



TOWN OF WARNER

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

Select Board
Harry Seidel, Chair
Faith Minton
Allan N Brown
selectboard@warnernh.gov
Diane Ricciardelli,
Town Administrator
administrator@warnernh.gov

SELECT BOARD MEETING DRAFT MINUTES

October 24, 2023 6:30 pm
Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

1. Open the Meeting & Roll Call

Chair Seidel opened the meeting at 6:31pm and took roll. Present were Harry Seidel, Faith Minton, Allan Brown, Georgia Flanders, Butch Burbank, interim Town Administrator

2. Appointments

A. Mink Hills Recreation Study Committee

Vincent Pagano (Central NH Regional Planning Commission), was present, as well as David Minton and Sarah Allan. Sarah is the Chair of the Committee, and she said they wanted to present a slideshow to the Select Board. There were some technical difficulties. Sarah said the purpose of the committee was to develop a report on the impacts of recreation upon the natural resources in the Mink Hills. She wished to talk about the findings and what the next suggested steps and recommendations were.

Sarah began the presentation, which was created from the Mink Hills Recreational Study Committee report. This report can be downloaded from the Town's website. The group has been meeting since 2020 and over that time they have worked to come up with recommendations on how to balance recreation with protection of the area.

A slide was shown by Vincent which showed the types of roads and trails that are part of the Mink Hills. It also showed protected portions of land. The Towns of Henniker, Hopkinton and Bradford also have property in the Mink Hills. The NH Wildlife Action Plan overlay shows that there is a lot of "highest-ranked habitat in the State" within the Warner section of the Minks. There is also a lot of "supporting landscape" within the area. These days, it is unusual to have this much undeveloped land in one place.

Sarah said that the committee will report back to some of the other committees and boards within Warner to provide specific recommendations for maintenance of roads, education, etc. She asked that the Selectmen formally disband the Mink Hills Recreational Committee as they have completed their work. She proposed a Mink Hills Stewardship Committee to be created, to follow the recommendations in the report.

It was moved by Harry Seidel and seconded by Faith Minton to disband the Mink Hills Recreational Study Committee and replace it with the Mink Hills Stewardship Committee.
The motion was approved unanimously.

B. Economic Development Advisory Committee – Charlie Albano

Charlie said that his Committee had promised to keep the Selectmen up to date on the projects that they have been working on. He said that the Town will need to enter into the grant cycle for some grant funding to help fund the upgrades to the Community Center. The Committee has been studying this building for the past two years. They have found that the building has never been formally managed. The building is 10,850 square feet and it is not ADA compliant. The Committee has identified actions that should be taken including reporting to the Selectmen, having studies done to assess the needs for making improvements and making it ADA compliant. There has been an energy audit as well. Charlie discussed possible grants/loans that the Town is eligible for. He noted that the cost to install an elevator would be at least \$800,000; it is a major architectural event. Two years ago, the cost to do this was about \$400,000.

Charlie said there were two grants available for the fit-up and for energy upgrades in the building. There was discussion on amounts that could be attained through grants and loans and how that could translate into repairs to the building.

Butch said that the numbers being mentioned for the building and funding weren't making complete sense, but having said this, the Town buildings are in dire needs of routine maintenance and they haven't gotten it. His pitch was that the Community Center and the Town Hall are beautiful buildings. If they are going to take care of these buildings, the Highway Department cannot do it. They need a dedicated maintenance person to go through the buildings and take care of them. They are deteriorating over time. Secondly, the Community Center has some space that he would recommend using for the Welfare Department to have a private area to meet with folks in the community who need aid.

Butch thought a full-time facilities manager should be hired soon. He also offered that those renting space in the building are not paying market rate to do so.

Allan said he gets lost in all the options on the energy audit/upgrades possible. He would like to get together and sit down to talk and come up with an actual figure for what it would take to fix the building. He can't make a good decision when he doesn't know what it will cost, total.

Charlie thought it would be helpful to have a Planning Board representative on the Committee again. Ben Frost, former Planning Board Chair, used to sit on the Committee. If the Planning Board and Selectmen are in favor of the work to be done (with grant funding), they could apply, and then research other grant sources to possibly install an elevator. There was talk of educational meetings for the public and also creating a work group to figure out the details of what was needed for the Community Center building.

Butch thought the citizens who vote at Town Meeting will be able to guide the Town as to whether they should fix up the building or not. The Selectmen would work to get solid figures and create a warrant article for Town Meeting. It was thought a survey should be done to see what the climate is among the citizens regarding the building.

C. Warner Connects

Allan said if they are going to spend the money to fix the fire issues, should they have the Warner Connects group sign the lease so the rent will start being paid? Butch said it looks like the group would like to expand the food pantry's lease into the space he envisioned the Welfare Office going into. He thought the Selectmen should look at this carefully as the lease sounded like they would like to expand.

Chair Seidel said they need to think about whether they sign the lease or not. The “Clothes Closet” thrift shop is the space that they’d need for office spaces. They cannot disturb the food pantry; it is sacred and it is needed.

D. Fire Marshall, Sean Toomey

Sean said the report that came in about the Community Center building had mostly to do with deferred maintenance. The biggest question was the use of the third floor. They understand it isn’t used more than 4 hours/day or 12 hours a week and so it was not considered an educational use, but rather a business use. The rules change for fire safety measures depending on what the use is.

Chair Seidel asked about the exit signs in the building. Sean said that the paper exit signs are not OK but self-illuminating signs are preferred. Chair Seidel listed off some things that need to be addressed, per the report. Sean said that there was some confusion about the 45-day time limit in the letter; they either need to fix the issues within 45 days or send a report back explaining when the repairs will be made, in a reasonable amount of time. The items need to be done sooner than later. It was thought the items should be addressed prior to year-end.

E. Tim Allen – Public Works Director

Tim said he wasn’t on the agenda for that evening, but he would like to get on the agenda for the next meeting. He would like to get started next year on the work on Red Chimney Road. They have received an ARM (Aquatic Resource Mitigation) grant for \$265,000+. It has not been voted by the Selectmen to accept the grant, and a public hearing has to be held to expend the funds from the capital reserve fund. They will then be reimbursed from the ARM grant for the funds spent on the project. Tim said this is a project they’ve been working on for the past three years. To meet posting requirements, Tim would be part of the November 14th Selectmen’s meeting.

3. Old Business

A. Perambulation

Chair Seidel said he would contact those who were supposed to be walking the lines. Apparently there was a Covid component as to why it hadn’t been done yet. Contact had been lost but Chair Seidel said he would make a connection. It was thought this perambulation needed to be done every ten years.

B. Property at Lainge Bridge Lane

Allan said they need to send a letter to the previous owner, letting him know the Town would be selling the property. He would have 90 days to purchase it back. Butch said the Town Attorney had sent him some suggested wording to use in the letter. He had sent it to the Selectmen for review.

Martha said the Town voted that the Selectmen have to notify the abutters of the property so that they are aware the Town is selling it. Chair Seidel said the abutters should be CC’d on the letter to the previous owner.

C. Property Revaluation Software

Elizabeth said that CAMA is the program they have in mind. Allan said the current system is obsolete and they have to do a revaluation this year. He also worried that there wasn’t enough money set aside in the CIP for the revaluation. Allan said that Elizabeth thought the cost of the program wouldn’t be high enough to get into a CIP. Butch said that in some emails he read from Michael Cutting (Chair of Budget Committee), that there was probably about \$150,000 or \$160,000 in the fund for the revaluation. There was some confusion as to how

much money was available for the revaluation. Faith referred to an email from Clyde Carson suggesting a warrant article be written to purchase the new software.

Robert Blake, Budget Committee member, had told Chair Seidel it could be up to \$230,000 for the revaluation. Mr. Blake is also the Trustee of the Trust Funds. He thought that \$37,000 needed to be put into the fund this year. There was discussion as to whether the cost for the new software was an operating expense or if it should be a warrant article. It was decided to put the expense into the operating budget.

4. New Business

A. Volunteers for the Planning Board

Justin Chamberlin was present. He was asked why he wanted to be on the Planning Board. Justin said he has been living in the town a little over a year and he recognizes the need for help on the Planning Board. Justin said he has children in the school. He was on an HOA in another state, which entailed a lot of planning. Faith thanked Justin for his willingness to volunteer in the Town.

Michael Smith was the second person interested in an open full-time position on the Planning Board. He was not present in person or via Zoom. It was noted that there were some technical difficulties that evening, which likely prohibited Michael from joining the meeting.

It was moved by Harry Seidel and seconded by Faith Minton to disband the Mink Hills Recreational Study Committee and replace it with the Mink Hills Stewardship Committee.

The motion was approved unanimously.

5. Public Comment

A. Tax Rate

Martha asked when the tax rate was coming in. Butch said that Clyde would be calling the next morning to get the numbers from the DRA. The Selectmen will set the tax rate once they get that information.

6. Consent Agenda - Elizabeth provided items for signature from the Board.

7. Manifest

Lost audio at about 2:21 and the screen was just on Butch

Chair Seidel said Martha identified that the Land Use Change Tax should not be a revenue into the balance sheets, but rather it should go to the Conservation Commission. Chair Seidel said he checked with Clyde who said that it does go into the balance sheets and then it moves to the Conservation Commission later.

Chair Seidel said this was the only item that caused a stir at the Budget Committee meeting. *(Lost audio again for a bit)*. Chair Seidel said this was how Diane did it in the past. Martha said it was incorrect.

It was moved by Allan Brown and seconded by Faith Minton to go into non-public session. The motion was approved unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00pm.
Respectfully submitted,

Kristy Heath, Recording Secretary
Town of Warner