

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Chairman Keith McGuigan called the work session to order 9:00 a.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Keith McGuigan, Vice-Chair Tom Chase, Selectboard Representative Pam Sanderson, School Board Representative Brian Winslow, Gulf Village District Representative Eric Buckland, Water District Representative Robert Young, Cove Village Representative Mike Jobin, Members Ginger Dole, Tim Jandebour, Michael Moore, Ted Wilkinson, Betty Smith, Paul Tudor, Matt Frye, Brad Hall, and Betsy Colburn (participated electronically due to medical reasons). Member Daniel McNally arrived at 10:22 a.m.

**ABSENT:** none

**TOWN STAFF:** Town Administrator Walter Johnson, Finance Director Cheryl Eastman, Land Use Specialist Linda Smith, Land Use Administrative Assistant Lisa Fellows-Weaver

**TOWN PERSONNEL PRESENT:**

Selectman Vice-Chair Tim Colby, Selectman Jim Guzofski, Librarian Donna Bunker, Library Trustees Janet Clark, Pat Vaillancourt, and Irene Kreider, Fire Chief Mark Tetreault, Recreation Director Scott Blewitt

**MINUTES:**

***November 3, 2022***

**On a motion made by Ms. B. Smith, and seconded by Ms. Dole, the committee voted, by a roll call vote, to approve the minutes of November 3, 2022, as written. The motion passed; 14/0/2.** Mr. Frye, and Mr. Hall abstained due to non attendance.

**2023 PROPOSED TOWN BUDGET**

**Pages: 17-20 Dept. 4220 ~ Fire Department**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$739,318 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$716,111.

Fire Chief Mark Tetreault was present to represent the Fire Department's proposed budget.

Ms. Sanderson stated the Chief presented a good budget to the Selectboard.

Ms. Dole noted that Electricity, line 42200/4350, references three stations. She asked what the third station is. Chief Tetreault replied the stations are the Narrows, Ridge, and the little garage in front of Harding Metals, which is a two-bay garage and is primarily used for storage. He noted that the electricity is about \$15 per month.

Mr. Tudor thanked staff for the larger printed budget; however, he noted that the percentage variance line is now missing. He stated that the increase from the current year's budget to the Selectboard's proposed amount is 20%.

Chief Tetreault stated that the increase is due to personnel. He explained that the salaries have been adjusted to attract quality employees. He added that it has been difficult to cover calls with volunteers. He noted that this is a nationwide matter. There has been a greater need to hire more part-time employees to cover calls. 78% of calls

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

are EMS calls. He explained that part-time employees can work up to 29 hours before benefits are required. He added that there is always 24/7 coverage.

Ms. Dole stated that the staff listing provided shows 23 part-time employees as well as a part-time paramedic. She asked how many of the PT firefighters are EMS certified. Chief Tetreault explained current staffing and added that some staff are not fire certified; however, there is always one medical person on duty.

Ms. Dole noted the proposed lines relative to salaries and stated that it appears the paramedic salary is less than some of the part-time firefighters. Chief Tetreault stated there is a pay scale in place, which is based on training. Typically, a paramedic would be higher; however, it is possible that there is an employee that has been employed longer.

Mr. Frye referenced Building Maintenance & Repairs, line 42200-4380, page 18, and stated that the Department requested \$13,000; the Selectboard reduced the line to \$3,000. Chief Tetreault stated that \$10,000 was moved into the Facilities Trust Fund.

Mr. Frye referenced Uniforms, line 42200-4509, page 19, which was reduced from \$4,000 to \$3,000. Mr. Johnson stated that the Selectboard adjusted line items throughout the budget in hopes that there may be funding available at the end of the year that they may be able to utilize.

Chief Tetreault stated that overall, the Selectboard was gracious this year and he has agreed with most of the proposed changes. He added that the budget has been level funded for the past 4 years. There have been adjustments made and he is hopeful that there will be funding available at the end of the year to purchase uniforms.

Ms. Colburn referred to line 42200/4404, Ambulance Billing, and stated that the line shows the funds being removed and the Comstar billing will be charged to the Ambulance Revolving Fund. She stated that the fund is specifically for equipment, and this is not the correct process. She added that the wording of the warrant article is not correct.

Chief Tetreault stated they have been successful with receiving the revenue from the billing process. Mr. Johnson stated that he checked with the auditors who reviewed the warrant article and felt it was net revenue not gross and going forward they would use the net revenue.

Ms. Colburn requested that a legal opinion be obtained.

Ms. Dole agreed that the funds were set up for a specific purpose; however, the billing is taken out before deposits are made. She expressed concern that there would now not be any way to track actual costs.

Mr. Johnson commented that the Budget Committee can add any of the funds back as it is their budget; the amount was proposed to be \$9,500.

Chief Tetreault stated that based on the percentage of revenue, \$9,500 is an estimate. He noted that there is a 5% surcharge and documentation is received to track the billing.

Mr. Young asked what constitutes the net for the ambulance billing. Chief Tetreault replied paramedic intercepts; however, that comes from the budget. He stated that the

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

proposal is to not deposit as much into the revolving fund; it would now only be the billing fees.

Mr. Chase stated that he would be uncomfortable adding \$9,500 back in unless advised otherwise.

Ms. Colburn stated that the fund was specifically set up and written for vehicle replacements. She stated that the proposed change will allow the funds to be used for other items.

Mr. Johnson stated that they did reach out to the billing company to provide just the net and they are unable to do so. He added that the fund was intended to be revenue and it would equal the same in the end.

Chief Tetreault stated that a monthly statement is received showing the revenue; a service fee is also charged per month.

Ms. Dole stated that based on the revenue, \$10,000 from the Capital Reserve Fund is on the high side.

Mr. Frye stated that they are not spending the funds out of the revolving fund, less is being put in and the money will not be spent if it is not billed. This is accounting not budgeting.

Ms. B. Smith stated that this process makes more sense to her.

Chief Tetreault stated he appreciated Ms. Colburn's support for the Ambulance Revolving Fund. This is a typical expenditure in other fire departments and will not deteriorate the fund; it is just an isolated item. Ms. Colburn commented that this may be the process elsewhere, but the warrant article is specific, and the Committee should have a professional ruling.

**Mr. Moore made a motion, seconded by Mr. Frye, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$716,111 for the Fire Department.**

Mr. Jandebour stated that he would prefer that the Committee not take any action until a legal opinion has been received.

Mr. Frye stated that he was comfortable with the opinion received from the auditors and the Committee should move forward.

Ms. L. Smith stated that the Budget Committee recommends their own budget to the voters; they may obtain additional opinions if they would like to do so.

**Ms. Dole made a motion, seconded by Ms. Colburn, to table any further action on the Fire Department's budget until another opinion is received and to revisit this Department's budget when the information is available.**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, TJ, BS, PT, TW, BW, BY, EB. NO: MF, BH, MM, KM, PS, MJ. Motion passed: 10/6.**

**Page: 20 Dept. 4220 ~ EMS**

Fire Chief Mark Tetreault represented the EMS section for the Fire Department's proposed budget.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's amount and Selectboard's proposed amount was the same, \$10,500.

Chief Tetreault explained that the EMS lines have been broken out into three new lines, page 19, 42200/4603, 4605, and 4810. He reviewed the notes for the new sections: Equipment Purchase, Equipment Maintenance, and Training. He stated that they are not looking to replace any structures any time soon. Currently, all equipment is durable. He noted that training has been down the past several years due to Covid; however, he is expecting more training will be completed this year and it will include certifications.

Mr. Tudor asked where the three sections were listed in prior years. Ms. Eastman replied everything was included in the Fire Department's budget.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Ms. Colburn, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend \$10,500 for EMS; 16/0.**

**WARRANT ARTICLES - FIRE**

**Article 15: FIRE RESCUE VEHICLE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND CAB AND CHASSIS LEASE/PURCHASE**

Chair McGuigan read Article 15 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **two hundred thousand dollars (\$200,000)** for the purchase of a new cab and chassis to replace the existing 2013 cab and chassis and the transfer of the existing ambulance #1 patient transport box on to the new cab and chassis and to authorize the withdrawal of seventy-five thousand dollars (\$75,000) from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Special Revenue Fund and further to authorize the Selectboard's to enter into a four year lease/purchase agreement for the balance of the one hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars (\$125,000). The existing ambulance 1 cab and chassis will be retained for construction of a new forestry vehicle if article 16 is approved. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Ms. Dole stated that the Selectboard has not voted on the proposed warrant articles. She asked how the Budget Committee can vote on the warrant articles if the governing body has not voted.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the Selectboard has not voted on the articles individually; however, they did vote to send the proposed warrant articles to the Budget Committee. The Selectboard felt that the public hearing allows the public to be involved and have their merit provided; therefore, they agreed to wait to vote until after the deliberative session. She stated that the warrant articles have been provided and a vote of the Selectboard is not necessary; the Budget Committee can still move forward and discuss the warrant articles.

Ms. Dole stated that warrant articles need to be recommended by the Selectboard and then the Budget Committee. She noted that, in the past, the Budget Committee has gone back and made changes to articles; amounts have changed at the deliberative sessions based on the public hearings.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Chair McGuigan stated that the Budget Committee would discuss the warrant articles at a future meeting. He would read the articles today only for context and information purposes.

Mr. Johnson stated the Selectboard voted 3/0/1 to vote on the warrant articles. He stated that the recommendations are for taxpayers.

A discussion was held regarding Article 15 and the equipment condition. Chief Tetreault stated that he did get information from the vendor; however, when the time comes to make the purchase, the cost could be higher; this is not a bid.

Ms. Dole stated that she was a member of the Capital Improvement Plan subcommittee, and this was the information provided. She added that it seemed reasonable to the subcommittee and the proposal was approved by the Planning Board.

Discussion ensued regarding repair costs. Chief Tetreault described the items that need to be addressed. He noted that the costs have increased since the information was provided.

Ms. Dole noted that there were two breakdown sheets provided to the Committee that should be provided in the voter's guide explaining the ambulance revenue fund.

Discussion ensued relative to the wording of the warrant article. Mr. Johnson stated that this is an annual appropriation. Chief Tetreault stated that if the funds are not available, they cannot make the purchase. He added that he believes the proposal is a reasonable figure.

**Article 16 FORESTRY VEHICLE**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 16 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **sixty thousand dollars \$60,000** for the construction of a new forestry vehicle utilizing the existing ambulance 1 cab and chassis and adding the necessary forest fighting equipment to the vehicle and to authorize the withdrawal of sixty thousand dollars (\$60,000) from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Special Revenue Fund. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Mr. Tudor asked about the use of the forestry vehicle. Chief Tetreault explained that the vehicle would be used as a utility vehicle.

Mr. Chase asked where an additional forestry vehicle would be stored. Chief Tetreault replied that this is not an additional vehicle; it is a replacement. He explained that the 1970 forestry truck was a permanent loan from the State of NH, and it has been taken out of service. It will be returned when not needed.

**Article 17: FIRE APPARATUS LEASE/PURCHASE PAYMENT**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 17 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **fifty-two thousand two hundred thirty-seven dollars (\$52,237)** as the third payment on a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for a Tanker Truck with said funds to come from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special Revenue Fund established for this purpose. If this article is

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

defeated the vehicle must be returned and the town loses the \$300,000 down payment and all prior year's payments. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

There was no discussion held.

**Article 18: FIRE RESCUE VEHICLE SPECIAL REVENUE FUND LEASE PURCHASE PAYMENT**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 18 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **twenty-six thousand two hundred twenty-five dollars (\$26,225)**, as the third payment on a 7-year lease/purchase agreement for an ambulance with said funds to come from the Fire Rescue Vehicle Replacement Special Revenue Fund established for this purpose. If this article is defeated the vehicle must be returned and the town loses the \$100,000 down payment and the first and second-year payment. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

Members thanked Chief Tetreault for attending the meeting.

**Pages: 31-34 Dept. 4550 ~ Library**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$234,409 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$210,000.

Library Director Donna Bunker along with Library Trustee Chair Betty Smith represented the Chesley Memorial Library's proposed budget.

Ms. Bunker gave an overview of the library's materials provided, as well as a review of what the library has to offer for programs, and clubs.

Ms. B. Smith stated the Trustees are very proud of all their staff and the variety of services offered; both are valuable resources. She gave an overview of the part-time and full-time positions explaining they are proposing to increase a part-time position to full-time by adding five hours per week, for a total of 35 hours. She added that it has become difficult to acquire trained and skilled staff and the wages must be increased to retain the employees. She stated that per their policy, there must be two employees in the library when open. The library has had to reduce their hours as well as close when they are not able to maintain coverages.

In addition, Ms. B. Smith spoke about the proposal to change the status of the Library Director from an hourly position to a salaried position.

Ms. Bunker noted the difference between the Department's budget and Selectboard's lines is relative to wages.

**Article 33: CREATING A FULL TIME ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 33 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to approve creating a full-time assistant librarian position and to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand four hundred (\$25,400)

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

to pay the additional wages and benefits not included in the proposed operating budget and further to authorize the Library Trustees and Budget Committee to include the necessary funds in future operating budgets to support this new full-time position. **(Tax Estimate \$0.03) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

**Article 34: CREATING A FULL TIME TECHNOLOGY LIBRARIAN**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 34 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to approve creating a full-time technology librarian position and to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand eight hundred and fifty dollars (\$25,850) to pay the additional wages and benefits not included in the proposed operating budget and further to authorize the Library Trustees and Budget Committee to include the necessary funds in future operating budgets to support this new full-time position. **(Tax Estimate \$0.03) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

*Mr. McNally arrived 10:22 a.m.*

Ms. Sanderson stated that the Selectboard reviewed the proposed budget and made some cuts throughout the entire department's budget. These cuts were uncomfortable but were necessary to reduce the Town's budget. She reviewed the lines affected by the cuts.

Mr. Johnson stated that the significant difference is the salaries. When the budget was presented to the Selectboard, the figure was higher as the full-time position salaries were included in the budget. The position changes are now reflected as warrant articles and the associated costs were removed from the budget.

Ms. Dole noted that approximately \$3,000 was cut from Building Maintenance & Repairs, line 45500/4380. Ms. Bunker noted a variety of items that were cut totaling \$3,300.

Discussion ensued regarding the differences between salaries and the amounts proposed in the warrant articles.

Mr. Chase stated that line 45500/4012, which is the wages for the part-time Assistant Librarian, the total is \$25,796. Should the warrant article pass the amount will be approximately \$50,000. Mr. Johnson stated the figure provided is for salary and benefits.

Ms. Dole stated the difference between the Department and the Selectboard for line 4012, is \$4,299, which is the salary for five additional hours per week. There is also the amount proposed in the warrant article for the salary and all applicable benefits. It is the same scenario for line 4014 for the Technology Librarian, \$4,840 for five additional hours per week. The Director's salary is an increase of 3%. She explained that the Trustees are requesting the additional hours so that the library will be open and more accessible.

Ms. Dole read the warrant article from last year related to creating positions. She stated that this is an increase in personnel hours for existing employees, which will take them from part-time to full-time.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Mr. Frye stated that it is really a matter of interpretation. Is it going against the voter's wishes by adding the funds to the budget or with the presentation as a warrant article.

Mr. Jandebeur stated that he believed that this warrant article complies with the intent of last year's warrant article.

Mr. Tudor asked if the library's non lapsing fund balance carries over if it is not expended. Ms. L. Smith noted the documentation provided shows the balance of the trust fund at \$67,394 as of September 30, 2022. Discussion ensued as the statutes were reviewed relative to libraries, RSA 202-A:11-a, non-lapsing, and donation funds. Additional information will be made available for a future meeting.

Ms. Dole asked what is included in General Supplies, page 33, line 45500/4501. Ms. Bunker replied the library requested \$672-paper products, \$1,067-cleaning supplies, \$772-for Covid supplies.

Ms. Dole asked what is included in Supplies-Tech Process, page 34, line 45500/4503 noting it appears that \$1,000 was cut. Ms. Bunker replied they proposed money for book covers, laminate, cards, labels. She added that this line also included promotional supplies.

Ms. L. Smith stated that in the future, it may be helpful for departments to provide a sheet as a part of their backup noting what their original requests were.

Mr. Frye asked about the difference in the Director's salary. Ms. Eastman noted that the note is not accurate, line 45500/4001.

Mr. Jandebeur asked about income generating items at the library. It was explained that three pieces of equipment are income generating and the services at the library are on a donation basis. All money received from the library is retained by the library and is separated out. Ms. Bunker stated that donations are the only funds in the non-lapsing fund and are then used for general repairs.

Ms. B. Smith stated that the fees were changed to donations several years ago.

Mr. Jandebeur stated that it is a small amount, but it still should be separated out and used appropriately.

Mr. Frye noted that non-lapsing funds are carried over.

Chair McGuigan called for a recess at 10:51 a.m. Session resumed at 10:57 a.m.

Library Trustee Janet Clark explained that the Library Trustees proposed the change in the Director's salary position as most director positions in the State are salaried positions now. She stated that the salaried position is not reflected in Selectboard's proposed budget.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the status of the Director is not in the purview of Selectboard; it is the purview of the Trustees.

Mr. Tudor stated that if this is the Trustees proposal, then the Trustees will need to find the funds in their budget.

Discussion ensued regarding the Director's salary. Mr. Chase stated that the amount proposed by the Selectboard is \$57,460, which reflects the current hourly amount. \$60,299 is the total amount if it were to become a salaried position.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Mr. Johnson explained that the BOS arrived at a bottom line of \$210,000 for the Library. Cuts were made in areas they felt were appropriate. He stated that the BOS could not meet the full salary and applied for a delta. The BOS recommended \$57,460 for the salary for the Director's position.

Mr. Chase noted that there may be other lines that need to be adjusted if the Budget Committee moves forward with the salary increase.

Ms. B. Smith stated that there are five salaried positions in the Town.

Mr. Wilkinson reiterated the great things about the library and the need for the library.

**Mr. Wilkinson made a motion, seconded by Ms. Dole, to recommend the Department's requested amount of \$234,409.**

**Mr. Frye amended the motion, seconded by Mr. Moore, to recommend \$213,544.**

Mr. Frye explained that this amount includes the salary for the Director, and all accompany fees for benefits; it also takes into consideration the cuts suggested by the Selectboard.

Mr. Tudor noted that, if approved, this is a 37% change for the library.

Mr. Johnson stated that the funds in the warrant article would now be double appropriated.

Ms. Dole commented that the amounts in the warrant articles can be amended at the deliberative session.

**Amendment - \$213,544**

**VOTE: YES: TC, GD, MF, BH, DM, MM, PS, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: BC, TJ, BS, PT, TW, KM. Amendment passed; 11/6.**

**Motion: New bottom line - \$213,544 - Library**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, DM, MM, BS, KM, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: TJ, PT, TW, PS. Motion passed; 13/4.**

**Pages: 29-31 Dept. 4520 ~ Park & Recreation**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$87,409 and the Board of Selectboard's proposed amount was \$73,709.

Recreation Director Scott Blewitt represented the Recreation Department.

Mr. Blewitt gave an overview of the Recreation Department's activities and programs. He noted that there are 47 programs available, and participation is strong. He has had 1,266 registrations in 2022 that has generated \$31,800 in revenue. He stated that the budget reflects increases due to personnel and maintenance. He stated that he hopes to increase the programs in 2023 and include more activities; there is unlimited potential although it depends on capacity for programs and facilities.

Mr. Blewitt stated that the difference in the two proposed budgets is funds were moved to the warrant article.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**Article 13: RT 4 RECREATION COMPLEX IMPROVEMENTS**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 13 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000)** to continue improvements to the complex including but not limited to expansion of parking, improving drainage, loaming and seeding and general equipment and improvements to the existing fields. Said amount to come from the unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2022. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget committee 0-0)**

Mr. Blewitt stated that it is a continued commitment to improve the facility. He encouraged everyone to visit the complex and stated that the Friends of Recreation have been doing a great job getting donations and working to improve the facility. He referenced warrant articles 35 and 36 relative to the Center School and noted that it would be nice to have an indoor facility that would allow for additional programs.

Mr. Tudor asked if any projects could be covered with ARPA funds. Mr. Johnson replied, perhaps, however; the funds have been committed to other projects.

Mr. Jandebour asked about the Department's revenue. Mr. Blewitt explained that the Recreation Department has a revolving fund. All funds from revenue producing programs go into the revolving fund. Those funds are used for the programs. The Department's budget covers expenses for the Department, such as supplies, and items that are not covered by revenue generating programs. He noted that the current balance is approximately \$30,000.

Ms. Dole asked about the part-time league coordinator position, line 45200/4011. She stated that the proposal is \$6,400 and only \$2,430 has been expended. Mr. Blewitt explained that a part-time director is not enough time for the position. He stated that he would like to have a second person to attend meetings, facilitate programs, and expand and add programs; it is becoming more difficult to rely on volunteers. He added that there has been a huge turnover in this Department over the past 10 years. His goal is to create more stability within the Department for the Director and programs. He also would like to add programs for pre-school and seniors.

Mr. Jandebour asked about the trust fund and noted the current balance is \$1,316. Mr. Johnson stated that revolving funds are under the direction of the Treasurer. Mr. Blewitt stated that the revenue fluctuates as it depends on the programs and participation.

**On a motion made by Mr. Frye, seconded by Ms. Sanderson, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$73,709; 17/0.**

**Pages: 1-4 Dept. 4130 ~ General Government: Executive**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$207,785 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$208,251.

Ms. Sanderson presented the General Government: Executive.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the increases are within the wages and overall costs of operations such as dues and software. General review occurred.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Chair McGuigan noted that the Moderator, line 41302, currently proposed at \$1039, may be an area to increase. Ms. Dole replied that this could be addressed during the deliberative session.

**On a motion made by Ms. B. Smith, and seconded by Mr. Frye, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$205,251; 17/0.**

**Pages: 4-5 Dept. 4140 ~ Election, Registration & Vital Records**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amount was \$15,810.

Ms. Sanderson represented the Election, Registration & Vital Records.

Chair McGuigan noted that this is another area that could be considered for an increase due to costs of numerous elections especially if there is another default budget.

Ms. Dole asked about the contracted services, line 41403/4432. Mr. Johnson stated that this is new to this section this year; it was previously under the Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Contracted Services, line 41504/4432.

Mr. Chase commented about the replacement of the ballot machine. Chair McGuigan replied that the Town will need to pay for a new machine. He added that a secondary machine would be a benefit should anything breakdown.

**On a motion made by Mr. Wilkinson, and seconded by Ms. Dole, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$15,810; 17/0.**

**Pages: 5-9 Dept. 4150 ~ Financial Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$339,539 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$342,956.

Ms. Eastman represented the Financial Administration.

Ms. Eastman stated that the increases are reflected in wages and software.

Ms. Dole referred to the increases included in the Trustees of Trust Funds, 41507. Ms. Sanderson stated that the Trustees requested a stipend increase.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that the Trustees audit over 60 funds and the Department has been level funded for ½ century.

Mr. Johnson noted that the Trustees also requested an increase for supplies, line 41507/4500 of \$150 and it was not noted correctly in the budget. The Selectboard approved \$100.

**Mr. McNally made a motion, seconded by Mr. Buckland, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$342,956.**

**Ms. B. Smith amended the motion, seconded by Mr. Chase, to recommend \$343,006, which is the additional amount requested by the Trustees for supplies.**

**Amendment - \$343,006**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**The amendment passed unanimously, by a roll call vote; 17/0.**

**Motion: New bottom line – \$343,006 - Financial Administration**

**The motion passed unanimously, by a roll call vote; 17/0.**

Mr. McGuigan called for a recess at 11:59 a.m. Session resumed at 1:01 p.m.

**PRESENT:** Chair Keith McGuigan, Vice-Chair Tom Chase, Selectboard Representative Pam Sanderson, School Board Representative Brian Winslow, Gulf Village District Representative Eric Buckland, Water District Representative Robert Young, Cove Village Representative Mike Jobin, Members Ted Wilkinson, Betty Smith, Paul Tudor, Matt Frye, Brad Hall, Daniel McNally, and Betsy Colburn (participated electronically due to medical reasons). Member Ginger Dole arrived at 1:04 p.m., Tim Jandebour arrived at 1:07 p.m., Michael Moore arrived at 3:40 p.m.

**TOWN STAFF:** Town Administrator Walter Johnson, Finance Director Cheryl Eastman, Land Use Specialist Linda Smith, and Land Use Administrative Assistant Lisa Fellows-Weaver.

**TOWN PERSONNEL PRESENT:**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown

**Pages: 13-14 Dept. 4195 ~ Cemeteries**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented the Cemeteries.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount and the Selectboard's proposed amount was the same, \$7,601.

Mr. Brown stated that there are minimal changes in the cemetery budget. He noted he is working to catch up on work in the cemeteries including mowing.

*Ms. Dole arrived at 1:04 a.m.*

**On a motion made by Mr. McNally, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$7,601; 15/0.**

**Pages: 22-24 Dept. 4311 ~ Highway & Streets: Administration**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented the Highway and Streets: Administration.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount was the same, \$214,645.

Ms. Eastman gave an overview noting that the increases are due to step increases.

*Mr. Jandebour arrived at 1:07 p.m.*

Mr. Johnson stated that the \$2,000 difference is shown in line 43110/4432, Contracted Services. More work will be done internally, to include ground maintenance at the recreation fields. Mr. Brown added that they are trying to do as much work in-house as possible. He noted that there has been a decrease in contracted services over the past few years.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Ms. Dole asked about the electricity, page 23, line 43110/4350. It was noted that the electricity is now separated out for each building, highway and recycling.

Mr. Frye asked if \$6,000 was sufficient for vehicle repairs, page 24, line 43110/4603. Mr. Brown stated that with the newer fleet there will be less maintenance required.

Mr. Johnson noted that the maintenance lines have also been separated out, vehicle and equipment, 4603 and 4605.

A discussion was held regarding heating, line 3110/4630. Mr. Brown explained that they are now using a waste oil furnace.

**On a motion made by Mr. McNally, and seconded by Mr. Frye, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$214,645; 16/0.**

**Pages: 24-25 Dept. 4311 ~ Highway & Streets**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented Highway and Streets.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$281,002 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$151,004.

Mr. Johnson explained that the budget reflects operating costs versus capital costs. Paving and small projects have been proposed in a separate warrant article. He noted that the Highway Block Grant projects will be adjusted at the end of the year. Additional discussion was held regarding the road service management plan, previously done, and recently updated in 2022. Mr. Johnson stated that they are seeing good results and may be able to begin working more towards preservation rather than reconstruction.

**Article 12: ROAD CONSTRUCTION/RESURFACING/PAVING AND DITCHING**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 12 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **two hundred and thirty-five thousand dollars (\$235,000)** to be used for the construction, reconstruction, paving, and ditching and/or resurfacing of town roads, and the refurbishing of ditches and culverts. Proposed Town Road Projects including paving, shimming, crack sealing etc. on a portion of Bow Lake Road (crack sealing) Church St, Harmony Road, Jenness Pond Rd. in accordance with the Town's 2022 road plan. Said amount to come from the unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2022. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget committee 0-0)**

**Article 30: ROAD IMPROVEMENT EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 30 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000)** to be deposited into the Roads Improvement Expendable Trust fund for improvements to Town roads including but not limited to paving, installing and replacing culverts, tree removal prior to road work, crack sealing, ditching, grading, and full reconstruction, etc. Said amount to come from the unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2022. Said funds will be used for road improvement projects as outlined in the Town's 2022 Road Surface Management Plan and for emergency road

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

repairs as they arise. The balance in this fund as of December 31, 2022, is \$xxxxxx.  
**(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of  
Selectboard's (0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

A discussion was held regarding the warrant articles and what happens if they do not pass. Mr. Johnson explained that part of the funding is revenue. Should the warrant article not pass, the Town will still receive the funds. The work will not be used for capital projects. If the budget passes the funds are there and road repairs can be done unless the roads are listed in the warrant article. Mr. Johnson stated that the voters will decide. Ms. Dole commented that this is a gamble.

**Ms. Dole made a motion, seconded by Mr. Wilkinson, to recommend the  
Selectboard's amount of \$151,004.**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, TW, KM, PS, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: TJ,  
DM, BS, PT. Motion passed; 12/4.**

**Pages: 25 Dept. 4316 ~ Street Lights**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented the Street Lights budget.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount and the Selectboard's amount is the same, \$1.

Mr. Johnson stated that the line is kept open with \$1. He noted that there has been a request to turn on some lights that have not been on.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. Frye, the Committee voted  
unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$1;  
16/0.**

**Pages: 25-27 Dept. 4321 ~ Sanitation: Administration**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented Highway and Streets.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount was \$82,399 and the Selectboard's proposed amount was \$88,600.

Mr. Brown explained that the increases are due to the relocation of lines. He agreed to recommend the BOS amount with the increases.

Mr. Johnson stated that there is still a vacant attendant position, and they are adding hours. They are changing some duties around to free up staff for more pertinent items.

Ms. Dole referred to page 26, line 43210/4380, facility improvement maintenance and repair and noted the burn pit and glass crushing have been shut down by the State.

Mr. Brown replied this is only a temporary shutdown. He is waiting for a deficiency letter, which will list the issues that need to be addressed. In addition, they are working to relocate the burn pit.

**On a motion made by Mr. McNally, and seconded by Ms. Dole, the Committee  
voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of  
\$88,600; 16/0.**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**Pages: 27 Dept. 4324 ~ Solid Waste Disposal**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented this section.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amounts are the same, \$150,000.

Mr. Brown stated that the increase is due to fuel costs and disposal fees. He noted that four years of default budgets have not been effective.

**On a motion made by Mr. Hall, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$150,000; 16/0.**

**Pages: 12-13 Dept. 4194 ~ General Government Buildings**

Department of Public Works Forman Chris Brown represented this section.

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amounts are the same, \$61,439.

**Article 29: FACILITIES COMMITTEE EXPENDABLE TRUST DEPOSIT**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 29 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **forty thousand dollars (\$40,000)** to be deposited into the Facilities Committee Expendable Trust Fund previously established for the maintenance, improvement, repairs, and replacement of general government buildings including the Chesley Memorial Library. Said amount to come from the unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2022. Current balance in this fund as of December 31, 2022: \$xxxxxx. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Mr. Johnson stated that the Town is continuing to try to absorb fuel and energy cost increases.

Ms. Dole asked if the Town has any contracts for fuel and other related items. Mr. Johnson stated that typically municipalities utilize the State of NH bid.

Mr. Frye asked about the prior year's cost which was \$78,681 and this year the proposal is \$61,439. Mr. Johnson stated that that past years were under contracted services and included all services for ground maintenance, cemeteries, and all government buildings maintenance, and repairs.

Ms. Sanderson noted that there were lighting changes as well.

Chair McGuigan noted a change in the internet line 41941/4320; there was nothing budgeted in prior years. Mr. Johnson replied that this is a change as they are breaking out costs for each facility.

**On a motion made by Mr. Frye, and seconded by Ms. Sanderson, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$61,439; 16/0.**

**Article 11: HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT TRAILER PURCHASE**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 11 as follows:

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **twenty thousand Dollars (\$20,000)** for the purchase of a 10-ton equipment trailer for the highway department and to authorize the withdrawal of **twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000)** from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Account. **(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Mr. Brown stated that in the past he has used his personal trailer. Road maintenance has been done in house. With the trailer, he would not need to hire out if equipment needed to be moved, towed for repairs, etc.

Ms. Dole referred to the quote for the trailer for \$17,250 and noted that the amount listed in the warrant article is \$20,000. Mr. Brown explained that the additional funds would be to change out items, if needed.

Mr. Johnson added that the supplier has already indicated that the cost for the trailer will be higher in the spring.

**Article 19: HIGHWAY DUMP TRUCK LEASE/PURCHASE PAYMENT**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 19 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate a sum of **twenty-six thousand four hundred thirty-nine dollars (\$26,439)** for the fifth-year lease payment of the seven-year lease/purchase agreement of a highway dump truck that was approved at the 2019 Town Meeting. If this is defeated the vehicle must be returned and the town loses all the money it has spent in prior years. **(Tax Estimate \$0.04) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

There was no discussion held.

**Article 20: HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT BACKHOE LEASE/PURCHASE PAYMENT**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 20 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **twenty thousand two hundred ninety-eight dollars (\$20,298)** for the fifth of five yearly payments for the lease/purchase of the backhoe. This lease agreement was approved in 2018 and does contain an escape clause so if the article is defeated the vehicle must be returned and all prior expenditures will be lost. **(Tax Estimate \$0.03) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

**Page: 9 Dept. 4153 ~ Legal Expenses**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's amount was proposed at \$24,001 and Selectboard's proposed amount was \$20,001.

Mr. Johnson stated that he recommended the additional funding because he has been notified that the hourly rate for the legal services will increase. The Selectboard reduced the line, increased it again, but not for the full amount he requested.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**On a motion made by Mr. Frye, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$20,001; 16/0.**

**Page: 9-10 Dept. 4155 ~ Personnel Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's amount proposed is \$520,148 and the Selectboard's proposed amount is \$443,401.

Ms. Eastman stated that the difference between the two amounts is the health and dental insurances.

Mr. Johnson stated that the funds for health and dental have been taken out of the budget for the proposed full-time positions and included in the three warrant articles, 32, 33, and 34. The funds would not be needed if the articles do not pass.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the Budget Committee increased the Library Director's wage line and asked if that would have any effect to this section. Ms. Eastman replied no as the Library Director was already a full-time position with benefits.

Ms. Dole referred to page 9, workers comp insurance, line 41550/4112 and asked about the increase. Ms. Eastman stated that there was a premium holiday received for 2022, and there will not be a premium for 2023.

**On a motion made by Ms. B. Smith, and seconded by Ms. Dole, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$443,401; 16/0.**

**Article 32: CREATING A FULL TIME CODE, COMPLIANCE AND BUILDING INSPECTOR POSITON**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 32 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to approve creating a full-time code, compliance and building inspector position and to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-two thousand seven hundred (\$42,700) to pay the additional wages and benefits not included in the proposed operating budget and further to authorize the Select Board and Budget Committee to include the necessary funds in future operating budgets to support this new full-time position. Said amount to come from taxation. **(Tax Estimate \$0.05) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Mr. Johnson explained that the current part-time position is a combined position and will be the same, combined position for a full-time code, compliance and building inspector position. He added that the employee would have been in attendance; however, he is at his other job. This change would allow for more proactive work rather than reactive.

**Page: 10-12 Dept. 4191 ~ Planning & Zoning**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$138,630.

Mr. Frye asked about the differences over the past few years.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Ms. Sanderson stated that salary lines are 80% for Planning and 20% for Zoning. She noted that there is an increase of \$9,000 for contracted services, line 41911/4432. She added that the Town is growing, and the Department is busy.

Mr. Jandebaur added that both the Planning and Zoning divisions are revenue generating departments and the expenses in both have also increased.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. Wilkinson, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$138,630; 16/0.**

**Page: 14 Dept. 4196 ~ Insurance**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$60,614.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the cost of insurance has increased. No other discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$60,614; 15/0.** Mr. Frye was out of the room for the vote.

**Page: 14 Dept. 4199 ~ Other General Government**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and Selectboard's proposed amount is \$2. No discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. Jobin, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$2; 16/0.**

**Page: 20-21 Dept. 4240 ~ Building Inspection**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount is \$78,22 and the Selectboard's proposed amount is \$65,222.

Mr. Johnson stated the difference in the bottom line is the wages for the inspector and clerk.

Ms. Sanderson commented that this position really should be a full-time position. The current inspector is very busy with applications and code compliance matters in Town; there is a real need to expand the hours. The current employee is very good at this job and the Town is lucky to have him. The Selectboard agreed to change this position to full-time. The warrant article contains the increase for the full-time position; the budget increase is wages.

Ms. Dole stated that the building inspector is currently working 25 hours. Mr. Johnson replied that the full-time position would be for 40 hours per week.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$65,222; 16/0.**

**Page: 21-22 Dept. 4290 ~ Emergency Management**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount is \$8,504 and the Selectboard's proposed amount is \$5,813.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Director Bob Young spoke to the Emergency Management budget.

Mr. Young stated that this will be his last budget. He complimented the Town Administrator for the adjustments throughout the budget process.

Mr. Young stated that emergency management is the responsibility of the Selectboard. 33 years ago, he was the chair of the BOS, and he has been doing the job since.

Mr. Young reviewed the budget and noted that there should be money in this budget for additional equipment and for a stipend for a new director. He stated that a new laptop will be needed as he has used his personal laptop, and a CO2 meter.

Ms. Sanderson explained that the Selectboard has proposed reducing the stipend from \$5,000 to \$2,500, line 42900/4000.

Mr. Johnson explained that the Town has benefitted from Mr. Young's service. Some emergency management directors have been incorporated into the duties of the fire and police chiefs. At this time, this is a place holder, and the Board will be looking for a replacement; not knowing the compensation, the range greatly depends on the community as well as the duties.

Mr. Jandebaur stated that the Town does not budget for emergencies; this is the perfect place and time to create such a fund. Mr. Young agreed and added that until the pandemic, this was not noticed, and it needs to be addressed.

Mr. McGuigan stated that this could be done as a petition article. Mr. Jandebaur stated that the Budget Committee can submit a request to the BOS. He noted that sometimes emergency services are reimbursed.

Ms. Dole stated that in the past the stipend for the Director was proposed to be \$10,000. She stated that she would recommend that it be at least \$5,000. She referred to the requests noted and added that the bulk mailing list should also be updated and sent out.

**Ms. Dole made a motion, seconded by Ms. Colburn, to recommend the Department's amount of \$8,504.**

Mr. McGuigan asked why the Selectboard would reduce the salary; the Town needs to be able to pay for someone.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the Selectboard has tried to prepare a frugal, consistent, and workable budget. The proposal does not mean anything is capped; it is just an unknown. She agreed that there should be a fund set up.

Additional discussion was held regarding creating an emergency management fund. Mr. Young commented that a reasonable emergency expendable fund should be between \$5,000-\$10,000.

Mr. Jandebaur stated that the fund should be started now, add funds each year until the determined amount is reached, maintain the fund, use it accordingly, and replace when necessary.

Mr. Young explained that in the past the Fire Department, Town, and food pantry have been utilized for emergencies; however, changes have occurred with federal regulations. He stated that the hazardous mitigation plan is through 2025 and he is working on finalizing a MOU with the school to be the primary shelter.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Ms. Colburn stated that the position is an underestimated job and she strongly encouraged supporting \$5,000 for the stipend.

Mr. Jobin commented that Mr. Young is giving his advice based on his experience, and the Committee should take this into consideration.

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, TJ, DM, BS, PT, TW, KM, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: PS. Motion passed; 15/1.**

**Mr. Jandebaur made a motion, seconded by Ms. B. Smith, to recommend the Selectboard to establish an emergency management fund, and fund it this year with \$10,000.**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, TJ, DM, BS, PT, TW, PS, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: KM. Motion passed; 15/1.**

**Page: 27-28 Dept. 4411 ~ Health: Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$6,815.

Mr. Johnson stated that this position is within the duties of the code compliance officer; it will continue to be a part of the position if approved for full-time. It currently is a portion of the hourly wages and is being maintained to keep the current part-time position.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$6,815; 16/0.**

**Page: 28-29 Dept. 4441 ~ Welfare: Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$3,038.

Mr. Johnson stated there has not been any expenditures from this department because he is currently doing this role as the Town Administrator. He added that there have been many inquiries. Should it become more of a burden, they may need to find someone for this position; therefore, the funds need to remain in the budget. The lines will continue to be used if he continues to do the job.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$3,038; 16/0.**

**Page: 29 Dept. 4442 ~ Direct Assistance**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$11,500.

Mr. Johnson explained that there has been a significant increase in assistance as well as a decrease in State funding; however, funding has been reinstated only for the winter months. He added that there will continue to be increases.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**\$11,500; 16/0.**

**Page: 29 Dept. 4445 ~ Vendor Payments**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount is \$27,486 and the Selectboard's proposed amount is \$26,736.

Mr. Johnson stated the vendors submit the requests to the Selectboard. One adjustment was made based on the explanation received.

Ms. Sanderson noted that the adjustment made was to a service that is not a direct benefit to the Town, court appointed special advocates, line 44450/4915; it was reduced by \$750.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$26,736; 16/0.**

**Page: 34-35 Dept. 4583 ~ Patriotic Purposes**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$2,800.

No discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$2,800; 16/0.**

**Page: 35 Dept. 4589 ~ Other Culture & Recreation**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$1,001.

Ms. B. Smith noted that the food panty has been assisting patrons.

Mr. Jandebour stated that due to the fact this is a big year and there will be a big celebration, funds should be added to assist with the Bean Hole Bash, line 45899/4902.

**Ms. Dole made a motion, second by Mr. Jobin, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$1,001.**

**Mr. Jandebour amended the motion to add \$499 for funding for the Bean Hole Bash. Seconded by Mr. B. Smith.**

**Amendment - \$1,500**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, TJ, DM, BS, PT, TW, KM, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: PS. Amendment passed; 15/1.**

**Motion: New bottom line - \$1,500 - Other Culture & Recreation**

**VOTE: YES: BC, TC, GD, MF, BH, TJ, DM, BS, PT, TW, KM, BW, BY, EB, MJ. NO: PS.**

**Motion passed; 15/1.**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**Pages: 35-36 Dept. 4611 ~ Conservation: Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$2,277.

No discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$2,277; 15/0.** Mr. Hall was out of the room for this vote.

**Pages: 36 Dept. 4651 ~ Economic Development: Administration**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's proposed amount is \$604 and the Selectboard's proposed amount is \$1.

No discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Ms. B. Smith, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$1; 16/0.**

**Pages: 36 Dept. 4723 ~ Interest on Tax & Revenue Anticipation Notes**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$1.

No discussion was held.

**On a motion made by Ms. Dole, and seconded by Mr. McNally, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$1; 16/0.**

*Mr. McGuigan called for a recess at 3:00 p.m. Session resumed at 3:10 p.m.*

**Page: 28 Dept. 4414 ~ Animal Control**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$13,272.

Mr. Johnson stated that the position has not been filled and they continue to search for a candidate.

Ms. Dole referred to line 44140/4603, vehicle maintenance and repairs, and stated that the request is a significant increase.

A discussion was held regarding continuing to do maintenance on the ACO vehicle. Ms. Smith stated that at the last Police Commission meeting the Chief reported that the vehicle passed inspection and repairs have been completed. She added that even though the ACO position is vacant, there are still calls that need to be addressed; currently the officers handle the calls, and they still need a vehicle for the animals.

Ms. Eastman stated that a recent expense for \$1,808 for repairs was submitted and it is not shown on the expenditure report provided.

**On a motion made by Mr. Frye, and seconded by Mr. Wilkinson, the Committee voted unanimously, by roll call vote, to recommend the Selectboard's amount of \$13,272; 16/0.**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

**Pages: 28 Dept. 4210 ~ Public Safety: Police**

Chair McGuigan stated the Department's and the Selectboard's proposed amount is the same, \$964,095.

Ms. Sanderson gave an overview of the proposed budget for the Police Department. She stated that a step increase has been recommended for all employees. Overall, the wages/salaries are low compared to the surrounding towns.

Ms. Sanderson stated that there are increases noted in the phones and internet, lines 42101/4320 and 4330, due to equipment increases. Legal has increased due to hiring a new legal contractor, line 42101/4401. Another increase was noted for the security camera system, line 42101/4414, for upgrades. Contracted services, line 42101/4432, has increased due to overall costs increasing as well as line 42101/4433 for professional services. She continued to note other increases in maintenance, general fuel costs, line 42101/4507 and the costs for uniforms and ammunition, line 42101/4509.

Ms. Sanderson noted that insurance and wages are a large portion of the increases. She stated that to be competitive, the wages need to be increased and we are still not where we need to be; four years of a default budget and the economy still increases.

Mr. Chase asked about the demand for services. Mr. Johnson stated that the department's calls have increased. He added that the Department is trying to fill positions and attract officers; however, so are other towns all utilizing the same pool. Northwood needs to at least be average or better to attract good personnel.

Ms. Dole referred to line 42101/4602, vehicle, maintenance, and repairs. She stated that prices have increased dramatically even for just oil changes, and parts. She is not at all surprised to see this increase.

Mr. Jandebour asked about step increases and noted that the figures appear to be more than one step. Ms. Sanderson stated that step increases are given on anniversary dates. Ms. L. Smith added that there have been promotions within the Department.

Mr. Wilkinson stated that it was stated that the Police Department has been having a hard time hiring and retaining people. He stated that it is not just due to the low wages; it may also be because of the condition of the station. The issues need to be acknowledged and addressed to make it more attractive as a working environment.

Mr. Chase asked if the Selectboard has had discussions relative to the station. Ms. Sanderson stated that a committee has been established to look at facilities and options. Most people will agree that the Department needs adequate facilities. The data needs to be compiled and a plan presented. She believes that this will be over the next few years.

Mr. Johnson stated that there needs to be public support for both the fire and police departments. The focus group will begin after the first of the year. Locations will be looked at. He stated that this will probably be a warrant article for 2024.

Mr. Frye asked about the lieutenant position. Mr. Johnson stated that the ranking within the Department will remain whether current employees return, or another position change occurs.



**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

held by the Northwood Treasurer. Current balance as of December 31, 2022: \$xxxxxxx  
**(Tax Estimate \$0.00) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of  
Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

**Article 26: AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION EXPENDABLE TRUST  
FUND**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 26 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **eight thousand two hundred and fifty dollars (\$8,250)** to be deposited into the previously established Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance in this fund as of December 31, 2022, is \$xxxxxxx **(Tax Estimate \$0.01) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

**Article 27: AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES TREATMENT AND CONTROL  
EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 27 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **twelve thousand dollars (\$12,000)** to be deposited into the previously established Aquatic Invasive Species Treatment and Control Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance in this fund as of December 31, 2022 is \$xxxxxxx. **(Tax Estimate \$0.02) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0-0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

**Article 28: TERRESTRIAL INVASIVE SPECIES EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 28 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)** to be deposited into the previously established Terrestrial Invasive Species Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance as of December 31, 2022 is \$xxxxxx. **(Majority vote required) (Tax Estimate \$0.01) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

No discussion was held.

**Article 31: TOWN EMPLOYEE COST OF LIVING INCREASE**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 31 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of sixty-eight thousand dollars (\$68,000) to cover the salary and benefits-cost associated with providing a 3% COLA (cost of living adjustment) in 2023 for all town employees. Said amount to come from taxation. **(Tax Estimate \$0.08) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard's 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

Mr. Jandebour mentioned that the warrant article indicates that an increase is proposed for all employees. Mr. Johnson explained that a step increase of 3% for employees has been factored into the budget; the COLA is being presented by the warrant article. He noted that social security increased 8%.

**Article 35: CENTER SCHOOL REHABILITATION**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 35 as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **ninety-five thousand dollars (\$95,000)** for the repair and restoration of the former Center School located at 818 1<sup>st</sup> NH Turnpike. Said project including but not limited to abating all hazardous materials, “gutting” the building to the outside walls and studs, repairing the existing foundation, removing the existing rear addition and constructing a new addition of similar size to include one full appropriate sized ADA compliant bathroom and a small kitchenet, replacing all insulation on all exterior walls and sheetrock and painting all interior walls, upgrading all electrical, mechanical and plumbing systems to meet all building and life safety codes. The finished building will be used for recreational, leisure, meeting and other activities deemed appropriate by the Select Board. Said amount to come from taxation **(Tax Estimate \$0.11) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard’s 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

**Article 36: RAZE THE CENTER SCHOOL**

Chair McGuigan read Warrant Article 36 as follows:

In the event Article 35 fails, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to raze the former Center School building located at 818 1<sup>st</sup> NH Turnpike next to the Town Hall and restore the property to a level area. Said amount to come from taxation **If Article 35 passes this article will be passed over. (Tax Estimate \$0.02) (Majority vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectboard’s 0/0) (Recommended by the Budget Committee 0-0)**

Ms. Dole asked how the total amount was provided. Mr. Johnson explained that a contractor provided the figure, noting that he would be able to do the work between \$80-\$90,000; however, an itemized list has not been provided. He added that the project would still go out to bid.

Ms. Colburn requested that the environmental report be shared with the Committee.

Ms. Sanderson stated that there are environmental concerns. She stated that the building cannot be used. Major repairs will need to be done in order for the facility to be used.

Mr. Buckland asked if the Committee will be made aware of the Selectboard’s recommendation for the Center School. He commented that, as a citizen, he would find this information helpful relative to voting on the issue.

Ms. Dole spoke of the need to vote on the warrant articles in order to effectively address the public. She stated that the articles should be addressed prior to the public hearings and prior to deliberative sessions.

Ms. Sanderson stated that the Selectboard has agreed to listen to the public’s comments and concerns first before voting on the warrant articles.

**Town of Northwood  
Budget Committee Minutes  
December 3, 2022**

*Mike Moore arrived at 3:40 p.m.*

**OTHER BUSINESS**

- ***School District & Other Districts***
  - All budgets have been mailed or otherwise distributed.
  - School and all District budgets to be addressed on Saturday, December 10.
- ***Request for Additional Information***
  - List of salaried positions
  - Accounting of Recreation Revolving Fund for 2022
  - Legal opinion (NHMA) relative to language in warrant article for funding of the ambulance fund
  - Environmental report for Center School report
  - Finalize recommendations on warrant articles
  - Selectboard votes for warrant articles

A discussion was held relative to the process and the position taken by the Selectboard relative to the lack of voting on the proposed warrant articles. Ms. L. Smith explained that the Selectboard has agreed to not act on the warrant articles until comments have been heard from the public. She stated that the Budget Committee cannot make any changes to the amounts proposed in the warrant articles; the figures are up to the Selectboard. She suggested the Budget Committee make recommendations on what has been presented; the Selectboard can choose to do what they like.

Chair McGuigan called for a recess, at 4:00 p.m. until Monday, December 5, 2022, at 7:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Land Use Administrative Assistant