



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
October 19, 2021**

ROLL CALL: Chairman Hal Kreider, Vice-Chair Matt Frye, Select Board Member Beth Boudreau, Select Board Member Tim Colby, Select Board Member Jim Guzofski

STAFF PRESENT: TA Walter Johnson, Finance Director Cheryl Eastman, Land Use Assistant Susan Austin

6:00 P.M. Chairman Hal Kreider opened the Northwood Board of Selectmen meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance

Selectman Kreider stated that this is a work session so they are not taking public comment at this meeting.

Police Department Budget:

Chief Drolet stated that he has distributed his budget. He stated that there were not too many changes or a great deal of increases. He stated that the majority of the increase is in the salary and benefits line. He stated that they are adding a position, so that is generally the largest increase. It's cheaper to pay part-timers to cover the shifts than paying overtime, so it offset the increase in the part-time line with reducing the overtime line. There's an increase in the cruiser modems that's just about \$440, and a security system camera upgrade. They had to replace the rear door of the police department, they used to have a window in it. It was a standard door and they had to make that a secure door. Because of that, they cannot see outside anymore so they would like to add a camera to that back door with a monitor so the officers can see who's at that back door before they swing it open. He stated that he added \$1,000 to make that adjustment. The printing line has been reduced, since they print very little now, mostly for Animal Control. Contractor services is up \$2,000 that's just cost of doing business. The businesses still increase their fees even if we're on a default budget. Uniforms and supplies increased \$2,000, the price of ammunition is skyrocketed so that is a huge hit that comes out of that line so that's a huge hit to that line. For qualifications they required provide ammunition to officers that go to the academy, so they need to have that on hand for them. Equipment purchase has a seven-thousand-dollar increase, but that's not an increase that's just an adjustment to the accounts. They closed off a line of 7000, which was Equipment/Small Items and combine that into just one equipment line so it's not really an increase it's a just a reallocation if you will. For Vehicle Maintenance, he put up a thousand dollars, but they are still waiting for the pickup truck that they ordered back in 2020, so since they are holding on to these older cars longer waiting for the replacements, he felt it was best to add to vehicle maintenance to cover those expenses. Chief Drolet also stated that as of now, they have an officer deployed overseas at least until May 2022. That's going to leave an opening. They already have a current opening of a full-time officer that left so they had two full-time openings, so they have had some struggling with staffing. Hiring is not the easiest thing to do right now. They have 4 patrolmen to cover 365 days. A few months ago he asked permission to solve two problems, one backfilled the deployed officer's position and also use that

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1 opportunity to add a new officer into the staff that we haven't added since 2008. He stated that
2 they are averaging anywhere between 250 to 350 calls for service a month right now and they
3 are close to 3,000 calls for the service for the year right now and around between 10 and 15
4 arrests per month. Motor vehicle accidents, depending on the on the month are higher in the
5 winter and lower in the summer. Having two officers on would be a huge benefit to the
6 department. Land wise, the Town is very spread out. One of the biggest complaints he hears
7 now from the town is that they don't have time to deal with the motor vehicle complaints. They
8 just don't have the presence that you would see in a larger town that has five or six cars on.
9 Right now, there are two candidates in the pipeline that have a few more hoops to jump
10 through, but hopefully in the next two weeks they will be extending them offers of employment.
11 Selectman Kreider asked if the wages they were offering were attracting applicants. Chief
12 Drolet stated that the commission has looked at where the 2021 budget is looking pretty
13 healthy this year so they are using some of that money to try to adjust the younger officers up
14 the pay scale so they can advertise for a higher rate.

15 16 Animal Control

17
18 Chief Drolet stated that overall, it's reduction of about \$3,600 in the line, and that's pretty
19 much just coming right out of the wages. They have had someone in the position for a
20 pretty steady amount of time that they could actually see what the hours were going to be and
21 with that reduction they can cover plenty of hours for that. Selectman Kreider asked if they still
22 have the vehicle and where's the gas and maintenance for that vehicle? Chief Drolet stated that
23 that comes out of the vehicle maintenance. A few years ago, one of the town administrators
24 said he wanted to save money and cut the gas line out of it so just pull it out of the PD
25 gas line. Chief Drolet stated that he would really like it back in its own line. The ACO uses
26 about \$300 worth of gas, and it would really be better in its own line for proper accounting.

27 28 Police Commission

29
30 Linda Smith, Police Commission Administrator and Nicole Rodler, Chair of the Police
31 Commission were present. Ms. Smith stated that they reduced the salary line to reflect to bring
32 it down a little bit closer to actual expenditures for the last three or four years. There should
33 still be enough in there for any potential step increase. The only other change was an increase
34 in the equipment purchase line. It's the sixty-four dollars is for the post office box rental. She
35 stated that she would like to add \$100 to the equipment that would be a cost share with her
36 other departments police commission legal is a retainer of \$200 a month by the attorney that
37 the commission has which is separate from the Town's general Counsel. That varies from year
38 to year. He's available both to her and to the commission to answer any general legal
39 questions.

40 41 Budget Committee

42
43 Ms. Smith stated that they made some reductions. Advertising is generally once a year for the
44 public hearing and maybe occasionally there would be a reason to advertise if there are
45 vacancies but they have been trying to do that with the website.

46 47 Planning and Development

48
49 Ms. Smith stated that one of the reductions is moving the GIS cost share down to a dollar. One
50 main change is in the salaries, the TA had suggested breaking down Land Use Specialists and
51 Land Use Admin Assist, 80% 20% between the Planning Board and the ZBA, to better show
52 where those salary expenses are being used rather than executive office. Ms. Smith explained
53 the break down for the Planner contracted services rate increase. She stated that the rate is
54 going to increase from \$60/hour to \$65/hour at the end of this contract, which expires on
55 12/31 of this year. She stated that this contract is a not to exceed amount, because of the
56 variables on the planning board with applications when they come in, how much time is
57 involved in them, the number of them, it's really very difficult to say x number of hours per
58 month for the planner. Because of that, it's based on a yearly total of 520 hours. The planner
59 has done an exceptional job keeping underneath that amount and trying to keep up with the
60 work as it fluctuates. It has worked out well over the last three or four years. The only other

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1 option other than increasing it to reflect that would be to reduce it and she would have real
2 concerns about having it that tight that we may very well have to cut service if that happens
3 Back in 2019 they went over the number of hours. Last year the selectmen worked with
4 Strafford Regional Planning Commission because of the default budget was so far from the
5 actual amount of the contract. There are things that the planner has helped with that do not
6 come under the contract, but he's helped us out with different issues relative to economic
7 development and there are other areas that are not part of that contract that they provide.
8 Typically, she, the chairman and the planner meet to work with SRPC to provide information
9 from the local level on transportation planning and the 10-year plan. SRPC also provided the
10 annual planning handbooks, as well as a number of other services.

11
12 Zoning Board

13 Ms. Smith stated that there are no real changes to that other than the changes to the
14 moving the wages into that section. There's been some minor reductions based on the
15 previous expenditures for three or four years the printing and advertising is down a little bit.
16 Ms. Smith stated that they're still looking for people to be on the Zoning Board.

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19 Conservation Commission

20
21 Ms. Smith stated that this line has very small changes within the department but the total
22 amount is within two dollars. The forester seems to be the one of the few spots, but it's actually
23 reallocating that. She stated that they were putting all of the money into the Town Forest Land
24 Management for the Town Forester for the update of the Forest Management plan. The others
25 have a dollar should there be a need that comes up that it keeps the line open but that's it.

26
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28 Fire Department

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30 Chief Tetreault stated that there is not a big difference between his last proposed budget and
31 this one. The biggest thing versus the default budget is including his salary in the budget. The
32 full-time staff will have projected wage salary increases for all of full-time staff of a two percent
33 step increase. The other larger increases are for part-time wages and that should give them
34 enough money to cover the station with two people 24/7. For Call Back pay, Chief stated that
35 he spoke with the TA about this. The call firefighters make \$10 an hour when they come back
36 for calls. As the Board is aware, Dunkin Donuts and McDonalds pay more than that. In this
37 budget he proposes that they have one pay rate so if a firefighter makes fifteen dollars an hour
38 working a shift, they will make fifteen dollars an hour on callbacks. If they are making more
39 money they'll may come back to calls more often. He stated that they have two cell phones and
40 six mobile data terminals that they use in their apparatus. Electricity has always been under
41 budgeted in the default budget so he put that up where it actually belongs. For building
42 maintenance and repairs, since they haven't spent that much lately, he feels that \$10,000 is
43 reasonable, and that's down \$3,000 from the default. A new line this year is Paramedic
44 Intercepts. Chief stated that hopefully with one of their firefighters getting her paramedic they
45 have reduced that line. A paramedic intercept costs about \$550 dollars per call. The more sick
46 people they have without paramedics on duty, the more it cost. Fortunately, they have some
47 really good advanced EMTs that know when they need a paramedic. Ambulance billing is a new
48 line to call out what exactly what they are paying for. Ambulance billing is one of the lines they
49 hope is overspent, because that means we're collecting more money because it's a percentage of
50 what they collect. Mutual Aid Dispatch went up again this year. It's still a really good deal,
51 \$48,000 for dispatching service 24 7. They have a regional hazardous materials team that they
52 can call on and they have a chief officer available to them 24/7 that come out and help if we
53 have a fire, and that's less than the cost of one person. For Contracted Services, he broke
54 that out. Most of that is subscriptions for software that they use, emergency reporting and
55 when to work scheduling. Office supplies is pretty self-explanatory. Educational is fire
56 prevention supply, including coloring books and hats and stuff for the schools. Fire department
57 general supplies includes the Janos sports. Medical supplies, that's for supplies they only
58 use once like band-aids. He noted that they are pretty fortunate because that line would be a
59 lot higher if it wasn't for Concord Hospital. Concord Hospital provides the majority of their
60 disposable medical supplies free of charge. Some things we don't get from Concord

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1 Hospital are pretty expensive. One of them is I/O needles. One I/O needle is \$100, so every
2 time they have a cardiac arrest, they use one of those needles. Diesel and Gas is just up
3 slightly. He stated that he didn't want to anticipate how much the price of fuel could go up, it's
4 a bit of a wild card. Uniforms are pretty self-explanatory, they buy all the uniforms for the staff
5 whether that be uh uniforms for career staff or t-shirts for call firefighters. The Equipment line
6 is eleven thousand dollars. If they need to replace hose or nozzles or fittings or things like that.
7 Testing hose usually wipes out a couple lengths of hose. Vehicle Maintenance and Repair is not
8 as high as requested last year, because they have some new apparatus and that's definitely
9 had a positive impact on what they are spending for vehicle repairs. Equipment maintenance:
10 they have to do an annual ladder testing, hose testing flow, and test the breathing apparatus.
11 They are fortunate this year, the breathing apparatus was new so they didn't have to flow test
12 that but they have to do that next year. For gear purchase, firefighter protective clothing, they
13 only bought what they absolutely had to this year but they were trying to be on a maintenance
14 schedule so he did bump that line up this year so that they could get back on schedule for
15 anything they might have missed this year. An average set of turnout gear cost about three
16 thousand dollars a set to outfit a firefighter from head to toe. After 10 years if they even if
17 it's never been used after 10 years it's not good for first line service. Hydrants, again, they
18 haven't spent that in the last few years but they do have some hydrants that are in need of
19 repair. Dues are National Fire Protection Association, Fire Chiefs Association, Fire Prevention
20 Society and New Hampshire State Fire Association. EMS equipment maintenance: monitor
21 defibrillators have to be serviced annually, the stretchers need to be serviced annually, so
22 that's basically what that that covers. EMS training covers initial EMS training whether that be
23 EMT, Advanced EMT or paramedic and then refresher training. They are required to take
24 refresher training every two years. Discussion continued about the Fire Department budget and
25 potential upcoming expenditures.

26 27 28 Highway Department

29
30 Public Works Foreman Chris Brown was present to discuss his proposed budget. He stated
31 that most of his budget is pretty similar to what he's had in the and for the most part it's
32 a pretty minimal increase over last year's budget. The foreman salary they added that in this
33 year versus default budget. The call crew stayed the same. They don't use town cell phones
34 they are using their personal so they cut that right out of the budget. Electricity and heating
35 oil, they have a waste oil furnace now. Contracted services, permit fees and supplies the
36 contracted services, that's the roadside mowing the building and grounds maintenance,
37 grading and outside contract at work. Fuel has been pretty decent with their fuel consumption,
38 it's their largest consumer obviously in the wintertime. Equipment maintenance and
39 maintenance and repair is all combined now, so there is an increase in that one. Electric and
40 heating oil for the recycling building. Department tools and supplies was all moved to either the
41 equipment purchase line or the contracted services line. They are trying to catch up versus the
42 default budget. For Highway cleaning and maintenance, there is a big change in contracted
43 services, basically most of the work he would like to keep in house and not have to put out to
44 contractors, so he just took portion of that line and moved it towards the rental line on the
45 other page and that in turn will allowed him to have the excavator for six months and a chipper
46 for a week if they need it here and there. In the two months that they had the mini excavator
47 this year they did 13 culverts and 2,700 feet of ditching. Snow and Ice control Mr. Brown
48 stated that if they look at the last few years, they haven't spent close to \$60,000, and this year
49 this year they are at \$32,000. He stated that going back through the numbers in records that
50 he found most of the trucks three years ago were six-wheelers, at \$95 to \$100 an hour versus
51 small contracted pickups, or one tons at \$75. There's a big fluctuation in prices there, plus
52 weather patterns are changing and most of everything is in-house regardless if it's storm or an
53 ice event. They try not to call out the contractors unless they're absolutely needed, if they know
54 it's going to be a 12-inch storm they're called ahead of time. Originally, salt was at \$73 a ton.
55 This year it's actually ten dollars less a ton than it was last year. Sanitation: Mr. Brown stated
56 that they were still at full staff at the transfer station. The only increase was in the salary lines.
57 For Solid Waste, Mr. Brown stated that there is a pretty significant increase because they are
58 working with a three-year-old budget, and obviously tipping costs and transportation costs
59 have increased a lot. Discussion continues about the Highway Department Budget as well as
60 the Transfer station budget including the road reconstruction and maintenance expenses

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1 estimate of \$350,000 based on the new road surface management plan. Replacing the oldest
2 six-wheel dump truck is also recommended for placement on the warrant for 2022.

3
4 Selectmen's Budget

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6 Selectman Kreider stated that he didn't think there was any desire to change anything as far as
7 the Selectman's compensation. He stated that he would not have a problem with an equal
8 distribution of money. He stated that he would leave the overall number the same. He stated
9 that there wasn't anything for travel for selectmen and obviously when and if trainings are
10 back in person that certainly that could be a case where travel costs would be used.

11
12 Town Administrator's Budget

13
14 Mr. Johnson stated that the salary amount was the amount included in his contract.
15 Everything else includes the associated cost for social security, retirement system, insurances,
16 etc. He stated that he does carry a town cell phone. Also included in this budget is the storage
17 facility for document storage that we have at Archive America. Dues are of the membership
18 dues for the Town Administrator and training and travel for conferences this year. He stated
19 that he hasn't attended any conferences as of yet as most have changed to remote due to
20 Covid, so he hasn't spent anything out of those lines this year to date.

21
22
23 Moderator Budget

24
25 Mr. Johnson stated that they maintain a stipend for the Moderator, but they haven't had a bill
26 submitted by the Moderator for the last three years, but they do have the provision there and
27 certainly they're entitled to submit their payment request for that.

28
29 Executive Office Budget

30
31 Mr. Johnson stated that again this is another area where they have divided expenses for staff
32 into departments that they actually work for and so they have taken out the Building and
33 Assessing clerk and put that in the Building and Assessing departments and they have kept a
34 portion in here for Carol for her executive responsibilities. The same way with the Land Use
35 specialist and the Land Use Administrative Assistant as previously discussed. Contracted
36 services, a lot of these are their functional operational maintenance contracts for the copy
37 machines and a data destruction service that they subscribe to which takes away all their
38 confidential papers under a secure agreement, a water cooler, software for the web site hosting
39 and then Mainstay computer support that's for support for all our departments except for
40 police which is under a separate contract. Printing and Advertising is for the voter guides and
41 the town report and notices for public meetings, etc. Software: this is for Adobe software that
42 they use for sending out things for approval. They were able to cut back the number of licenses
43 on that after they started meeting in person again. General office supplies are copy toner,
44 batteries etc. Postage again they have allocated a percentage to the Executive Department for
45 mailings. Books and Periodicals: they have their proposal for new computers that need to be
46 replaced or aren't scheduled to be replaced, he just met today for their annual review with
47 Mainstay about their hardware and software need and that'll be something that he will have by
48 the November budget meeting. These computers that are budgeted in are actually scheduled
49 for replacement in 2021. Equipment Maintenance and repairs: This is just keeping all the
50 equipment operating and whatever equipment maintenance that comes up comes out of that
51 particular budget. Dues include New Hampshire Municipal Association dues that they benefit
52 from every year is \$4,000, Sam's Club membership program that's pretty minimal. Travel and
53 Training is minimal there as well.

54
55
56 Restoration of Records

57
58 Mr. Johnson stated that they started on a quest to restore and preserve the records in the
59 town clerk's office. The first volumes were done last year and so this year they recommended
60 the next two volumes which are smaller, and they've provided us this a quote for \$6,984 to get

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1 those next two volumes done. Selectman Kreider stated that they would stop there for now,
2 with the intent to work on more budget at the next meeting.

3
4 **NON-PUBLIC SESSION**

5 **Motion: To enter non-public at 9:00 PM under RSA 91-A:3, II (a)**

6 **Motion: M. Frye**

7 **Second: J. Guzofski**

8
9 **Motion carried by roll call vote 5/0**

10
11 *The Select Board Members entered non-public at 9:00 PM.*

12
13 *Public Session Reconvened at 9:25*

14
15 **Motion: "To seal the minutes as they are relative to a personnel matter"**

16 **Motion: M. Frye**

17 **Second T. Colby**

18
19 **Motion: "To adjourn at 9:26 PM"**

20 **Motion: M. Frye**

21 **Second: T. Colby**

22
23 **Motion carried by Roll Call Vote 5/0**

24
25
26 ***Respectfully Submitted***

27 ***Susan Austin, Land Use Assistant***