

TOWN OF WARNER



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

Select Board Public Meeting DRAFT Minutes January 28, 2025, 10:00 AM

Lower Meeting Room Warner Town Hall 5 E Main St

I. Open the Meeting and Roll Call

Chair Smith called the meeting to order at 10: **audio issue** AM

Present: Michael Smith (Chair), Faith Minton, Harry Seidel via Zoom, Kathy Frenette

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Faith Minton to allow Harry Seidel to attend by Zoom. Roll Call Vote Mike Smith YES and Faith Minton YES

Mike Smith stated that the order of business will be adjusted

c. Warner River Local Advisory Committee Member Appointment, Mickey Benson

Mickey Benson has been a Warner resident for a few years and lives along the river.

Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to appoint Mickey Benson to the Warner River Local Advisory Committee. Roll Call vote Harry Seidel YES, Faith Minton YES and Mike Smith YES

e. Reeds North, Lower-Level Expansion

Steve Reddy (owner of Reeds North) explained that Reeds North is an existing commercial business, and they are requesting to expand into an existing commercial space.

Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Harry Seidel to authorize Steve Reddy, owner of Reeds North, to expand his current commercial business into the lower level furthermore when all licensing is agreed upon with the State Fire Marshal the Select Board will grant final approval.

Roll Call Vote Harry Seidel YES, Faith Minton YES and Mike Smith YES

Discussion on the motion: Ed Mical asked if this requires a site plan review. Mike Smith stated that it does not require a site plan review because it is not a change in use or square footage. Steve Reddy explained that he is required to submit an Assembly Permit with the Warner Fire Department. He will provide the Select Board a copy of the Assembly Permit when issued.

Darcie Buskey stated that an accusation has been made against the Town Administrator, and she would like for public comment to be heard. Mike Smith stated that he would like to hold off on the topic at this time. Darcie Buskey advised the Select Board that she has a letter of support for Kathy that she would like to read because she cannot stay for the entire meeting. Mike Smith requested she forward the letter to the Select Board.

c. Land Use Change Tax (LUCT) Abatement request Map 18 Lot 28

Harry Seidel explained that after reviewing the issue he is in agreement with the decision of Loren Martin the Town's Assessor. Faith Minton believes the Select Board needs to rely on the professional guidance from the assessor.

1 **Harry Seidel made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to agree with the decision of the professional**
2 **assessor from Avitar Associates of New England regarding Map 18 Lot 28 Land Use Change Tax**
3 **abatement. Roll Call Vote Faith Minton YES, Mike Smith YES and Harry Seidel YES.**

4 Harry Seidel spoke about the employee benefit package explaining that the Select Board did their best to
5 offer a strong benefit package for the employees and recognize the cost to the town. He stated there was a
6 change made to the co-pay that has been controversial and has impacted the employees. He mentioned the
7 possibility of making an adjustment that would be reflected in the operating budget to help relieve the burden
8 of a higher deductible. Ray Martin explained that the employee deductible went from \$1,500 up to a net up
9 to \$5,600 because the deductible itself went from \$3,000 to \$7,150 as a way to reduce cost. He proposed that
10 through a warrant article if approved the Select Board increase the Employee Expendable Trust Fund to
11 \$40,000 to come from the unexpended fund balance not from taxes. He reiterated that the Town's
12 contribution would increase to \$5,000 and the employee portion would be \$2,100. Ray Martin spoke about
13 the need to maintain the town's workforce. Kathy Frenette stated that she is hoping to change the open
14 enrollment period to July. The Select Board supported the proposal.

15 **II. Select Board Business**

16 **b. Review of Overall 2025 Proposed Budget**

17 The Select Board reviewed the proposed 2025 Operating Budget, Harry Seidel presented his questions and
18 suggested cuts to the operating budget. No change was made.

19 The Select Board reviewed the proposed 2025 Capital Budget \$625,000. There was a discussion regarding
20 the use of \$50,000 from the Transfer Station Capital Reserve Fund, reducing the proposed capital budget
21 down to \$575,000. Mike Smith stated that he does not support cutting the \$50,000 because the Transfer
22 Station is in need of repairs. Faith Minton spoke about the need for a plan for using the \$200,000 currently in
23 the CRF. Harry Seidel would prefer to use what is in the CRF and not put any in this year. Mike Smith feels
24 that it is appropriate to continue to put funds away. There was discussion regarding the use of the
25 unexpended fund balance and the concern that the current balance is not sufficient. Additional discussion
26 related to the need to put money aside to help the Town secure grants. Faith Minton stated that she would
27 support reducing the \$50,000 to zero or possibly \$10,000. She would also support a CRF for the WCC and
28 the contingency fund for the Emergency Management request as outlined in article 14. Mike Smith stated
29 that he would support reducing the request for a transfer station CRF to \$30,000 and the remaining for the
30 WCC and merging the Emergency Management request with the contingency fund. Harry Seidel explained
31 he is trying to reduce the Capital Budget; he would prefer to take the \$20,000 for the WCC from the
32 unexpended fund balance. Mike Smith and Faith Minton would prefer not to take the money from the
33 unexpended fund balance. Tim Allen addressed the needs at the transfer station. Faith Minton reiterated the
34 need for a plan for the Transfer Station CRF.
35
36

37 Clyde Carson advised the Select Board that the unassigned fund balance is approximately \$830,000 which is
38 just under 7% of the expenses covered. He stated the goal is 10% \$1,200,000. He estimated that there would
39 be approximately \$200,000 of surplus that will go back to the unassigned fund balance. Harry Seidel
40 reiterated that he would like to take the \$200,000 surplus add it to the unexpended fund bringing the balance
41 to \$1,030,000 and take \$40,000 for the Employee Expendable Trust fund, \$20,000 towards the WCC CRF
42 and \$6,500 for Emergency Management and \$10,000 for the contingency fund. He explained that it would
43 minimize the tax burden for residents and improve the town's position relative to the unassigned fund
44 balance. Faith Minton agreed but would like the transfer station CRF to be reduced to \$25,000. Harry
45 explained that after hearing Tim Allen's thoughts he is satisfied with keeping the \$50,000 for the Transfer
46 Station CRF.
47

1 Mike Smith explained that the Budget Committee had a question about the Administrative Assistant wage
2 line item. Clyde Carson explained that what was budgeted for in 2024 was 35 hour/week. He stated the
3 individual worked 40 hours a week plus overtime for meeting attendance.

4
5 The proposed 2025 budget stands at \$4,667,621.

6
7 The Select Board took a 10-minute recess, the meeting resumed at 1:35 PM.

8
9 Clyde Carson advised the Select Board that there are refunds that need to be issued for over payments on
10 property taxes.

11
12 Map 37 Lot 6 \$4.36 Map 10 Lot 44 \$59.00 Map 18 Lot 41-3 \$7.96 Map 18 Lot 44 \$2,724.34
13 Map 9 Lot 13 \$1,425.85 all to be refunded to Corelogic.

14
15 Map 31 Lot 5 \$7,627.67 refunded to homeowner Map 31 Lot 9 \$182.27 refunded to homeowners.

16 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to approve the refunds for overpayments of**
17 **property taxes as stated by Clyde Carson. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

18
19 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 4: Shall the Town vote to raise**
20 **an appropriate the sum of \$4,667,621 as the 2025 Operating Budget for the general municipal**
21 **operation? This amount does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles**
22 **addressed separately. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES and Smith YES**

23
24 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 5 Capital Reserve Fund in**
25 **the amount of \$20,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

26
27 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 6 Police Department Vehicle**
28 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$25,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
29 **Smith YES**

30
31 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 7 Bridge Repair Replacement**
32 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$50,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
33 **Smith YES**

34
35 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 8 Highway Equipment Capital**
36 **Reserve Fund in the amount of \$265,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
37 **Smith YES**

38
39 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 9 Transfer Station Facility**
40 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$50,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
41 **Smith YES**

42
43 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 10 Transfer Station Equipment**
44 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$ 25,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
45 **Smith YES**

46
47 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 11 Firefighters Equipment**
48 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$35,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
49 **Smith YES**

1 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 12 Fire and Rescue Vehicle**
2 **Capital Reserve Fund in the amount of \$100,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
3 **Smith YES**

4
5 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 13 Property Reval Capital**
6 **Reserve Fund in the amount of 40,000 as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

7
8 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 14 to establish a Contingency**
9 **Fund for the current year unanticipated funds in the amount of \$10,000. This sum is to come from the**
10 **unassigned fund balance not raised by taxation. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

11
12 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 15 Employee Expendable Trust**
13 **Fund in the amount of \$40,000 funded through the unassigned fund balance not taxation. Roll Call**
14 **Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

15
16 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept article 16 to establish a Capital**
17 **Reserve Fund for the Warner Community Center in the amount of \$20,000 funded through the**
18 **unassigned fund balance not taxation to address energy efficiency, safety issues and other**
19 **improvements. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

20
21 **e. Submitted Petition Warrant Articles**

22 **i. To Increase the Select Board to 5 Members**

23 The Select Board discussed the petition warrant article to increase from 3 to 5 Select Board members.
24 **Harry Seidel made a motion seconded by Faith Minton not to recommend the petition warrant article**
25 **as submitted to increase the Select Board to 5 members. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES**
26 **Smith YES**

27 **ii. Modify the Veterans Tax Credit (RSA 72:28, II) from \$500 to \$750**

28 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to recommend the petition warrant article as**
29 **submitted to modify Veterans Tax Credit to \$750. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

30
31 **iii. Modify the All-Veterans Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b) from \$500 to \$750**

32 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to recommend the petition warrant article as**
33 **submitted to modify the All-Veterans Tax Credit. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

34 **IV. Town Administrator's Report**

35 Kathy Frenette advised the Select Board that she has been focusing on the following

36 -Drafting warrant articles for the review by the DRA

37 -Finalizing the town budget

38 -Draft of the personnel policy

39 -Continuing to work on the Managed IT transition. The Police Department firewall needs to be replaced next
40 month. The cost will be roughly \$1084.

41
42 **V. Consent Agenda**

43 None

44
45 **VI. Manifest**

46 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Harry Seidel to accept the manifest motion for January 28,**
47 **2025, as written. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

48

1 **VII. Public Comment**

2 John Leavitt spoke about Zoom participation from the public without the requirement to identify themselves.
3 Harry Seidel agreed but questioned if there is a legal right to not identify themselves. Kathy Frenette stated
4 that she will check with the New Hampshire Municipal Association for guidance.
5

6 **VIII. Select Board Unanticipated Business**

7 Mike Smith stated the Select board has received correspondence from Bill Meadows pertaining to a water
8 supply issue. Mike Smith that he has spoken to Ray Martin and the issue has been resolved. He will contact
9 Bill Meadows to make sure he is satisfied.

10 Mike Smith spoke about a request from Jim McLaughlin to replace a sign at the roundabout. An estimate was
11 provided to the Select Board in the amount of \$2,200 to replace the sign. Mike Smith will look into ways
12 funds can be raised.
13

14 **a. Proposed Select Board Rules of Procedure**

15 The Select Board continued their review of the draft rules of procedure. Faith Minton questioned the time
16 requirements on pages 2 and 3 inquiring if they are in conflict with each other. The Select Board agreed the
17 time requirements are correct and should remain in the document. Mike Smith will forward the document to
18 the Town attorney for review.
19

20 **II. Select Board Minutes – January 14, 2025**

21 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to approve the January 14, 2025, Select Board**
22 **minutes as amended. Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**

23 Page 2 School funding discussion strike Andover Select Board insert Andover residents

24 Page 2 middle paragraph insert strike (last name not stated) insert Shoemaker

25 Page 2 strike Narducci insert Narducci's

26 Page 2 strike was upset and insert said that

27 Page 2 replace all CNRPC to CNHRPC

28 Page 3 strike Harry Seidel:

29 Page 3 Xenakis discussion; should read a committee should be formed and start...

30 Mike Smith questioned the missing non-public information review the Zoom recording

31 Page 3 insert a comma after not spending

32 Page 5 3 lines up from bottom clarify the language of Harry Seidel's comment regarding family plans
33

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

35 None

36 **X. Adjournment**

37 **Faith Minton made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to adjourn the Select Board meeting.**

38 **Roll Call Vote Seidel YES Minton YES Smith YES**
39

40 The meeting adjourned at 7:56 PM audio difficulties, background sound made it inaudible to hear stated time

41 Select Board PUBLIC Meeting Minutes

42 Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty 1/30/2025 at 7:45 PM

43 Edited by Darcie Buskey, Assistant Clerk
44