



# Warner Budget Committee Meeting

## Minutes

November 21, 2024, 7:00 PM

### Budget Committee - Open Meeting and Roll Call

Chair Michael Cutting opened the Budget Committee meeting at 7:01 pm

**Present:** Michael Cutting (Chair), Alfred Hanson, Rick Bixby, Bill Hanson, Selectboard Representative Faith Minton, Robert Blake via Zoom and Ray Martin arrived at 9:00 pm.

**Absent:** Harold Blanchette

### Warner Selectboard - Open Meeting and Roll Call

Harry Seidel opened the Selectboard meeting at 7:03.

**Present:** Harry Seidel, Faith Minton, Kathy Frenette Town Administrator and Judy Newman-Rogers Selectboard Administrative Assistant, running zoom.

**Absent:** Mike Smith

### Approval of Minutes • November 7, 2024 November 14, 2024

**Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Faith Minton to approve the November 7, 2024, Budget Committee meeting minutes. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Bill Hanson to approve the November 14, 2024 Budget Committee meeting minutes as amended. Motion passed unanimously.**

**Public Input Discussion:** Mike Cutting spoke about a concern that has been raised relating to allowing public input during the budget meetings. The public has the opportunity to weigh in during the Public *Hearing* in February (versus a *meeting* when it is the decision of the Chair to allow or not allow public input) He asked the Budget Committee members to weigh in with their preference. The general consensus was that public comment is welcome but should be controlled by the Chairman to facilitate a polite and efficient meeting.

**Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Bill Hanson that the Budget Committee receive public input through the recognition of the Chairman. Motion passed unanimously.**

Mike Cutting spoke about the need for the actual expenses to be better reflected in the budget lines as the department budgets are reviewed. The general consensus was that the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was a one time receipt of funds used over three years. Members would like more time to review actual ARPA expense report received and it was stated that in the future that pool of money (ARPA funds) will not be there.

### Presentation of the 2025 Budget

**Highway Department:** Tim Allen presented the Highway Department Budget. Total budget increased by \$80,030 7.3%.

Director Wages increased by 2.5%

1 Fulltime wages (7 positions) increased to \$361,000, brief discussion regarding the split of the mechanics  
2 wages  
3 Overtime: average of the last 5 years  
4 Hydrants: \$3,000  
5 Outside professional services: increased  
6 Paving: no change there was a discussion regarding the affordability of rebuilding roads and a paving plan  
7 Outside rental: decreased by \$5,000  
8 Bridge maintenance: a place holder  
9 Mileage: increased slightly for training travels  
10 Gravel: increased by \$20,000 there was a discussion regarding blasting and refilling the stock pile  
11 Building maintenance wages: new employee starts December 2024  
12 Telephone: cell phone expense  
13 Computer IT: to be determined: John Leavitt questioned why IT is being separated out to each department.  
14 Kathy Frenette explained the rationale.  
15 Outside Repairs: increased to \$17,500  
16 Heat: reduced due to reduced cost in the new annual contract  
17 Equipment Replacement: Grader- open for discussion trade in or keep it. Tim is concerned that it is no longer  
18 under warranty. No equipment is scheduled for replacement. There was a discussion regarding the need for  
19 an equipment replacement schedule.  
20 Uniforms: no change  
21 Supplies: increased by \$1,000  
22 Building maintenance: priority is air exchange system; the line item has been increased to \$7,500; bay doors  
23 need to be replaced.  
24 Gas and Diesel: no change to be safe  
25 Parts line: item is at \$55,000 there was a discussion on a replacement/maintenance plan for the highway  
26 trucks  
27 There was a discussion on considering contracting out for winter maintenance.  
28 Guardrails: no change  
29 New equipment: (hand tools) increased \$1,000  
30 Signage: decreased \$500  
31 Training: increased \$100  
32 Safety: increased \$1,500 upgrade to the drug testing program  
33 Sand: \$2,500 is a place holder  
34 Salt: no change  
35 Harry Seidel asked what the amount would be to lease a grader? The current value of the grader is \$140,000  
36 and the cost for a new grader is \$418,000. Tim Allen stated the cost would be \$45,000 a year for 7 years.  
37 The extended warranty is \$26,000 for 7 years. There was additional conversation on the grader. James  
38 Sherman asked about the interest rate on the grader. Tim Allen stated the interest rate was quoted at 2.4%. Mr.  
39 Sherman asked approximately how much equipment increases each year. Tim Allen estimated the increase to  
40 be \$30,000 per year.  
41  
42 **Transfer Station:** Tim Allen presented the Transfer Station budget.  
43 The budget increased 16.7%.  
44 Wages increased by 60%, largely due to a new full time position. Tim Allen stressed that there is a need for  
45 additional manpower at the Transfer Station; there needs to be 3 people at the Transfer Station on the  
46 weekends. He also spoke about the need for part-time help.

1 Parttime wages: increased 14% Tim Allen reiterated the need for manpower to run the Transfer Station.  
2 Harry Seidel stated by hiring more help the hope is that the Transfer Station will be cleaner and safer. Kathy  
3 Frenette spoke about the challenge of hiring parttime help. Tim Allen spoke about the trucking issues that the  
4 Transfer Station faces. Alfred Hanson asked about the possibility of private contracting services. John Leavitt  
5 asked about the required licensing for the Transfer Station employees. He asked if the new employee will be  
6 certified. Tim Allen confirmed that all employees should be certified.  
7 Electricity: no change.  
8 Heat: reduced slightly.  
9 Building maintenance; compactor, repair walls, loading dock, loading ramp.  
10 Uniforms: slight increase.  
11 Office supplies: no change.  
12 Equipment maintenance/repairs: no change.  
13 Vehicle: fuel no change.  
14 Ground Improvements: no change.  
15 Meetings and Seminars: a slight increase.  
16 Safety equipment and programs: a slight increase.  
17 Transportation: cost increased  
18 Mileage: no change.  
19 Tonnage increased to \$88,000 from \$80,750  
20 Demo tipping fee increased to \$12,500  
21 Hazardous Waste Disposal: place holder.

22  
23 There was additional conversation regarding the new full time position and the benefit costs.

24  
25 Next meeting is December 5, 2024

26  
27 **Adjournment**

28 **Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Bill Hanson to adjourn the Budget Committee meeting.**  
29 **Motion passed unanimously.**

30  
31 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Harry Seidel to adjourn the Select Board meeting.**  
32 **Motion passed unanimously.**

33  
34 The meeting adjourned at 9:15 PM

35  
36 Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty  
37 Edits by Judy Newman-Rogers, Selectboard  
38 Administrative Assistant  
39