

Selectmen's Meeting Minutes

February 13, 2017

7:00 pm Meeting called to order by Board Chair, Jack Esposito. Also in attendance were Selectmen John Quinlan and Peter Eckhoff.

7:00 pm Public Hearing on the Proposed Operating Budget and Warrant Articles called to order by Board Chair, Jack Esposito.

Selectman Esposito explained that after tonight's hearing the Proposed Operating Budget will be set, and those will be the numbers voted on at Town Meeting. Since none of the Warrant articles are over \$100,000, they do not need to be discussed tonight, but the Board believes that the taxpayers should have the opportunity to discuss all money articles.

Esposito Read each article:

Article 01: Election of Town Officers

To choose all necessary Town Officers for the year ensuing.

Article 02: Amendment to Zoning Ordinance Article I-308 "In-Law apartments"

Shall the town vote to amend Zoning Ordinance Article I-308 from "In-Law apartments" to "Accessory Dwelling Units" to conform to NH State Law in accordance with RSA's 674:71 through 674:73 more aptly described in the information posted at the Mont Vernon Town Hall?

Selectmen and Planning Board recommend this article.

Article 03: Zoning Regulation Glossary Addition

To see if the Town is in favor of adding the definition below of the word "structure" to the Mont Vernon Planning and Zoning Regulations Glossary. The term "structure" is used often in Mont Vernon's Regulations, but is not defined.

"STRUCTURE: *That which is built or constructed for occupancy or use. Structures shall not include stone walls and fences less than six feet in height.*"

Selectmen and Planning Board recommend this article.

Article 04: Acceptance of Personal Property Donated

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to accept gifts of personal property, other than cash, to the municipality for any public purposes. This authorization, in accordance with RSA 31:95-e, shall remain in effect until rescinded by a vote of the Town meeting. (Majority vote required)

Article 05: Acceptance of Unanticipated Sources of Funds

Shall the town accept the provisions of RSA 31:95-b providing that any town at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the selectmen to apply for, accept and expend, without further action by the town meeting, unanticipated money from a state, federal, or other governmental unit or a private source which becomes available during the fiscal year? (Majority vote required).

Article 06: Acceptance of Donations in Trust

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to accept and hold in trust for a certain purpose; money, gifts, legacies, and devises made to them for the establishment, maintenance, and care of public buildings and places, or for any other public purpose that is not foreign to their institution or incompatible with the objects of their organization. To further authorize the board of Selectmen to expend such trusts without further action by the Town. This authorization, in accordance with RSA 31:19-a, and RSA 31:95-e, shall remain in effect until rescinded by a vote of the Town meeting. (Majority vote required)

Article 07: Borrow in Anticipation of Taxes

Shall the Town accept the provision of RSA 33:7 providing that any Town at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the Selectmen to issue tax anticipation notes? (Majority vote required).

Article 08: Authorizing the Board of Selectmen to lease Town Property for Cell Tower purposes for more than one year.

To see if the Town will vote pursuant to RSA 41:11-a to authorize the Board of Selectmen to lease town-owned property located at 1 South Main Street, Mont Vernon, NH (Map 10, Lot 37), for longer than one year but not more than 30 years to a cellular telecommunication services provider and to further authorize the construction and installation of a new wireless communications service facility on the property and within the existing building on the property, subject to obtaining all necessary approvals and subject to such other business terms determined by the Board of Selectmen to be in the best interests of the Town, including but not limited to an annual rental of market value with market rental escalators and adjustments and subject to the taxation authority of the Town for non-governmental use of governmental land and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any action necessary to carry out this vote. (Majority vote required) **Unanimously Recommended by the Board of Selectmen.**

Esposito explained that Verizon Wireless has approached the Town to put up a cell tower inside the clock tower on the Town Hall. It will not be visible, but they will have a small structure erected at the back of the parking lot to house their generator. They will pay taxes and rent to the Town for the use of the building.

Article 09: Scenic Road Designation

To see if the Town is in favor of designating Cemetery Road as a scenic road in accordance with section 231:157 of New Hampshire RSA's. (Majority vote required).

Planning Board unanimously supports this article. The Selectmen do not support this article.

Resident Eileen Naber asked why the Board does not support this article.

Esposito explained that it just makes more work for everyone involved.

Brown said that the Planning Board is in the process of updating the master plan. In the master plan, it suggests that Cemetery Road and the roads named in the next article should be designated scenic. That is why they are bringing it to the voters.

Quinlan said that he feels that just because these roads are dirt, it doesn't mean they are or should be designated scenic.

Resident Bonnie Angulas asked if the designation would prevent them from being paved.

Quinlan said no, and there was a short discussion regarding the residents of Cemetery Road not being able to open their windows in good weather. There were no further questions or comments.

Article 10: Scenic Road Designation

To see if the Town is in favor of designating Lamson Road, Cross Road and Horton Road as scenic roads in accordance with section 231:157 of New Hampshire RSA's? (Majority vote required).

Planning Board unanimously supports this article. The Selectmen do not support this article.

Article 11: Library Capital Reserve

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Library Capital Reserve Fund previously established under the provisions of RSA 35:1. .

(Majority vote required.) **The Selectmen and Budget Committee unanimously support this article.**

Bonnie Angulas explained that the Daland Trustees will match this \$10,000.

Article 12: Reconstruction of Carleton Pond and Park

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve fund to Reconstruct Carleton Pond and Surrounding Park previously established. Said appropriation to come from and not exceed the total funds collected by the Town in the form of Timber Taxes from the logging on properties owned by Joseph Carleton, Jr. (Majority vote required.) **The Budget Committee does not support this article by vote 2 - 1.**

The Selectmen unanimously do not support this article.

Esposito explained that they are in favor of the following article that raises \$15,000 from general taxes.

They are not in favor of any Timber Tax money being earmarked for the project. This Town has never voted for Timber income or Current use income to be diverted from the general fund. This money is meant to make up in small part for the lack of property tax being collected from these parcels because they are have been in in current use for years.

Article 13: Reconstruction of Carleton Pond and Park

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve fund to Reconstruct Carleton Pond and Surrounding Park previously established. (Majority vote required.) **The Selectmen and the Budget Committee unanimously support this article.**

Article 14: Repairs and Maintenance of the McCollom Building

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) for the purpose of repair and maintenance to the McCollom Building. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the purpose is completed or by December 31, 2021, whichever is sooner.

(Majority vote required) **The Selectmen and the Budget Committee unanimously support this article.**

Esposito explained that this is the last of the money being spent on the Energy Envelope of the Building, and will be spent on new windows and shutters.

Article 15: Fire Truck Capital Reserve.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Five Thousand Dollars (\$35,000) to be added to the Fire Truck Capital Reserve previously established under the provisions of RSA35:1, for the purpose of purchasing or replacing Fire Trucks. **The Budget Committee unanimously supports this article. The Majority of the Selectmen do not support this article.**

Esposito explained that it doesn't make sense to put this kind of money in the bank: It is very inexpensive to borrow money right now, and letting money sit in the bank will actually have you losing money.

Quinlan said that he does support it because it is easier to wrap their heads around a Capital Reserve, and since we won't be purchasing for a few years, we don't know what the bond rate will be then.

Chief Wilson said that if you have the money, you can negotiate a better deal from the vendors.

Eileen Naber commented that it is a higher number than we have seen in the past.

Wilson explained that we only have five years to save up.

Article 16: Highway Block Grant

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety Two Thousand Three Hundred and Eighty Dollars (\$92,380) for the purpose of the reconstruction of Town roads. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the purpose is completed or by December 31, 2022, whichever is sooner. (Majority vote required). **The Selectmen and the Budget Committee unanimously recommend this article.**

Article 17: Operating Budget

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Million, Two Hundred Sixty Four Thousand, Five Hundred Sixty Dollars (2,264,560) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required) **The Selectmen and the Budget Committee unanimously recommend this article.**

Esposito said that he would not read every single line item, but rather would take it in groups. If anyone had a question or comment they were to ask it as we go.

- **Town Clerk**

Brown asked the Board to add \$500 to the Town Clerk's Dues and Fees line because the T/C had asked earlier to be able to accept credit cards. There are fees involved, which will be covered by the \$500.

Esposito asked a few more questions, and then Quinlan motioned, seconded by Eckhoff to add \$500 to the Town Clerk Dues and Fees Account in the 2017 Proposed Operating Budget. All in favor.

Resident Alyson Miller asked if the budget reflects a 3% pay increase across the board, and was told yes. She then wanted to know if we are caught up with the surrounding towns yet.

Esposito said that we are still behind surrounding towns, even with the health insurance factored in.

Miller insisted that we must be caught up by now.

Quinlan said "Not even close."

- **Planning / Zoning**

Miller asked about the Planning /Zoning Administrative Assistant. She said that the new Assistant was not hired at the old Assistant's rate.

Brown explained that Selectmen's office and the Chairman of the Planning Board agreed that it would benefit the Town to have the assistant available more than the 2 hours per week that she was scheduled in the office. It was agreed that, if Joan would accept the new responsibilities, she should be paid at the same rate as she is paid for her work in the Selectmen's Office.

Miller asked if it would go back to the old rate if Joan leaves the job.

Brown said that the Planning Board Chair would have to hire a new assistant at whatever rate he could.

- **Police Department**

Eileen Naber asked what the Police Department "Code Red" line was for (it is now \$0).

Police Chief Furlong explained that "Code Red" is a program that sends out emergency texts/calls. The State has implemented its' own program, and it is free.

- **Fire Department**

Esposito asked Chief Wilson if he had gotten a firm number on fixing the pump on E1.

Wilson said that \$20,000 is a good figure – it is actually \$17,300 without shipping and anything else they find.

- **Highways and Streets**

Miller stated: Account number 431382 – Tarring and Sealing was \$35K up to 2014, in 2015 it went up to \$50K, and in 2016 to \$100K. There is no improvement plan for how that is being spent and the block grant has gone up over \$90K this year.

Esposito said that when a big note was paid off, we took that \$ and added it to Tarring and Sealing because the roads were falling apart.'

Miller said that it is \$100K in the budget, and looks like it is going to stay there. If we are looking at cutting money from the budget, this is a place we can cut.

Esposito said that we still have a lot of roads that need attention. Some are sitting with a base coat, and if we don't get them top coated soon, we will lose the work that has been done.

Quinlan said that if we weren't trying to hold down the tax rate, I would triple this number.'

Miller: "There is no plan."

Esposito: "There is a plan; we talk about the roads all the time."

Miller: "So how long until the roads are caught up?"

Esposito: "There will always be work needed on our roads."

• Patriotic Purposes

Eileen Naber asked what the increase in Patriotic Purposes represents.

Jay Wilson explained that there is an Eagle Scout that has planned a project for the War Memorial. It includes a walkway. The idea is to add to his project by making the site more accessible. We will have all the perimeter cleaned up and brush removed, and would like to make it a more defined space for visiting the memorial.

Board agreed that the proposed operating budget should be presented as discussed tonight.

Quinlan motioned, seconded by Eckhoff to present \$2,264,560 as the Proposed Operating Budget to the Town at Town Meeting on Wednesday, March 15, 2017 at 7:00 pm. All in Favor.

8:00 pm Quinlan motioned, seconded by Eckhoff to close the Public Hearing portion of the meeting. All in favor.

8:10 pm Esposito told DPW Director that he has heard nothing but compliments on these last few storms.

Ypya said that the one-ton's plow frame broke for the 3rd time.

Quinlan stated that Route 13 from the New Boston town line into our village is not even plowed by mid-morning. The State is doing a lousy job taking care of it. Ypya agreed, and said it has been like that for years, and I don't know why we are always at the bottom of their list.

Chief Wilson said that Engine #1 cannot be used, and asked if he had to wait for Town Meeting before having the repairs done.

Esposito told Wilson to go ahead and get it done right away. It is a matter of public safety.

8:15 pm Quinlan motioned, seconded by Eckhoff to go into non-public session with DPW Director Mike Ypya to discuss a personnel issue.

8:40 pm Board returned from non-public session.

Quinlan motioned, seconded by Eckhoff to seal the minutes of the non-public session. All in favor.

Esposito asked about the development on Old Milford Road.

Quinlan said that there is a buyer for the whole development. Before they took ownership of it, they were in there working on the road. They were asked to stop until all of their permits were in order, and it looks like they complied.

Esposito asked about the road bond and the engineering bonds.

Brown said that the road need not be bonded until they want to sell a lot, or get a building permit, but that the engineering bond should be on there as soon as they even think about working on the road.

Quinlan said that Bill McKinney (Planning Board Chair) is on it – they will have to put up an engineering bond and a road bond.

8:45 pm As there was no further business before the Board, Quinlan motioned, seconded by Esposito to adjourn. All in favor.

Respectfully Submitted,
Laurie M. Brown