Board of Selectmen

February 12, 2024

Public Budget Hearing

Present: Select Board members – Chair, Edward Haskell Jr., Robert Berti, Isaac DeWever

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell

7:00 PM The Meeting was called to order and opened by Selectman Ed Haskell. Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to suspend the meeting and open the 2024 Public Budget Hearing. The motion was seconded by Selectman, Isaac DeWever. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

In attendance for the Public Budget Hearing: Nick Coursey, Mark Murray, Cathy Hacker, Dawn Coffey, Fire Chief Evan Hacker, Christina Westfall, Janice Mulherin, EMS Director Dan Medaglia, Police Chief Greg Patten, Lila Williams

Attached is a copy of the Warrant Article handout and the discussion, if any, on the articles. Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, read the Warrant Article as it appears in the handout.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Article 01** | **Choose Necessary Town Officers** |
| ARTICLE 1: To choose all Necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year (by official ballot on March 12th):   Selectman for 3-year term  Trustee of Trust Funds for 3-year term Cemetery Trustee for 3-year term  (2) Planning Board Members for 3-year terms  Fire Commissioner for 3-year term  Fire Commissioner for 2-year term Fire Commissioner for 1-year term  Library Trustee for 3-year term  Town Moderator for 2-year term Supervisor of Checklist for 2-year term Supervisor of Checklist for 6-year term  No discussion. |
|  |
| **Article 02** | **Capital Reserve Fund** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $151,500 to be added to the following previously established Capital Reserve Funds. The Selectmen recommend this special article. (Majority vote required)    Police Department Fund (1986) $10,000  Highway Equipment Fund (1961) $40,000  Town Facility Improvement (1987) $25,000  Fire Department Fund (1963) $40,000  EMS Vehicle (2005) $2,500  Bridge Repair & Maintenance Fund (2008) $15,000  Fire Department Equipment (2009) $7,000  Transfer Station Equip $1,000  EMS Major Equipment $1,000  Cemetery Improvement (2014) $10,000    TOTAL CAPITAL RESERVE FUNDS $151,500  No discussion. |
|  |
| **Article 03** | **Purchase Highway Truck** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $90,000 to purchase a replacement Highway Department Truck and authorize the withdrawal of $90,000 for this purpose from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund (established in 1961). The Selectmen recommend this special article. (Majority vote required.)  Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated that the Highway Department Capital Reserve currently has a balance of approximately $105,344.00. This is before the amount in Warrant Article 2 is deposited. Chivell added this would replace the current F-550 in use by the Highway Department.  No further discussion. |
|  |
| **Article 04** | **General Government Expenses** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $611,393 to defray the following General Government Expenses for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required)  Executive $105,496 Town Clerk/Tax Collector $103,245 Supervisors of Checklist $6,500 Financial Administration $65,308 Legal Expense $25,000 Health Insurance $171,400 Planning Board $14,361 General Government Buildings $66,150 Street Lights $12,000 Property/Liability/WC $39,683 Regional Dues $2,250  Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained that the Health Insurance premium is scheduled for a not greater than 13.9% this year. Janice Mulherin asked if the school is still in the same Health pool as the Town? Joe Chivell said yes, it is. Chivell explained that the Town had a payment holiday last year in the Property Liability/Workers Comp line. The true increase over the past four years is about $3,000. Chivell stated there are 52 Street lights paid for by the Town. No further discussion. |
| **Article 05** | **Old Home Day** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $7,594 for the purpose of Old Home Day celebration. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the Old Home Day is completed or by March 12, 2028 whichever is sooner. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated that the unspent 2023 funding of $1,735.54 will be carried over for use in 2024. No further discussion. |
| **Article 06** | **Cemetery** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $33,760 for the operation of the Cemeteries for the ensuing year; $5,000 to come from the Cemetery Trust Fund and $28,760 to be raised by taxes. The Selectmen recommend this special article. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator indicated this budget is down slightly from 2023. No further discussion. |
| **Article 07** | **Code Enforcement** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $5,000 for the purpose of Code Enforcement during the ensuing year. (Majority Vote Required) |
| Town Administrator Chivell explained this pertains primarily to licensed Junk Yards, illegal Junk Yards, and Gravel Pits. No further discussion. |
| **Article 08** | **Police Dept.** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $286,600 to defray the cost of running the Police Department for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator explained increases cover salary and real costs such as telephones and maintenance. No further discussion. |
| **Article 09** | **Ambulance Service** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $83,651 for Ambulance Service contracted with the Town of Plymouth for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required)  Town Administrator Chivell explained the significant increase is due to nonpayment from insurance, Medicare / Medicaid. No further discussion. |
|  |
| **Article 10** | **Emergency Management** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $8,335 to defray the cost of the Safety Committee, E-911, and Emergency Management. (Majority vote required)    Safety Committee $2,500 E-911 $200 Emergency Management $5,635  Total Safety, E-911 & Emg Mgt $8,335 |
| Joe Chivell explained that some emergency management grants are currently in progress. No further discussion. |
| **Article 11** | **Fire Dept.** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $134,112 to defray the cost of running the Fire Department for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Joe Chivell explained the Fire Department is the next Town building on the list for renovations. No further discussion. |
| **Article 12** | **Fire Dept. - Forest Fire** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $4,002 to defray the cost of Forest Fire Protection for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained this hasn’t changed in probably 10 years. No further discussion. |
| **Article 13** | **Fire Dept. Non-Capital Reserve** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate $1,000 to add to the Mutual Aid Fire Fighter Fund non-capital reserve account (established in 2016) for the purpose of compensating fire fighters involved in fighting forest fires. The Selectmen recommend this special article. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, shared that there is an approximate balance of $7,500.00 currently in this reserve. No further discussion. |
| **Article 14** | **Fire Dept. Hose Testing** |
| To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $4,500 for testing and Cataloging Fire Department Fire hose and ladders and authorize the withdrawal of $4,500 from the Fire Department Equipment Capital Reserve (Established in 2009) created for that purpose. The Selectmen recommend this special article. (Majority vote required) |
| Chief Hacker explained this hasn’t been done in probably 15 years, but should be done yearly. This will create a baseline for hose and ladders and should not be a reoccurring expense. There is a company that will test one truck at a time while giving inventory of what passed/failed. Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, added that there is currently an approximate balance of $57,562.00 in this capital reserve, No further discussion. |
| **Article 15** | **Petition Warrant Article** |
| To see if the Town would vote to rescind Article #18. "To choose (3) three Fire Commissioners." This was approved during the Annual Town Meeting - Business Session on March 9, 1937. This will discontinue the Rumney Fire Commissioners. The change to take effect one year following this vote at the Annual Town Meeting - Business session on March 14, 2024. (Petition Warrant Article.) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained this Warrant Article was submitted by Petition with a valid number of registered voters. Mark Murray asked Chief Hacker how he felt about this article. Chief Hacker explained there have been no Fire Commissioners for several months and it has been working out well to report directly to the Selectmen. No further discussion. |
| **Article 16** | **EMS** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $16,950 to defray the cost of running the EMS (Emergency Medical Services) for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrate stated this is the same budget amount requested in 2023. No further discussion. |
| **Article 17** | **Highway Dept.** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $308,616 to defray the cost of running the Rumney Highway Department for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| No discussion. |
| **Article 18** | **Road Improvement** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $85,000 for road improvements for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained these funds are used for the maintenance of Town roads. Maintenance such as paving, crack sealing, tree removal, and such. No further discussion. |
| **Article 19** | **Debt Services** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $82,566 for annual debt payments for the following bond items, backhoe purchase, rest area purchase and the town office addition; Highway Backhoe Purchase Bond (8,523) The Rest Area purchase (20,097) and Town Office Addition (53,946). This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. The Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, reported that the final payment was made for the backhoe this year. This is year three of five Rest Area and Town Office Addition bonds payments. Chivell explained that of the $255,000 bond for the office addition about $137,000 has been used. Several different grants and funding sources have been used to add office space, replace the roof of the old section of the building, seal the driveway, and replace the 32-year-old boiler. No further discussion. |
| **Article 20** | **Library** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $57,880 to defray the cost of operating the Byron G. Merrill Library for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| No discussion. |
| **Article 21** | **Transfer Station** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $198,302 to defray the cost of maintaining the Transfer Station for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, wanted to acknowledge the Board of Selectmen and Transfer Station Superintendent, Sonny Ouellette, for the work they have done to find a different transportation provider and a different destination for our solid waste. The Town will realize about $40,000.00 in savings. Chivell added that the savings aren’t seen taken off the bottom line of the budget but will be seen as not being additional funds needed to run the Transfer Station. Chivell added that the new disposal area only accepts Town’s with required recycling. So thank you to all the residents that recycle and know that you may not like to recycle, but you are saving money in doing so. No further discussion. |
| **Article 22** | **Landfill Closure** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $7,000 to continue with Phase II of the Landfill Closure process as required by the State of New Hampshire. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained this is for the required ground water test that is done each year. No further discussion. |
| **Article 23** | **Solid Waste** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $1,800 to defray the cost of the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated this is for dues to belong to the Pemi-Baker Solid Waste District, which saves the Town money and allows residents to take part in the annual hazard materials disposal day. No further discussion. |
| **Article 24** | **Assessing and Mapping** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $48,000 for assessing and mapping and authorize the withdrawal of $10,000 from the Town Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund (Established 1984) created for that purpose. The balance of $38,000 is to come from general taxation. The Selectmen recommend this Special Article. (Majority vote required) |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, stated that this is the year that the revaluation information will be brought together. New property values will be derived during the Summer. No further discussion. |
| **Article 25** | **Health, Welfare, Animal control** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $38,324 for the purposes of Animal Control, Health and Welfare for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required)   Animal Control $1,002 Health Officer Stipend, etc. $969 Health Administration $500 Mount Mooselaukee Health Center $1,500 Pemi-Baker Community Health $6,500 Voices Against Violence $1,000 Bridge House $2,000 Genesis $1,250 CASA $500 CADY $800 Transport Central $1,250 Direct Assistance $10,000 Welfare Administrator Stipend, etc $4,307 Grafton County Seniors $3,250 Tri-County CAP $2,996 NCH $500 Total Animal Control, Health & Welfare $38,324 |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, reported that providing funding to the nonprofits listed in this warrant article saves the Town money by offering residents support. No further discussion. |
| **Article 26** | **Culture, Recreation, Conservation** |
| To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of $19,425 for the purposes of Culture, Recreation and Conservation for the ensuing year. (Majority vote required)    Common-Mowing, Maintenance & Port-a-toilet $2,000 Baker Athletic Field $1,100 Jim Darling Natural Area $800 Patriotic Purposes $400 Conservation Commission $9,000 Baker River Watershed Dues $375 Conservation Trust $5,000 Stinson Lake Port-a-toilet $750 Total Culture, Recreation & Conservation $19,425 |
| No discussion. |
| **Article 27** | **Choose Members for Advisory** |
| To choose one member for the Advisory Budget Committee:   1 - 1-year term   1 - 3-year term |
| Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, explained that 1 person for three years will be added to the final, approved warrant. No further discussion. |
| **Article 28** | **Reports** |
| To hear reports of agents, auditors, and committees heretofore chosen, to pass any vote relating thereto, and to transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting. |
| No discussion. |

7:40 PM Selectman, Isaac DeWever thanked everyone for coming out and reminded them of the upcoming Town Election on 03/12/2024 and the Town Business Meeting on 03/14/2024.

Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to close the Public Hearing and return to the Board of Selectmen’s Meeting. Selectman, Bob Berti, seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Town Administrator, Joe Chivell, recommended that the Board of Selectmen Amend article 27 to add a 1 person for a three-year position on the Advisory Budget Committee. Selectman, Isaac DeWever, made a motion to add “1 – 3-year term to Article 27. Selectman, Ed Haskell, seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to accept the warrant as amended and to allow the Board of Selectmen to sign the warrant once it is amended and printed. Selectman, Isaac DeWever, seconded the motion. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Selectman, Ed Haskell, made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Selectman, Bob Berti. There was no discussion on the motion. The motion passed 3-0.

Submitted by:

Lila Williams

Dawn Coffey