

**Town Deliberative Session**  
**February 8, 2017**

**Board of Selectmen:** Chairman Christopher Hutchins, Michael Sununu and James Thompson

**Moderator:** John M. Hayden

**Town Clerk:** Sue McKinnon

**Deputy Town Clerk:** Donna Newman

Moderator John Hayden called the meeting to order at 7:02pm. He led us in the pledge of allegiance and introduced the head table.

Moderator Hayden explained the purpose of the meeting was to deliberate, discuss and possibly amend the town warrant articles and budget. He briefly reviewed the rules and procedures of the meeting.

Article 1. Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$1,564,978? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$1,512,660 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newfields or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. Selectmen recommend the \$1,564,978 as set forth on said budget.

Chairman Hutchins mentioned that the budget increases are directly related to solid waste collection and the highway and streets budget. Tipping fees for solid waste collection have increased this year and the highway budget has changed to reflect the amount of money we receive from the state highway block grant. Michael Sununu added that this year the mosquito larviciding is included as a line item under pest control due to the fact that it has passed as a warrant article for the past 10 years. He also mentioned that in 2016 the conservation bond was refinanced, saving the town a significant amount of money.

A motion was made by Win Fream and seconded by Kim Crisp to increase the operating budget by \$3,000 to be added to the library line for the purchase of library books.

Mike Price asked if there was money available in the budget now for books. Win explained that the Selectmen cut their budget by \$3,000. The Library Trustees are not looking for an increase, they annually budget \$3,000 for books. Friends of the Library contributes money towards the purchase of books if it is available.

Don Doane asked for an explanation since the Library budget is already \$3,000 more than last year. Win explained that the Library Trustees went to the Selectmen and asked for raises for

the employees; they haven't had a raise in three years. The Library Director does an excellent job and has helped the Library grow to what it is today. Her pay is below the standard at \$24.00 per hour with no benefits. The Library Trustees value the Library Director and she deserves a raise. Donations from Friends of the Library were used to expand the parking lot last year. According to Kim Crisp, there is no money in their budget for books this year because the Selectmen removed it.

Mike Sununu explained that when the Selectmen met with the Library Trustees their budget was up \$6,000 over last year. Over the past 5 years the Library budget has increased 60%, which in his opinion is significant. The Selectmen asked which line the Trustees would cut money from if they had to and they chose books. They do receive funding from trust funds, fundraising, and Friends of the Library to purchase books.

Kim Crisp said the last few years the Town has supported the purchase of books and it has been part of the budget. Michael Sununu added that historically the purchase of books was not town supported. The money came from fundraising and donations. The Library budget in the past 10 years has increased \$20,000.

Joe Perna commented that the implication of not funding books is that the Library will have to rely on fundraising and donations, which cannot be guaranteed.

Beth Lieberman, board member of Friends of the Library, said they have bake sales and do minor fundraising but they can't ensure that money will be available for books. Some of their donations have been used for computers, rugs, cabinetry and woodworking.

The motion to increase the Library budget by \$3,000 for a total operating budget of \$1,567,978 was voted on and passed. Article 1 will be placed on the ballot as amended.

Article 2. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$275,000 for the purpose of renovating the town offices. The sum of \$175,000 to come from unassigned fund balance and the remainder \$100,000 to come from taxation. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the renovation is completed or by December 31, 2018, whichever is sooner. Recommended by Selectmen

Selectman Jamie Thompson explained that \$175,000 for this warrant article will come from the towns unreserved fund balance. \$100,000 will be raised through taxation and will be a one-time cost. He feels it is a very good plan which doesn't change the outside of the building and will double the size of the police department and make the offices safer.

Jen Macpherson asked why the extra money was not going back into the operating budget and Tom Rogers asked where the extra money comes from.

Jamie Thompson explained that the unreserved fund balance, which is approximately \$600,000, is money that is left over each year from the operating budget. Some of the money is used each year to reduce the tax rate but the State requires that we keep a certain percentage of the

total budget as our unreserved fund balance. The money is accounted for on our balance sheet as an asset of the Town.

Barbara Clark suggested using \$275,000 of the unreserved fund balance and not have any tax impact.

Mike Sununu clarified that the \$600,000 is our cash reserves and it is not wise to spend half of it on the renovation. If there was a cost overrun in plowing due to extensive snow storms or fire at the town hall the money is there. In his opinion, the proposal is the best way to get the project done and keep the impact to a minimum.

Peter Maciolek asked how many bids were received for the project. Michael Sununu explained that one estimate was done to get an approximate cost for the warrant article. After the warrant article passes the project will be put out to bid. Jamie Thompson added that if the bids come in at a higher price the project will not be done. The project bids will be opened at a public meeting for anyone interested in attending.

Deb Rimbaud asked where the new parking lot will be located. Mike Sununu stated there will be no new parking lot but an area behind the town hall will be paved for the entryway to the police department to be located in the back of the building.

Win Fream asked if this article will be a capital expenditure and voted on at town meeting. Jamie Thompson explained this will be voted on in March 2017. If passed, it will go out for bid and the work will be done this year. The expenditure will not re-occur next year.

Rebecca Watts mentioned that the origination of the bid specifications done by Adrian Fieldhouse of Yard Arm Construction, allowed the Selectmen to come up with a plan to put out to bid. She added, Adrian donated several hours of his time working on the plan.

A motion was made by Rebecca Watts and seconded by Kim Crisp to allow non-registered voter Adrian Fieldhouse to speak. The motion was voted on and passed. Adrian said he came up with a plan the town can work with. There are no guarantees that he will be doing the work and there was no exchange of funds for his time put into preparing the plan.

Randy Zelonis commented that years ago, we bought the old post office for the police department at a cost of \$134,000 and the former Police Chief did not want it. Now Main Street Art uses the building and we collect no taxes on it. Last year we spent \$40,000 to come up with an expansion plan that would meet our needs for years to come and that design has been thrown away. Now we are looking at spending \$275,000 on a renovation that may cost \$475,000 and what if the Police Chief leaves in 3-4 years. We need a plan suitable for the town's needs.

Tom Hayward asked to hear from Police Chief Nate Liebenow. Nate said the existing police department is inadequate and this project is an opportunity to double their space. The plan will address one of the biggest concerns which is a separation between the town offices and the

police department, allowing officers to conduct interviews and talk confidentially. The Police will have their own bathroom and Nate will have an office. He is in full support of the renovation.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector Sue McKinnon also spoke about the renovation. The police department is in dire need of space and these plans will double their square footage. Her space will be cut back slightly but by scanning and digitizing file cabinets of documents, the area will be adequate for her, the assessor, building inspector and town planner. Sue is in full support of the renovation.

The \$275,000 does include the cost of new furniture, scanning documents, and trailer rentals to temporarily house the town offices and police.

Tricia Cox asked about the renovation of the upstairs room. Jamie Thompson explained that the Selectmen's Office will be moved upstairs in the back room and meetings will be held upstairs.

Tom Hayward commented that Nate and Sue had 100% input into the renovation plan. It is what they need and want and we should support them.

Jamie Thompson said in future years we will be faced with having to address the fire departments needs and it may be a large sum. This is the best budget solution we have come up with. It is a one-time expense and won't be an ongoing bond payment.

Peter Maciolek would like to see the town set aside money each year like we do with the fire truck.

Michael Sununu stated that for a project like this it would take 10 years to set aside enough money. We all recognize the need to increase the square footage of the police department. He agrees that a variety of solutions have been purposed. Last year the Town did not support a 1.5-million-dollar bond. We found this plan to be a far better solution.

Pilara Bauer was recently in the police department and commented on how horribly tiny it is. She feels the plan is an affordable one.

The cost on the tax rate will be approximately .40 to .45 cents per thousand for one year.

Jamie Thompson stated this renovation makes the town offices and police department safer and it addresses concerns with keeping information confidential during interviews. It might be considered a compromise but it is a good solution and very affordable.

With no further discussion, Article 2 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 3. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$17,900 for the purpose of mosquito control by town wide adulticiding (truck spraying)? Recommended by Selectmen 2-1

Robin Gray spoke about being personally affected by EEE when her son contracted the disease. This warrant article has been a hot issue for many years. A few years ago the warrant article was changed to zero, which is not fair to voters. She requested that the amount of \$17,900 be left as is and let the voters decide if it passes. She understands that people are concerned with the chemicals that are being sprayed but there are pesticides everywhere and if a resident does not want spraying near their home they can be added to the “no spray” registry list. Robin Gray has noticed a huge difference in mosquito populations when there is no adulticiding.

Natalie Fream spoke about the dangers of pesticides and road side mosquito spraying. The precautions include, closing your windows, turning off air conditioners, turning off fans, cover pools and do not have children or pets outside for an hour after the spraying. Also, wash your vegetables, and outdoor toys with soap and water. The spray only reaches 10 feet off the road and people concerned about mosquitoes should consider spraying their own yards.

Kristen Johnson said that the recommendation she has seen is to close your windows. Other states do not make those same recommendations. All information regarding the safety of mosquito spraying is done by the State. NH does not have different regulations than other states.

Rebecca Watts asked if anyone could speak about the effectiveness of road side mosquito spraying.

Kristen Johnson said she is not familiar enough with the testing done in Town to speak on its effectiveness.

Deb Rimbaud commented that mosquitoes were extremely bad last year. She saw a difference with no spraying being done.

Michael Sununu said studies show larviciding is 80-99% effective. There are no conclusive studies on adulticiding.

Sarah MacGregor of Dragon Mosquito agreed that larviciding is more effective in treating mosquitoes. Adulticiding is often used as a supplement when there is a threat of disease. Dragon traps and identifies the mosquitoes and the State tests them for disease. As of a few years ago, the State no longer reimburses towns for spraying. All pesticides are reviewed by multiple state agencies; Department of Pesticides, Department of Environmental Services, Rural and Economic Community Development and Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau, etc. The pesticides are highly regulated and a permit is required. Dragon Mosquito does take precautions to protect ground water, endangered species and bees. Residents may register on the “no spray list” to prevent their property from being sprayed. There are currently 22 residents on the list.

Sarah said the funds for road side spraying also include money for the spraying of Hilton Park for the Memorial Day Celebration.

Jen MacPherson said the Town has overwhelmingly supported adulticiding over past years. She would like the voters to decide on it.

Natalie questioned why there are warnings to close your windows and shut off air conditioners if the pesticides are not harmful. Sarah MacGregor replied that warnings are issued for liability reasons; everything has a warning. Notification of spraying is sent out in an email to residents and on the marquee in front of the town hall. There are insecticides that are organic and vegetable based which are safer.

Natalie suggested that residents go to the Dragon Mosquito website and educate themselves before voting.

Kim Crisp asked about data regarding bees being killed from spraying. Sarah MacGregor acknowledged that it does kill bees but Dragon Mosquito sprays in the evening after sunset when bees are not out. They also try to locate as many beekeepers as possible and take precautions to safeguard their bees.

Leslie Steinhauser commented that her house and most houses on Main Street are extremely close to the road and the spray is hitting the houses instead of yards. She feels residents should be responsible for their own yards.

Kim Crisp added that she has found the road side spraying works in some places but not in others. She still has to put bug spray on her children and herself. The spray kills ticks, ants, mosquitoes and bees. If she has to continue to put bug spray on she would rather not have roadside spraying.

Carolyn Gajewski is also concerned with the spraying of her house on Main Street. She can opt out of being sprayed but the next house is very close so there is no guarantee. According to Sarah MacGregor, the spray travels 300 feet and in her situation the neighbors would not get sprayed.

Michael Woodworth asked if other towns in the area adulticide. Sarah replied that Stratham, Newington, Portsmouth, Brentwood, N. Hampton and Hampton spray regularly. Other towns reserve the roadside spraying for emergency situations and spot spraying.

A motion was made by Win Fream and seconded by Marc Brown to change the amount of the warrant article to zero.

Paul Bauer is in favor of the roadside mosquito spraying and has noticed a huge difference when there is no roadside spraying. In his opinion, all people in town should have the opportunity to vote.

Kristin Droste is opposed to spraying but would also like to see the town vote on it.

Tom Hayward noted that every year the adulticiding warrant article was on the ballot, it has passed.

The motion to zero out the warrant article was voted on and failed to pass. Yes-25 No-34

Randy Zelonis mentioned that there have been a total of 82 cases of EEE in the country according to the CDC. The odds of contracting EEE are exceptionally low.

With no further discussion, Article 3 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

A motion was made by Robin Gray and seconded by Jen MacPherson to restrict reconsideration of Article 3. All were in favor and the motion carried.

Article 4. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000 to be added to the previously established Sidewalk Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of planning and designing a sidewalk extension to Old Lee Rd? Recommended by Selectmen 2-1

Chris Hutchins said this warrant article will allocate funds to continue the sidewalks to Old Lee Rd. \$15,000 would be enough to start the planning and designing of the sidewalk but not enough to build it.

Tom Hayward asked which Selectman was opposed to the article and why. Chris Hutchins voted against supporting the article this year because of other budget items on the warrant. He felt \$15,000 would be better allocated elsewhere this year.

Jamie Thompson added that the town has applied for grants to expand the sidewalks multiple times but only so many communities are awarded the funds.

Brendan Johnston asked the price of the existing sidewalk. Road Agent Brian Knipstein explained that there was a lot of legal work and coordination involved in constructing the sidewalk. The cost was about \$130,000 and it included moving the stone wall, drainage and culverts.

Article 4 shall be place on the ballot as written.

Article 5. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 to be added to the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established, for the future purchase of a new fire truck? Recommended by Selectmen

Fire Chief Jeff Buxton stated that this warrant article is on the ballot every year. It is for the future purchase of a fire truck. The cost of a new fire truck has increased to \$500,000-\$600,000 so we aren't too close to purchasing it. The plan is to replace vehicles before they get to be more than 30 years old. After 25 years the vehicle is no longer recognized by ISO. The 1987 truck will be the one to be replaced when the time comes. In the future, there will be a need to put an addition on the fire station because the new fire trucks are bigger and wider and will not fit in the station.

Kristen Johnson asked about increasing the amount of the warrant article but Jeff Buxton suggested leaving it as is.

With no further discussion, Article 5 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 6. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the Rescue Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established? Recommended by Selectmen.

Chris Hutchins commented that this is the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of appropriating \$10,000 for rescue equipment. The Fire Chief intends to purchase the equipment next year.

Article 6 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

Article 7. Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to sell the property located on Maple Street, Tax Map 102, Lot 74, comprised of .13 acres of land? This parcel will be sold through an open process at a price and under terms at the discretion of the Selectmen. Recommended by Selectmen

Michael Sununu explained that the parcel on Maple Street is vacant and used to have the Scout House on it. It is a useless piece of property to the Town. It is not a buildable lot but perhaps an abutter would be interested in purchasing the land. The land will be put out for open bid.

Article 8. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,350 for the purpose of replacing the original portion of the roof at the Paul Memorial Library? Recommended by Selectmen

Kim Crisp mentioned that the roof at the Library is in need of replacement. The Library Trustees put the job out to bid and chose the lowest one.

Article 8 shall be placed on the ballot as written.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:06pm.

Chris Hutchins thanked residents for taking time out of their schedule to attend the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Sue McKinnon  
Town Clerk/Tax Collector