

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING
JANUARY 12, 2021
MINUTES**

PRESENT: David Lage Chairman; John Veaser, Shawn Talbot
Town Administrator Scott Butcher
Police Chief, Tim Carpenter

6:00 PM OPENED THE MEETING

BOB ROMERIL DELAY IN DELIBERATIVE / VOTE:

Selectman Veaser noted that the School board is going to do their deliberative / budget online through ZOOM not in person at any point. Voters should be aware of the budget and the impact it will have. Due to funding insecurity at the state level there may be an increase in taxes even if the budget stays the same. So it's important to be aware of the meetings. Mascenic public budget hearing Monday Jan 4th at 6:00 PM, deliberative will be Feb 2nd at 6:00 PM

Bob Romeril joined in the meeting to discuss virtual deliberative session, he noted we need to coordinate the town and school how they would like to do this. Virtual deliberative session which would require two part effort. Notification to all registered voters of the warrant and then a meeting to review the warrant, then receipt of the input from all voters for the next 7 days. Followed by another meeting where the BOS read out the input received and BOS will decide whether to amend any warrant articles or leave as is. Then publish the new warrants. At election there will be a question "Do you agree with the method we used to arrive at the warrants". Will need a 50% plus one positive response. It also requires drive thru voting as well as walk in voting. Bob doesn't see the town and school warrants being held at the school to accommodate the drive through voting. Rules on voting in another town would require bussing from one town to another. It would be very complicated to do the two elections in one day.

Separate from that a piece of legislation is hanging up that would allow for the delay of both the deliberative and the voting in 72 hours increments. If we decided to delay what would be the impact to the operational budget for the town and the school. Delay in notification of contracts that are renewed or not would be one effect. Some teachers may jump ship without the clarity of their futures. Continue with the face to face meeting socially distanced at the auditorium is the recommendation by Bob and Selectmen Veaser and Lage. Mr. Lage felt we are in a better position now because some are starting to get the COVID-19 vaccine as well.

Further discussion on whether both town and school can do it differently. March is still pretty cold to be out in the cold doing the drive through for 12 hours.

Mr. Veaser made MOTION for the town voting to remain as in and not in virtual. We will offer Zoom options for the deliberative sessions. This will allow input by the remote attendees.

It was asked that we reach out to tech/audio visual folks at the school. A good microphone is imperative to ensure everyone can hear what is being said.

LED STREETLIGHT REQUEST:

Still lights on either side of Mascenics driveways, should have been just one, but both lights got changed over. Highbridge has no light there. Doesn't look like North Road at Turnpike has the new lights. Mr. Lage asked Mr. Butcher if he had a list of the lights to be changed. Some discussion on the cost savings and rebates related to the project. If sitting at Gibbs you are in the dark if you don't have headlights on, there is a light after that however.

Bob Romeril mentioned a streetlight on middle Ashby Road that was dropped about 10 years ago and he asked if it could be upgraded, they responded that it was only municipalities that could request that. He asked if it could be transferred to town so that this could happen, and then he'd take responsibility back after. Eversource will not upgrade the light because it's not the towns.

Mr. Lage is not sure what is involved in doing this transfer. Mr. Veaser noted it will take some research to see what would be involved to do this. It will most likely be more involved than switching back and forth. Mr. Butcher noted he believes it may involve votes and he will look into this situation.

FINALIZE 2021 BUDGET / WARRANT:

Town Administrator Butcher brought up a couple additional Warrant Articles. One from Prime Roofing, to see if the town would allow the BOS to discontinue .29 acres (pursuant to RSA 231:43) which is adjacent to NH Route 124 (Part of the old Right of Way), as it has the potential to impact the development of their land. Prime will be in to discuss an upcoming project in two weeks (Jan 26, 2021) Selectman Veaser suggests putting the common areas on a flash drive so that at that future meeting it can be put up on the screen for the audience to see.

Warrant Article for the GIS / Tax mapping was also reviewed by each of the selectmen. Mr. Lage asked Mr. Butcher if we could send the warrant to town counsel to be sure the finances were appropriate for the Conservation Commission to pick up.

The Board then moved onto reviewing budget worksheet to confirm and finalize numbers as needed.

Mr. Butcher noted the spare vehicle needs to be inserted in the Board of Selectmen budget, also need to consider maintenance, repairs and fuel expenses. Mr. Lage feels the department using it should be responsible for the cost. The cost should have its own line item. Also discussed is that we need a policy for who is responsible for tracking use, keeping the keys, cleaning it, cost chargeback, etc.

Mr. Lage suggests taking the money from each departments Travel budget to make the use tracking easier. The easiest way may be to fill the tank, then when vehicle is used the user is responsible to fill the tank for the next user. Mr. Veaser described a process where they fill it they turn in the receipt for gas, and it is written off the appropriate budget. The BOS budget to be \$100 for fuel for their use.

Mr. Butcher suggested a plan to get the Land Use new hires some training from outside to free up the Tax Clerk from training. He looked into getting an experienced Land Use Planners with MRI and found 2 who he felt were candidates. The cost would be \$75 hour, and he was thinking 40 hours at a cost of \$3000. His thought is to increase the consulting line by \$3000 to do this. Hoping this will alleviate concerns of the Assessors and Planning, and also the consultant can look for opportunities for improvement.

Mr. Lage asked if it would be better served to increase the hours of the Deputy Town Clerk so that she could do the training. It was said that the Assistant would need to work more hours to be able to cover.

Mr. Butcher brought up the topic of salary. The Selectmen prefer to table this discussion and continue at a non-public session for the final numbers.

Mr. Butcher brought up the topic of selling the old DPW property. There is a warrant article allowing the fire department to use as long as needed. He believes there is still some old fire equipment in there that would need to be removed, and will confirm this. The Selectmen don't believe there is any equipment left over there. There was a warrant, but he suggests reversing it.

Veaser if in favor, if DRA can give us direction on the correct wording, to get warrant worded properly. This will reduce the maintenance of the property.

The next topic was a review of budget for Assessors and DPW as well as Capital Reserve accounts. Master sheet was updated accordingly.

Trust fund balances was discussed next, minor changes were made.

Mr. Talbot brought up the topic of cleaning, and that the current person had mentioned she was not wanting to do that anymore. Also, asked, was this in the budget? Mr. Butcher noted he had started to look for company, but circumstances with the current person he feels it is not a high priority.

Parks budget was brought up next. Tennis courts need to be redone, currently asphalt. Mr. Veaser noted the proposal and whether we could do a concrete court or something like that to avoid the proposed cost which he felt was too high.

OLD / NEW BUSINESS:

COVID-19 Policy – Have employee who is quarantining, but we have been deducting from their sick time. Does the 40 hours sick time they get anyway get deducted from the COVID 80 hour policy? Board was in agreement the sick time should be charged first, then go into the 80 hour COVID quarantine time.

Mr. Butcher will follow up with his contact at the Department of Labor to get some guidance on the CARES act and this policy.

NON-PUBLIC SESSION #1:

At approximately 8:30 PM Selectman Veeseer MOTIONED to enter into a non-public session under RSA 91-A: II(c & d) Selectman Talbot SECONDED the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan Mallett, Land Admin

Minutes approved by:
BOARD OF SELECTMEN

David S. Lage, Chairman



John Veeseer



Shawn Talbot