

Present: Committee Members Mary Jo Holmes, Jon Benson, Gordon Muench, Gene Cordes, Steve Bonaccorsi (arrived at 7:04), Nancy Murray, and Recording Secretary Shawn Perreault.

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 pm by Holmes in the basement meeting room at the Fremont Town Hall, 295 Main Street in Fremont. Meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

Motion made to approve the meeting minutes of 06 December 2023 by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Muench. Motion approved by a vote of 5 Yes, 0 No, 1 Abstain (Holmes).

Holmes thanked Benson for filling in at last weeks meeting. She stated this meeting was for reviewing any budgets the Committee wanted to look at again or questions they had and needed answered too.

### **Town Warrant Articles**

Article 19 – Waste Management Long Term Contract was reviewed with the changes requested from last weeks meeting. Cordes discussed the article to bring Holmes up to date. He stated that this Warrant Article was for approval of the 5 year contract with Waste Management. There is a cap of 5% increase per year, with no increase during year one. For years 2-5, there is also a fuel adjustment and about a \$4.00 baseline for any additional housing that is added. Residents will also receive a recycling tote around the beginning of the year. This will avoid the need for WM employees to get out of the truck, as well as keep recycling contained and avoid problems due to weather. The history of the prior contract was discussed as well as the process in getting this current contract. Because this is a long term contract, it must be approved by the voters. If they vote it down, Cordes believes then the Town would enter into a yearly contract, but then we are open to higher increases. Tonnage was discussed but Cordes only talk in general but said he could bring the exact numbers if the Committee wanted them. Motion was made by Bonaccorsi to recommend Article 19, seconded by Benson. Motion passed with a vote of 6 Yes, 0 No.

Article 21 – Official Committee for Town Celebration was reviewed. This Committee would be an official Town Committee that in the future could request town funds for this celebration. It would cease six month after the celebration on June 30, 2027. There was a brief discussion held on the prior big Town celebration. Motion was made to recommend article 21 by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Benson. Motion passed with a vote of 6 Yes, 0 No.

Article 6 – Operating Budget was discussed again. Holmes expressed her concern on residents being taxed out of their homes. Discussion was held on the prior years trends, department budgets such as police with increased costs. Views on what the Town felt residents were looking for such as safety, building maintenance and other factors were expressed. In addition, with the new High School contract it is the hope of the Town and Committees that costs will decrease over the high current high school contract. Bonaccorsi also brought up the CIP Committee and the great work they are doing to project the large costs the Town will need in the future to help prepare better.

**School Updated** – Sanborn is meeting tomorrow night, December 14<sup>th</sup> to set the GMR. The School Board will be meeting next week to review the final number and the School final recommended budget. Then they will be back in front of the Budget Committee on December 20<sup>th</sup>. The new High School contracts are still being negotiated.

Holmes will write the Budget Committee Annual Report for the Town Report, which is due the first week of January.

Annual notices were circulated with Public Hearing and Deliberative Session dates and information; as well as the Candidate Declaration notice with all of the local election dates and information. This has all been posted on the Town website as well.

Next meeting date: December 20, 2023.

The Public Hearing will be held at Ellis School on Wednesday January 10, 2024 at 7:00 pm. Budget committee will meet at 6:30 to review petitions and final information. The snow/continuation date is Thursday January 11, 2024.

Motion was made to adjourn by Bonaccorsi, seconded by Benson. Meeting adjourned at 7:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Shawn Perreault  
Recording Secretary