

**DRAFT**



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**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD  
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

Town of Northwood • 818 First NH Turnpike • Northwood NH, 03261 • 603.942.5586

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**Board of Selectmen Worksession Meeting Minutes  
November 6, 2019**

**ROLL CALL:** Chairman Scott Bryer, Selectman Dave Ruth, Selectman Matt Frye, Selectman Hal Kreider, and Selectwoman Beth Boudreau.

**ABSENT:** None

**STAFF PRESENT:** Town Administrator (TA) Heather Thibodeau and Municipal Administrative Assistant Lisa Lamarche

**5:30 P.M. Chairman Scott Bryer opened the Northwood Board of Selectmen Worksession meeting and Chief Drolet led the Pledge of Allegiance**

**APPOINTMENTS: MOTION: "To appoint Susan Romano to Conservation Commission."**

Motion: D. Ruth

Seconded: H. Kreider

Discussion: Selectman Kreider said he's met her and seen her at many events and he thinks she'll be very good.

**Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

**LAND USE BUDGET REVIEW**

Linda Smith presented the following budget line item changes:

Legal Line - \$1 to keep line open, funds come from your general legal line

Contracted Services – 12-month annual contract with Strafford Regional Planning Services \$32,000 and \$2,400 for the annual CAI Tech assessing program. She stated that Strafford Regional Planning is working with her to keep the cost down, and if someone has to come in to cover for James, they bill at the lower rate. Selectman Ruth questioned fiscal year or calendar year. Linda Smith said they went on a not exceed rate based off our budget. Selectman Kreider questioned if that was the total cost for online too. Linda Smith said yes it's the annual cost but the updates are done in house now. The GIS line is for the software that's on the laptop.

Printing/Advertising – Selectman Frye questioned if the additional \$500 for printing would be enough and Linda Smith said that it averages to about \$150-\$175/month, so they're hoping that should be enough.

Bottom line for Land Use proposed budget is \$45,601.

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## ZONING BOARD BUDGET REVIEW

Linda Smith presented the following budget line item changes:  
Printing/Advertising – Linda Smith said same change as land use  
Legal – Selectman Ruth pointed out a correction needed to be made to the comments and clarified that it's only a \$1 because the cost will come from Selectmen or Executive Office budget.  
Bottom line for Zoning Board proposed budget is \$3,701.

## CONSERVATION BUDGET REVIEW

Linda Smith presented the following budget line item changes:  
Contracted Services – Chairman Bryer noted that it's \$2,000 instead of \$1,000 and Linda Smith said that line 491 is combined with 330, that's why 491 is \$1 not \$1,000 and 330 is \$2,000 not \$1,000. She said the reason is that they no longer have a town forester, but the conservation commission has a request for qualifications and hopes a Selectman will sit in on the interview to have someone for the winter. Selectman Ruth asked if the amount being asked is within reason of surrounding towns, and Linda confirmed yes.  
Bottom line for Conservation proposed budget is \$3,553.

## TOWN REPORT

Linda Smith asked for recommendations for dedication of the town report. She said it publicly in case someone from the public has a recommendation. In years past, they have gotten away from doing individuals and doing more of a group, like emergency, vets, etc. Selectman Ruth asked if the school pays half of the town report. Linda said that she needs to ask the Finance Administrator if they have been billed. She believes the school pays a portion but not half.

## POLICE COMMISSION BUDGET REVIEW

Chairman Bryer asked if the increase was for the salary of the administrative assistant, the police commissioner said the increase of \$100 is for equipment. They usually only ask for \$1 but wanted to be prepared. Selectman Ruth asked why the legal line hasn't been used in years and the police commissioner said it's a retainer, and then Selectman Ruth was corrected and it has been used over the years and most of it so far this year.

## POLICE DEPARTMENT BUDGET REVIEW

Police Chief said a few corrections: contracted services line 330, should be \$11,848.75 and 2 lines after that, security camera should be \$1,000 and that's for the security system for inside and outside the Police Department. Selectman Ruth would like a line for why it's not there. Selectman Kreider asked how many full-time police for that line. Police Chief Drolet said it's from lieutenant down to patrol officer and that's 6. Selectman Kreider questioned if \$34,000 for part time officers is enough, when in the past it's been requested at \$66,000. Police Chief said he never asked for that amount in the past, he asked for \$31,875. Selectman Kreider said actually spent around \$55,000 and Police Chief said it was because they were down full-time officers. Selectman Kreider said there's a cruiser in there. Police Chief said he was told he couldn't get a cruiser this year, but his plan was to get one every year. He would like one to come out of the default budget and one to come out of the reserve fund. Selectman Kreider said that he expressed to T.A. Thibodeau that if funds are available at the year end, he would like to see it go to the electric project and a cruiser. Selectman Kreider questioned line 440, and Police Chief said they usually stay under that number, so they are comfortable with it. Selectman Ruth asked if the SRO comes out of the full-time officer's line, and Police Chief said no that's from the school, a check comes from Coe Brown. Selectman Ruth asked for more

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1 notes, such as how many full time and part time officers, etc, because even though we'll get a  
2 separate report with salaries, the people reading the proposed budget need to have notes. The  
3 line about \$3,500 Coe Brown cruiser is for maintenance of that cruiser, said Police Chief.  
4 Selectman Ruth suggested more notes or put the salary information report online too, so people  
5 know and understand the percentages of raises, etc. He said people might think Coe Brown  
6 pays for that line, so it's free, but the students each pay a portion. Selectwoman Boudreau  
7 questioned line 630 building maintenance and repairs only being \$2,000 and if that's enough,  
8 because the stairs still have cones. Police Chief said they're done the stairs, there's just a small  
9 repair left that he'll do. He said it's enough money for only if someone breaks a door or window,  
10 etc, and if it's something bigger then they ask in a warrant article. Selectman Kryer questioned  
11 line 635 for vehicle gas and if it's been encumbered, Police Chief said yes. Chairman Bryer  
12 said to work with T.A. Thibodeau because in the budget all departments are putting 2% increase  
13 and the new step is a warrant article. Police Chief Drolet thought that was risky, but Chairman  
14 Bryer said it has to be a warrant article because we're adopting a new wage plan. Selectman  
15 Kreider clarified that we're using the old wage plan, adding 2% and new steps, and that's going  
16 in the proposed budget, and the new wage plan is a warrant article. Chairman Bryer said  
17 statutorily the police department can ask for whatever they want, he just wanted the chief to talk  
18 to the T.A. to see if they're doing the same thing. Selectwoman Boudreau said if people see too  
19 much added on, then they're not going to vote for it. Like in the school, when they didn't get  
20 raises for 6 years. Chairman Bryer would like the T.A. to get legal counsel for if they're  
21 accepting a new wage plan, does the town need to ratify it. T.A. Thibodeau said she will get  
22 town counsel and find out if it's a town vote or board's decision. Police Chief said the only did  
23 step increases, not the 2%. Because of significant savings in the full time line, the police  
24 commission increased by the step they missed and a new step. He didn't know about the  
25 additional 2%, so T.A. Thibodeau will adjust that line by 2% and associated costs like  
26 retirement, etc. Selectman Kreider wanted clarification on the cruisers. Chairman Bryer said  
27 one will come out of default budget and the other will come out of the detail line. Police Chief  
28 said the detail line can be anything to do with detail, cones, barricades, etc. There is around  
29 \$78,000 left in there and legally we can use it for a cruiser because it's a fee factored into detail.  
30 Selectman Ruth asked if there's enough for new officers. Police Chief said it costs around \$4-  
31 5,000 per new officer: \$900 for specially fitted vest and around \$1,200 for special ammo at  
32 training, just to name a few, and that's after hiring them, there's costs before too, and they sign  
33 a 3-year agreement. Selectman Krye said that's ever more reason why we should try to retain  
34 people. Chairman Bryer said the total for animal control officer budget is \$12,067.59. Police  
35 Chief said the salary went down because historically they haven't kept someone in there for an  
36 entire year, but now they've had someone in for an entire year and can base the amount better,  
37 and they're paid hourly.

## **BUILDING/CODE ENFORCEMENT BUDGET REVIEW**

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40 T.A. Thibodeau reviewed the Building/Code Enforcement budget review for this department. It  
41 is a 20-hour weekly position that is very busy. He is a firefighter and gets paid 52 hours and  
42 everything else is overtime, but even with the overtime, using a wage study compared to other  
43 towns, it's not anything different than what we'd be paying for that position. She said this is one  
44 of the hardest positions to fill statewide. Chairman Bryer wanted to know if we're paying more  
45 because of the overtime. T.A. Thibodeau said in comparison to other towns, we're paying the  
46 same, if not lower, and some towns are paying more. Selectman Kreider said that we can't  
47 depend on him always being there for this position, and T.A. Thibodeau said yes that's why we  
48 are budgeting for the 20 hours and for the position not for the person. Selectman Kreider said  
49 the complaints start to flow when that department gets backed up or needs to do something.  
50 T.A. Thibodeau said they were paying a contractor \$35/hour before. Selectman Kreider  
51 questioned if what we're budgeting is too low, would we be able to get someone in for that low

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1 of an amount if the current person is no longer available or no longer wants the position. T.A.  
2 Thibodeau said she thinks she could get an employee for the \$26.70 but not a contractor. The  
3 economy is so good right now it's tough to get anything. Selectman Frye clarified that  
4 Selectman Kreider thinks the rate should be raised. Chairman Bryer said that he thought that  
5 since the fire inspector (which is the same person) is going out already to do inspections, that's  
6 why they combined the position. Selectman Kreider said yes and it's appreciated if that can  
7 continue, but we need to plan for if it can't continue. He wants to budget in case it doesn't work.  
8 For instance, if he gets hurt or sick, we need to get someone to cover. He knows we're trying to  
9 save the tax payers money, but we need to budget for it, and if we don't spend it, that's okay.  
10 Chairman Bryer said we need to be careful if it's too far off, then people don't like that.  
11 Selectman Kreider suggests we put in some more money and if the budget is low enough, then  
12 this is one that we'll come back to. Selectman Ruth suggested we multiple 20 hours times  
13 \$35/hour times 50 weeks (minus the 2 weeks for vacation) and budget that. T.A. Thibodeau  
14 said maybe we could create a Deputy position and put the money there. Selectman Kreider  
15 said we should take the \$6,000 and add it to the salary line, making it an even \$35,000 because  
16 we need to be reliably able to fill this position regardless of what happens. Selectman Frye  
17 suggested putting the money in the contracted services line to cover if needed. So for line 330  
18 it will be \$2,500 for Avitar and \$5,500 in case we need to contract a building inspector, for a total  
19 of \$8,000. Selectwoman Boudreau said the mystery column is the salaries with the step and  
20 2% increases. T.A. Thibodeau said we'll put those amounts in the proposed budget lines and  
21 delete that column.

## JOB DESCRIPTIONS

### ***Public Works Foreman***

25 T.A. Thibodeau said we made the changes you requested from last week, please approve  
26 those.

### ***Land Use Administrative Assistant***

29 T.A. Thibodeau said getting rid of the term Secretary is the main concern. She made all the  
30 adjustments from last week.

31 **MOTION: "To accept and approve the job description for Land Use Administrative  
32 Assistant as amended."**

33 Motion: B. Boudreau

34 Seconded: D. Ruth

35 Discussion: None

36 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

### ***Municipal Administrative Assistant***

39 Selectwoman Boudreau thinks it should say attendance at nightly meetings is required, right  
40 now it says seldomly required. Chairman Bryer agreed that it should say attendance at all  
41 Selectmen's meetings is required. The board agreed upon: Attendance at all Selectmen's  
42 meetings is required as well as any additional meetings as deemed necessary. Some  
43 discussion between Selectman Ruth and Selectwoman Boudreau was about hiring a person to  
44 do the minutes, if so, they can adjust the job description, but for now keep it as it is.

### ***Building & Assessing Clerk***

47 **MOTION: "To discuss the job description for Building & Assessing Clerk."**

48 Motion: D. Ruth

49 Seconded: M. Frye

50 Discussion: Chairman Bryer said it should say all meetings, not just nightly.

51 Selectwoman Boudreau said it's in case someone has to cover, that's why it's going in the job

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1 description. After discussion, the Board agreed upon: Some evening/weekend hours may be  
2 required and attendance at other meetings as deemed necessary by supervisor. Selectman  
3 Frye thinks in the duties it should say, like the other job descriptions, performs other duties as  
4 assigned by the Town Administrator. Chairman Bryer said we need to not rush, and we need to  
5 get the can language correctly. After discussion, the Board agreed that all 3 of the positions  
6 should say in other duties: Performs other related duties as requested by the supervisor.  
7

8 **MOTION: “To approve the job description for Building & Assessing Clerk as amended.”**

9 Motion: M. Frye

10 Seconded: D. Ruth

11 Discussion: None

12 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

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14 **MOTION: “To approve the job description for Municipal Administrative Assistant as  
15 amended.”**

16 Motion: M. Frye

17 Seconded: H. Kreider

18 Discussion: None

19 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

20  
21 **MOTION: “To approve the job description for Land Use Administrative Assistant as  
22 amended.”**

23 Motion: M. Frye

24 Seconded: H. Kreider

25 Discussion: None

26 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

## 27 **Public Works Foreman**

28 Selectman Kreider thinks the supervisor should be the Town Administrator, not the Board of  
29 Selectman. Chairman Bryer agreed we should take out the B.O.S. and the T.A. is the boss.  
30 Selectman Kreider said in the general summary, the wording of emergency response and the if,  
31 doesn't sound right. Chairman Bryer said the T.A. should ask the legal opinion about  
32 emergency situations language. Selectman Kreider asked if we're requiring this person to  
33 answer calls 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. Selectwoman Boudreau said yes. Selectman  
34 Frye suggested it say, and the Board agreed: Coordinate with the Police and Fire departments  
35 in emergency situations for public safety and weather events. Selectwoman Boudreau said  
36 under essential functions, are they going to be the handyman too? Chairman Bryer said we  
37 need to make it more professional and logical, in the past it was jack of all trades. T.A.  
38 Thibodeau said she had a conversation with someone that's already done some handyman  
39 work for the town, and suggested by Selectman Kreider, and he is going to give the town a  
40 quote to do handyman work. Selectman Ruth said we'd need to put that money in a budget line  
41 under contracted services, etc. Chairman Bryer said we need someone that's going to focus on  
42 the roads, transfer station, and maintenance of lawns. He shouldn't be fixing clogged toilets,  
43 fixing doors, etc. He said each Fire, Police, and Highway department should be responsible to  
44 call a contractor to fix said items. Selectman Kreider clarified that each department covers their  
45 own areas. Selectman Frye said this position can manage those outside contracts for the  
46 needed work, it's fair to ask of this position. Chairman Bryer clarified that yes, the warrant was  
47 for the title Public Works Foreman, so we have to stick to that. Selectman Ruth said add money  
48 to the contracted services line item. Selectwoman Boudreau and Selectman Kreider asked  
49 what budget this will come from? Chairman Bryer said we don't need to add more money, we  
50 have money in the budget. Selectman Kreider thinks this person should need to follow OSHA  
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1 guidelines and lift more than 20 pounds. The Board thinks 50 pounds is good. Selectwoman  
2 Boudreau thinks this position is overseeing facilities. Selectman Frye said that's already in the  
3 job description. Selectwoman Boudreau questioned the ability to use a backhoe, and  
4 Selectman Frye said it's in the job description already. Selectman Kreider said it says  
5 occasionally operates heavy equipment.  
6

## 7 **MOTION: "To approve the job description for Public Works Foreman as amended."**

8 Motion: M. Frye

9 Seconded: H. Kreider

10 Discussion: Selectman Kreider clarified the 3 changes: use Selectman Frye's line to  
11 replace the emergency response, take out Board of Selectman as supervisor, and ability to lift  
12 50 pounds.

13 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

## 14 **OTHER DISCUSSION**

15 Selectman Kreider said he has a potential warrant article but we have a day for going over  
16 warrants, and he'll hold his other item until next meeting.

17 Selectman Ruth questioned the work at the community center. T.A. Thibodeau said she is  
18 going to talk to the recreation director and Steve Bailey about the recreation center and the  
19 community center. Chairman Bryer said each department can ask for warrant articles, for  
20 example one for the Center School.

21 Chairman Bryer requested the discussion for the Municipal Administrative Assistant position  
22 move to full time and he waited until tonight for all Selectman to be present. T.A. Thibodeau  
23 said having a good qualified person for the town not just for the T.A. The administrative  
24 assistant is clerical and supports the residents, whether greeting, answering 91A, assists with  
25 Land Use, works with confidential information, there's legal repercussion if not handled  
26 correctly, assembles packets, reports to all departments, will start coding mail invoices when it  
27 comes in to help assist the Finance Director, writing minutes takes time, maintaining supplies,  
28 sets up meetings, has skills with associates degree and municipal experience. She said having  
29 someone with more hours would help if we need to open maybe Friday mornings, and the  
30 amount of work needs more time to get done, and to provide accurate information and back up,  
31 etc. She said it's a problem with all the turnover. Selectman Kreider said that over time when  
32 changes happen, things don't get done. He's seen and heard that a person is more willing to  
33 stay if full time, and he likes having the consistency. If there's no consistency, then he's very  
34 uncomfortable. Selectwoman Boudreau said since she's been a Selectwoman there have been  
35 3 administrative assistants, and every time they asked for full time, the answer was that we  
36 didn't need it, so why do we need it now. She said this person currently is only a temp and the  
37 position hasn't been advertised yet, and the Fire Department hasn't hired their 4<sup>th</sup> person yet,  
38 we're in a default budget, and the Highway Department is short a person too. She thinks it's  
39 okay to budget it for next year, but not now, and it's not fair to people they said no to, or to the  
40 tax payers. Selectman Ruth said he's seen the turnovers and he thinks they've rushed to find  
41 someone, instead of finding someone that is responsible enough to handle the responsibilities  
42 that the Board is having them do. Same thing with the Finance Department, they calculated for  
43 part time and realized it wouldn't work. He thinks we need to get into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and need  
44 full time, someone qualified will help in the long run. He agreed that 4-5 weeks ago, they said  
45 they didn't need it full time, but after evaluation, things change and you realize you need more.  
46 Selectwoman Boudreau said she's okay with it being full time with benefits, but she thinks we  
47 need to budget for full time. Selectman Ruth said he thinks we have enough for this year and it  
48 will definitely be in the budget for next year. He said he agrees that we need to hire the person  
49 for the Fire and Highway Departments, but we need to start somewhere. Selectwoman  
50 Boudreau said we talked about needing a full time Police Officer, we needed to go to the tax  
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1 payers, and Chairman Bryer said both the School Board and the town and the Police  
2 Commission have the authority to hire as they see fit. He thinks for fairness and transparency  
3 to the tax payers, if we add a position, he'd like it to go on a warrant article, but there's no law  
4 that says we have to do it. Selectman Kreider said he doesn't remember a warrant article for  
5 changing any position from part time to full time, but he saw articles for a new position, and  
6 Chairman Bryer said yes just for brand new positions. Selectman Kreider said he agreed that  
7 they changed their minds about full time or part time for the Finance Director, for what was best  
8 at the time. Selectman Frye echoed what Selectmen Ruth and Kreider said, that other  
9 department's needs don't preclude us from filling needs here. Just like in the discussion with  
10 the Police Chief, keeping and retaining people is better, not only for efficiency but for outputting  
11 the fore costs. Selectman Kreider said if we continue to lose people, then going forward he  
12 insists contracting out the position, and if we didn't contract out, that would be probably \$25  
13 plus. He's not willing to make do with it being vacant or with someone else covering it. He said  
14 the choices are to get someone for \$25/hour for contracted or have someone full time  
15 consistently here. Selectman Frye said he thinks opening some Friday hours would be good;  
16 he's heard from a few people. Both Selectman Ruth and Kreider said they don't think opening  
17 Friday is a big deal, and you're never going to please everyone. He said we could open 7 days  
18 a week, and still not please everyone. Selectman Kreider said we could make Friday hours a  
19 consideration but not a condition. Chairman Bryer said he is very torn and it's been a very  
20 difficult year with lots of change and frustrated citizens, and he normally doesn't support doing  
21 this, because in the past he thinks it should go on a warrant article. But he wants to make sure  
22 that the town's day to day business is getting done. At this time, he can support this. He thinks  
23 they have a great opportunity here, and he thinks they're making the right decision at this time.  
24

## **MOTION: "To approve the Municipal Administrative Assistant as full time."**

26 Motion: H. Kreider

27 Seconded: M. Frye

28 Discussion: None

29 **Motion Passes: 4 – Yes, 1 – No**

## **MOTION: "To recommend the temporary position of Municipal Administrative Assistant to full time, Lisa Lamarche, Grade 11, Step 10, \$20.21."**

33 Motion: H. Kreider

34 Seconded: D. Ruth

35 Discussion: Chairman Bryer said the benefits eligibility will be 30 days.

36 **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

## **SELECTMEN'S COMMENTS**

### ***Selectman Kreider***

## **MOTION: "To post the month end financials (monthly expenditure report) on the Town's website."**

42 Motion: H. Kreider

43 Seconded: M. Frye

44 Discussion: Selectman Ruth asked if the budget review would be ready in time for the  
45 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the month, which is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of everymonth, and T.A. Thibodeau said yes.  
46 Chariman Bryer asked if the current system has the ability to put the current expenditures  
47 online? T.A. Thibodeau said she will check, but our Finance Administrator is very, very new,  
48 and our current system is very challenging, but she will check with her. Selectman Kreider  
49 suggested scanning whatever information they get a the 1<sup>st</sup> meeting of the month, as a PDF to  
50 the website. Selectman Frye said that since they're discussing it at a public meeting, then it's  
51 public information.

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1           **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

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3    **Selectman Ruth**

4    Selectman Ruth suggested we get an ad for the Highway position. Chairman Bryer said since  
5    the position has been approved for next year’s budget, we can since they already approved the  
6    salary and the job description. T.A. Thibodeau will get legal opinion.

7    Selectman Ruth would like their packets only mailed, no new copies at the actual meeting. He  
8    thinks the Board needs to make a decision for future meeting if we need an additional person at  
9    the transfer station. He would also like to see in the future, a note about what the Land Use  
10   Specialist does for the small departments the position works with. He thinks the more notes the  
11   better and it will help people understand better. T.A. Thibodeau said she’ll put that in the  
12   narrative that she’s creating for the budget.

13  
14   **Selectwoman Boudreau and Selectman Frye** had no comments.

15  
16   **MOTION: “To adjourn.”**

17           Motion:       M. Frye  
18           Seconded:    H. Kreider  
19           Discussion:   None

20           **Motion Passes: 5 – Yes, 0 – No**

21  
22   Respectfully submitted,

23  
24  
25   Lisa Lamarche  
26   Municipal Administrative Assistant