

Holmes called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 7:00 pm. Present were Committee Members Mary Jo Holmes, Pat Martel, Steve Bonaccorsi, Jon Benson, Gordon Muench and Gene Cordes. Emily Phillips had notified Carlson that she would be late. Also present were Town Administrator Heidi Carlson, Road Agent Leon Holmes Jr and Recording Secretary Shawn Perreault.

Motion was made by Bonaccorsi to approve the September 28, 2022 meeting minutes. Benson seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

Motion was made by Holmes to approve the October 12, 2022 meeting minutes. Bonaccorsi seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 5 Yes – 0 No – 1 Abstain (Muench).

Road Agent Leon Holmes Jr met with the Committee to review the 2023 Highway Budget (4312). He reported the Select Board included a 5% wage increase which was different than his proposal. Holmes Jr stated this increased the part-time wages to include a third day per week (up from current of two days per week). The difference between the initial wage proposal (by the Road Agent) and the Board's recommendation was reviewed. Holmes Jr is requesting an increase in the Road Agent stipend of \$2,000 annually to a total of \$6,500 (stating it has been the same for more than 20 years). The Select Board's recommendation only shows the current amount and the change (\$2,000 increase) will be placed in a Warrant Article as an elected official's stipend.

The increase to the Guardrails/Stonewall line was explained as the Department is proposing to replace two stonewalls, one on Beede Hill and one on North Road. These new walls will mirror the wall that was rebuilt in 2022 on Sandown Road near Victoria Farm Road with stone block so it will last longer. The new equipment is up because it includes the year 2 payment on the new dump truck. There was discussion about the truck being delayed. The current date we have for arrival is February 2023. If the truck is further delayed the Town will still make the payment to the leasing company escrow account.

The Road Agent's planned paving project for next year will be Martin Road. Holmes Jr said it has been reviewed with the engineer who feels the bridge should be ready to be replaced at the same time. There are still items and details that need to be approved on the bridge, but it is moving ahead with the NH DOT and other agencies. Holmes stated that he plans to move ahead with Martin Road regardless of the bridge, stating his work will come as closed as 100 feet on either side of the bridge and once the bridge is installed the final layer will be put down in a future year. The Martin Road paving will go from North Road to the Town line, which is located between the Peterson Farm and LCB Transport. The Town will also be getting 80% of the Bridge cost back from the State's Bridge Aid reimbursement. Holmes said the amount of money he spends each year to patch and repair Martin Road is extremely high, which is the reason it will be paved regardless of the bridge structure being ready to be replaced. In response to bridge follow-up questions, Carlson informed the Committee that the Town recently received a letter from the State that the bridge will be shut down, if not replaced soon.

There will be another Warrant Article on the ballot for the Highway Department Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for \$25,000.

There was a discussion by the Budget Committee on making sure the recommendations for the Town budget could be defended. It was noted by the Committee that the items being requested by Departments were needs as opposed to wants. Members felt they were comfortable with being able to give voters valid reasons to back up the Committee's recommendations.

Motion was made by Bonaccorsi to recommend function 4312 in the amount of \$992,707. Muench seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 5 Yes – 0 No – 1 Abstain (M Holmes).

4140 Town Clerk Tax Collector - This function was reviewed again due to the 5% wage increase. Motion was made by Benson to recommend function 4140 in the amount of \$70,600; seconded by Bonaccorsi. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0. The Warrant Article for the Town Clerk's salary will also be increased to 5% based on her updated request.

4196 Insurance - Carlson reviewed the insurance increase with the Committee. She stated the numbers look a lot higher due to the lower return of contribution the Town is getting back as compared to the current year. The supplemental police liability policy was dropped because it didn't offer any coverage we don't already have. The Town's property liability policy was increased by 9% approximately \$7,000. Motion was made by Benson to recommend function 4196 in the amount of \$77,531. Muench seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4210 Police - The Committee again discussed this budget as it has been several weeks since Chief Twiss was in to review. There was discussion about the wage changes and a reduction of 728 in the Select Board recommendation for the shift differential which would not begin until April 1 if the budget passes. In response to questions Carlson also explained the Revolving Fund that occurs with Special Detail Wages and Revenues. Motion was made by Benson to recommend function 4210 in the amount of \$777,644. Bonaccorsi seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4240 Building Inspection - This budget was brought back before the Committee due to the 5% wage increase. Muench made a motion to recommend function 4240 in the amount of \$46,532. Bonaccorsi seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4313 Bridges - Carlson stated that this sum covers the annual bridge inspection that is required to maintain the Warranty on the Sandown Road Bridge Overflow bridge deck. The cost for the engineering inspection increased by \$250 which is reflected in the number presented. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend function 4313 in the amount of \$1,750. Benson seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4316 Street Lighting - Carlson explained we have approximately 28 lights on Eversource and 1 light on Route 111A, which is NH Electric Cooperative. The Highway shed is part of the NH Coop meter. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend function 4316 in the amount of \$6,000. Benson seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4442 Direct Assistance - Carlson stated this budget is the same as last year. These funds supplement funds given through State and Federal programs to help residents that cannot make their cost of living. There was also an increase to the Stipend for the director of \$200. Muench made a motion to recommend function 4442 in the amount of \$20,580; seconded by Benson. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4445 Vendor Payments to Social Service Agencies - Carlson stated these are agencies that provide the Town with services and have previously been approved by warrant articles. She reviewed two new agencies that were added by Warrant Article in 2022 and some agencies that were combined. These agencies must request these funds. Carlson has set deadlines of August 1st and November 1st that agencies must submit requests. She will no longer be making calls, which the Committee agreed should be the responsibility of the agency themselves. Benson made a motion to recommend function 4445 in the amount of \$35,707; seconded by Bonaccorsi. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4610 Conservation Commission - This budget is up only slightly over 2022 due to a clerical wage increase of 5%. Bonaccorsi made a motion to recommend function 4610 in the amount of \$3,721. Benson seconded. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

4723 Interest on Tax Anticipation Notes - Carlson explained this fund is to allow the Town to borrow one time if we run into a cash flow problem. There was discussion held on the different reason this would be needed. It was also stated that since we have changed our tax collection from once a year to twice a year, this hasn't been needed. Muench made a motion to recommend function 4723 in the amount of \$1,500, seconded by Benson. Motion passed by a vote of 6-0.

Carlson circulated a first run review draft of the 2023 Town Meeting Warrant as crafted to date. The Committee will review and discuss at a later meeting. Carlson stated the biggest article is probably the Fire Department because of the different funding mechanisms and the unknown details. She also pointed out that there are three elected officials stipend/salary increases: Cemetery Trustees, Road Agent and Town Clerk Tax Collector.

2022 Tax Rate Setting - The press release has been posted and put on the Town website and in the Newsletter. The new tax rate is \$23.19, which is an increase of \$.87.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday November 2, 2022 at 7:00 pm in the first floor meeting room. Town expects to have the final two budgets in front of the Committee at that time.

Bonaccorsi made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Cordes. Meeting was adjourned at 8:15 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Shawn Perreault
Recording Secretary