



**TOWN OF NORTHWOOD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN**

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

**Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes
December 14, 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

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

Citizen's Forum:

Tim Jandebaur said he would like to put a petition warrant article to grant a 2% COLA to all employees if the budget fails. He is asking for the dollar amount for a 2% COLA. Chairman Kreider said he will get the info to Tim.

Minutes:

Minutes of November 23, 2021 were reviewed. J. Guzofski noted on line 206 there is no second to a motion. It was the consensus of the board that B. Boudreau seconded the motion.

Motion: "To approve the minutes of November 23, 2021, as edited."

Motion: M. Frye

Second: B. Boudreau

Motion carried 5/0

Consent Agenda:

Payroll Manifest dated December 1, 2021:
Batch # 18083 for \$86,509.91

Payroll Manifest dated December 1, 2021:
Batch # 18088 for \$2038.46

Accounts Payable Manifest dated December 8, 2021
Batch# 18131 for \$717,067.11
This batch includes the county tax payment of \$548,684.

Accounts Payable Manifest dated November 03, 2021

45 Batch# 18024 for \$495.14
46 This had mistakenly not been approved at a previous meeting.

47
48 Accounts Payable Manifest dated December 15, 2021
49 Batch # 18157 for \$102,089.70
50 This batch includes 2 payments to Grappone Auto Group, one for \$34,607 and the other
51 for \$36,133, both for new cruisers.

52
53 Payroll Manifest dated December 15, 2021
54 Batch #18154 for \$84,635.45

55
56 Timber Yield Tax for Map 207 Lot 38 - \$950.95
57 Timber Yield Tax for Map 105 Lot 2 - \$1,388.22

58
59 **Motion: “To approve the consent agenda as presented.”**

60 **Motion: T. Colby**

61 **Second: M. Frye**

62 **Motion carried 5/0**

63
64 **TA Reports/ Items for Board Action:**

65 Staffing Update: We are still advertising for the full-time firefighter position. Application
66 review will begin this week. All other positions are fully staffed. The Transfer Station is
67 operating on a normal schedule now that they are fully staffed.

68
69 Lighting Upgrade Project: A pre-construction tour was scheduled for next week but will
70 be delayed due to materials being on back order. When the materials are on site they
71 will begin, hopefully early to mid-January.

72
73 The Route 107/Main Street bridge construction is now complete. The State DOT has
74 signed off.

75
76 2020 Cyclical Assessments Audit: The data that needs to be corrected will be entered
77 in the system. M. Frye asked if the results of the audit are average. TA Johnson said
78 that the variances were within the acceptable range for the random sampling of
79 properties used.

80
81 Old Canterbury Road guardrail project: We have a proposal to replace the guardrails
82 for \$13,260 with work to begin in spring, 2022. The funds will come from the Red Listed
83 Bridge Expendable Trust Fund account. TA Johnson has requested a motion to include
84 a 10% cap to authorize this project.

85
86 **Motion: “To approve \$13,260 to replace the Old Canterbury Road guardrails and**
87 **include a 10% project cap, with funds to come from the Red Listed Bridge**
88 **Expendable Trust Fund and to approve Walter to sign all documents.**

89 **Motion: M. Frye**

90 **Second: T. Colby**

91 **Motion carried 5/0**

92
93 Budget Update: With three weeks left in the fiscal year, we continue to monitor the
94 expenses. We have been doing A/P every week and payroll every other week. The bottom

95 line is still strong through the year-end but does not include any unanticipated
96 expenditures that may pop up. The Fire, Sanitation, Recycling, Town Buildings, Town
97 Clerk/Tax Collector, Administration, and Finance departments will come in over budget
98 due to the increases over the past few years. Other departments will have a surplus that
99 will cover those overages. Encumbrances for year end will be discussed at the December
100 28 Board meeting.

101
102 Narrows Fire Station heating units: A pair of heating units at the Narrows Fire Station
103 have failed. Due to the age there are no parts available for repairs. TA Johnson has a
104 quote of \$12,000 and is asking for a motion to move forward.

105
106 **Motion: “To expend up to \$12,000 to replace the failed heating system at the**
107 **Narrows Station and fund the expense from the Facilities Expendable Trust Fund,**
108 **and to authorize Walter to sign all documents necessary.**

109 **Motion: M. Frye**

110 **Second: B. Boudreau**

111 **Motion carried 5/0**

112
113 Auction Sales Update: 24 sales have closed so far. Proceeds have been received from
114 17 of those sales, with the remainder still coming. A couple of the sales have fallen
115 through due to buyer’s remorse. There are also a couple properties that have title issues
116 that are holding things up. One piece needs a subdivision approval because there is no
117 record of a past subdivision. The cost to get this done is approximately \$12,000 which
118 will come out of the proceeds of the sales since it is the town’s responsibility to get this
119 cleared up. The Chairman of the Board Hal Kreider was the successful bidder on this
120 property, so he is stepping down for this discussion.

121
122 **Motion: “To spend up to \$12,000 for the survey and subdivision process on the**
123 **Tasker Shores Drive auction property.**

124 **Motion: T. Colby**

125 **Second: B. Boudreau**

126 **Motion carried 4/0, with H. Kreider stepping down**

127
128 Town Hall Meeting Room: Walter has a quote for painting the ceiling and walls of the
129 meeting hall. The total is a little over \$2,500. The consensus of the Board is to clean
130 out the hall and have the ceiling and walls and trim painted, with funding to come from
131 the old 250th Committee fund that was left for improvements to Town Hall. The Board
132 instructed Walter to go forward on this project.

133
134 Holiday Luncheon: The Board of Selectmen are hosting a holiday luncheon for the
135 employees on December 21 from 12:30 to 2. The Library, Tax Collector, and Town Hall
136 will remain open.

137
138 **2021 Tax Rate**
139 Chairman Kreider stated that he is looking at the recent reduction in the town portion
140 of the tax rate as a “tax holiday”. We may not have the same events in coming years
141 such as the sale of tax deeded properties to help with revenue. We have been making
142 improvements to the roads and as a result have seen costs go down as we get caught
143 up on needed work. TA Johnson added that the \$1.91 drop in the town rate will not be
144 an ongoing event. This year we had the perfect storm of revenue with sales of tax deeded

145 properties, \$200,000 coming from fund balance, and a \$100,000 increase in the Meals
146 & Room tax distribution from the State. The goal will be to try to monitor the rate using
147 the fund balance over the next few years. The Board discussed the plan to spend the
148 fund balance down over the next several years by buying down the tax rate, or funding
149 projects with no tax impact.

150

151 **FY22 Operating Budget and Warrant Articles**

152 The Budget Committee requested the Board of Selectmen revisit the recommended
153 budget. Chairman Kreider feels it conflicts with the process outlined by statute, which
154 states the Budget Committee shall propose the recommended budget. TA Johnson
155 added that typically the Board of Selectmen makes a budget. If the Budget Committee
156 feels differently, the Budget Committee should make adjustments in the operating
157 budget or warrant articles. TA Johnson is not sure it would be beneficial to look for
158 cuts, but there are other ways to meet the objective of the budget committee in the spirit
159 of cooperation and compromise. J. Guzofski stated that through the budget process he
160 observed a lack of trust between both residents and town officials, including a lack of
161 trust of town officials with one another. He heard rude comments, innuendoes, childish
162 attacks, personal attacks, badmouthing, and complaining on Monday night for 1 and ½
163 hours. Evident biases were seen. J. Guzofski was astonished that the \$12,000,000
164 school budget went through the budget committee in 4 hours, while the \$4 million dollar
165 town budget has taken 1 full day and two evenings and still isn't complete. J. Guzofski
166 was amazed the committee was questioning items such as the Town Administrator's
167 training and travel budget. His personal opinion is the Board of Selectmen should be
168 the bigger people and try to make cuts to the budget. B. Boudreau feels if voters see a
169 budget over \$4,000,000, we will get the default. She feels a budget under \$4,000,000
170 should be more passable. T. Colby was astonished that while the Police Chief was
171 present at the Budget Committee meeting, there were no questions for him. But when
172 the Chief was not there, the committee beat up the Police department budget. He feels
173 the Selectmen have done their job and the budget is done. M. Frye agreed, saying the
174 Selectmen did their job and cutting the budget to an arbitrary number doesn't serve the
175 taxpayers. He does not accept that the budget needs to be under \$4,000,000 in order to
176 pass. He feels the whole budget process has been hijacked by Tim Jandebour and Paul
177 Tudor and he takes umbrage to it. H. Kreider feels the department heads know the
178 situation and they came in with a budget that was not inflated. The Board still found
179 some cuts in that budget. He added that most of the members of the Budget Committee
180 commented that they could not find places to cut the budget. H. Kreider said that there
181 are things the Board of Selectmen can do, as opposed to the Budget Committee, that
182 can make the pill easier to swallow. He is proposing taking some funds out of the
183 operating budget and putting them in a warrant article. The total appropriation would
184 be the same, but the funding for the warrant article can come from the unassigned fund
185 balance. H. Kreider asked the Board is they would consider not cutting expenses but
186 looking at moving some items into warrant articles.

187 **Motion: "To reconsider the budget on the basis of moving some items into warrant**
188 **articles."**

189 **Motion: H. Kreider**

190 **Second: B. Boudreau**

191 M. Frye said the RSA clearly states what the budget committee shall do. The Board of
192 Selectmen is usurping the roll of the budget committee at this point. He feels that the
193 creation of a recommended budget is the Budget Committee's job and not the Board of
194 Selectmen's problem at this point. T. Colby commented how disappointed he was to

195 watch the Budget Committee acting as unprofessional as they were. J. Guzofski added
196 that the Budget Committee had broken their own rules last Saturday to go forward
197 without having the required paperwork 7 days in advance of the meeting. Some
198 members walked out. He added that the Board of Selectmen definitely does not have to
199 reconsider the budget, but someone needs to be the agent of change to stop the personal
200 attacks. M. Frye feels if the Board of Selectmen goes back now it will be like saying “we
201 were just kidding the first time”. He thinks the town needs to be educated about having
202 to play catch up after years of default budgets. He could agree with moving items into
203 a warrant article if they are to be funded through taxation, not through the fund balance.
204 He is also concerned that a budget artificially lowered by moving items to a warrant
205 article would then become the new default budget.

206 **Motion carried 3/2 with T. Colby and M. Frye opposed.**

207

208 H. Kreider reviewed the list of possible changes:

209 - In the Finance budget, the software payment scheduled for 2022 could be done in
210 2021 for \$6,500.

211 - TA Johnson re-negotiated with the assessors to reduce the cyclical update by \$8,000
212 by using more in-house person for some tasks.

213 - \$31,362 for the COLA for employees could be moved into a warrant article. There was
214 a lengthy discussion regarding removing the COLA into a warrant article, leaving it in
215 the budget, or a potential petition article submitted in case the budget fails. The
216 consensus was to move the \$31,362 for the 1.5% COLA into a warrant article funded by
217 taxation.

218 - The cruiser purchase of \$47,500 could be moved into a warrant article. It was the
219 consensus of the Board to leave the cruiser in the operating budget because that is the
220 way the Budget Committee has repeatedly wanted it in the past.

221 - Paving and Reconstruction could be reduced by \$70,000 and Highway Cleaning &
222 Maintenance by \$20,000 by moving the funds for the chipper rental and excavator rental
223 for ditching work into Warrant Article #6.

224 These changes would make the new bottom line \$3,927,497.

225 **Motion: “To recommend these changes to the Budget Committee”.**

226 **Motion: B. Boudreau**

227 **Second: J. Guzofski**

228 After confusion over the content of the motion,

229 **Motion Restate: “To recommend to the Budget Committee a bottom line number**
230 **of \$3,927,497, which is based on the following changes to our original**
231 **recommendation: \$6,500 reduction in Finance software to be paid ion 2021;**
232 **\$8,000 reduction in Assessing; A new warrant article for \$31,362 for a 1.5% COLA;**
233 **\$70,000 moved from Paving and Reconstruction to warrant article #6 and \$20,000**
234 **moved from Highway Cleaning & Maintenance to warrant article #6. Both of these**
235 **amounts to be funded by taxation with the balance of warrant article 6 to be**
236 **funded through unassigned fund balance. All other numbers remain the same.**

237 **Motion: H. Kreider**

238 **Second: J. Guzofski**

239 **Motion carried by 3/2 roll call vote: J. Guzofski – Yes, B. Boudreau – Yes, T. Colby**
240 **– No, M. Frye – No, H. Kreider – Yes.**

241

242

243

244

245 **Review of Non-Monetary Warrant Articles**

246 The Board did not have any other non-monetary warrant articles that TA Johnson needs
247 to be working on.

248

249 **Service Agreement with Strafford Regional Planning Commission**

250 The new agreement with Strafford Regional Planning Commission is primarily for the
251 services of the town planner for 2022. The compensation rate is \$65.00/hour and not
252 to exceed \$34,600 for the year. This is in the proposed FY22 budget.

253 **Motion: “To approve the 2022 contract for services with Northwood and the
254 Strafford Regional Planning Commission as proposed.”**

255 **Motion: T. Colby**

256 **Second: M. Frye**

257 **Motion carried 5/0.**

258

259 **Lamprey Regional Cooperative Update and Budget**

260 A financial report of the Lamprey Regional Cooperative is in the packet. The budget
261 shows an increase of \$715 for Northwood for the closure portion and around \$900 for
262 the operating budget. This amount was addressed with the Budget Committee at their
263 work session.

264

265 **Review Board Task Manager**

266 T. Colby asked about the progress with the Lower Bow Street legal issue. TA Johnson
267 has talked to DOT District 6 about reconstructing that intersection and improving the
268 drainage. They will need to address the relocation of the pole since it is in their right-
269 of-way. The resident pumping water across the road continues to be responsible for any
270 liability at that intersection. The Board asked TA Johnson to ask PW Foreman Brown
271 to keep track of any additional costs on clearing that intersection of ice. B. Boudreau
272 asked TA Johnson to get some info on prices for more streetlights at intersections along
273 Route 4. TA Johnson reported that the new financial software is going well. Finance
274 Director Eastman has been training each week and the conversion of data went well.
275 Training of the other employees will begin after the first of the year.

276

277 **Citizen’s Forum**

278 Tom Chase had been at the meeting earlier and wanted the Board members to read an
279 article he dropped off about funding local expenses via real estate taxes and the
280 downshifting of costs to municipal levels from the state and federal levels.

281

282 **Motion: “To go into a non-public session under RSA 91a:32(b).”**

283 **Motion: M. Frye**

284 **Second: H. Kreider**

285 **Motion carried 5/0 by roll call vote.**

286

287 **Resumed public session at 8:30pm**

288

289 Chairman Kreider announced that during the non-public session the Board approved
290 the conditional hiring of Raymond Como as an on-call transfer station attendant at
291 Grade 5 Step 5 \$13.01/hr.

292

293 Minutes respectfully submitted by

294 Cheryl Eastman

DRAFT

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