

**Town of Northwood
Budget Committee Minutes
January 9, 2013**

Chair Ginger Dole opens the public hearing at 7:20 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Ginger Dole, Vice Chair Betsy Colburn, Selectmen Representative Robert Holden, School Board Representative David Ruth, Water District Representative John Jacobsmeyer, Bonnie Sears, Lois Nichols, James Ryan, Thomas Chase, James Vaillancourt, Muriel Johnson, Herb Johnson, Board Administrator Linda Smith, and Board Secretary Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

ABSENT: Daniel McNally-excused. John Difeo.

TOWN REPRESENTATIVES:

Selectman James Hadley, Town Administrator Brent Lemire, and Finance Administrator Sandy Garrett.

PUBLIC PRESENT:

There are approximately 12 people present in the audience.

Article 2: HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT BOND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum not to exceed **Seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000)** for the purpose of designing, constructing and paving roads, graveling roads and making necessary drainage improvements to town owned and approved highways in the Town of Northwood, and to authorize the Selectmen to act on behalf of the Town in conjunction with such purposes, and to further authorize the issuance of not more than **Seven hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$750,000)** of bonds and/or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate and regulate such bonds and/or notes and to determine the rates of interest thereon. Furthermore, all future payments of principal and interest for this bond shall be expended from the State Highway Block Grant Special Revenue Fund to be established in Warrant Article 4.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-2) (A 3/5 majority vote is required).

Joseph McCaffrey asks for some clarification regarding the bond and the payments.

Ms. Dole explains that the \$250,000 in the operating budget is comprised of three different amounts. The highway block grant is funds from the state utilized to work on the town's roads. She adds that the purpose of Article 4 sets up a separate reserve account and the funds will now go to the reserve fund as opposed to being included in the highway department's budget.

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Mr. McCaffrey states that it is his understanding that the town is currently spending \$250,000 per year for repairs to the town's roads. There was a study completed that suggests that the town really needs \$350,000 in order to maintain the town's roads at their current conditions.

Mr. Holden states that over the first few years of the bond, the *amount* being spent will depend on how many roads are done as well as if there may be a surplus in the budget, which can be used for other road repairs, or returned to the unexpended fund balance. He adds that typically the town receives \$100,000 per year from the state highway block grant.

Mr. McCaffrey states that originally this warrant article was proposed in the amount of \$2.2 million and it has been reduced. Mr. Holden explains that the selectmen were concerned that at the end of the bond payment the town would be lacking; therefore they felt it was prudent to reduce the bond. He states that the selectmen agreed that it would be more palatable to approve the \$750,000 than \$2.2 million.

Mr. Hadley states that the town contracted for the engineer for the highway advisory committee (HAC) and/or the selectmen. The HAC accepted the plan and the selectmen approved the plan. He adds that the next step was to finance the plan and several options were reviewed. He explains that 60 other towns in the state have used the municipal bond bank or a local bank to finance this type of work. Another option is to use a highway block grant. He states that Northwood has received an increase of 5.8% for the last four years. He states that in 2011 the block grant was \$101,000. Mr. Hadley states that a \$750,000 bond for 10 years would pay 100% of the amount so nothing would need to be raised from taxation for year 1 and 2.

Mr. Hadley states that \$2.2 million was not sustainable as taxes would need to be raised in addition to utilizing the highway block grant. He states that the selectmen feel that this proposal is the best practice and the best use of taxpayers' money. He adds no additional taxes will need to be raised to pay the bond.

Mr. McCaffrey states that if the amount proposed of \$750,000 is to work over the suggested time frame of 5-7 years, it will take 10 years to pay for the bond using the highway block grant monies. He expresses concern with not getting the roads addressed and there would be a need to spend more. He states that he is unsure as to what will be achieved. In addition, he states that the Town of Strafford has similar roads, more paved roads, and yet they are spending ¼ of what Northwood does.

Hal Kreider expresses concern with the bond, the bond process being

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understood, and if the bond will pass. He states that he supports spending some money up front if the plan is that that will save more money in the future. He states that if the bond does not pass he feels that the town will be in a worse situation. Mr. Holden replies that it is the town's responsibility to educate the voters on how the bond will be beneficial to the town.

Article 3: FIRE/RESCUE DEPARTMENT NEW AMBULANCE

To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to enter into a lease/purchase agreement, with no non-appropriation clause, in the amount of **Two hundred twenty seven thousand, five hundred seventy two dollars (\$227,572)** for the purpose of leasing/purchasing and equipping a new ambulance for the Northwood Fire/Rescue Department to replace the 2007 Ford/AEV ambulance, and to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty-eight thousand six hundred seventeen dollars (\$48,617)** for the first of five years of payments, and to fund the payment by withdrawing the sum of **Forty-eight thousand six hundred seventeen dollars (\$48,617)** from the Fire/Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special Revenue Fund. **(A 3/5 majority vote required) Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0. (Recommended by the Budget Committee 14-0)**

No discussion is held.

Article 5: 2013 OPERATING BUDGET

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 **\$3,303,012**. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$3,303,352**, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the town 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.

Ms. Chadwick states that overall the budget appears to be what it was last year; however, she is concerned with what has occurred over the past 10 years. She asks if people have thought about why the taxes were less in 2012. She states that how people vote makes a big difference. She states that she continues to see a rise with employees and benefits. She asks what the selectmen and budget committee did to reduce the budget as far as personnel.

Mr. Holden replies that there are no fewer employees. He adds that the town is always looking to maximize return on the benefits and feels that the benefits line has been held reasonably well. He explains that outsourcing has been utilized in the human services department, which allows for savings in that area. He states that upgrades have been done to the town hall, within the 2012 budget, as well

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as many significant repairs to fire equipment. He explains that the town administrator reviews the budget daily. With the school's return this year, this is one reason why the taxes were reduced this year. In addition, he refers to Ms. Chadwick's comment noting the rise over 10 years; it is difficult to maintain a level funded budget.

Mr. Kreider states that as an economic development committee (EDC) member, the committee requested funds, several times, to make significant change in the town's website. He states that he does not recall seeing additional funds applied. Mr. Holden refers to the EDC budget and notes that their requested amount of \$890 was approved by the selectmen. He adds that Mr. Lemire is always working to improve the website and will continue to update and improve the website on a daily basis. Mr. Kreider states that the EDC is trying to attract businesses, which help to reduce taxes, and this is an item that should be considered.

Mr. McCaffrey refers to a story in Foster's Daily Democrat, and asks what the factors are for the town's reduced taxes. Ms. Dole explains that the tax rate is determined based upon the overall budget, approved by the voters, for the school and town. She states that in March the default budgets passed for both entities, which were less than the previously approved budgets for the prior year. She adds that very few of the warrant articles passed so there were no additional funds needed to be raised for warrant articles. In addition, she states that the town and school were both able to conserve money, returning funds to the general fund, which helps to reduce the tax rate set this past fall. She adds that if less money is needed to operate than, the tax rate will be less.

Mr. McCaffrey asks about the town's total evaluation of buildings. Mr. Hadley explains the process of the towns evaluations, noting it includes an increase of property, building permits taken out, new houses, and improvements to houses. He adds that the default budgets passed, the school board returned \$286,320, and the selectmen took a portion of the unreserved, undesignated fund balance of approximately \$200,000, which left about \$1.5 in the fund. Based on these factors and numbers, the tax rate is calculated. He states that the town rate went down 12%; the school rate went down an overall decrease of 6%.

Article 6: FIRE ENGINE PAYMENT

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of **Sixty thousand, One Hundred Nine dollars (\$60,109)** for the fifth of five annual payments on a five year lease on Fire Engine 1 and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of **Sixty thousand, one hundred nine dollars (\$60,109)** from the Fire/Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special Revenue Fund. This lease agreement was approved at the 2008 Town Meeting and does not contain an escape clause. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 14-0)**

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Mr. Kreider asks what happens if the article does not pass and he notes that there is no escape clause. Mr. Holden states that if the article is not funded, the equipment will be returned.

Mr. Strobel asks if this is the last payment, will the town own the equipment at the end of the lease. Mr. Holden replies yes.

Article 7: HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE DEPOSIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifteen Thousand dollars (\$15,000)** to be deposited into the previously established Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012, with no amount to be raised by taxation. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 13-1)**

Ms. Chadwick notes that the wording in the article states that the money does not come from taxes. She asks where the funding comes from and adds that it was in last year's budget, which was raised by taxation. Ms. Dole explains that the language is dictated by the Department of Revenue (DRA), and it means that there will be no additional taxes raised to utilize the amount of money, in this manner.

Mr. Holden states that the selectmen would like to clarify wording in the articles; however, DRA is very rigid as to the wording.

Article 11: LAGOON MAINTENANCE AND REPAIR EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirteen thousand, two hundred seventy-five dollars (\$13,275.00)**, to be placed in the Lagoon Maintenance and Repair Expendable Trust Fund and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of that amount from the Lagoon Special Revenue Fund held by the Northwood Treasurer. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 9-0)**

No discussion is held.

Article 12: GRANT MATCH EXPENDABLE TRUST

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifteen Thousand dollars (\$15,000)** to be placed in the previously established Grant Match Expendable Trust for town grants and local matching funds to enable the Town of Northwood departments to apply for and receive State and Federal Grant money, this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012, with no amount to be raised by taxation. **(Majority vote**

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required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 13-1)

Mr. McCaffrey requests clarification relative to the wording of the article. Ms. Dole explains that some grants that are applied for require matching funds. She states that there must be a matched amount of funds available.

Additional discussion is held regarding the unreserved fund balance. Ms. Dole explains that remaining funds in the budget are undesignated funds or surplus and these funds go back into the general fund. Mr. McCaffrey states that this money is previously taxed money. He states that there is a deception in the wording as it was raised before, previously; taxed money. Ms. Dole states that the article is written per requirements of DRA and she suggests that Mr. McCaffrey address the wording issues with DRA and ask that they change the requirement for warrant articles.

Article 13: FACILITIES COMMITTEE EXPENDABLE TRUST

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Eighteen Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$18,500)** to be deposited into the Facilities Committee Expendable Trust Fund previously established for the maintenance, improvement, repairs and replacement of general government buildings, this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012, with no amount to be raised by taxation. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 14-0)**

No discussion is held.

Article 14: TRANSFER STATION EXPENDABLE TRUST DEPOSIT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty-five thousand, two hundred fourteen dollars and seventy-five cents (\$25,214.75)** to be placed in the existing Transfer Station Expendable Trust Fund previously established for the purpose of purchasing transfer station equipment and repairing and maintaining the transfer station buildings and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the transfer of that amount from the unreserved fund balance as of December 31, 2012. This amount is the equivalent of the amount received from the sale of recyclable materials in 2012. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 9-0)**

Mr. McCaffrey asks if the budget committee looked at the revenues received from the transfer station, specifically metals. Ms. Dole states that the budget committee did not request a breakdown of the various recyclable materials or

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the monies received. She states that this is revenue for recycling various products.

Ms. Garrett refers to the recycling fees line in the revenue report and reads that the actual amount received for recycling fees is \$25,214.75. She states that this is the exact amount that is removed from the general fund and put into the trust fund, which is the exact amount in the warrant article. She states that warrant articles list the exact amount of funds taken in for the year.

Mr. Lemire states that the town is a member of NRRA, National Resource and Recovery Association. He states that the town has been very successful in maximizing all of the different recyclables. All revenues for recyclables have been increased and the town works with the NRRA and Harding Metals. He adds that this is done on a routine basis and the recyclables are continually being monitored. Mr. Lemire explains that the NRRA membership allows the town to capitalize on the ability to get the highest amount for the town for recyclables. He states that the revenue has increased over 100% over the past 1½ years. Discussion ensues. Mr. Lemire states that the operation benefits from the revenues. He states that he will continue to work towards improving the facility.

Mr. Jandebeur asks Mr. Lemire how long he has been employed by the town. Mr. Lemire replies 2 years. Mr. Jandebeur asks what the revenue was for recyclables two years ago. Mr. Lemire replies less than \$8,000. Mr. Jandebeur states that Mr. Lemire has really maximized the recycling revenues over the past few years.

Article 15: CEMETERY IMPROVEMENT EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred dollars (\$300)** to be deposited into the previously established Cemetery Improvement Expendable Trust Fund and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the transfer of that amount from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012. This amount is the equivalent of the amount received from the sale of cemetery lots in 2012. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 14-0)**

No discussion is held.

Article 16: MILFOIL TREATMENT AND CONTROL PROGRAM EXPENDABLE TRUST

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Thousand dollars (\$5,000)** to be deposited into the previously established Milfoil Treatment and Control Program Expendable Trust Fund, this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012, with no

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amount to be raised by taxation. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 14-0)**

Ms. Chadwick asks if this money is available for any other lakes. Mr. Holden explains that this trust fund is for all waterbodies in Northwood.

Mr. Vaillancourt, past president of Northwood Lake Watershed Association (NLWA), explains that NLWA has been very active and has treated the lake for invasive species. He states that Northwood Lake is the only lake that has invasive species. He states that Northwood Lake and other lakes have a lake host program and the selectmen have also begun to support (or help fund) those programs from this trust fund. He states that other lakes are also able to set up a lake host program in an attempt to keep the invasive species from their lake.

Mr. Kreider states that this warrant article is very important. It allows the town to show support as well as an insurance policy. He recommends adding more money to the fund to allow other lakes to be able to control invasive species. He asks what the current balance of the fund is. Mr. Holden replies that he believes it is approximately \$11,000. He adds that the selectmen increased the amount this year and he believes that the amount will need to be increased further.

Mr. Jandebour asks what the value of the program is. Mr. Kreider states that with invasive species property valuations are reduced. He adds that once a species exists, you have to live with it. He states that it is very important to prevent this from entering the other lakes.

Mr. Vaillancourt states that cost studies have been done and if there were a 20% drop in assessments, it would result in about \$0.15 per thousand. He states that funding the article is \$0.028 now, or \$0.15 later, which would be forever.

Article 18: BENEFIT PAY VESTED TIME EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifteen Thousand dollars (\$15,000)** to be added to the Benefit Vested Time Expendable Trust Fund previously established, this sum to come from the unreserved fund balance (surplus) as of December 31, 2012, with no amount to be raised by taxation. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 14-0)**

Ms. Chadwick asks what the current balance is. Mr. Holden replies approximately \$30,000. Ms. Chadwick notes that the wording again states that no amount will be raised by taxation.

Mr. McCaffrey asks what the purpose of the article is. Mr. Holden states that if all of the employees were terminated tomorrow, the liability is approximately

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\$164,000. Ms. Dole explains that this article provides a buffer for the employee's accrued benefits, which need to be paid all at once. Mr. Holden states that the staff is encouraged to utilize their earned time.

Mr. Kreider states that with the proposed addition of \$15,000, it is $\frac{1}{4}$ of the town's liability. He asks if it is necessary to have that much money. Mr. Holden asks what the total amount should be. Ms. Garrett notes that there are three employees that have been employed for the town over 25 years. Should they retire all in the same year, the liability could total \$18,000 to \$20,000 each.

Ms. Chadwick states that many companies have unfunded liabilities. She asks what the town has done to decrease expenditures and/or liabilities. Mr. Holden replies that a few years ago the selectmen changed the personnel policy and instead of paying out time, an insurance policy was purchased.

Mr. Holden requests that for the next meeting there will be copies of the personnel policy available for the budget committee.

Article 19: CABLE EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Thirty three thousand, two hundred one dollars and fifty-nine cents (\$33,201.59)** to be deposited into the previously established Cable Expendable Trust Fund and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the transfer of that amount from the unreserved fund balance as of December 31, 2012. This amount is equivalent to the amount received as cable TV franchise fees in the year 2012. **(Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (Recommended by Budget Committee 8-1)**

No discussion is held.

Mr. McCaffrey requests to revisit Article 2. He states that the town is currently spending \$250,000 on the roads and looking to spend more because if we maintain the current expenditures the roads will continue to deteriorate further from the current maintenance level. He asks how much more money the selectmen and/or budget committee are anticipating to spend on the roads, on average, in order to maintain the current levels, and is there any intent to improve the current levels. Ms. Dole defers this to the selectmen as the budget committee does not have anything to do with spending of any funds other than what is proposed to the committee. She states that the committee considered the articles and figures that were provided to the committee as that was what the governing board was proposing to be considered by the committee and voters. Mr. Holden defers to Mr. Strobel.

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Mr. Strobel explains that the 7 year plan recommended by the highway advisory committee (HAC) the approximate annual funds of \$350,000 maintains the status quo of the roads at 73%. He states that the BOS asked him to develop a bond plan of \$2.25 million and after the analysis, it was determined that this was unsustainable. He states that the amount of the bond averaged out to be 83% at the end of the bond. He notes that the percentage represents the good quality of the road, 100% being the best and a Class VI road or impassable is approximately 18%.

In addition, Mr. Strobel states that typically a road starts at 100% and deteriorates to 90% over a few years. The rate then decreases more quickly. He states that his plan includes a small portion of maintenance on roads where the repairs are behind and have deteriorated below 50%. He adds that without the plan, for these roads to have significant improvement it would take the entire budget line; one road could cost \$250,000; the entire road maintenance line would be depleted. He states that in the long run it costs less to maintain the roads.

Mr. Strobel compares road construction and maintenance to the maintenance of a house. He states that maintenance on roads adds to the roads lifetime. Lengthy discussion ensues.

Mr. Holden states that the selectmen and budget committee are offering a choice to the voters; approve \$750,000 and fix the roads over a two year period or defeat the warrant article and continue in the manner in which the town has been doing, which will take 7 years to complete.

Mr. McCaffrey states that this article is an important issue and needs to be taken seriously. He states that due diligence must be done by everyone in town; they need to make sure they understand this article.

Ms. Dole states that the selectmen will provide educational opportunities prior to the deliberative session.

Ms. Dole closes the public hearing and calls for a brief recess. Mr. Holden respectively requests that the committee go right into discussion of the petition article as members of the public are present. Ms. Dole explains that the article was submitted yesterday, as a petition article. She states that the committee must discuss the article in work session and then the committee will re-open the public hearing.

Session resumes at 8:57 and Ms. Dole explains that the committee is in a work session to discuss a proposed petition article submitted 1/8/13.

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Article 20: (By Petition) FULL TIME DEPUTY TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifteen thousand, six hundred eighty-one dollars and twelve cents (\$15,681.12)** for the purpose of changing the position of Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector from a 30-hour per week part-time position to a 35-hour per week full time position, and to expend these funds for wages and applicable benefits beginning July 1, 2013.

Mr. Holden makes a motion, second by Mr. Johnson, to approve Article 20.

Mr. Holden explains that at the time of the vote of the petition article only two selectmen were present. He states that the article was discussed and the selectmen voted 3/0 to not move the article forward. He states that based on the fact that the article was not approved by the selectmen, a petition article was received and signed by 26 voters to present to the budget committee and town. He explains that it is the selectmen's position that currently there is no need for a second full-time position. He adds that the warrant article indicates that the request is just under \$16,000. He notes that this amount is six months only and next year the amount will be approximately \$30,000.

Mr. Johnson states that he feels that this is a lot of money for an addition of 5 hours. Ms. Colburn states that she does not feel that the proposed amount is enough to cover the cost, if it is including the benefits. Mr. Lemire states that the position does exist and the amount proposed would be additional money needed to make the position full-time.

Further discussion is held regarding the figures and benefits. Ms. Garrett states that the amount of the warrant article includes the extra money for the salary for the additional 5 hours per week for 13 payrolls, health insurance for a family plan for 6 months, life insurance, and dental for family plan for 6 months, as well as retirement.

Ms. Sears states that the voters would not know the actual amount of the position. Ms. Colburn states that the total should be clarified. Mr. Holden states that the wording is again a matter to discuss with DRA. The original petition is provided for review.

Mr. Ruth asks if members of the budget committee signed the petition, he asks them to abstain from voting. A discussion is held regarding if members cannot vote if they signed the petition. Ms. Dole explains that unless there is a financial gain from the article being addressed then members have a right to vote. Mr. Lemire states that there was a similar issue with the selectmen recently and a legal opinion was obtained relative to this issue. The legal opinion stated that

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members are a citizen first and signing a petition does not preclude them from participating in the process if they are not benefiting in a financial way.

Mr. Holden explains that if this warrant article is approved there would be an addition of 260 hours per year, approximately \$30,000 which equals \$115 per hour.

Mr. Johnson states that he does not see the necessity of the increase in hours.

Mr. Hadley states that he voted to not recommend the article. He explains the reason for his vote was based on the annual survey done by the Local Government Center, which shows comparisons of other similar towns. He states that there were few that had a full-time deputy. He does not feel that there is a need at this time.

Mr. Ryan calls to move the question.

Vote to move the question:

YES: BC, BS, LN, JR, DR, MJ, HJ. NO: RH, TC, JJ, JV, GD. Motion prevails; 7/5.

VOTE: Article 20

NO: BC, BH, BS, LS, JR, DR, TC, JJ, JV, MJ, HJ, GD. Motion does not pass; 0/12.

Ms. Dole closes the work session and opens up the public hearing at 9:12 p.m.

Mr. Kreider states that he appreciates the efforts of the budget committee.

With no additional comments, Ms. Dole closes the public hearing at 9:16 p.m.

Mr. Holden states that if this article is approved, there will be another full-time position in town. Mr. Chase states that the selectmen have responsibilities to communicate to the voters some of the implications of the warrant articles. He states that the selectmen should be able to explain to the voters that the deputy position warrant article figure is a sum that is for six months. He states that the selectmen could decide within their rights to eliminate the position, either at part-time or full-time. Mr. Hadley states that there will be a flier provided to the public.

Mr. Vaillancourt states that the budget committee or selectmen should contact the person who presented the article that they should be prepared to present their case at the deliberative session. He states that it is not the selectmen's responsibility or the budget committee's responsibility to make a case for a petitioned article; the source should be required to present.

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Mr. Holden states that he would like to see deputy town clerk become the town clerk someday; however, it is the duty and obligation of the selectmen to manage the town's money appropriately and he cannot support this article at this time.

OTHER

School Public Hearing

Ms. Dole states that the school board should be prepared to provide new copies of the warrant articles for the committee and public. She states that the updated revenue sheets should be provided as well. In addition, she adds that copies of the operating budget should be provided with the budget committee's *figures* listed. Ms. Dole adds that the SAU and preschool budgets should also be provided.

A discussion is held regarding the process of the budget committee's public hearings. Ms. Dole explains that during the public hearings the budget committee presents the information to the public and the public asks their questions and provide comments. Generally, the school board's representative or selectmen's representative answers the questions. She states that after the public hearing the committee goes into a work session for their discussions.

Ms. Smith states that warrant articles are the selectmen's responsibility and the budget committee recommends or not recommends; it is not the responsibility of the budget committee to defend or explain the articles, which is the responsibility of the selectmen. She states that with a petitioned article, the petitioner should attend the meeting and present their article rather than having board members explaining the article.

Mr. Holden expresses concern that the tax payers know what they are voting on. He states that when he voted for the cruisers at the selectmen's level he voted for the cruisers to be in a warrant article. He states that the budget committee changed that proposal and added the cruiser to the budget and he voted for the change. He states that this topic was not mentioned at the meeting tonight and he fears that the voters will vote the default budget showing the town that they were not pleased with the choice to put the cruises in the budget.

Mr. Johnson makes a motion, second by Ms. Sears, to recess. Motion unanimously passes; 12/0.

Respectfully submitted

Lisa Fellows-Weaver
Board Secretary

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