



Budget Committee Meeting

Minutes

December 5, 2024, 7:00 PM

Open the Meeting and Roll Call

Chair Cutting opened the Budget Committee meeting at 7:00 PM

Budget Committee Members Present: Michael Cutting (Chair), Ray Martin, Harold Blanchette, Rick Bixby, Bill Hanson and Faith Minton Selectboard Rep

Absent: Robert Blake and Alfred Hanson

(*A quorum of the Select Board not present to open a Selectboard meeting)

Approval of Minutes • November 21, 2024

Bill Hanson made a motion seconded by Ray Martin to approve the November 21, 2024 Budget Committee meeting minutes. Motion passed with Michael Cutting, Bill Hanson, Rick Bixby, Ray Martin and Faith Minton voting in favor. Harold Blanchette abstained.

Presentation of 2025 Budget

General Government buildings total decrease of 1.9%

a. Warner Town Hall

Custodian wages: no change, split with the highway department

Electricity: decreased due to rate reduction.

Heating oil: decreased which is attributed to the heating oil contract

Water and Sewer: reduced to \$1,200

Fire alarms: increased to \$1,700

Supplies: \$1,200

Maintenance / Repairs: \$6,000

Mileage: (travel for pick up or repairs) \$100

Propane: slight decrease

Equipment inspections: (no change) \$3,000

b. Warner Community Building

Electricity - no change

Heating fuel slight decrease

Sprinkler / Fire alarm \$700

Supplies - no change

Maintenance repairs \$20,000

1 **c. Old Fire Station**

2 **Heat** slight decrease

3 **Maintenance / Repairs** – no change

4 **Electricity:** no change, possibility of a decrease at end of month

5
6 James Gaffney questioned the \$20,000 for the community center, could that line item be reduced
7 by the remaining balance (\$6,000) from the current budget. Mike Cutting explained that left
8 over money is returned to the general fund and expenditures come only from the operating
9 budget.

10 **d. Building Inspector** reduced by \$305 (1.2%)

11 No anticipated changes in the building inspector’s budget

12 **e. Health & Welfare** increased \$7,238 (19.4%)

13 **Wage** is a stipend rate of \$14,000

14 **Telephone** – reimburse use of personal cell phone \$300

15 **Computer Software** - \$250

16 **Membership** (NHMA training) \$500 and NHWOA \$30

17 **Mileage** \$100

18 **Direct assistance** – reduced to \$30,000 through effective management (\$45,500 year to date has
19 been spent)

20 John Leavitt questioned why the town pays towards the use of a personal cell phone.

21 Kathy Frenette explained that the town should reimburse for any town expense.

22
23 **f. Conservation Commission – presented by Nancy Martin, Chair:**

24 **Maps** \$100 printing of new maps as changes occur

25 **Legal fees** \$100 for attorney services

26 **Dues** NH Association of Conservation Commissions

27 **Supplies** \$100

28 **Postage** – no change

29 **Planning/Seminars** \$100

30 **Notices** – newspaper advertisement of public hearings 8-10 per year.

31
32 James Gaffney inquired about the dollar amount the Conservation Commission has received by
33 way of land use change tax. Clyde Carson stated that he does not have that figure with him.

34 Nancy Martin stated the approximate amount accumulated is \$140,000. She stated those funds
35 will be transferred to the NH Deposit Investment pool where it will receive a higher interest rate.

36 Bill Hanson asked how long it has taken to save the \$140,000. Nancy Martin explained that two
37 years ago there was \$25,000 in their account. Mr. Gaffney stated he is shocked that the dollar
38 amount of land use change tax (LUCT) is not known. Judy Newman-Rogers explained that the
39 town commissions are managed by the treasurer, not the finance director. Mr. Carson said he will
40 have that amount at the next meeting. He further noted that when LUCT is collected the money
41 is deposited into the Conservation Commissions account. John Leavitt inquired why the
42 Conservation Commission is asking for a \$900 operating budget when they have \$140,000.

1 Nancy Martin explained that funds are used for conservation efforts not their operating expenses.
2 Clyde Carson was able to find the amount collected year to date from LUCT which is \$57,645.
3 Town Moderator Ben Frost, Attorney, sitting in the audience, explained that NH RSA 36-a limits
4 the use of funds to acquisitions of land for conservation purposes, not for operating budgets.

5 **g. Elections**

6 **Proposed budget** is \$3,350 (40.6% decrease)
7 Two elections in 2025 (Town Meeting and the Town elections)
8 **Mileage** increased for training travel.
9 **Computer Hardware** one computer needs to be replaced
10 **Supplies** decreased down to \$150
11 **Postage** decreased to \$100

12

13 Faith Minton spoke about a recent presentation - the E-Poll pads for the election check in. She
14 explained that it is a paperless voter check in program. Michele Courser, Town Clerk: the
15 program will improve accuracy, eliminate the checkout process and reduce the time spent
16 counting ballots at the end of the night; planning to purchase 3 tablets; cost is \$6,476 but the
17 Secretary of State's office will contributed \$3,500. Mike Cutting stated there are two options to
18 pursue 1) receive approval from the Select Board to include the cost in the proposed budget or 2)
19 a warrant article. John Leavitt stated there is another option which is to use the ARPA funds.
20 James Gaffney stated the best option is to allow the voters to decide.

21

22 Next meeting is December 12, 2024: review the Finance Department, Town Clerk, Tax Collector,
23 Assessing Department, Parks and Recreation and Library budgets.

24

25 **Adjournment**

26 **Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Bill Hanson to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed**
27 **unanimously.**

28

29 The meeting adjourned at 8:16 PM

30

31 Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty
32 Edits by Judy Newman-Rogers Selectboard Admin Asst.