TOWN OF WARNER

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Select Board: Alfred Hanson, Chairman
Rick Bixby, Vice Chair
Michael J. Smith

Select Board Public Meeting Minutes
September 15, 2026 6:00 PM

I. Open meeting Roll Call/Attendance and Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Alfred Hanson called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM.
The Pledge of Allegiance was recited

Select Board Present:

Select Board	In Person	Zoom	Absent
Chair Alfred Hanson	X		
V-Chair Rick Bixby	X		
Michael Smith	X-late		

Others Present:

In Person:		**Zoom**
Judy Newman-Rogers	Amelia Gardner	Zablocki
Martha Mical	Jon Nobel	FM
Ed Mical	Natalie Nobel	F Minton
Jon France	John Leavitt	
Herm Blanchette	James Gaffney	
Margaret Bastien		

II. Public Hearing

To hear public comments on the request to withdraw and expend $17,000 from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for a street sweeper attachment to the Town loader.

Alfred Hanson opened the Public Hearing at 6:02 PM

Herm Blanchette explained that the Highway Department is looking to purchase a front-mounted sweeper for the loader. He stated that the current street sweeper is a 1993 model that is worn out, it needs the engine pulled out and motor mounts replaced. Herm Blanchette explained that if the attachment is purchased it would be one unit to maintain (one motor and one set of hydraulics). He stated that it would be a savings to the town. Herm Blanchette stated that a brand-new sweeper is $24,000. He explained that this is a new sweeper that has been sitting on a pallet for three years. Herm Blanchette explained that the price $7,000 less than it would be to buy a new one next year.

Alfred Hanson opened the floor for public comment.

Martha Mical asked if Herm Blanchette had seen the sweeper functioning. Herm Blanchette explained that he had seen it in operation.

Ed Mical spoke in support of this purchase.

Alfred Hanson closed the floor to public comment.
The Select Board began deliberations.

Alfred Hanson asked if the current street sweeper would be taken out of service. Herm Blanchette confirmed. Mike Smith stated that he supports the request. Rick Bixby stated that it is a smart move.

Action

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve and expend $17,000 from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the street sweeper attachment for the town loader. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES, Smith YES Hanson YES

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to close the public hearing. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Smith YES Hanson YES

The public hearing was closed at 6:08 PM.

II. Select Board Business: Departments

a. Highway, Herm Blanchette; Update on the Highway Garage.

Herm Blanchette advised the Select Board that the removal of the old roof panels had begun. He questioned the roofers where the new panels were that were not being used and he was told that they were going to try to reuse the old panels. Herm Blanchette asserted that he stopped the work and they are waiting for the new panels. He assured the Select Board that the Town was promised a new roof and that is what will be installed. Herm Blanchette stated that the old insulation has been removed. He informed the Select Board that once the new roof and the new insulation is finished the electrician and plumber can start their work. He hopes the new roof panels will be delivered within the week.

b. Emergency Management, Ed Mical

Ed Mical requested the Select Board accept the local emergency operation plan. He explained that Warner has had an emergency operation plan since the 1990's. Ed Mical explained that roughly every five years the plan is reviewed and rewritten to be compliant with the State and Federal guidelines. Ed Mical explained that in March of 2026 he received approval for a grant to hire a contractor to work with the Town to update the plan and that has been completed.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to accept the local Emergency Operation Plan dated 2026. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Smith YES Hanson YES

c. Fire Department, Jon France Fire Chief

Fire Chief Jon France requested funds for a new Fire Department vehicle. He explained that part of his Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) fleet replacement for the last five years has been to replace rescue 2, a suburban. Jon France stated that the current rescue 2 vehicle would be converted to a utility command vehicle. He advised the Select Board that currently the department does not have a command vehicle for staff. Jon France stated that he is looking at a Chevy Tahoe that is (from the state bid). He stated that he has two pricing quotes for the rear console assembly and the radio. Jon France recapped the pricing; Tahoe $55,400, console $17,500 and the radio $5,500 just under $80,000. He noted that the CIP reflected $90,000. He advised the Select Board that MacMulkin dealership has a few red vehicles and they agreed to hold one.

Alfred Hanson opened the floor to Select Board deliberations. Rick Bixby appreciates that responders will not be bringing their personal vehicles to a call. Alfred Hanson asked if the cost to the operating budget for retaining the old vehicle is known. Jon France explained that the new vehicle is replacing a 2013 vehicle but maintenance wise he does not see a significant cost. Alfred Hanson inquired about the insurance cost, Jon France explained that he does not have the answer to that. Jon France stated that he is looking at downsizing his fleet in the future. Jon France stated that the fleet replacement Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) has a balance of $460,761. He spoke about the importance of adhering to the replacement schedule.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the withdrawal of $80,000 from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a Rescue II 2026 Chevy Tahoe.

Discussion on the motion; there was a brief discussion regarding including the console, and radio and vehicle lettering costs. Jon France explained that each item would be a separate withdrawal.

Alfred Hanson withdrew his motion, Rick Bixby withdrew the second to the motion. Roll Call Vote Hanson YES Bixby YES Smith ABSTAIN.
Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the withdrawal of up to $85,000 from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of a Rescue II 2026 Chevy Tahoe, equipped with a console and radio. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

d. **Land Use, Peg Bastien**

Peg Bastien provided the Select Board with a Land Use department update. She stated that August and September have been very busy. She explained that three applications were submitted in August consisting of a two lot subdivision, a lot line adjustment and a site plan review. Peg Bastien recapped the recent Planning Board meeting.

Peg Bastien explained that the Public Hearing Continued – Site Plan Review for the Dollar General and CATCH housing were held at the last meeting. She advised the Select Board that a letter sent to the Planning Board requesting they deny the site plan application was reviewed and each item rejected. She informed the Select Board that the application was approved with conditions. Peg Bastien advised the Select Board that the Planning Board approved the necessary edits to the site plan review regulations. She explained that the Flood Plain Development ordinance has been approved and is on the Town's website.

Peg Bastien informed the Select Board that during last night's meeting there were attendees via Zoom who were not residents of Warner. She explained that when requested to speak they were cut off upon stating where they were from. Peg Bastien alerted the Select Board that an applicant from the Planning Board meeting notified her that he received an email falsely claiming it was from her asking for a wire transfer. She notified the IT department. Peg Bastien also received a call from the applicant's bank. She spoke about the precautions and guardrails that the Town can implement. Alfred Hanson requested a letter from the IT manager outlining the steps he suggests the Town take.

Peg Bastien explained that some members of the Planning Board have expressed their frustrations regarding the usability of the Town's website. She explained that to better serve the community she has adjusted her hours to have a mix of morning and afternoon. She stated that Monday and Tuesday she will be in the office from 8:30 AM to 12:00 PM and Wednesday 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM for a total of ten hours. Peg Bastien stated that she has seen a steady stream of customers. She will be attending the budget work session tomorrow.

e. **Elizabeth Labbe, West Joppa Road**

Elizabeth Labbe updated the Select Board on a situation on West Joppa Road. She explained that the road being built has an old right of way. Elizabeth Labbe explained that when I-89 was built there were right of ways implemented. She explained that this was supposed to be a service road but it was never built until now with the permission of DOT. She spoke to Eric Sargent at the State and he is going to make sure that the builders of the road adhere to all the criteria. She stated that the letter stated that it will be accepted as a class VI road.

Elizabeth Labbe stressed that town ordinances must be followed. She referenced previous deeds and recorded documents. James Gaffney questioned the language in the deed, he stressed that it must be clear in the deed to be legal. He stated that the deed must include a description of the property. Alfred Hanson asked if any of this is in the deed. Elizabeth Labbe stated that they do not have a right of way and that is part of the reason why they have petitioned the State: because their property is land locked with no way to access it. She recommends that the Select Board invite Eric Sargent to come to a meeting to discuss the situation. Alfred Hanson would like to hear from the land owners and Eric Sargent from the State. Elizabeth Labbe will contact Eric Sargent. Amelia Gardener would like a conversation with the landowners and to stop the project until an engineering review is done. She stressed that damage is being done to West Joppa Road. Elizabeth Labbe asked her to submit that in writing, Amelia Gardener agreed. Jon Nobel said that both sides of West Joppa and the side of Rte. 89 are crumbling due to the road traffic. Herm Blanchette confirmed there is damage. Mike Smith stated that the Town should issue a cease and desist until the matter gets figured out. Alfred Hanson agreed. Elizabeth Labbe requested the driveway permit be put on hold.

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to issue a cease and desist on Map 10 Lot 37 for the construction of a driveway. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson ABSTAINED

Elizabeth Labbe explained that the state issued a temporary use and occupancy agreement over the right of way October 24, 2025. Jon Nobel asked if the cease and desist prohibits them from accessing the abutters land. He stated it should be made clear that they are prohibiting the building not the access. Martha Mical asked if the Police have been involved. Amelia Gardener stated that the Police Department has not been involved. She noted that the people constructing the road are there late into the night. Alfred Hanson explained that he was told that they work full time and they are doing the work in their free time. Elizabeth Labbe stated that she will have the letter ready for signing tomorrow.

f. **Fuel Bids**

Elizabeth Labbe advised the Select Board that the fuel bids are in. She explained that the bids will be honored until midnight. Alfred Hanson explained that 3 bids were sent out and only two vendors submitted bids for heating fuel and propane. He stated that diesel fuel is not receiving bids, it is pump price. Alfred Hanson explained that one of bidders did not bid on the propane because it would require them to change the current tanks.

Alfred Hanson asked if the Town could use one vendor for heating fuel and one vendor for propane. Elizabeth Labbe confirmed. Alfred Hanson suggested accepting Huckleberry's bid for fuel and Irving for propane. Rick Bixby noted that Irving offers a discount to Town of Warner employees, he questioned if that is still available if they split fuel and propane between the two vendors.

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to buy #2 heating oil from Huckleberry at $4.95 per gallon. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to buy propane from Irving at $1.51 per gallon. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

III. Select Board Other Business

a. **Tax Collector, Kimberley Edelmann Request for two tax refunds:**

1.) Jeremy and Rachel Hebert 855 Route 103 East for $3,551.47 plus interest in the amount of $38.92 per day. Alfred Hanson explained that the Hebert's paid their taxes after the lender paid.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to approve the refund in the amount of $3,551.47 plus interest in the amount of $38.92 per day for Jeremy and Rachel Hebert of 855 Route 103 East for the taxes that were paid twice by the Hebert's and their mortgage company. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

2.) Hastings Rigollet of 112 Red Chimney Road and three properties on Red Chimney Road $807.11 plus interest of $8.85 per day.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to approve the refund of $807.11 plus interest in the amount of $8.85 per day for Hastings Rigollet of 112 Red Chimney Road and three properties on Red Chimney Road. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Smith YES Hanson YES

b. **Housing Committee Resignation of Conner Spern**

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to accept the resignation of Conner Spern from the HOP grant II committee. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanon YES

IV. Public Comment

James Gaffney stated that at Town Meeting the town voted as read "shall the town vote to require the Select Board to outsource payroll to a qualified payroll company no later than September 30, 2026".
Alfred Hanson explained that it is on the next Select Board's agenda. James Gaffney stated that it must be completed by September 30, 2026. Alfred Hanson explained that all of the studies have been done and it is on the agenda for September 29, 2026. James Gaffney asked if the quotes are posted on the Town website. Alfred Hanon explained that he is unsure because there have been difficulties with the quotes, and the price keeps changing with add-ons. James Gaffney requested the quotes be posted on town website as soon as possible prior to the Select Board meeting.

Faith Minton via Zoom spoke about the possibility of closing the Warner Simonds School and Sutton School. She explained that in the 90's when the school district proposed adding on to the Simonds, Sutton and New London schools they proposed to build a multi-purpose room. She explained that when they did that proposition it was presented to the taxpayers that this addition would also be for the community's use in a way to persuade the voters to support the addition. She reiterated that it is a community building. Faith Minton stated that approximately 6 years ago the School District proposed to take the middle school in New London and convert it to a professional development center. She stated that they built the SAU offices for all the administration and a big professional development room for meetings. She would have preferred that money to be spent in areas that benefit the students. Faith Minton explained that it would have been more appropriate for maintenance on the Simonds School. Alfred Hanson stated that there is a committee looking into the ramifications of closing the Simonds School and the money that was set aside for the Simonds School but was deferred elsewhere.

James Gaffney explained that the deed to the Simonds School has conditions that if they cease using it as a school it reverts to the current land owner. He stated that the School District has an obligation to maintain the school and it appears they have not been doing that. Alfred Hanson reiterated that the committee is looking at the money that was deferred from the Simonds School. He pointed out that the middle school was built and is only half full. Martha Mical stated that the Simon School only has 114 students and the school was built for 200 students. James Gaffney stated that the SAU should be held accountable for the items they deferred maintenance on.

V. Consent Agenda: None

VI. Manifest: None

VII. Minutes: August 11, 2026 and August 25, 2026

August 11, 2026

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the Select Board meeting minutes for August 11, 2026 as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

August 25, 2026

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the Select Board meeting minutes for August 25, 2026 as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

VIII. Non-Public Session if needed

None

IX. Adjournment

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to adjourn the Select Board Meeting. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 PM

Respectfully submitted on 9/22/26 by Tracy Doherty

Edits, Judith Newman-Rogers, Select Board Admin Assistant