



TOWN OF WARNER

PO Box 265
Warner, New Hampshire 03278-0265
Telephone: (603) 456-2298 Fax: (603) 456-2297
Warnernh.gov administrator@warnernh.gov
selectboard@warnernh.gov

Select Board: Harry Seidel, Chair
Faith Minton
Michael Smith
Kathleen Frenette, Town Administrator

Select Board - Work Session Minutes

November 4, 2024, 10:00 AM

Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

I. Open the Meeting and Roll Call

- Harry Seidel called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM
- **Present:** Harry Seidel (Chair), Faith Minton, Michael Smith
- **Also Present:** Kathy Frenette Town Administrator, Judith Newman-Rogers Selectboard Administrative Assistant

Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Harry Seidel to nominate Michael Smith as Select Board Chairman. Motion passed unanimously.

Select Board Business:

Harry Seidel is still working on replacing the town hall tree. Faith Minton is working on the Festival of Trees.

II. Proposed 2025 Department Budgets (Note: audio difficulties)

The Parks and Recreation budget was presented by Apryl Blood and Ericka Carr.

-Maintenance wages is proposed to be \$17,825.

-Part-time seasonal wages increased by \$4,000 to \$6,141 for 267 hours. Apryl Blood explained that her department lost a volunteer, and the hours will be made up by the part-time seasonal employees. She informed the Select Board that they are still looking for volunteers to take over the maintenance of the ice rink. Apryl Blood stated that the liner will be replaced for \$1,600. She stated last year the Parks & Rec budget was \$39,746 this year the proposed budget is \$43,049.

-Mileage is proposed to be \$1,273.

-Equipment repair and purchases is proposed to be \$700.

-Electricity is proposed to be \$3,000.

-Sanitation is proposed to be \$4,980.

-Ice rink improvements are \$ 1,600.

-Parks and Rec Improvements and Maintenance: proposed amount \$7,350, a decrease from last year at \$12,000.

Harry Seidel expressed concern regarding the cost of the ice rink. Apryl Blood explained that this is the first year that it is budgeted for because in the past it was maintained by volunteers. She cautioned that this is estimated on usage for the full season, but she does not anticipate it being in use the entire season due to the weather, warmer winters. She stated they are looking at different ways to maintain the rink for next year that could realize some savings.

Apryl Blood recapped the rink maintenance required. There was a discussion on who would do the work. The Select Board is concerned which employee would be tasked with the responsibilities given the lack of manpower in Public Works. There was discussion regarding the need to accurately code expenditures for labor

1 and mileage and apply them to the correct department. The Select Board agreed to reduce the Ice Rink budget
2 to \$4,500, the Parks and Rec proposed budget is now \$41,549.

3
4 The Conservation Commission budget was reviewed next. The Select Board reduced the Notices line item to
5 \$200. Meetings and seminars were reduced to \$100. Legal expenses do not reflect the actual expenditures. The
6 Select Board budgeted \$100. Office supplies was reduced to \$100.

7
8 The Tax Collector budget was presented by Kimberley Edelman. Deputy tax collector wages is proposed to
9 increase to \$2,000 from \$1,500. Kimberley Edelman spoke about the value for the Town in having a Deputy
10 Tax Collector. Mike Smith is opposed to the increase Harry and Faith suggested \$1,750. There was a discussion
11 regarding the value of having an online tax collection system. She stated that she is doing the same amount of
12 work as she did prior to purchase of the Avitar software. She stated that she is currently making less than the
13 previous Tax Collector did in 2010. She asked for clarification. Harry Seidel explained that he has always been
14 of the opinion that the previous rate of pay was exceedingly high for the amount of work. He spoke about the
15 review he did of other towns of similar size who do not come close to the wages in Warner. Mike Smith stated
16 he would like to table the discussion of Tax Collector's wages to allow the Select Board to look into it.

17
18 Computer expenses year to date are approximately \$13,000. Kimberley Edelman stated the Select Board put
19 the purchase of Avitar into the budget. She does not see the need for additional software unless the Select Board
20 wishes to purchase additional modules. Printing is proposed at \$600 a reduction of \$275. Kimberley indicated
21 that there could be the need to purchase a new printer. Office supplies is proposed to be \$300 a reduction of
22 \$391. The meeting and seminars discussion focused on the need to train the Deputy Tax Collector. Kimberley
23 stressed the deputy tax collector does not have any experience and needs to be trained. Harry Seidel
24 recommended \$1,000 for training. Kimberley indicated that she would check with the NH Tax Collector's
25 association to see if it is required by state law for the Town to pay for the 2 positions to attend conferences.

26
27 Kimberley Edelman stated that she should be receiving benefits as provided by the Town based on a past vote
28 at Town Meeting. Judy Newman-Rogers explained the Town Meeting vote pertained to elected officials, Town
29 Clerk and Tax Collector, and offer benefits as provided by the Town. She stated that the Town provides benefits
30 for either 35+ hours/week employees or full-time employees. Mike Smith stated that he would look into this.
31 Kimberley Edelman stated that the previous tax collector was open to the public 3 hours a week but worked
32 more than 3 hours a week. She stated she is open to the public from 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM 4 days week and she
33 does additional hours work when not open to the public. Faith Minton would like to know how other
34 communities operate. Mike Smith stated the surrounding communities are below 30 hours. He stated that he
35 does not believe benefits apply because it is a stipend position. He stated the budgeted wages are \$30,000 and
36 the proposed amount is \$50,000. He stated that he will look at wages and research more on the benefits.

37
38 Kathy Frenette provided information that Jon France, Fire Chief, submitted last Friday in an effort to have the
39 Select Board consider increases for his staff. Kathy Frenette said that he would like to give an increase to his
40 staff because he does not want to lose anyone. The Select Board reviewed the recommendations from the Fire
41 Chief. Mike Smith stated that Jon France needs to talk to the Select Board to discuss increases for his
42 employees.

43
44 Kathy Frenette stated that the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer wages need to be determined. The Select Board
45 agreed not to adjust the proposed budget until they receive more information.

1 *The Select Board went into recess until 12:30 PM.*

2
3 Trustee of the Trust Funds budget was reviewed. No adjustment to the stipend amount or Outside Services.

4
5 General Government Buildings; custodian wages were not changed. Fuel was adjusted to \$7,300. Sewer and
6 Water was adjusted to \$1,200. Alarms, sprinklers and elevator (actual amount is unknown at this time). The
7 Select Board adjusted the line item to \$1,700 from \$1,845. Equipment inspection remained unchanged.

8
9 Town Hall Supplies: there was some discussion on what this line item covers. It was determined that town hall
10 supplies are for cleaning supplies. The select board adjusted this line item to \$1,200.

11 Town Hall Office Supplies and Equipment: The Select Board accepted the proposed amount of \$4,000.

12 Town Hall Maintenance/Repairs: there was discussion regarding the Town Hall doors and repairs needed. The
13 Select Board accepted the proposed amount of \$6,000.

14 Town Hall mileage of \$100 covers when staff need to travel out of Warner to pick up supplies. Select Board
15 accepted the proposed amount.

16 Town Hall propane of \$1,000 the Select Board accepted the proposed amount.

17 Town Hall equipment inspections the Select Board accepted the amount of \$3,000.

18 Town Hall electricity increased; the Select Board adjusted the proposed amount to \$6,100.

19 Town Hall heating fuel, the Select Board adjusted the proposed amount to \$11,000.

20 Town Hall water and sewer, the Select Board reduced the proposed amount to \$900.

21
22 Community Center fire alarm testing proposed amount is \$850, the Select Board reduced the amount to \$700.

23 Community Center maintenance proposed amount of \$20,000 was accepted.

24
25 Old fire station is minimally heated, the proposed amount is \$1,430, the Select Board revised to \$1,200.

26
27 The Conservation Commission proposed budget was presented by Nancy Martin. She wanted to discuss the
28 adjustments previously made by the Select Board. She stated that the Conservation Commission budget has
29 remained unchanged at \$1,087 for many years. She informed the Select Board that the invoice for the NH
30 Conservation Commission Association dues came in for \$250. Nancy Martin advised the Select Board that
31 legal fees are unpredictable. She spoke about mapping costs at \$100 and the need for updating. Kathy Frenette
32 suggested having the maps updated by Central Regional Planning.

33
34 American Legion budget is unchanged at \$1,500.

35
36 Cemeteries: the Select Board accepted the proposed amount of \$25,000. Cemetery Maintenance remained at
37 \$3,000. Monument repairs unchanged. The Select Board discussed the need to keep funding tree pruning.

38
39 Insurance: Property and Liability is \$100,692, an increase of 9% due to claims. Kathy Frenette stressed the
40 need for mandatory safety training. She stated the majority of claims are from the Transfer Station. She
41 explained that the changes in operations should alleviate some of the claims going forward. The Select Board
42 discussed shopping around for a new insurance carrier. The Select Board reviewed the increase in workers
43 compensation.

44
45 Harry Seidel spoke about the importance of grants. Mike Smith agreed. Harry Seidel inquired about the need to
46 hire someone to seek and write grants for the Town. The Select Board agreed to discuss the topic during a
47 regular Select Board meeting.

48
49 Outside Professional Services Emergency Management- Ed Mical stated that it is a place holder.

1 The Health Administrator and Health Administrator stipend were accepted as proposed. Health Agency was
2 accepted as proposed. Riverbend Health Incorporated provides mental health services to the residents and was
3 approved at Town Meeting.

4
5 Health and Human Services wages: The Select Board discussed an adjustment for this position and increased
6 the wages to \$14,000.

7
8 Library: the proposed amount is calculated on the Town's overall assessment (1/15th of 1%). The Select Board
9 questioned the payroll increase. There was a conversation regarding the over lapping line items for the
10 cemetery maintenance, American Legion and flags.

11
12 Long term bonds and notes: The fire truck principle and the fire sation principle both need explanation from
13 Finance Director. Debt Services: highway construction loan has increased and needs clarification.

14
15 *At this time the Select Board went into recess until 2:30 PM*

16
17 Clyde Carson Finance Director was present to provide clarification needed on the proposed budget. Faith
18 Minton asked for an understanding of the increase in electricity under the Highway budget. Clyde Carson
19 explained that the budget was set before the Town switched to the Community Power Coalition. He advised the
20 Select Board to remain flexible on electricity budgets because Community Power will not set their rates for
21 2025 until December. He stated that Community Power will also be offering a fixed rate if that appeals to the
22 Select Board. Harry Seidel questioned the budgeted amount of \$5,984 to the year-to-date amount \$3,442
23 verses the proposed amount \$6,800. Clyde stated the YTD amount is through September. The Select Board
24 agreed to propose \$6,500.

25
26 The Select Board asked for clarification on the Highway mechanic proposed amount. Clyde Carson explained
27 that he breaks out the wage for mechanic to keep track of it because it is a separate wage. The full-time
28 highway wages of \$346,787 does not include the mechanic portion of his wages of \$17,948. The Select Board
29 adjusted the mechanic wage to \$25,000 which does include the 2.5%.

30
31 Street Light cost fluctuation between \$7,300 and \$11,000. Mike Smith inquired about why it changes and is not
32 a fixed amount. Faith Minton asked about the Exit 9 electricity cost. Clyde stated that exit 9 is roughly around
33 \$200 for the year. The Select Board agreed to propose \$300 for Exit 9 electricity. Ed Mical spoke about an
34 Eversource program that shut off some of the lights at midnight that could explain the fluctuating cost of street
35 lighting. The Select Board agreed to propose \$9,200 for street lighting.

36
37 Transfer Station electricity: The Select Board discussed what the appropriate amount should be. The Select
38 Board agreed on \$7,000.

39
40 Patriot Purposes/Cemetery/American Legion: Clyde Carson stated that the line items are duplicated. The
41 American Legion is no longer able to mow the cemetery. He recommended to zero out the American Legion
42 \$1,500 line item.

43
44 Warner Community Center Electricity: Clyde Carson agreed the proposed amount of \$10,000 is too high and he
45 supports the adjusted amount of \$6,100. Clyde Carson recommended increasing the Select Board amount for
46 the Town Hall electricity amount of \$4,500. The Select Board agreed on \$5,000.

47
48 Debt Services: Fire Truck and Fire Station principal, Mike Smith asked if it is an adjustable rate to explain the
49 increasing amounts. Clyde Carson confirmed, noting that as the loan is paid the amount of principal goes up
50 and the amount of interest goes down. He stated that it is the same with the Highway loan.

1 Kathy Frenette stated that she would make the changes to the budget today. The Select Board will then have an
2 opportunity to review their changes. She asked the Select Board to attend a dinner on Friday November 8th with
3 the Kearsarge sailors. There will be a 2pm tour of Town Hall and dinner later that day. The Select Board all
4 agreed to attend.

5
6 Kathy Frenette advised Clyde Carson that there will be new accounts/line items to add to the budget. She
7 explained that welfare needs to be revised to Health and Human Services. IT needs breakdowns of computer
8 hardware and software and Managed IT. Health and Human Services needs new line items added for
9 computers and new software. She asked the Select Board if they wanted her to include the current various
10 benefit amounts. Mike Smith confirmed.

11
12 *The budget review concluded.*

13 **Other Select Board Business**

14 Mike Smith asked for the position of the Select Board regarding the cease-and-desist order for the tree house.
15 He distributed a copy of a cease-and-desist order that includes fines pursuant to the RSA. Harry Seidel spoke
16 about potential violations regarding septic issues. Mike Smith stressed that the property owner has ignored the
17 denial for a driveway. The Select Board agreed to ask the Town's legal counsel to review the letter.

18
19 Mike Smith asked for the position of the Select Board regarding MadgeTech. He stressed that a decision needs
20 to be made. He advised the Select Board that an "after the fact" permit has been applied for. Faith Minton
21 recapped the directives that Building Inspector Tom Baye has issued. Mike Smith expressed frustration that the
22 concrete, foundation, walls and trusses are all in without a permit. The Select Board will revisit the issue next
23 week. The Select Board agreed to invite the tree house property owner to come in and talk to the Select Board.

24
25 Election times: Harry Seidel will be available from 7:00am-12:00pm and possibly later in the day. Faith Minton
26 will be in at 10am. Mike Smith will be in at 7:00am.

27
28 Harry Seidel spoke about the Housing Champion program. The Deadline is November 15th. He stressed that if
29 the Town has the status of the Housing Champion program it will put the Town in a better position for grants.

30 31 **IV. Adjournment**

32 **Harry Seidel made a motion seconded by Faith Minton to adjourn the meeting at 3:39 PM. Motion passed**
33 **unanimously.**

34
35 Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty
36 Edits – Judith Newman-Rogers