

TOWN OF NEWPORT, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Board of Selectmen Minutes for Budget Work Session - February 21, 2022
Remote Access: Zoom.com - Meeting ID: 826 8123 7251 Passcode: 691845
+1 (253) 215-8782 US (audio only, long-distance fees may apply)

SELECTMEN PRESENT: Jeffrey Kessler, Chairman; Barry Connell, Herb Tellor, Jr.; Keith Sayer
John Hooper II, Vice Chairman

STAFF PRESENT: Hunter Rieseberg, Town Manager; Paul Brown, Finance Director

COMMUNITY MEMBERS PRESENT: Joanne Stone, Stuart Stone, Nancy and William Wilmot, Jr.

CALL TO ORDER: Chairman Kessler called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. followed by the Pledge of Allegiance. He informed the public that the BOS would be conducting a Budget workshop until 6:30 p.m. or later and then would hold the regular BOS meeting.

BUDGET: Finance Director Brown handed out a paper with the 2022-23 proposed budget. It included the total amount of the operating budget, the tax rate and the increased amount as a percentage. He asked that they approve or discuss and approve the budget as it was presented. Chairman Kessler asked what the changes were. He was told there were no changes. They would be approving the Manager's (originally) presented budget. Chairman Kessler asked about proposed changes. The BOS had asked for a call per/diem pay increase for the Fire and EMTs. It was not in the budget. Chairman Kessler asked what the approximate cost of the increase would be. After a brief discussion the Board was given the approximate amount of \$15,000-\$20,000. The Board discussed adding money to the Fire/EMS budgets to cover the increased costs. Selectman Connell made a motion *to add the sum of \$20,000 to the budget to reflect our ability to increase call pay for Fire and EMS*. Finance Director Brown requested the Selectboard to accept the operating budget and then revise the budget. When asked why, Finance Director Brown explained the monetary reasons.

Selectman Connell moved *to adopt the operating budget for 2022-23 as recommended by the town manager in the sum of \$10,180,969.00 having a tax rate of \$11.95 and a 1.37% increase*. It was seconded by Selectman Tellor. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Selectman Connell made a motion *to amend the budget to add the sum of \$20,000 to the budget to be allocated to the Fire and EMS (budgets) for call pay*. It was seconded by Selectman Tellor. In discussion, Selectman Sayer asked about the short-staffed police department. He asked if it created a surplus in the Town budget. He was told no. *The motion passed 4-0-0.*

Chairman Kessler addressed the additions by the library totaling \$41,888. Plowing/grounds maintenance at the library were discussed and explained. The Town will continue plowing and maintenance as in years past as part of their allocation to the library. Their allocation will remain \$366,536. The Board members passed over the new line items; the library budget will remain as the town manager recommended.

Selectman Hooper arrived at the meeting at 6:23 p.m.

Chairman Kessler explained the budget work they had done before his (Hooper's) arrival. Mr. Lunn addressed the BOS and made a plea for the inclusion of Southwestern Community Services (SCS) and their \$10,000 request to be added to the operating budget. The Board members held a brief consultation on the inclusion of the SCS request being included in the budget. The Board members concurred to leave it as a petition article.

A large group of Police officers and community members arrived at the meeting at 6:27 p.m.
When asked, Chairman Kessler informed community members that they were now having a budget workshop. The regular meeting of the Board of Selectmen would begin at the conclusion of the work session.

For clarification, Chairman Kessler asked if only \$20,000 had been added to the operating budget for call pay. Finance Director Brown stated he was correct. Finance Director Brown said he did not need a motion to approve the budget with the additional \$20,000. Finance Director Brown asked that the Board approve the Warrant Articles.

On a motion by Selectman Connell, seconded by Selectman Teller; ***the Board voted to approve the Communication Capital Reserve Warrant Article of \$5,000 with a tax impact of \$.01. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Teller, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the Board voted to approve the Ambulance Capital Reserve Warrant Article of \$60,000 with a tax impact of \$.14. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

Selectman Connell addressed Finance Director Brown to ensure the Board was approving the Warrant Articles correctly. He was told they were. On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Teller; ***the Board voted to approve the Recreation Facilities Capital Reserve Warrant Article in the amount of \$10,000 with a tax impact of \$.02. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Teller, seconded by Selectman Hooper; ***the Board voted to approve the District Court Capital Reserve Warrant Article in the amount of \$10,000 with a tax impact of \$.02. The motion passed 5-0-0.***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Connell; ***the Board voted to approve the New Community Center Bond Warrant Article in the amount of \$4,000,000. The motion passed 5-0-0***

On a motion by Selectman Hooper, seconded by Selectman Teller; ***the Board voted to approve the Dorr Lagoon Management Project Bond Warrant Article in the amount of \$75,000 with a tax impact of \$.00. (3/5 necessary to pass).*** In discussion it was confirmed that it will be a Bond Article (\$75,000)-State Revolving Loan Fund (with 100% forgiveness). A 3/5 majority vote was needed to pass. ***The motion passed 5-0-0.***

Finance Director Brown stated the Warrant Articles and two Bond Articles will be posted on Wednesday, February 23, 2022. February 28, 2022 the budget will go to the Budget Advisory Committee (BAC). The Public Hearings on the 2022-23 Town budget will be held on March 7, 2022. Any time after the public hearings the Selectboard can approve their final budget. The final budget will be posted on March 28, 2022. Another public hearing will be needed if the BOS wants to add additional funds to the budget before March 28, 2022. When asked, Finance Director Brown stated that Friday March 25, 2022 will be the last day to add money to the 2022-23 Town budget. He explained the process for the addition of a Warrant Article with or without money involved.

March 8, 2022 is the last day to submit a Petition Article to the Town Office to be on the Town Meeting ballot. Chairman Kessler announced ***the close of the 2022-23 budget workshop at 6:43 p.m.***

Respectfully submitted,



Maura Stetson, Scribe

Approved on: March 7, 2022