Selectboard representative doesn’t serve on the ZBA, but a Selectboard member can serve as a regular ZBA member. (The Planning Board requires both a Selectboard representative and a Selectboard alternate, in the event that the regular rep cannot attend a meeting.)

Seidel said his decades of experience in the areas of planning and zoning made him the best candidate to serve on both those boards. Sloane said she’s been attending Planning Board meetings and she’s a quick study who could understand the work. After some discussion, C. Frost suggested Sloane serve on the Planning Board and Seidel serve as the alternate. Sloane said she thought that was a good option but Seidel rejected the compromise, saying he would prefer to be a full voting Planning Board member.

C. Frost said she would like to leave the two to resolve the issue and report back at the next meeting.

d. Reappointments and New Appointments

i. Board and Committee Vacancies and Expiring Terms Report

- Building Inspector Tom Baye will be asked to attend the next Board meeting for consideration of reappointment to a new three-year term.
- Noted the Planning Board makes recommendations for candidates to serve on the Central New Hampshire Regional Planning Commission (CNHRPC; the Selectboard will wait to hear back.
- There are two vacant positions on the CNHRPC State Energy System board; suggested to contact EDAC Chair Albano for more information.

- It was asked if Ben Inman is planning to continue representing the Town on the CNHRPC's transportation group; Ricciardelli said she will find out.
- A suggestion earlier in the meeting that the Community Power Committee be comprised of Chair Carson, Seidel, Daryl Blood, Neil Nevins, George Packard, and Jan Gugliotti was discussed. There was a question about how this group's work overlaps with the Energy Committee's. Carson said all the members of the current Community Power Committee would like to serve on the Energy Committee saying the Power Committee work is minimal until April 2024 so members could go back to working on wood burning, energy efficiency and other issues that the Energy Committee was working on before the community power proposal was raised.
 - No representative currently on its Northeast Regional Solid Waste Committee. Ricciardelli will contact Transfer Station Foreman Varick Proper.
 - Ricciardelli will check with Conservation Chair Nancy Martin and reappointment.
 - Ricciardelli will check with the chair of the Groundwater Protection Committee & their plans to continue its work now that voters approved a proposal presented by the group.
 - Former Selectboard member Bower said he was on the Highway Safety Committee, the committee meets as needed and its members are per statute. The Chair asked Seidel to check in with Road Agent Tim Allen about the committee's work and makeup.
 - C. Frost asked Sloane to attend The Mink Hills Recreation Committee meeting tomorrow night at the Pillsbury Free Library.
 - C. Frost said she would reach out to Parks & Recreation Chair Apryl Blood and member Tim Blagden regarding their expiring terms.
 - Newman-Rogers told the Board the Town doesn't appoint members of the Local Warner River Advisory Committee.
 - Barbara Marty's term on the ZBA is ending, she has sent a message to the Board that she wants to remain on the board.

The Chair made a motion to reappoint Marty to a three-year term; Seidel seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

e. Volunteer Interest Form – Dan Emanuele

Seidel made a motion that Daniel Emanuele be appointed as an alternate member of the Planning Board; C. Frost seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

f. Sign Permit

Newman-Rogers told the Board that Daniel Reidy, 56 Kearsarge Mountain Road, had appeared before the Planning Board recently requesting approval for an antique business sign to be placed at the end of his driveway, there was no need for a site plan review so the permit application is now before the Selectboard for its approval. Land Use Administrator Janice Luz added that the Planning Board placed one condition on the sign: the top can be no more than six feet up from the ground.

Seidel made a motion to approve the sign with the stipulation that the top must be no higher than six feet above the grade; Sloane seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

X. Selectboard Other Business

C. Frost discussed with members her ideas for considering changes to the Board's methods of operation: have meeting agendas scheduled for up to six month-to-one-year in advance; at the same time, there would always be more current items included: the Board meets primarily on alternate Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m but this Board could agree to a different scheduled if it liked: move to a process that allows all Board members to craft the agenda so if one member learns of something that should be addressed by the Board that person can reach out to Newman-Rogers to have the item added to the agenda, and the Chair would then review the final agenda with Town Administrator Ricciardelli before the next meeting.

C. Frost also noted several issues she would like the Board to consider reviewing, including the process of hiring an auditor, internal control policies, and certain health-related issues; the latter may have to be initially considered at nonpublic sessions. She is particularly concerned about the Town's purchasing policy, which "doesn't really work," she said, and needs a review and updating, as does the Town's procedure policies investment policies.

Seidel said he would support the Chair's proposals and suggested that it might be helpful for the group to have a "brainstorming sessions," since both he and Sloane are new to the Board. He indicated that the pair might be able to help the Chair move ahead with her overall plans – while adding their own thoughts to the process. And he said that he's okay with the Tuesday meetings time.

Sloane agreed with C. Frost's suggestion. She pointed out that there is an online portal where Selectboard members can share information outside of meetings; legally, they cannot discuss issues outside of meetings. Members agreed they were most comfortable utilizing a structured approach to their upcoming meetings and agendas.

Town Administrator's Report

Progressive Insurance will cover the cost of the roundabout repair. The Town Administrator is working directly with the driver's insurance company to avoid a Primex deductible. Estimate from McGyver received and staff time will be calculated and added to invoice for Progressive.

LEGAL:

Azme on RT 103 - Town Administrator reviewing with the police department and the court decisions from years past. Looking at court decisions and identifying contempt items with town attorney and Warner PD.

Letter hand delivered by Warner PD to resident Tom Dunn to move box truck on 103 with sign on side. Truck was moved same day week of April 6.

Completing the Collins Donation for Conservation in Warner. Legal bills – recommend having funds from Conservation Commission cover the \$3,000 in legal bills for deed research, filing, preparation of documents. Conservation Commission agrees. Chandler Reservation

Committee reviewing the agreement from the lawyers for Collins to sign regarding using the land.

Capital Appraisal is working on the appraisal for the Red Chimney Road appraisal so that we can move forward with the culvert grant of \$180,000.

RTK request from Linda Dymont on Couchtown for neighbor who is currently before the ZBA. Judy Newman-Rogers prepared the documents for Dymont's attorney Alfano.

Three staff fulltime scheduled for April LPA (local Public Agency) certification exam to qualify to manage DOT grants.

Primex insurance coverage completed – March 28, 2023 for Worker Comp, Property & Liability, and unemployment compensation insurance.

Primex tour of buildings next Tuesday, April 18, for insurance purposes. All buildings.

Warner Community Center – new wall between Food Pantry and Child Care center. Leak in ceiling fixed by Highway Department. New Locks installed, and new plate over lock in hallway door. New combination lock on outside of back door. These projects covered by ARPA funds.

MS 232 DRA Reports completed prior to 20 days after Town Meeting deadline – requires Selectboard signatures.

Budget software updated with 2023 budget following town meeting. First quarter expenses at 23% of budget at 25% through the year.

Attended IHOP training online for processing the 14k grant for planning.

AED's ordered paid for with Goeffler grant money.

Eversource Solar annual reports due and will be completed next week.

XI. Manifest

C. Frost made a motion for the Selectboard to approve the following previously signed manifests:

- Accounts Payable check numbers 6979 through 7023, dated 3/1/2023, in the amount of \$531,849.11, which includes the February payment to the Kearsarge Regional School District of \$420,000.
- Accounts Payable check numbers 7024 through 7033 dated 3/21/2023, in the amount of \$61,433.09, which includes the payroll and federal tax deposits for the 3/23/2023 bi-weekly payroll.
- Bi-weekly payroll paper check numbers 3267 through 3276 and direct deposit check numbers E00733 through E00759, dated 3/23/2023, with a net check and direct deposits totaling

\$44,840.21.

Seidel seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

C. Frost then made a motion to authorize the Selectboard to approve and order the Treasurer to sign the following manifests:

- Accounts Payable check numbers 7034 through 7065, dated 3/29/2023, in the amount of \$362,011.27, which includes the March payment to the KRSD of \$325,000.
- Accounts Payable check numbers 7066 through 7067 dated 4/4/2023, in the amount of \$55,640.14, which includes the payroll and federal tax deposits for the 4/6/2023 bi-weekly payroll.
- Bi-weekly payroll paper check numbers 3277 through 3285 and direct deposit check numbers E00760 through E00788, dated 4/6/2023, with a net check and direct deposits totaling \$42,981.35.
- Accounts Payable check numbers 7068 through 7102, dated 4/6/2023, in the amount of \$52,635.07.

Seidel seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

XII. Consent Agenda

Sloane made a motion to approve as signed by the Warner Selectboard:

1. Building Permits:

- a. Map 03 Lot 084-10B Route 127
- b. Map 30 Lot 051 East Main St
- c. Map 15 Lot 015-3 Old Pumpkin Hill Rd
- d. Map 10 Lot 055 Parade Ground Cemetery Rd
- e. Map 14 Lot 047 Bartlett Loop
- f. Map 33 Lot 019 Kearsarge Mountain Rd
- g. Map 15 Lot 032-2 Brown Road

Seidel seconded. In a voice vote, the Board unanimously approved the motion.

IX. Selectboard Other Business (Cont.)

Seidel presented some photographs of trees falling in a trailer park near Interstate 89's exit 7 area. He said he understands the trees are in the DOT right-of-way, and drainage has caused tree roots to be weakened by water flow. A resident asked Seidel if the Selectboard could ask the State agency to deal with the problem.

Town Administrator Ricciardelli will look to the Highway Director, Tim Allen, to work on this as he is familiar with the trees, and the people at DOT that he will contact.

Town Administrator Ricciardelli said the Town has received a message from DOT asking for an update on what the Town is planning to do with the \$1.2 million Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) grant.

C. Frost recommended the Town reply with a message containing the language of the petition warrant article as passed at the 2023 Town Meeting.

C. Frost said interest was received in installing solar cross-walk lights but the Town cannot do that since Route 103 is a State road. She asked Town staff to have the item on the agenda for the next meeting. "Even if it's something we can't address, it should be something we talk about," she said.

C. Frost suggested regularly included on the agenda could be "Correspondence" to indicate the Board acknowledged receipt of the information.

Newman-Rogers distributed an official notice to the Board members given to her for the Board from the Tax Collector regarding dates of mailed tax bills.

X. Adjourn

At approximately 9:30 p.m., without objection, C. Frost adjourned the meeting.