



# TOWN OF WARNER

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

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

## Select Board Meeting Minutes December 19, 2024 1:00 PM

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 1:12 PM

**Present:** Michael Smith (Chair) via Zoom, Faith Minton, Harry Seidel, Kathy Frenette Town Administrator, Judy Newman-Rogers Selectboard Administrative Assistant and Ray Martin, Budget Committee.

### II. Superintendent, John Fortney, Kearsarge Regional Scholl District

John Fortney stated that he would like to meet with the Select Board on an annual basis. He advised the Select Board: there will be five warrant articles to be discussed at the deliberative session on January 4, 2025; the first two items are \$100,000 for capital improvements and \$100,000 for the roof project; those items are only funded if there is money left over; he spoke about the return of funds to offset the tax burden; the district has the statutory ability to hang on to 5% but over the last few years the district has only held back 2 ½%; the district will continue to build budgets that address their needs; the School District has been forced to contract out for special needs services; the School District budgets for a full complement of staff; the district retains 2 ½% of anything not spent and the remainder is returned to the taxpayers.

John Fortney continued: the warrant article for General Operation Fund is in the amount of \$55,387,481; the Budget Committee and School Board both are in agreement for that amount; of that amount there is a little over one million dollars of new money and of that, \$700,000 is for health benefits which are uncontrollable costs; after the \$700,000 is accounted for there really only is approximately \$300,000-\$400,000 of discretionary spending.

Mr. Fortney spoke about: the collective bargaining agreement for the teachers; the recruitment challenges the School District faces; the agreement provides teachers with a 3% increase next year in the amount of \$857,617, 2.75% for 2026-2027 \$879,608, and 2.75% for 2027-2028 \$861,580; the group agreed to pay another 3 quarters of one percent into health insurance; the current starting salary for a teacher is \$41,000; next year that will go up to \$45,000; there are teachers commuting from all over the state. He spoke about the housing challenges in the district and the shift in hiring qualifications and ability to train candidates.

John Fortney advised: they received a petition warrant article to put a tax cap in place; currently the per pupil expenditures is approximately \$32,000-\$33,000 (includes busing, heating etc.); tuition is between \$22,000-\$23,000; the petition warrant article calls for a flat rate of \$27,000 which is adjusted every year by the consumer price index and that is the most amount of money that can be appropriated; if that cap was in place now they would be looking at a \$10,083,000 deficit which would have required a \$10,000,000 cut out of the School District's budget. He outlined the impacts that a tax cap would have on the School District and students.

1 Mike Smith expressed his opinion that a select board representative should be on the School Board. Faith  
2 Minton explained that Warner has two representatives on the School Board and anyone is permitted to run for a  
3 seat on the School Board. Judy Newman-Rogers stated that in the past the School Board representatives have  
4 come to Select Board meetings to keep them informed during the year. There was brief discussion on the  
5 membership make-up of the Municipal Budget Committee.  
6

7 John Fortney assured the Select Board that he will forward the warrant articles to the Select Board.  
8

### 9 **III. Capital Budget.**

10 Harry Seidel suggested the Select Board discuss the Capital Budget on Monday. Clyde Carson outlined the  
11 Capital Budget process: the Planning Board prepares the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) for 6 years out  
12 receiving input from departments; the CIP is presented to the Select Board as an advisory document. Kathy  
13 Frenette suggested establishing a capital reserve fund for future IT needs. The Select Board agreed to wait for  
14 Mike Smith to return before making any adjustments to the capital budget. They acknowledged the Budget  
15 Committee's schedule, but agreed it is their responsibility to conduct a thorough review of the capital budget.  
16 The Select Board agreed to meet at 10:00 AM Monday December 23, 2024.  
17

### 18 **III. Non-Public Session (If needed, RSA 91-A:3 II (a,b,c,d,e,f,g,h,i,j,k,l) )**

19 None  
20

### 21 **IV. Adjournment**

22 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed**  
23 **unanimously.**  
24

25 The meeting adjourned at 2:40 PM.  
26

27 Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty  
28 Edits by Judy Newman-Rogers, Selectboard Admin Asst.  
29