



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
Budget Work Session
November 16, 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

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

Minutes:

Motion: "To approve the minutes of October 26, 2021, as written."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: M. Frye

Motion carried 5/0

Motion: "To approve the minutes of November 2, 2021, as written."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: M Frye

Motion carried 5/0

Motion: "To approve the minutes of November 9, 2021, as written."

Motion: T. Colby

Second: M. Frye

Motion carried 5/0

Chairman Kreider said the Board will be finalizing the recommendations for the budget and the warrant articles so the budget committee can get the full package to review. Walter supplied supplemental information to the notes in the budget and the proposed warrant articles. This will be part of the package that goes to the Budget Committee.

Operating Budget: Finance Director Eastman stated the changes from the latest version of the budget include a step increase for the Deputy Tax Collector/Town Clerk granted two weeks ago and related taxes and retirement costs. In the Board of Selectmen budget, the recording secretary line has been added. Previously it was included in the

45 Executive budget. Invoices for software licensing for Assessing and Building Inspection
46 have been received and they are lower than the estimates. Chairman Kreider asked if
47 the Board wanted to adjust the wage scale to adjust for inflation. TA Johnson reported
48 that the Social Security cost of living adjustment this year is 5.9%. Other towns are
49 adjusting anywhere between 3 and 5%. Discussion referenced the need to adjust the
50 wage scale and the need to have a budget that will pass. Selectmen Boudreau suggested
51 a 1% COLA, along with the need to buy down the tax rate. Last week, the Board included
52 \$20,908 to fund a step increase for every employee that had not already had an increase
53 included in the proposed budget. TA Johnson reminded the Board that within the Police,
54 Fire, and Library proposed budgets there were market adjustments included. There was
55 discussion regarding a potential COLA amount of between 1% and 2%. The consensus
56 of the Board was to grant a 1.5% COLA in the budget. Selectman Frye brought up a
57 request from the Recreation Commission to ask for funds for field improvements. The
58 Board decided to put that request in a warrant article and leave the operating budget
59 alone. Selectman Guzofski asked for clarification on the process of the Board of
60 Selectmen recommending a budget and if they have any say over budgets such as the
61 Library or Police. TA Johnson explained the Board of Selectmen give a recommended
62 amount for the bottom line of the budget, which includes the Library and Police
63 Departments. Their recommendation goes to the Budget Committee, who will determine
64 what the final recommended budget will be. The budget that goes on the reports is the
65 Budget Committee's budget. Whatever bottom line amount that is voted by the town is
66 the amount that the Library Trustees and the Police Commission then can decide how
67 to spend in their own departments. The Board of Selectmen determine how the rest is
68 spent in the other departments. Selectman Guzofski said when he prioritizes the
69 budgets by dollar amounts, the police and fire are highest, then the employee benefit
70 pool, and then the library. He feels the perception is that the Board of Selectmen have
71 control over the entire budget, but they don't when it comes to the Library and Police.
72 Selectmen Guzofski is concerned about the Building Inspector budget being too small
73 for the upcoming activity in town. Chairman Kreider feels it is important for the Board
74 to unanimously vote to recommend a budget amount. Selectmen Frye cautioned
75 Selectmen Guzofski to consider what each departments costs and the staff needed to
76 provide the services needed, not necessarily the bottom line amount or percentage. TA
77 Johnson added that the Board of Selectmen is the closest to what goes on day to day in
78 all the departments. The Budget Committee is there to verify that the amounts the Board
79 of Selectmen recommend make sense. The Board of Selectmen input and
80 recommendation is an important part of the process. TA Johnson also cautioned the
81 Board to not vote on the budget before holding a public hearing, but to only vote to
82 recommend to the Budget Committee as public comment may influence their vote.

83 **Motion: "To recommend the operating budget of \$4,063,189 to the Budget**
84 **Committee."**

85 **Motion: M. Frye**

86 **Second: T. Colby**

87 **Motion carried 4/1 with J. Guzofski dissenting.**

88 Selectmen Boudreau commented that this is a large increase, but TA Johnson pointed
89 out that it is over a five-year period. 2018 was the last year a budget passed.

90

91 **Review of Warrant Articles:**

92 Article 4: Highway Dump Truck Purchase for \$126,000 for a six-wheel dump truck with
93 plow, wing, and sander. \$100,000 to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve
94 Account and \$26,000 to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectman Boudreau

95 would prefer to have the entire purchase amount come from the Capital Reserve
96 Account. TA Johnson stated that if we do that, we will need to increase the amount of
97 funding back into the Capital Reserve Account to keep on track with the purchasing
98 plan.

99 **Motion: “To go with Walter’s recommendation”**

100 **Motion: T. Colby**

101 **Second: M. Frye**

102 **After discussion, T. Colby withdrew his motion.**

103

104 **Motion: “To change the funding for this article to be \$126,000 coming out of the**
105 **Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Account.”**

106 **Motion: J. Guzofski**

107 **Second: B. Boudreau**

108 **Motion carried 5/0.**

109

110 Article 13: Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Funding for \$40,000 to come from the
111 unassigned fund balance.

112 **Motion: “To take \$40,000 out of the unassigned fund balance to put into the**
113 **Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Account.”**

114 **Motion: M. Frye**

115 **Second: B. Boudreau**

116 **Motion carried 5/0.**

117

118 Article 5: Communications Equipment Purchase of \$33,000 for year 3 of a 3-year plan
119 to replace portable and mobile radios in the Fire Department with funds to come from
120 the unassigned fund balance. TA Johnson has verified with Chief Tetreault that these
121 are still needed.

122 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

123 **Motion: M. Frye**

124 **Second: T. Colby**

125 **Motion carried 5/0.**

126

127 Article 6: Road Construction/Resurfacing/Paving and Ditching for \$175,000 with funds
128 to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen Boudreau suggested adding
129 wording “in accordance with the 2022 Road Plan”.

130 **Motion: “To recommend this article as amended.”**

131 **Motion: M. Frye**

132 **Second: T. Colby**

133 **Motion carried 5/0.**

134

135 Article 7: Fire Apparatus Lease/Purchase for \$52,237 for the 2nd lease payment on the
136 Tanker Truck with funds to come from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special
137 Revenue Fund.

138 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.:**

139 **Motion: M. Frye**

140 **Second: B. Boudreau**

141 **Motion carried 5/0**

142

143 Article 8: Ambulance Lease Purchase for \$26,225 for the second payment on a 7-year
144 lease/purchase with funds to come from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special
145 Revenue Fund.

146 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

147 **Motion: M. Frye**

148 **Second: B. Boudreau**

149 **Motion carried 5/0.**

150

151 Article 9: Highway Dump Truck Lease/Purchase for \$26,439 for the 4th year of a seven-
152 year lease/purchase.

153 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

154 **Motion: M. Frye**

155 **Second: B. Boudreau**

156 **Motion carried 5/0**

157

158 Article 10: Highway Department Backhoe Lease/Purchase for \$20,297.79 for the fourth
159 of five yearly payments. TA Johnson stated the amount needs to be amended to whole
160 dollars of \$20,298.

161 **Motion: “To recommend this article as amended.”**

162 **Motion: M. Frye**

163 **Second: B. Boudreau**

164 **Motion carried 5/0.**

165

166 Article 11: This article needs to wait for a recommendation until after the 12/31/21
167 figures for the Cable Expendable Trust, Transfer Station Expendable Trust, and
168 Cemetery Expendable Trust are finalized.

169

170 Article 12: Vested Benefit Expendable Trust Fund deposit for \$10,000. TA Johnson
171 explained the purpose of this fund is for when an employee leaves and has accrued leave
172 time we are obligated to pay out. This expense is taken from this fund instead of the
173 operating budget. It could be a large impact if it was a long-term employee. If this fund
174 is short for any amount needed, the balance would have to come from the operating
175 budget.

176 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

177 **Motion: M. Frye**

178 **Second: B. Boudreau**

179 **Motion carried 5/0.**

180

181 Article 14: Police Equipment Capital Reserve Fund Deposit of \$6,000.

182 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

183 **Motion: M. Frye**

184 **Second: B. Boudreau**

185 **Motion carried 5/0.**

186

187 Article 15: Lagoon Maintenance and Repair Expendable Trust Fund Deposit, with funds
188 coming from the Lagoon Special Revenue Fund held by the Northwood Treasurer.
189 Selectman Frye questioned if we have enough money in that fund if we are required to
190 shut the lagoon down. TA Johnson stated that the permit is reviewed and approved by
191 the state and so long as we are in compliance there is no reason to not renew the permit.
192 The amount is whatever amount of revenue is generated in 2021.

193 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

194 **Motion: M. Frye**

195 **Second: B. Boudreau**

196 **Motion carried 5/0.**

197

198 Article 16: 250th Anniversary Expendable Trust Fund Deposit. TA Johnson said the
199 250th Committee is not requesting any funds this year. They are confident the funds
200 they currently have, and the fund-raising planned this year, they are all set. After some
201 discussion, the board removed the article from the warrant.

202

203 Article 17: Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Expendable Trust Fund Deposit for
204 \$7,000.

205 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

206 **Motion: M. Frye**

207 **Second: B. Boudreau**

208 **Motion carried 5/0.**

209

210 Article 18: Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment and Control Expendable Trust Fund
211 Deposit for \$12,000.

212 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

213 **Motion: M. Frye**

214 **Second: B. Boudreau**

215 **Motion carried 5/0.**

216

217 Article 19: Terrestrial Invasive Species Expendable Trust Fund Deposit for \$10,000. TA
218 Johnson recommends increasing this from the \$6,000 added last year. The Japanese
219 Knotweed treatment this year cost more than \$6,000. Selectmen Frye questioned if there
220 will be enough funds to remove trees if necessary. TA Johnson said there are funds in
221 the operating budget for both road construction tree removal and invasive tree removal.

222 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

223 **Motion: M. Frye**

224 **Second: B. Boudreau**

225 **Motion carried 5/0.**

226

227 Article 20: Facilities Committee Expendable Trust Deposit for \$15,000. TA Johnson
228 reported that this year we have spent about \$21,000 on Town Hall and Community
229 Center repairs to date and we will need about \$10,000 more for the completion of the
230 repairs to the siding at the Community Center. This article is looking to replenish the
231 fund. In the near future the Town Hall will need a new roof. After discussion, the
232 consensus was to increase the amount to \$25,000 and take the funds from the
233 unassigned fund balance.

234 **Motion: “To recommend increasing this article to \$25,000 and to take the funds
235 from the unassigned fund balance.”**

236 **Motion: J. Guzofski**

237 **Second: B. Boudreau**

238 **Motion carried 5/0.**

239

240 Article 21: Information Technology Capital Reserve Fund Deposit for \$15,000. This fund
241 was established last year to hold the money from the Profund reimbursement and move
242 forward with the purchase of the finance software. There will be some large expenses

243 coming for IT needs in the next 2 or 3 years that could total \$25,000 to \$30,000. This
244 deposit will replenish the fund after the purchase of the finance software.

245 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

246 **Motion: M. Frye**

247 **Second: B. Boudreau**

248 **Motion carried 5/0.**

249

250 Article 22: Road Improvement Expendable Trust Fund Deposit for \$50,000. This is a
251 replacement of the funds we used in 2021 for road improvement projects. This fund will
252 be utilized for a portion of the 2022 work along with the Capital Plan budget for 2022.
253 This will provide for the coming years pre construction work and any emergencies.

254 **Motion: “To recommend this article as written.”**

255 **Motion: M. Frye**

256 **Second: B. Boudreau**

257 **Motion carried 5/0.**

258

259 Article 23: Cable Expendable Trust Fund expanded purpose to include paying costs
260 for improving communications to Town citizens from Town’s Boards, Committees, and
261 Departments. Said improvements to include but not limited to e-mail communications,
262 message signage, newsletters, etc. Consensus was to change the wording of the article
263 for better clarity. This article doesn’t require a board vote because it is not a money
264 article. It was agreed to Jim will draft new wording for the article for the Board to review.

265

266 **Recreation Field Improvement Request**

267 Selectmen Frye spoke about the request from the Recreation Commission for a warrant
268 article for \$20,000 to continue the work on the blasting, rock removal, leveling, loam,
269 seeding, and drainage improvements at the Recreation fields. After discussion about the
270 scope of work, B. Boudreau suggested \$27,000 and have the funds come from the
271 unassigned fund balance.

272 **Motion: “To add a warrant article for \$27,000 for the continued improvements at
273 the Rt 4 Recreation fields and for the funds to come from the unassigned fund
274 balance.”**

275 **Motion: M. Frye**

276 **Second: B. Boudreau**

277 **Motion carried 5/0.**

278

279 **Master Plan Request**

280 The Planning Board has requested \$18,000 to upgrade the Master Plan. This amount
281 will cover updating the two chapters that are a required minimum. In the coming years,
282 the Board can prioritize other chapters to update. Having an updated Master Plan
283 allows us to apply for grants and defend the Town zoning ordinance .

284 **Motion: “To add a warrant article to update the Master Plan for \$18,000.**

285 **Motion: M. Frye**

286 **Second: B. Boudreau**

287 **Motion carried 5/0.**

288

289 **CIP Funding Requests**

290 Library Generator: The Library requested \$10,000 for a stand-by generator. Discussion
291 ensued about the necessity to stick with essential items to get the town back on track.

292 **Motion: “To exclude the request for a generator for the Library from the warrant.”**

293 **Motion: J. Guzofski**
294 **Second: B. Boudreau**
295 **Motion carried 3/2 with H. Kreider and M. Frye dissenting.**
296

297 Narrows Station Apron/Ramp: The Fire Department requested \$25,000 for repairs to
298 the Narrows apron and ramp. There was discussion questioning the logic of putting
299 funds into a building when we want to have a safety complex. TA Johnson stated that
300 there are no current proposals for a safety complex and we need to maintain the
301 buildings we currently have.

302 **Motion: “To include a warrant article for \$25,000 for paving the apron and ramp**
303 **at the Narrows fire station.”**

304 **Motion: M. Frye**
305 **Second: J. Guzofski**
306 **Motion carried 5/0.**
307

308 Defibrillators and ventilators: The Fire Department has asked for new defibrillators and
309 ventilators. Chairman Kreider feels there are other options such as grants to fund these
310 purchases instead of tax dollars. The consensus of the Board was to tell the Chief to
311 prepare to buy 2 defibrillators and 2 ventilators, one set funded from the ARPA funds
312 and the other from separate grants.
313

314 **Tax Rate Setting**

315 TA Johnson stated that we are currently waiting for the Department of Revenue to set
316 the tax rate. He has estimated the town portion of the rate to be \$2.67, which is down
317 from \$4.23 last year. This is based on the extra revenue from the sale of town properties
318 and the use of the unassigned fund balance voted last June. The final rate will depend
319 on the local school rate, county, and state education rate.
320

321 At 9:23, **Motion: “To go into non-public session to discuss personnel issues.”**

322 **Motion: B. Boudreau**
323 **Second. T. Colby**
324 **Motion carried by roll call vote.**
325

326 Chairman Kreider announced the meeting will adjourn after the non-public session and
327 no votes will be taken in non-public.
328

329 Minutes respectfully submitted by
330 Cheryl Eastman
331
332
333
334
335
336
337