



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

**Town of Northwood 818 First NH Turnpike Northwood, NH 03261
(603) 942-5586**

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
March 20, 2024**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Hal Kreider, Vice-Chair Tim Colby, Select Board Member James Guzofski, Select Board Member Pam Sanderson, and Select Board Member Matt Frye.

STAFF PRESENT: Town Administrator Neil Irvine

6:00 P.M. Chairman Kreider opened the Northwood Board of Selectmen meeting with a roll call and led the pledge of allegiance.

H. Kreider welcomed Matt Frye back to the Board.

Election of Officers

Motion: "To nominate Hal Kreider as Chair."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: P. Sanderson

Motion carried by vote of 5 to 0.

Motion: "To nominate Tim Colby as Vice Chair."

Motion: J. Guzofski

Second: H. Kreider

Motion carried by vote of 5 to 0.

Default Budget Options

TA Irvine said since the warrant article for the operating budget failed, the Board of Selectmen has two options. They can accept the default budget amount, or they can request a special election for a revised operating budget only. TA Irvine asked for some direction from the Board. The vote count on the article was 493 against and 391 for. The consensus of the Board is to accept the default budget and figure out how to make it work. H. Kreider asked the Board members to let TA Irvine know what information they need and what they want him to investigate to help them make decisions at the next meeting. P. Sanderson wants to see last year's expenditures against the default budget, plus the 3% COLA that was approved. The sand and salt lines are already overspent the amount in the default budget lines, so there is nothing left for November and December 2024. She added that the Building Inspector and Land Use

43 Assistant positions need to be funded. TA Irvine said the article to create and fund the Winter
44 Maintenance ETF passed, but the seed funds to set that up will not be enough to make up the difference
45 through the end of the year. The amount funded this year into the new ETF was based on a five-year
46 rolling average over the requested budget, not the default. P. Sanderson said the voters approved the
47 deposit into the Building Maintenance ETF but did not approve the employee included in the operating
48 budget that was intended to do the maintenance work. Contracting out that maintenance work will be
49 more expensive than having town employees do the work. There could be a reduction in services in one
50 area if the Board decides to use employees in other areas. T. Colby asked if the Police Commissioners are
51 the ones that decide about the Police Lt salary line. TA Irvine stated that by federal law we must hold the
52 position of an employee that is deployed, but we can have a discussion with the Police Commission about
53 how to fund the position. M. Frye wants to look at the salary lines in the Police Department. As a member
54 of the Budget Committee, he questioned fully funding all the salary positions and fully funding the
55 overtime line for the officers that need to fill vacant shifts due to staff shortages. He believes you don't
56 need to fully fund both. He wants to look at quarter 1 figures to make decisions. P. Sanderson said since
57 the cruiser was in the budget, that needs to be looked at. It is supposed to be a routine rolling over of
58 vehicles on a schedule. If we don't purchase one this year, it will affect the long-term program of
59 replacement, and increase repair costs. Matt would also like to see up-to-date numbers in the Special
60 Detail Fund. T. Colby asked about cutting the operating hours at the transfer station and using those
61 employees elsewhere for maintenance work. J. Guzofski agreed about looking at the transfer station
62 hours. T. Colby also suggested not going out to plow until there is 4 inches of snow on the ground. H.
63 Kreider stated he is concerned about the large increase in the health insurance costs. TA Irvine has started
64 conversations with NH Interlocal Trust and SchoolCare for comparisons. H. Kreider asked how the board
65 members felt about possibly doing a pro-rated deduction across the budget. The Board wants to look at
66 the numbers first. They want to see last year's operating budget plus the 3% COLA, the default numbers
67 for this year plus the 3% COLA for 2024. M. Frye asked if we are able to fund the full-time position in the
68 building inspector department, legally, regarding the "no means no" rule. TA Irvine said the petition
69 warrant articles for that position and the Land Use Assistant was asking for the funding for the positions,
70 not the positions themselves. They were defeated. Since both positions were included in the operating
71 and default budgets with an amount funded, the Board can transfer funds within the operating budget to
72 fund them at any level they choose. This was upheld in the court case of Sullivan v Hampton. The court
73 ruled the Board can over-expend one line without specifying which line would make up the difference, so
74 long as there is at least one dollar in the line you are trying to fund. If the budget had zero proposed in
75 the line, the Board could not transfer funds into that line. The increased costs for insurance and benefits
76 for the Building Inspector position can be funded because all the health insurance expenses are together
77 in one line under Personnel Administration. The year-end reports will show some lines overspent and
78 others will be underspent. The bottom line is the total amount that can be spent.

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80 **Terms of Office**

81 TA Irvine said a question was raised this week about the end period for terms of oaths of office. If it is an
82 elected position, the new member only needs to be qualified (meaning domiciled in Northwood and
83 completed the oath of office) before they can be seated. The election term is from one town meeting to
84 another. If it is an appointed position, the appointing authority can set the end term date and the member
85 must be qualified and complete the oath of office. In the past, Northwood has handled all positions the
86 same way. We will stay with past practices for this year just to keep things moving. TA Irvine will propose
87 a change to this process in the future.

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89 At 6:43,

90 **Motion: "To go into a non-public session under RSA 91-A:3 (c) - reputation."**

DRAFT

91 **Motion: T. Colby**
92 **Second: P. Sanderson**
93 **Motion carried by roll call vote 5 to 0.**
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96 Minutes respectfully submitted by
97 Cheryl Eastman
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