TOWN OF WARNER

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

Select Board Meeting Minutes
October 27, 2026 6:00 PM

I. Open meeting / Roll Call / Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Alfred Hanson called the meeting to order at 6:01 PM. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
Select Board present: Chairman Alfred Hanson, Vice Chair Rick Bixby and Mike Smith.
Public present: Judy Newman-Rogers, Clyde Carson, Herm Blanchette, Peg Bastien, Ed Mical, Travis Downs, Varick Proper, Steve Riale, Sara McNeil, Martha Mical, Faith Minton, Russ Smith and Jordan Dunn.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Mike Smith to move up Warner Representative to the Kearsarge Regional School District. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

II. Select Board Business

Kearsarge Regional School District Representatives

Patrick McGowan (Warner) Jamie MacKenna (New London)

Patrick McGowan explained that there a forum and presentation scheduled for upstairs. He stated that a few issues that will be discussed. He advised the Select Board that the School Board has voted to begin planning a two school (elementary) consolidation. He stated that Warner students would be going to Bradford and Sutton students would be going to New London. Patrick McGowan explained that recent information received indicates that the Simon school consolidation is not feasible under the current plan. Patrick McGowan explained that the School Board voted to remove Simon school from further consideration for consolidation. Alfred Hanson clarified that Sutton is the only elementary school currently being considered for consolidation. Patrick McGowan confirmed. He cautioned that there is a petition #1374 currently being considered that would close the Sutton school. He stated that will come up for a vote on December 5th at the middle school.

Jamie MacKenna spoke to the Select Board regarding House Bill 1300. He explained that House Bill 1300 is legislation that was passed and enacted into law effective this year. Jamie McKenna stated that at the next election on November 3rd voters will be asked if want to enact a tax cap. He stated that it needs a super majority (3/5) to pass. He explained that the tax cap would cap the school budget at prior year's expenditures. Jamie MacKenna explained that the school budget is voted on in March and some of the information that this law requires the school district to submit is not known until April making the actual budget unknown. Jamie MacKenna reviewed how the tax cap would have impacted the school district for the last two years. He stated that if the tax cap was in place now with the current budget the school district would be in the red by $2 million. He explained that the teacher's union contract requires the funding of positions even if they will not be filled. Jamie McKenna explained that the tax cap would cause the school district to consider combining classrooms, reevaluate transportation contracts and reviewing AP courses. He stated that 71% of the school district budget goes towards salaries and benefits. Jamie McKenna explained that the school district is anticipating a 10% increase in benefits costs, 30% increase in transportation, and next year begins the negotiating of teacher's contracts.

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Patrick McGowan explained that the tax cap would need 60% to pass and it is on the November 3rd ballot. Jamie McKenna explained that HB1300 does two things, it caps the district wide budget and it caps the SAU budget at 6%. He noted that Kearsarge School District is under 6%. He stated that the second part of the question relating to the SAU and administrative office, states that it won't impact class room instruction. Jamie McKenna stated that is a confusing questions because that line is specific to the 6% part of the question not the original tax the budget as a whole. He explained that there have been voters who have reached out because they are confused by that.

Patrick McGowan advised that if there is a School Board recommendation to consolidate Simons School at the deliberative session the charter dictates that only the residents of Warner would vote on that but if there is a petition #1374 all registered voters in the district would vote on it. The Select Board thanked them for the information.

a. Departments

Public Works, Herm Blanchette, Update on Highway Garage

Herm Blanchette informed the Board that the building repairs are ongoing. He stated that the roof materials were delivered last week and an installer is expected tomorrow. Herm Blanchette noted that he has had some issues with the contractor relating to their workmanship. He stated that the contractor has agreed to replace the west wall of the exterior. Herm Blanchette stated that he hopes that the situation will improve. He stated that interior work will begin when the exterior is done. He originally was planning for the plumbing and electrical work will begin mid-November but that is not realistic now. He estimates completion by mid-January. Herm Blanchette assured the Select Board that he has been in contact with Primex regarding the situations. Mike Smith asked if there have been discussions with the State about annexing the State property that is temporarily housing the DPW. Herm Blanchette explained that would be a discussion for the Select Board, he has discussed the DPW's use of the property. Alfred Hanson stated that in his discussions regarding the property the state has not had any intention of selling the property.

DPW and Building Maintenance, Travis Downs to Review Town Buildings

Alfred Hanson stated that the Select Board would like a better understanding of the maintenance of the Town Hall, CAP Building, the old Fire Station and the Transfer Station. Travis Downs outlined the priorities as he sees them.

Town Hall: Travis Downs noted that the oil tanks and windows need replacing and the kitchen floor needs repairs. Septic system updates and repairs.

CAP Building: Travis Downs explained there are more serious concerns at the CAP Building

He informed the Select Board that he requested a chimney inspection. He received a quote for $19,000. Travis Downs explained that the oil tanks need to be replaced price quoted is $10,000. The handicap ramp needs to be replaced and repairs on the fire escape. Travis Downs recommended repairing the front stairs and replacing the back roof. Travis Downs explained that he is waiting on quotes for the fire suppression system. He stated that the windows and back doors need replaced. He stated that there are vinyl tiles that need attention. He explained that the Boys & Girls club have requested converting a closet to a bathroom.

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to approve the Boys & Girls club to proceed with installing a new bathroom on their floor at no cost to the taxpayers. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

Old Fire Station: Travis Downs spoke about the maintenance needed at the old fire station; sagging floors and roof replacement.

Herm Blanchette explained that Beautification Committee is requesting funding from the Fall Foliage Festival for the replacement of three shades upstairs in Town Hall.

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Transfer Station: Travis Downs explained that the walls at the Transfer Station need to be put back on plates on the foundation, two new entry ways need to be added, the heating system requires a catwalk around it for maintenance and a sink for eye washing station. Herm Blanchette stated that the plumber working at the highway garage will give them a price. Mike Smith suspects there is money in the budget to cover the cost. Travis Downs explained that the electrical meter box needs to be repaired. He advised the Select Board that the beams that hold up the roof over the compactor need to be addressed. Travis Downs stated that they are looking for a way to widen the area to reduce the equipment hitting them. He explained that insulation is needed in the walls.

Alfred Hanson questioned if the Select Board could receive a work scope of the most pressing needs. Travis Downs will provide a work scope beginning with the highest priority. He will also work on quotes.

Land Use Administration, Peg Bastien, Provide Monthly Update

Peg Bastien provided the monthly update. She informed the Select Board that the Planning Board approved a site plan for a manufacturer of the natural playgrounds located off Warner Road in the commercial district. She stated that the Planning Board approved a lot line adjustment and a two lot subdivision. Peg Bastien explained that recently the Planning Board granted a conditional approval for CATCH Housing. She advised the Select Board that the conditions for the CATCH Housing development are extensive. She recapped the conditions; winter salt and sanding management plan, fire safety conditions, ground floor commercial use requirement and annual recertification of the work force housing income eligibilities. Alfred Hanson questioned why some of the conditions were not applied from the beginning. Peg Bastien informed the Select Board that additional fraudulent emails have been going out appearing to be sent by her. She explained that the Planning Board is aware. She recommended redacting phone numbers and emails from the information that gets posted on the town's website. Alfred Hanson requested she provide the Select Board with her plan and procedures for doing that. Peg Bastien spoke about two non-conforming lots that are currently up for sale. Alfred Hanson asked Peg to research the historical significance regarding the School House property that is for sale.

Emergency Management, Ed Mical, New Flood Plain Maps

Ed Mical updated the Select Board on the new Flood Plain Maps, he explained that the new flood plain study and maps will be effective November 13th. Ed Mical explained that he has been working with the Office of Planning Development to make sure that the new flood plain development ordinance is forwarded to that office as well as the site plan review regulations. Ed Mical informed the Select Board that Warner is currently in good standing in the process. He explained that the state will forward all materials to FEMA for their review. He explained that he will provide the new maps to the assessing and the land use department.

Transfer Station, Varick Proper, Update on Out of Town Users

TABLED to the next Select Board meeting.

III. Select Board Other Business

b. Steve Riale, Discuss Responsibilities of a Compliance Officer

TABLED to the next Select Board meeting.

c. Informational Discussion, East Joppa Road Property Owner Construction

Alfred Hanson stated that the Select Board needs to make a decision on issuing a cease and desist order. Herm Blanchette informed the Select Board that the driveway permit clearly states that a 15 inch culvert is required in the ditch line on Joppa Road to catch any runoff. He stated that currently the culvert is full of dirt and there is not a culvert. He is concerned that it will freeze and cause damage to Joppa Road.

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Herm Blanchette questions if the state's rules/regulations are being followed pertaining to class VI roads. Alfred Hanson explained that originally there was a culvert in the location. He explained that the owners have been given the opportunity to come in and discuss the situation in search of a resolution.

Mike Smith asked for clarification, he stated that the Board previously voted to send a cease and desist letter. Alfred Hanson explained that the letter was held on the suggestion of Mike Smith to ask them to come to a Select Board meeting.

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to immediately serve a cease and desist letter as originally voted on. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

The Board agreed to have cease and desist served by the Police Department giving the owner seven days to rectify the situation. Herm Blanchette expressed concern of the area freezing. Mike Smith explained that they have seven days and if it is not remedied in seven days the Town will fix it and the owners will be charged. He stressed it is not fair to the taxpayers.

d. Supplemental Conservation Easement

Mike Smith made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson that the Select Board approve and sign the supplemental to the conservation easement which will resolve pending litigation between docket # 217-2026-CB-00654. Roll Call Vote Smith YES Bixby YES Hanson YES

e. CheckMate Payroll Services

Alfred Hanson explained that he met with Casey Rollins and John Robinson from CheckMate on Wednesday October 14, 2026. He stated that the Town needs to sign an agreement with CheckMate that specifies the payroll options the Town would like. He outlined the options: standard payroll processing, tax services and direct deposit. Alfred Hanson noted that the agreement includes a fee schedule for the authorization for the transfer of funds from the Town's bank. He stated that the agreement can be cancelled with a 60 day notice. Alfred Hanson explained that once the agreement has been finalized CheckMate will assign a staff member to work with the Town in establishing the payroll data system. He informed the Board that CheckMate will need payroll information, accounting mapping, benefits and accrual policies. He stated that this will require multiple sessions and a significant amount of time and resources to ensure that the information is accurate. He added that the testing period will then begin in January 2027. Alfred Hanson stated that the CheckMate estimated completion and target date to go live is February 2027

IV. Public Comment

Jordan Dunn 200 Bible Hill Road spoke about the Update on Out of Town Users at the Transfer Station agenda item that was tabled until the next Select Board meeting. He advised the Select Board that effective October 30th he will no longer be able to use the transfer station, he asked if the Select Board would extend that date to the next Select Board meeting. The Select Board agreed and they will notify Varick Proper. Judy Newman-Rogers made a point of order that the address given of 200 Bible Hill Road is in Bradford. The property owner (female name not stated) asserted that they own property in Warner. Jordan Dunn stated that the property in Warner is where the trash is generated.

Barbara Marty asked the Select Board is able to elaborate on the conservation easement. Mike Smith stated that he will give Barb Marty a copy.

V. Consent Agenda October 27, 2026

Motion by the Warner Select Board to approve the following previously signed request for the trustees of the trust fund for:

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a. $6,500 from the bridge repair replacement capital reserve fund to pay the invoice from Mission Concrete.
b. $13,440 from the bridge repair replacement capital reserve fund to pay the invoice from JM Timber to re-plank Joppa Bridge.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the Consent Agenda as read. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

VI. Manifest

Motion for the Warner Select Board to approve the following previously signed manifest:
Accounts payable check numbers 13072 through 13074 dated October 13, 2026 in the amount of $63,032.38 for the October 15, 2026 biweekly payroll.
Biweekly payroll check numbers 4341 through 4353 and direct deposit check numbers EO3605 through EO3653 dated October 15, 2026 for a net payroll of $49,181.87.
Accounts payable check numbers 13075 through 13111 dated October 21, 2026 in the amount of $938,051.67 which includes the monthly payment of $860,000 to the Kearsarge Regional School District.

Motion to authorize the Select Board to approve and order the treasurer to sign the following manifest.
Accounts payable check numbers 13112 through 13114 dated October 27, 2026 in the amount of $58,841.27 for the October 29, 2026 biweekly payroll deposits. Biweekly payroll check numbers 4354 through 4359 and direct deposit check numbers EO3635 through EO3567 dated October 29, 2026 with a net payroll of $45,544.78.

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the October 27, 2026 manifest as read. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

VII. Minutes: September 16, 2026 September 17, 2026 September 29, 2026 and October 13, 2026

September 16, 2026

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the September 16, 2026 Select Board meeting minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

September 17, 2026

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to approve the September 7, 2026 Select Board meeting minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

September 29, 2026

Rick Bixby made a motion seconded by Alfred Hanson to approve the September 29, 2026 Select Board meeting minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

October 13, 2026

Alfred Hanson made a motion seconded by Rick Bixby to approve the October 13, 2026 Select Board meeting minutes as presented. Roll Call Vote Bixby YES Hanson YES Smith ABSTAIN

VIII. Non-Public Session if needed (RSA 91-A:3 II (a-m))

None

IX. Adjournment

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

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 PM
Respectfully submitted by Tracy Doherty

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