

2020 Town Meeting Minutes

Town of Sanbornton

New Hampshire

March 11th, 2020

Date: 3/11/2020

Time: 7:00 PM

Location: Sanbornton Central School

Moderator Tim Lang opened the meeting at 7:00pm and recognized Joel Smith of the Recreation Commission who spoke about the Recreation Department. He thanked Mark Cray, Dolly Elliott and former Recreation Department Director Julie Lonergan for their service.

Budget Committee and Board of Selectmen members and staff introduced themselves. Moderator Lang introduced assistant moderators Ian Raymond and Steven Cobb and read the results of yesterday's Town Election results. A coin was flipped to determine the position of Budget Committee Member for a three-year term, as there were four write-in nominations for both Ralph Rathjen and Lisa Auger. Ralph Rathjen won the coin toss.

Selectman Jim Dick noted the Solid Waste Committee's Report was accidentally left out of the Town Report; copies were made available and it is on the Sanbornton website for viewing.

Article 1 - Operating Budget – Town

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Million Three Hundred Twenty-Six Thousand Two Hundred and Ninety-four Dollars (\$4,326,294) for general municipal operations as recommended by the Budget Committee. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

| DRA Acct #'s | DRA Account Name | Budget Committee Recommendation | Selectmen's Recommendation |
|---------------------|-----------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 4130-4199 | General Government | \$1,369,352 | \$1,369,352 |
| 4210 | Police | \$505,902 | \$505,902 |
| 4220-4299 | Fire & Emergency Management | \$531,283 | \$531,283 |

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 4311-4319 | Highways & Streets | \$950,177 | \$950,177 |
| 4321-4329 | Sanitation | \$313,390 | \$313,390 |
| 4411-4449 | Health & Welfare | \$108,314 | \$108,314 |
| 4520 | Recreation | \$123,049 | \$123,049 |
| 4550 | Library | \$161,183 | \$161,183 |
| 4583-4589 | Other Culture and Patriotic Purposes | \$23,350 | \$23,350 |
| 4611-4659 | Conservation | \$2,425 | \$2,425 |
| 4711-4799 | Debt Service | \$237,339 | \$237,339 |
| Total | | \$4,326,294 | \$4,326,294 |

DISCUSSION:

Budget Committee Chair Craig Weisman made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion and explained that the budget process went smoothly this year, as the departments introduced their budgets to both the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee at the same time. BC Chair Weisman noted that the Health Insurance Study Committee was formed as a result of discussions at last year’s Town Meeting, and that that committee was able to make recommendations to the BC and BOS based on their findings to allow savings for the Town for insurance. BC member Ray Masse served on that committee and explained that they worked to maintain the level of health insurance coverage employees have been receiving while still saving the Town \$80,000. The entire report is on the town website.

Andy Sanborn of Knox Mountain Rd asked for the individual deductible amounts of the new insurance. Ray responded that the new HealthTrust Access Blue plan will have a \$3,000 deductible for single, \$9,000 for a family, with an out of pocket maximum of \$5,000 for single and \$10,000 for a family. The proposed salary increase of 4% for employees, along with an HRA and FSA component, will allow for an offset in the out-of-pocket costs in this plan.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 1 passed.

Article 2 - Modifications to the Life-Safety Building

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Seventy-five Thousand Dollars (\$175,000) to be added to the Town Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund for use only on the Life-Safety Building for the purposes of modifying the Life-Safety Building (565 Sanborn Rd) to add shower/locker room facilities, a secure entrance, a water filtration/treatment system, and to make other minor modifications as necessary during construction with said amount to come from the Town’s Unassigned Fund Balance. No amount is to be raised from taxation. Appropriations under this warrant article are not included in the Operating Budget total previously voted upon under Article 1 or the Transfer to Capital Reserve Funds total to be voted upon under Article 6.

(Majority vote required)

This Warrant Article is designated as a Special Warrant Article.

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Dick made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion. Selectman Dick explained that these modifications were included in the \$5 million bond that was voted down last year.

These changes would allow for the safety of Fire Department employees and proper maintenance of the fire equipment as the water at the LSB is currently not potable. These are permanent changes that will not be lost if a new town buildings complex is built in the future. BC Chair Weisman stated that this was discussed at length by the Budget Committee.

Mitch Lewis of Shute Hill asked how many showers will be installed and what water filtration system will be used. Fire Chief Paul Dexter responded that he is estimating two showers plus toilets for both male and females will be constructed though he won't know for sure until renovations start. The water filtration system has not been finalized yet; he noted that there may be Homeland Security funding available for improving the Police Department entrance. The filtration system would be able to feed to the Town Offices also, as the water there is also not potable.

Selectman Dick noted that the \$175,000 figure is a "do-not-exceed" number but this has been developed using plans from Bonnette Page and Stone, the construction firm that provided last year's building complex proposal. Stuart Dymont of March Rd stated that this article should not say "no amount is to be raised from taxation", as even if there are no new taxes, the money has been generated by taxation. Selectman Dick responded that there will be no increase to the tax rate to pay for this; the funding is from previous years of taxes and revenue surplus.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 2 passed.

Nina Gardner made a **motion** to restrict reconsideration for Articles 1 and 2. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion and the motion passed.

Article 3 – Capital Outlay

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Nine Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty-one Dollars (\$709,951) for the following Capital Outlay purposes:

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

| DRA Acct #'s | DRA Account Name | Budget Committee Recommendation | Selectmen's Recommendation |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 4902 | Machinery, Vehicles & Equip | | |
| 4902.122 | Fire SCBA | \$39,000 | \$39,000 |
| 4902.304 | DPW Truck 5 Lease Pmt | \$21,051 | \$21,051 |
| 4902.310 | DPW Truck 3 Lease Pmt | \$33,725 | \$33,725 |
| 4902.312 | DPW Truck 4 Lease Pmt | \$16,175 | \$16,175 |
| Sub-Total | | \$109,951 | \$109,951 |
| 4909 | Improvements Other Than Buildings – Town Roads | \$600,000 | \$600,000 |
| Sub-Total | | \$600,000 | \$600,000 |
| Total for All Capital Outlays | | \$709,951 | \$709,951 |

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Dick made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion.

Selectman Dick stated that these requests go through the Capital Improvements Program Committee as well as BOS and BC. Mitch Lewis asked what the \$600,000 is for and stated that Shute Hill is in especially bad shape. Highway Department Director Johnny Van Tassel responded that this money goes towards reclaiming and repaving asphalt roads and shimming and overlaying. Major projects for FY 2020 include Shaw Hill Rd to Osgood Rd, Pine Stump Rd and Bay Rd to Lower Bay Rd. Andy Sanborn noted that this \$600,000 is for major road projects that are not part of the regular road maintenance tasks. Chair Weisman added that the Underwood Road Study completed last year, which cost \$75,000, recommended \$1.2 million per year for road maintenance, and noted that the Highway Department is doing what they can with half that amount.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 3 passed.

Article 4 - Police Cruiser

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) for the purchase and set up of a Police Cruiser. This cost includes: purchase of the vehicle, purchase/updating/installing any equipment needed, installation of existing equipment, decommissioning a cruiser in order to send it to auction or for trade, with the funds received to be used to offset the costs of the vehicle.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Tom Salatiello **seconded** the motion. Selectman Olmstead explained that the Police Chief has been able to extend a vehicle another year in years past depending on its condition, but this year a cruiser will need to be replaced. Police Chief Steve Hankard explained that the 2017 sedan will become the Town Office car and he will be purchasing a new vehicle in FY2020.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 4 passed.

Cal Di Nitto made a **motion** to restrict reconsideration for Articles 3 and 4. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion and the motion passed.

Article 5 - Trust Fund – Employee Severance Benefits

To see if the Town will vote to establish an Employee Severance Benefits Expendable Trust Fund under RSA 31:19-a for the purpose of funding employee payouts for accrued sick time and paid time off due at the time of separation from employment with the Town, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in this fund, and further to name the Board of Selectmen as the agent to expend from said Fund. Appropriations under this warrant article are not included in the Operating Budget total previously voted upon under Article 1 or in the Transfer to Capital Reserve Funds total to be voted upon under Article 6.

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

This Warrant Article is designated as a Special Warrant Article.

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Dick made a **motion** to approve. Kate Osgood **seconded** the motion. Selectman Dick explained that the Town currently does not have a fund to cover vacation and sick time payouts when employees leave, and for long-time employees this can be a substantial amount. If all employees left on July 1st, 2019, the total payout would have been \$167,000. Ralph Rathjen noted that starting the fund at \$30,000, and possibly adding that much each year for five years, will allow the Town to limit its liability. Mitch Lewis asked how many vacation and sick hours employees can carry over year to year. Chief Dexter responded that 200 vacation hours and 480 sick hours can be carried over. (Employees only get paid out half of their sick time which is capped at 480 hours)

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 5 passed.

Article 6 – Transfer to Capital Reserve Funds

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$420,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve Funds, previously established, as follows:

(Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Selectmen – Recommended by the Budget Committee

This Warrant Article is designated as a Special Warrant Article.

| DRA Account Name | Budget Committee Recommendation | Selectmen’s Recommendation |
|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Fire Truck | \$80,000 | \$80,000 |
| Fire Truck Repair & Refurbish | \$10,000 | \$10,000 |
| Heavy Equipment | \$35,000 | \$35,000 |
| Road/Bridge Construction | \$150,000 | \$150,000 |
| Milfoil, Phosphorous Reduction | \$5,000 | \$5,000 |
| Town Building Improvements | \$25,000 | \$25,000 |
| Facilities Repair & Refurbish | \$90,000 | \$90,000 |
| Old Town Hall Repair & Refurbish | \$25,000 | \$25,000 |
| Total Operating Transfer | \$420,000 | \$420,000 |
| | | |

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Selectman Dick explained that these items have been discussed as part of the CIP Committee process and are to save towards large projects.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 6 passed.

Nina Gardner made a **motion** to restrict reconsideration for Articles 5 and 6. Chief Dexter **seconded** the motion and the motion passed.

Article 7 - Amend Solar Energy Property Tax Exemption

To see if the Town will vote to amend the exemption adopted pursuant to RSA 72:62 via Ballot Question #1 at the March 1993 Town Meeting to read, “ The Town votes to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:61-64 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property’s assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property which is equipped with solar energy. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of the qualifying solar energy system under these statutes”. The amended exemption shall take effect beginning April 1, 2020.

Recommended by the Selectmen.

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Olmstead made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Dick **seconded** the motion. Ian Raymond of Skyline Drive explained that this article will allow for the Town to be in line with the State RSA. Stuart Dymment stated that the article refers to any landowner which could include a corporation or a trust. Ian Raymond stated that this article would not apply to large systems.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 7 passed.

Article 8 – Sale of Town Owned Property

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to sell certain Town owned property identified as Tax Map 3, Lot 25, on Moose Run Drive, said parcel being 0.63 acres and having an assessed value of \$3,000. This lot is non-buildable and is to be sold “as is” through sealed bid with bids to be opened July 1, 2020 or thereafter.

| Tax Map | Lot Number | Acreage | Address | Assessment |
|----------------|-------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 3 | 25 | 0.63 | Moose Run Dr | \$3,000 |

Recommended by the Selectmen.

DISCUSSION:

Selectman Tom Salatiello made a **motion** to approve. Selectman Olmstead **seconded** the motion. Selectman Salatiello explained that the BOS and Conservation Commission agreed that this property is of no value to the Town and should be auctioned.

Vote was in the affirmative – Article 8 passed.

Nina Gardner made a **motion** to restrict reconsideration for Articles 7 and 8. Chief Dexter **seconded** the motion and the motion passed.

Article 9 - Petitioned Warrant Article for Paving of Dr True Rd and Maple Circle

To see if the Town will vote to approve the paving of Dr True Rd and Maple Circle.

DISCUSSION:

Petitioners Ron Hilbrunner made a **motion** to approve. Kathy Hilbrunner **seconded** the motion. Selectman Salatiello explained that the Town follows the rules set forth in the Municipal Budget Act which states that a dollar amount must be associated with a warrant article. This article will still be voted on tonight as it is already included in the warrant, but it has no bearing.

Ray Masse made a **motion** to allow for the following amendment, **seconded** by Selectman Dick:

“The Board of Selectmen shall form a Road Study Review & Implementation Committee, generally comprised of the following persons:

Highway Department Director

3 Citizen Representatives (Including 1 of the Original Warrant Article 9 Petitioners)

Budget Committee Member

Capital Improvement Planning Committee Member

Selectmen's Representative

The purpose of this Committee shall be to review the request for the paving of Dr True Road and Maple Circle, and to make a recommendation to the Board of Selectmen – primarily based upon information obtained from the Underwood Engineering Road Repair and Evaluation Study - on whether the paving of these two roads should be included in the FY22 road repair plan.”

Chair Weisman asked for Johnny Van Tassel’s opinion on this amendment. Johnny responded that he does believe that the Vortechs stormwater system that was installed at Maple Circle would work best with a paved road. He stated that he would work with the Selectmen on discussing this or would help with a committee. Ray noted that the committee he is proposing would also discuss other roads. Andy Sanborn stated that he is reluctant to see a committee formed to supervise the Highway Department Director.

Voting Results: Yay – 42; Nay – 46. Article 9 fails.

Ralph Rathjen proposed an amendment that asked for a public hearing where the Underwood Engineering study would be presented by its creators. Town Counsel advised that this is not a legal amendment as it does not pertain to the original article.

Selectman Dick stated that the BOS can work with the petitioners, Johnny, and others on this issue.

Voting on original article: Motion fails.

Article 10 – Other Business

To transact such other business that may legally come before the Town Meeting.

DISCUSSION:

Nina Gardner reminded residents of the School Board Budget Hearing on Saturday March 21st. She stated that tax rates are largely impacted by the school budget.

Meeting adjourned at 8:50pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Audry Barriault

Selectboard Clerk: _____

Approval Date 3.18.2020