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Town of Danville  
Board of Selectmen  
Monday, November 01, 2021  
7:00 PM

7:00 PM

Meeting is Video-Recorded

Selectmen Present: Shawn O’Neil, Chair; Steve Woitkun, Vice-Chair; Sheila Johannesen, Dottie Billbrough, and Scott Borucki

Others Present: Kimberly Burnham, Selectmen Administrator; Stacy O’Connor, Danville Field Co-Ordinator, LT Justine Merced, Danville Police Dept.; Police Chief Wade Parsons, Danville Police Dept.; Sharon Griffin Woodside, Barry Hantman, Camera Operator/Chair Cable Committee.

Shawn called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and opened the meeting with a moment of silence for the troops who put themselves in harm’s way. All stood for the Pledge of Allegiance

**I. Delegates**

Shawn asks if there are any members of the public not on the agenda who wish to address the BOS.

**Eversource Access Update:** Stacy O’Connor asks the BOS if they were aware that Eversource was mowing. Kim states that Eversource did not have permission to mow. Ms. O’Connor states they are mowing and that she has an issue with finding the field gates unlocked. Kim states that an Eversource employee came in today (Monday) and asked for a key to the gates, stating that Eversource owned that property. Kim states that she told the employee that Eversource did not own that property and did not give him a key. She did suggest that he attend tonight’s BOS meeting to clarify the issue and determine if Eversource had been given right-of-way access. Shawn notes that Eversource is trying to do maintenance under the powerlines and had sent a letter requesting access to the power lines across the Town’s property. Because of the issues around the previously granted right-of-way access, the BOS had denied that request<sup>1</sup>. Kim reiterates that she did not give them a key and does not know how they were able to access the powerlines through the field.

Ms. O’Connor explains that when she came home last Friday afternoon the gate was open and a red pickup truck “came hauling out of there”. She checked with the Highway Dept. and they stated they did not open the gate, and the padlock had not been cut. Ms. O’Connor states that the double gates going out to the powerlines were wide open and tonight there were huge trucks down there. When she unlocked the gates for soccer, the white Eversource pickup trucks, the red truck, and two big trucks were all down there and they were mowing by the gate and by the extra parking lot. Ms. O’Connor states that she will drive up the power lines tomorrow to video the work. Shawn notes that he would appreciate that.

Shawn notes that the Police Dept. is at tonight’s meeting and should note that Eversource should not be accessing their powerlines through that gate. Sheila reiterates that the BOS did not give Eversource permission to do that and they are supposed to be “coming in from a different angle.” Shawn suggests that perhaps Eversource made a copy of the gate key from earlier access. Ms. O’Connor states that if Eversource is there tomorrow when she comes home, she will ask them how they unlocked the gate and will ask them to return the key.

Kim states that when the Eversource employee came to ask for the key, he stated that it was Eversource property. She reiterates that she told him it was not and that someone from Eversource needed to attend tonight’s BOS meeting. There are several simultaneous conversations. Sheila states she believes that Ms. O’Connor has no authority to take the key from Eversource. Stacy questions “why not, they are down on the fields that she has been


appointed to oversee.” Sheila states that unless the BOS gives her the authority, she (Stacy) can’t take their key. Stacy states that “she is the Field Co-Ordinator and Eversource is going down to the field and she believes that she has that authority.” Shawn and Steve agree that she does and the BOS is not going to micromanage that issue. Steve notes that the BOS would not have known about this issue if not for Stacy. Sheila states that she believes “there is more to this whole thing than the BOS knows about.” Shawn asks what she means. Sheila states that she has questions about how Eversource got the key. Stacy points out that the BOS does not know how Eversource got the key, she doesn’t know, and the Highway Dept. doesn’t know. She clarifies that Eversource was in there on Friday (October 29) and came in today but the gate was locked. Kim clarifies that the Eversource employee came to her today (November 1) asking for the key and she believes they were “covering their bases” because they didn’t come in until about 2:00 PM-3:00 PM. Shawn states that he will contact Elizabeth LaRocca (Eversource representative). Kim notes that Ms. LaRocca had retired and was no longer with Eversource. Sheila confirms that Eversource did not respond to the BOS after they refused Eversource’s request for access. Kim reiterates that Eversource has no permission to be on the fields. Ms. O’Connor notes that there is no way that Eversource could access those powerlines by coming down Sandown Rd as there are two huge puddles. LT Merced confirms with Stacy that the gate had been opened on Friday. Shawn notes that Eversource owns the property off Sandown Rd. and could access it that way. Ms. O’Connor states that they would not be able to drive through the puddles as they were too deep. Shawn again suggests that Eversource may have kept a key from their last project and are using it again.

LT Merced states that she remembers that Eversource had put their own lock on the gate the last time and would not have needed to have a Town key. Eversource switched to a combination lock because they did not have enough keys. LT Merced reiterates that as far as she knows Eversource never had a copy of the Town key and when the previous project was completed, Eversource switched out their combination lock for the Town padlock. Stacy states that she unlocks the gate every Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday. LT Merced states that “someone with a Town key would have had to give Eversource access to that gate, it’s a matter of who”. Shawn notes that the BOS will need to find out more information regarding this “saga” as it continues.

Shawn closes the Delegate session at 7:08 PM

## II. Budgets

**#4210.10- Police Dept.:** Chief Wade Parsons presents the Police Dept. Budget #4210.10 for \$626,638. After ensuring all members of the BOS had copies of the budget, Chief Parsons reviewed the following:

 **PD #110- Full-Time Salaries-** reflect the approved 4.4% COLA increases with one exception. That salary line is dedicated to hiring a new officer, hopefully someone with experience. Chief Parsons explains that he has had interest from certified police officers, but he wasn’t able to hire them at the entry-level salary that was originally advertised. He states that he wanted to have the potential for the salary of hiring someone with years of experience. He re-assures the BOS that if he doesn’t hire someone at that level, he would not be offering that top salary, but having it in the budget provides an opportunity to hire someone already certified and with experience. This would eliminate the need to send someone to the academy, which is a year-long process before that officer is certified, trained, and on the road.

Shawn asks how the salary lines compare to compensation in 2021. He confirms the salary of that line was only for one-half of the year. Chief Parsons confirms that line was only budgeted for forty (40) weeks in 2021, but is budgeted for the whole year in 2022 because he is in the hiring process now and is hoping to have an officer hired to start at the beginning of 2022. Sheila notes that one of the officers is also at the same salary at the upper end of the open position. She asks if the new officer will start at the same salary as an officer already working at the Police Dept. Chief Parsons explains that the highest salary is based on fifteen (15) years of service. An officer with no experience starts at \$27.99 plus the 4.4% COLA up to \$31.29 plus the 4.4% COLA. An officer with a reasonable amount of experience would be somewhere in that range. Sheila expresses her concern that a new officer coming in would start at the same rate as the established officers. Chief Parsons reiterates that he is trying to set the salaries based on years of service and experience. He explains he is beginning to see interest in the Police Dept. openings because he can offer them something more enticing than before. He reiterates that if he must hire an officer who is not certified, that salary would be based on the lower rate and the full-budgeted amount would not be used.

Steve asks who decides the salary when hiring a new officer. Chief Parsons explains that he has been using the 2018 Greenland Salary Study and tried to create an average in kind/like departments. He took that middle point in 2019 and got people positioned where they should be across Rockingham County and from that point has just been adding the annual COLAs to those salaries. It has allowed him to remain competitive. Chief Parsons notes that the Greenland Study has not come up with another survey since 2018 and is supposed to be doing one in 2021. He has reached out to them and has not heard back. He states that when he does get the updated numbers, he will still work with the formula to stay competitive. He gives an example of an officer with ten (10) years of experience. He would then use the formula to calculate the salary for his current officers “in house” who also have ten(10) years of experience.

✚ *PD #120- Part-Time Salaries:* Chief Parsons does a quick review of this line. There are no comments from the BOS.

✚ *PD #112- Second Shift Differential:* Chief Parsons notes that he made a mathematical error last year. He presented the FY2021 budget for this line at \$520 and it should have been \$832 for an officer working four (4) days a week. He notes that he caught the error when he was doing the FY2022 budget and corrected the numbers. He explains that the new-hire officer would be working five (5) days on the second shift with a second officer and that would increase the budget from four (4) days to five(5) days. He notes that while that is not a substantial increase dollar-wise, it is reflected as a large percentage increase.

✚ *PD #114- Third Shift Differential:* no change

✚ *PD # 121- Community Service:* no change

✚ *PD #122- Prosecution:* Chief Parsons explains there is a slight increase in this line. He notes the courts were closed due to COVID increases and cases became backlogged. The Police Dept. is just now starting to get back into the courtroom for trials and there will be more of that as the courts catch up with the cases.

✚ *PD #124- Labor and Training:* Chief Parsons explains there is a substantial increase in this line due to the new mandatory training and increased training requirements for the “3-2’s” from the Governor’s Council. Training used to be for eight (8) hours. In 2022 the required training is for sixteen (16) hours and by 2023-2024 the State will mandate twenty-four (24) hours of training for officers to keep their certification. He notes that he is trying to be proactive with these requirements. Sheila confirms that the officers must take required courses for this mandatory training. Chief Parsons explains the “3-2’s” are Ethics, Bias, and De-Escalation.

✚ *PD #140- Overtime:* Chief Parsons notes that he is adjusting this line to account for a new-hire officer with experience. Like that salary line, this line has been budgeted reflecting a full year and not the forty (40) weeks that were budgeted in FY2021.

✚ *PD #343- Communications:* no change

✚ *PD #349- Support Contracts:* Chief Parsons notes there is an increase in the IMC maintenance contract for 2022

✚ *PD #390- Professional Services:* Chief Parsons explains this reflects an increase in prosecution fees. He notes that the program is working well. He has reduced the budget for psychological services, noting that is a hiring expense and that while he is still hoping to hire for the open position in 2021, he will need those services if the hiring process continues into 2022. The budgeted amount also accounts for the possibility of having to replace an officer in 2022.

✚ *PD #430- Vehicle Maintenance:* There is no change. Chief Parsons updated the BOS on the newly purchased Durango. He explains it has been held up waiting for parts for the vault in the back, but they are almost through outfitting it. LT Merced notes that the last piece of the necessary equipment was scheduled to ship on October 29. They are hoping the Durango will be in service within the next couple of weeks. Chief Parsons notes that he has removed the truck from service. He reminds the BOS that he had been told during the inspection process in 2020 that the truck would not pass inspection in 2021 and that he had planned to pull it from service accordingly.

Chief Parsons notes that Jimmy Seaver (Road Agent) had expressed an interest in using the truck for the Highway Dept. The truck has been de-commissioned and just needs to have the equipment removed. Shawn states there is no issue if they are planning on using it only as a yard vehicle. Scott agrees, noting it would depend on what the intended purpose is. Chief Parsons notes that Andy Ward is a really good auto tech and could potentially do the necessary welding on it. Sheila agrees that she has no problem with the Highway Dept. using the truck. Chief Parsons assures the BOS that Mr. Seaver would strip it down and remove all the decals, etc., and suggests that if they can make the truck roadworthy that is great. If not, the truck could still be sold through the sealed bid process. Sheila

notes that Mr. Seaver could leave the Town seal on the truck. Chief Parsons reiterates that he will make sure everything else is removed.

Shawn asks what the Police Dept. is looking to purchase for their next vehicle. Chief Parsons explains that they have a 2012 Dodge Charger that is no longer used as a cruiser but only as a detail vehicle. It did pass inspection and is running “okay”. The Durango is replacing the truck that has already been decommissioned. It can pull a trailer and access places that the Chargers can’t. The next vehicle will most likely be another Dodge Charger unless the Durango works out better. Shawn asks how much money has been made on the department’s special details, noting those funds are dedicated to purchasing new vehicles. He expresses concern that if the department is not doing those details, there is no income to put towards new vehicles. Chief Parsons explains that the officers like working special details and these details have been available from March through October. He has billed approximately \$70,000 for the details which will provide approximately \$32,000 towards a new vehicle. Chief Parsons notes that details “add up pretty fast.” Shawn agrees, stating that “it is a good program since we started it.”

Scott suggests that if Chief Parsons is planning on purchasing a new vehicle that he “start looking now because the inventory is ridiculous.” He states the lead time is very long, noting that his company leased trucks in 2020 and is only now just getting them. Ms. Woodside states that her husband’s truck has been in the shop since August 30 because they can’t get the part. Scott reiterates that if the Police Dept. needs a new vehicle, now might be the time to move forward with an order due to the wait. He expresses his concern that if the Police Dept. “goes down another vehicle, it could be a problem.” Chief Parsons notes that he will investigate this issue after he pays the invoice for the Durango. He explains that he is also trying to update the equipment in the Police Dept. vehicles. In the past he has been transferring technology like the control panels, lights, and radios from car to car; but the equipment is “getting old and tired” and as the Police Dept. is getting new vehicles, it is also getting new equipment and this is costing more. LT Merced notes the Durango had to have all new equipment because it is the only one in the fleet. Shawn asks Chief Parsons to keep the BOS updated on the issue. Scott suggests the BOS get the amount of what is left in the Detail Account and see what other funds are available. He reiterates his concern that if another vehicle goes down it could be a huge problem if the Police Dept. doesn’t have enough vehicles to go around. Shawn confirms that having an order on the books is different from taking delivery of it and agrees this is something the BOS should investigate.

✚ *PD #620- Supplies:*

✚ *PD #625- Postage:* Chief Parsons explains the increases of these two lines are due to sending more court documents as they clear up the backlog of cases.

✚ *PD #635- Gasoline:* Chief Parsons notes that in 2021 the average cost of gasoline was approximately \$1.30 per gallon. The average cost right now is approximately \$2.184 and that was the number he used for the FY2022 budget.

✚ *PD #670- Law books:* no change


✚ *PD #681- Ammunition:* Chief Parsons notes that the cost of ammunition has slightly decreased.

✚ *PD #740- Equipment:* Chief Parsons explains that RMON assessed the Police Dept. systems and network and found there are some vulnerable areas. RMON has suggested upgrades to the network and computers and these expenses have been reflected in the budget. Chief Parsons notes that Kim has the quotes for these items. Sheila confirms that these quotes have also been submitted as proposals for the ARPA grant. LT Merced explains that they put it in the budget in case they couldn’t get these updates done through the grant in a timely fashion. Chief Parsons reiterates that wherever the money comes from, he just wants to be sure the money is available. Sheila agrees. LT Merced notes that the equipment that was budgeted for replacement is at the end of its life span. Everything that was quoted is proactive because if they go any longer, the issues will become reactive and more difficult to resolve. She notes that the equipment was estimated to last five (5) years and the Police Dept. has gotten six (6) years out of it.

There are no changes in the rest of the Police Dept. budget. Chief Parsons explains that if the gasoline lines and the RMON quotes are removed, the budget increase drops to 7%, a more palatable increase. He reminds the BOS that over the years the average increase in the Police Dept. budget has been approximately 2.78%, he has never run over his budget, and they always return what is not spent back to the Town. Sheila notes that she sent out an e-mail last week regarding a matching grant that will become available. She asks if there is anything the Police Dept. can do

with that grant. Chief Parsons explains that he is gathering information for that now. Shawn asks where the line is for the FICA and other payroll costs that the BOS requested be reflected in each department's budget. Chief Parsons explains that he sent that to them as a separate file and had to wait for Patty Sarcione to provide that information. Shawn asks the Chief to integrate those payroll costs into the salary lines of his budget. Shawn notes that the FICA costs for the Part-time salaries are \$4,046, Medicare is \$946 and the totals are \$65,262 for two (2) officers. Medicare costs for the Full-time officers are \$6315. NH Retirement costs are \$147,553. Total payroll costs for the six (6) full-time officers are \$435,518. Chief Parsons asks why the NH Retirement budget is extended to 2023.

Shawn recommends that the BOS approve the budget with the caveat that Chief Parsons returns with the updated salary costs reflected in his budget. Steve notes there are no costs for the healthcare coverage reflected in either the budget or the added information. Chief Parsons confirms with Shawn that he can get these numbers from Patty Sarcione. Shawn explains that the Chief needs to make new line items in his salary budget and add those costs in. He reiterates the BOS' decision was to include these costs in each department's budget to show the true costs of the salaries. Chief Parsons confirms the BOS' request to get these numbers and create new budget lines to reflect these costs in his budget to show the true costs of the salaries. Shawn states that is correct and that he has no questions on the budget that was presented tonight. Shawn explains the BOS can approve what Chief Parsons presented tonight, but the budget does not reflect a final amount until the other salary costs are added. Shawn notes that he would recommend the BOS approve the Police Dept. budget that was presented tonight and adjust the amount when Chief Parsons finishes adding in the rest of the salary costs. Chief Parsons again clarifies the process. Sheila reminds him there will be no BOS meeting on November 8. Sheila motions to approve the #4210.10 Police Dept budget for \$626,638. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

 **#4210.10 Police Dept. is approved as presented for \$626,638 until the BOS receives the requested updates. Vote is 5-0.**

Ms. O'Connor asks if Chief Parsons had budgeted raises for the existing officers in FY2022 and if he didn't, why not. Chief Parsons explains that he only added the COLA increase to those salary lines. He notes that when the BOS approved the salary increases from the Greenland Study, the wages were far more in line than they were before. Ms. O'Connor asks "as a Town, why wouldn't you want to give a little more to keep the officers he (Chief Parsons) has, because there is a turnover. Small towns are like 'stepping stones', they (police officers) come, get their training and then go off to bigger and better." She notes that she personally.... Shawn states "build back better". Ms. O'Connor agrees stating she sees it all the time, noting it is the same with the Fire Dept. Steve explains that's what motivated him last year to raise the salaries for the Fire Dept. Ms. O'Connor notes that the Police Dept. has an amazing staff that has been working 2-3 times overtime because they are short-staffed. She would rather pay more now to keep the existing staff.

Dottie explains that she's been working on wage and salary matrices for this year's budget process and asks if anyone is interested in the salary numbers for police officers. Ms. Woodside states that she would like to hear those numbers. Dottie clarifies that the numbers are from 2021 and do not include any COLA increases. She reads the following information:

- Chief: \$46.72 - \$50.70 per hour
- Lieutenant: \$37.75 - \$41.72 per hour
- Sargent: \$33.28 - \$36.23 per hour
- Full-time Officer: \$23.42 - \$29.96 per hour
- Part-time Officer: \$21.96 - \$27.02 per hour

Steve asks if Dottie did the salaries for the Fire Dept. Dottie states that she did, but the Fire Dept. budget was approved before she had a chance to speak. Shawn asks her to provide those numbers to Steve.

Ms. O'Connor states that the two most important departments are the Police and Fire departments. Steve notes that is why he has been fighting to get the "Premium Pay" from the ARPA grant. He explains that he thinks that is the way to address the salary issue in the interim for a year or two. Ms. O'Connor reiterates her concern with losing Police and Fire Dept staff because the salaries are too low, noting that it's "going to get competitive". Steve agrees, noting that Laconia is offering a \$5000 sign-on bonus, something that is unheard of. He states that when he got on the job there were three hundred (300) guys applying for ten (10) open positions, and now no one wants to apply.

Chief Parsons notes that a lot of people are leaving law enforcement because of what has been happening over the past couple of years. Steve notes that the State has “butchered the NH Retirement system, so there’s no incentive there.” Ms. Woodside notes that if Danville, as a small town, can’t compete with other small towns, it will never be able to compete with the mid-sized towns.

Shawn states that the Town also needs to look at the quality of the officers’ work environment. Danville is the safest town in NH and there are perks to working in Danville. Ms. Woodside notes that there is always the possibility of violence wherever you are. Shawn responds that the risks are different. Ms. Woodside reiterates that “paying the police officers at a decent level shows them the Town appreciates them.” Ms. O’Connor states that she believes paying at a more competitive rate would get open positions filled, knowing there is room for advancement. Shawn states the current open position is “well-funded now, and not just for a rookie, but for candidates with up to fifteen (15) years of experience. Ms. Woodside suggests that by paying the “mid-level” officers a little more, the Police Dept. would be more likely to keep them from moving to another department and that is why she likes Dottie’s research.

Mr. Hantman asks what is the total number of hours worked for the Police Dept. Shawn clarifies that the detail hours worked are separate. Chief Parsons states that there are approximately 9,000 straight-time hours through the end of October. Barry states that is approximately 12,000 hours per year. If the BOS gave every officer a \$1.00 per hour raise, it would change the Town budget by \$12,000. Scott states that he doesn’t disagree, but questions what the current risk factor is in the current working environment. He asks Chief Parsons if he feels the current officers are happy. Scott explains that when somebody searches elsewhere for a job, there are many factors. Pay is one factor, but not the only factor, and he asks Chief Parsons what he (the Chief) feels is the general feeling in his department. Is there a risk factor that the Police Dept. could lose officers at the current pay scale?

Chief Parsons states that he agrees with Ms. O’Connor that his current staff is among the best staff he has ever had and he is fortunate to have these people. He notes that the Police Dept. does not have much to offer regarding the current building. He notes that when talking about the current work environment “if he can compensate them (the police officers) a little better for the environment they’re working in, it might take the sting out of it.” He explains that a lot of other Police Depts. have a good, safe working facility and Danville can’t offer that. He notes that he tries to create an environment where the staff is happy coming to work and he feels he is doing a good job with what the Town has.

Scott agrees that the facility is a problem, noting that is no secret. He states that he feels for that reason alone, they should “up the ante a little bit because it’s not the best or the most.” Shawn notes that the previous metric used for the salaries was the Greenland Study and that had important and supporting data. Sheila states that they can’t compare Greenland with Danville. Chief Parsons clarifies that the Greenland Study was of every city and town in Rockingham County and within the State. Scott notes there is a “difference in working in a state-of-the-art facility, with room to do your job, versus the postage stamp that is Danville’s Police Station. He states that “it takes some of the ‘heart’ out of it.” Shawn agrees with Scott’s earlier statement regarding multiple factors when someone goes looking for a job elsewhere. He reminds the BOS that the quality of life of a police officer in Danville is drastically different than in Concord, Manchester, Salem, or Derry and an officer needs to put a value on that. Ms. Woodside asks how the Police Dept. salaries compare to a small town like Atkinson. Shawn explains that when the BOS used the Greenland Study, they made adjustments to all the positions and the Chief continues to follow the same matrix using the COLAs, and years of service as guidelines. Ms. Woodside confirms that Shawn is saying that Danville is competitive with other towns the same size. Chief Parsons notes that until those changes were made, Danville wasn’t competitive.

Scott states that based on the current home prices in Danville, he questions if any officers can afford a home in Danville. Ms. Woodside states that is what she is trying to discuss, noting that she “doesn’t know of many cops who can afford the housing prices in Danville.” There is a discussion among the BOS and public regarding housing prices in Danville and elsewhere. Ms. Woodside notes that other police departments have stations where officers can shower, other facilities in their office, etc., and be more comfortable. Sheila reminds the BOS that they and BudCom can make all the adjustments they want, but if the townspeople vote the operating budget down, nothing will change. Ms. Woodside states she feels a lot of it depends on its presentation to the Townspeople and if the BOS

promotes the budget. She reminds the BOS of the failed attempt to build a new police station, noting that as the BOS promoted the issue, there was a simultaneous “anti-police station faction that was more vocal.” Ms. O’Connor states that she’s been watching the meetings and feels “the two budgets for the two departments that protect us are overlooked yearly” and that she’s been watching the other departments get increases each year. She notes that the “facility conditions in both departments are ridiculous.” Sheila asks where the BOS is with the Police Dept. budget. Shawn reminds her that they just approved it.

Steve addressing Ms. O’Connor, states “that’s why he’s been battling for dollars in the ARPA grant because it won’t impact the taxpayer, but will reward the people who hung with this Town and stood behind the Town during this period of the COVID episode.” He notes the State reimbursed the full-time and part-time first responders, but the “women who kept the Town Offices open got zip.”

Sheila asks the BOS if they want to revisit the Police Dept. budget with different numbers. Steve states that he wants to vote to see a “fair amount is added to the ARPA grant to give all the employees who worked at least 2000 hours a year \$3.00-\$4.00 per hour which will put a “nice little check in the officers’ pockets.” Sheila reminds him this would only be for a short time. Steve responds that it will give the BOS time to readjust and look at the Greenland Study and address it in the future. Shawn reminds him that any adjustments that would be made now wouldn’t be based on any kind of data. LT Merced asks Dottie how she came up with her wage study. Dottie outlined her process, noting her frustration with the lack of response to her inquiries. She notes that she had information from eight (8) towns in Rockingham County that she used to put together the salary ranges for the Police Dept. Chief Parsons notes that the Greenland Study had more information because it was “chief reaching out to chief and they tend to communicate a little better.” Shawn agrees the Greenland Study was extremely well done.

Steve asks Chief Parsons how he feels when compared to other towns. Chief Parsons reminds him the last survey that was done went back to 2018. The department made some adjustments then, but he doesn’t know where they stand now. He notes that he is anxious to see the numbers and see if Danville is still competitive, noting that historically, Hampstead pays better. Sheila asks if Danville is competitive with Fremont. Chief Parsons states that he doesn’t know. LT Merced notes that in other towns if an officer doesn’t take the town’s health insurance benefit, they receive “x-amount” of money back in their checks as an incentive. Chief Parsons states that Plaistow is offering a \$10,000 sign-on bonus and more agencies are taking that route. Shawn notes that there is a large number of internal issues in the Plaistow Police Dept. and that “it is not a nice place to go to right now, it’s a toxic environment.” Scott notes the discussion is proving his point that there are many factors why someone would stay on or move on. Aside from salary, he would like to know if the Police Dept. and the Fire Dept. COLA increase is fair, or would a different amount be more adequate or fairer.

Chief Parsons agrees with Steve on using the ARPA grant funds to recognize the people who have been doing the job. He notes that the COLA increases over the past four years has been 2.7%, 2.0%, 1.5%, and 4.4%. Those are not big increases in the salaries. He asks how can the BOS make it better. Without the raw data, he doesn’t know if giving everyone a \$1.00-\$2.00 per hour raise would be fair. Chief Parsons notes that the incentive through the grant is a “reward for work that is already done without committing the Town to an hourly rate which may not be accurate.” He reiterates that he doesn’t have an answer without all the information. Shawn states that he supports the direction that Steve is going in to reward the employees until the new Greenland Study is ready, noting that using the updated study would keep everything consistent. Chief Parsons asks Shawn where the COLA figure comes from. Shawn explains the BOS uses the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in August and that this is a twelve (12) month rolling average. A yearly average. Ms. Woodside confirms this is the same process the Feds use when for seniors. Scott explains it is the exact same process, noting that COLA is used to address inflation and is not a “performance raise.” Shawn notes that it’s to “replace the eroding American dollar.” Scott notes that while he appreciates the Greenland Study, he doesn’t believe it is a “be all, end all” number and the BOS needs to do what’s right for the Town and the departments. Both the Fire Dept and the Police Dept should be compensated properly to keep the right people here. It’s good to have the information from the study, but the numbers shouldn’t be “etched in stone.” Steve reiterates that retention has been his whole motivation. Ms. Woodside agrees, noting that in business, key people are paid more to keep them. Shawn reminds the BOS of what they approved tonight and that some action items need to be brought back to the BOS. When these items are presented, the BOS can discuss the salary issue further. Scott asks



Chief Parsons when he is expecting the results of the new Greenland Study. Chief Parsons states that he believes it will be completed by the end of 2021. Steve notes that adjustments could be made at the Deliberative Session. Scott notes that the BOS can also choose to amend the salary amount before the end of the year. He agrees that it will be good to have the data and circle back on the discussion. Chief Parsons notes that he appreciates the opportunity.

**#4210.20- Animal Control:** Sheila, as the elected ACO, presents the #4210.20 Animal Control budget for \$29,639. She reviews the budget with the BOS.

✚ *Line #120- Professional Services* Sheila states that with the 4.4% COLA is the ACO stipend is \$6214. She explains that she did a wage survey of local towns and the average salary of their ACO officers is \$12,008 including the 4.4% COLA and longevity pay. This is the amount that she has submitted in her budget. Sheila asks Dottie if she had also done a wage study. Dottie confirms that she got approximately the same numbers from towns that pay their ACO's a stipend, noting that other towns do pay an hourly wage to their ACOs. The average that she came up with is \$11,902.

✚ *Line #343- Communications:* no change

✚ *Line #351- Veterinary Care.* Sheila notes that there is no change for the network card in the Communication line or for Veterinary Care.

✚ *Line #430- Vehicle Maintenance:* Sheila states that she has increased this line noting that she is replacing the battery in the van now. Steve notes that she also needs a new sticker. Sheila states that she believes it is good until March 2022. LT Merced confirms that her sticker has expired.

✚ *Software:* Sheila states that she has included the costs of the IMC software for \$15,615. She notes this has also been submitted to the ARPA grant and if approved for the grant it would be removed from the budget. Sheila reviews the remaining lines of the budget which have no changes. Dottie and Kim note that her lines do not add up to the total budget amount that she has presented.

Shawn states that he will support \$6214 in the salary line which is the current rate that was approved by the voters plus the COLA. He also states that he will support \$500 for Vet Care, \$200 for Vehicle Maintenance, \$100 for Supplies, \$600 for New Training, \$100 for Clothing, and the FICA salary costs of \$475. The total of these items is \$8189.

Sheila asks if Shawn is going to treat the ACO department differently from every other department that comes before the BOS. Shawn states that he is treating the ACO budget fairly. Sheila disagrees. She states that the ACO salary increase was done the same as every other salary the BOS has adjusted. Steve suggests that for that large an increase, it should be put on a Warrant Article. Shawn agrees. Ms. O'Connor asks how vet costs are charged. Sheila explains that if she picks up an animal with immediate medical needs, and she doesn't know the owner, she takes it to the Vet for care. Ms. O'Connor confirms with Sheila that once the owner is located, they are eventually charged for those vet fees. Sheila confirms that owners are also charged if the animal must be euthanized. Shawn clarifies for Ms. Woodside that the ACO budget increases reflect the IMC software and an increase in the ACO stipend.

LT Merced explains the IMC issue, noting that in a previous discussion it was stated that RMON is involved. LT Merced wants to confirm that IMC and RMON are working together. She explains that the Danville Police Dept. are "guests" on the Rockingham County server, so if Rockingham County does not "allow this relationship (between IMC and RMON) happen, the ACO's documents and records would still only stay on the ACO computer and no other agency would have access to them. The only way any agency can reference that information in a limited capacity is if the ACO is part of the Rockingham County server and they can refuse to let her have access to the server because she is a civilian employee." LT Merced continues that in that case the IMC software "would be a waste of funds because the reports would continue to remain only in the ACO database." Sheila states that IMC and RMON have spoken to Rockingham County. LT Merced states that she spoke to Rockingham County today and was told that was not true. Steve expresses his concern that IMC and RMON just want to make money. Shawn motions to approve the #4210.20 Animal Control budget for \$8,189. Second by Steve. The discussion continues.

Dottie states that the BOS increased the Welfare Director's salary from \$7,000 to \$10,000 noting that is also a stipend and asks why the BOS wouldn't consider the same kind of increase in the ACO's stipend. Steve notes his concern that the increase requested is a 101% increase, noting that he was "chastised and turned down when he requested a 10-12% increase in the Fire Dept. salaries." He states that the BOS would be "crucified by the taxpayers" if they




approved the requested increase. Ms. O'Connor notes that the Welfare Director is an appointed position. She clarifies that Ms. Tracy is elected only as the Town Clerk. Dottie notes that when the salary is so low, any increase is a greater percentage of that salary, so the increase looks much larger percentage-wise than the same increase on a large salary does. Steve states that he will consider the IMC software if he sees a letter from the Rockingham County Sheriff's department stating that they will support Danville's ACO access to their server. Shawn states that he does not understand the need for the ACO to access IMC. He notes the current ACO performed the same tasks while working as the ACO with the Hampstead Police Dept. and never had access. He states that the requirements for accessing IMC have changed over the years since 9-11. Shawn explains he does not support spending money on something that could be done in Microsoft Excel and notes that the BOS has dealt with multiple computer issues with the ACO. He expresses his concern about spending more money and more time on these issues. Shawn notes that the network card that is in the budget is only so the ACO can access the Internet when she is not at home, and he doesn't know why the ACO can't use her home network. Sheila explains that she can't use her own Wi-Fi because it is not secure. Ms. O'Connor notes that the network card is a "glorified hot spot". LT Merced explains that the ACO uses the same network card that the Police Dept. uses for their cruiser computers and it is NOT visible to the public. Shawn states that the ACO could run the ACO computer on a VPN. Ms. Woodside states that there are people who just have difficulty using computers. Mr. Hantman explains that a home network can be configured so that it can't be seen. Ms. O'Connor refers to previous discussions that she believed stated that the ACO typed her reports and sent them to the Police Dept for input into IMC. It was clarified that was not the process, it was a proposed solution. Scott states that he can't justify the ACO budget increasing \$23,000 and would suggest that if the budget is accurate, it should be addressed at the Deliberative Session or as a Warrant Article. Scott asks to call the questions. Shawn calls the question and asks for a vote on his motion. The vote is 3-yes, 1- no, 1- abstention. Dottie voted no. Sheila abstained as she is the current ACO.

 **#4210.20 Animal Control is approved for \$8,189**

**Vote: 3-1-1.**

Sheila states that she also has a Warrant Article to add \$5000 to the previously established ACO vehicle account. Shawn states that he will add it to the other Warrant Articles for later discussion.

**#4611.10- Conservation Commission Update:** Kim has received the updated amount of the salary line for the #4611.10 Conservation Commission budget. The updated salary will be \$1,225. She notes that this "will adjust itself with the raise" and there is no impact on the previously approved budget amount. Shawn confirms that the Conservation Commission budget will remain \$4,500, the amount approved at the October 11, 201 BOS meeting.

 **#4611.10- Conservation remains at the approved amount of \$4500. Approved by the BOS 10/11/21.**

### III. Old/New Business

**Signature File:** The BOS reviews and sign the payroll warrants in the Signature File.

**Minutes:** The BOS again reviews the minutes for the October 18, 2021 BOS public meeting. Sheila states that she "has not gotten to them and has other things to work on." Shawn asks if she thinks she can get to them by the next BOS meeting. Sheila responds that she "thinks it's a moot decision Shawn, as she has other papers to be working on as well." Shawn notes that most of the "inaudible" have her name on them and trying to infer what she said through her mask.... She states "for the Minute-Taker; Our words do not need to be verbatim and that's basically what we're having done for our minutes. In the future, if she's having problems trying to understand, she doesn't need to do word-by-word of what everyone is saying." Shawn agrees, but notes that most of the "inaudible" are Sheila's. Shawn states that he wants a clean copy for approval, either write in the "inaudible" or strike the statements from the minutes. The minutes are tabled for further review on November 15.

The BOS review the minutes for the October 25, 2021 BOS public meeting. Scott notes that on Line #88 "Lisa Stittle" should read "Lisa Stith". Sheila motions to accept the minutes for the October 25, 2021, BOS public meeting as corrected. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

**ARPA Grant Updates:** Shawn asks if Kim has received any estimates of the employee hours that were worked during COVID. Kim states that she still does not have all the departments yet, and provides the BOS with the information

that she has received. Shawn asks the BOS to review that information. He asks Kim to input that information into a spreadsheet to make it easier for the BOS to review and make any changes. Kim notes that she still needs the information on the employee hours from the Treasury, Highway, and Finance depts. She notes that these are “people who haven’t been here.” Sheila notes that she also has not submitted her hours worked as the ACO. Mr. Hantman asks if Kim has a copy of the camera operators’ hours. She states that she has asked for them, but hasn’t received them yet and expresses her concern that despite repeated requests, she is not getting responses. Scott suggests the BOS set a deadline for this information and when the BOS attaches a dollar value to the hours, those who have not responded will not receive premium pay. Mr. Hantman notes that he does not have any records of the camera operators’ hours. Their timesheets are simply turned in for payment. Scott agrees the BOS should be able to get that information “internally”. He reminds the BOS that they were looking for an approximate number of hours. Shawn notes there is more work to do.

**Scanning Update:** Shawn states that they have identified a couple of other companies that do this work and are in the process of getting updated quotes from them so the BOS can do “comparable bidding.” Sheila notes the need for bids will be required for all the proposals.

Kim states that a department asked if the BOS would consider “premium pay” for prior employees if they worked for Danville during the COVID pandemic, but have since left. Shawn states that the BOS will deal with that at the board level later. He notes that his opinion is that if they have left, they have left and have no claim on any “premium pay”. Scott states that would make it difficult and that in business, they would not give such bonuses as “merit/premium pay,” etc. retroactively to past employees. Steve agrees but asks about employees who have retired. He notes that he feels it would unfair to exclude them. Scott notes that on one hand, he agrees with Steve, but on the other hand, in business, a retiree is still not an employee. He states that he believes the BOS needs to establish clear boundaries on this issue. Shawn states the BOS is willing to listen if there are extraordinary circumstances.



**Warrant Article Request:** Sheila states that now that the Town has completed its property re-evaluation process, she would like the BOS to do a Warrant Article to modify the elderly tax exemption. She notes the last time an adjustment was made was in 2016. Sheila explains that she reached out to Fred Smith (Assessor) and reviewed the discussion of when the elderly tax exemption was changed in 2016. She notes that change was made on the recommendation of the BOS to adjust the values accordingly due to the increase in the property evaluations. The overall increase in the Town’s property evaluations was an increase of approximately 30%. Sheila states that she has calculated the percentage for the different age groups and gives the following example: Ages 65-74: property values were \$73,865 and increased to \$96,000. She notes that she has broken down this information and provides it to the BOS. Shawn states that this was a Warrant Article that he would get to eventually. Sheila states that she has also increased the income limits for the exemption. After talking with Mr. Smith, she is suggesting to increase the income limits by 5% based on the rate of inflation. She reiterates that she would like to bring this issue forward on the ballot this year. Shawn notes this change would try to keep the same ratio of the evaluation assessment to the dollar amount of the exemption, keeping the same relative value. Shawn states that he will review Sheila’s numbers and recommends that the BOS support this. He thanks Sheila for bringing this issue forward.

**2022 Rabies Clinic:** Sheila states that she would like to hold a rabies clinic on April 30, 2022, at the Community Center. She states that she has already lined up a veterinarian for that date. Shawn states that he would like to have that as a “separate discussion” because the Police Dept. has been doing it over the years. Dottie notes that during a previous BOS discussion she thought they (the BOS) “were going to let her do it the next time and the only reason the BOS didn’t was because the one by the Police Dept. was already scheduled.”<sup>ii</sup> Shawn asks that this issue be put on the BOS agenda in two (2) weeks.

Shawn reads the Town Announcements listed below. He notes that the next BOS meeting will be on Monday, November 15 at 7:00 PM. The Public Hearing to approve the ARPA grant funds will be the first item on the agenda. The budgets to be reviewed at that meeting are the Library, Insurance (Liability and Workman’s Comp), Advertising, and Regional Associations.

#### IV. Town Announcements

##### Calendar

-  **November 15- Monday:** Public Hearing to approve the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) Grant funds of \$476,966. of which the Town has currently received \$238,483.01 at 7:00 PM at the Town Hall
-  **November 15- Monday:** BOS meeting, immediately following the Public Hearing at the Town Hall. Budgets to be reviewed are the Library, Insurance (Liability and Workman's Comp), Advertising, and Regional Associations.

**Hazardous Mitigation Plan meetings will be held on Wednesdays, via ZOOM from 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM  
On Nov. 17, Dec. 1, and Dec. 15.**

There being no further items to discuss Shawn adjourns the meeting at 8:45 PM

Minutes derived by video provided on the Town of Danville website.

Respectfully Submitted  
Deborah A. Christie

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<sup>i</sup> Shawn states that the BOS has received a request from Eversource for access off Meadowlark Lane to clear vegetation and cut trees. Scott asks to be updated on the issues with Eversource. Shawn gives a brief review of Eversource's previous request for access that was granted by the BOS with the condition that Eversource would enter into negotiations with the BOS to purchase a permanent easement. However, once Eversource completed their project, they no longer participated in those negotiations. The consensus of the BOS at that time was that they would no longer honor access requests from Eversource.

Sheila disagrees with Shawn's stance on the issue, stating the Eversource access request is for line maintenance. There is further discussion of the earlier process and the failure to reach an agreement. Shawn notes that Eversource always has a right-of-way to their lines and that access requests are simply a less expensive route for them. Sheila confirms that there is another way for Eversource to access its lines. Steve motions to deny the request for access from Eversource. Second by Shawn. Vote is unanimous (5-0). **Town of Danville, NH Board of Selectmen's Minutes September 20, 2021.** Online at [www.townofdanville.org](http://www.townofdanville.org). November 1, 2021.

<sup>ii</sup> **Rabies Clinic:** Shawn notes the Police Dept. has requested dates for a Rabies Clinic. Kim explains they have requested Saturday, April 10, 10:00AM-1:00PM at the Safety Complex. Dottie asks why the Police Dept. is doing the rabies clinic, noting that she thinks the Animal Control Officer (ACO) should be doing that. Shawn states that the Police Dept. has been doing this the entire time. Sheila disagrees. Dottie notes years ago the ACO did it, but once things got "ugly" the Police Dept. took that over and insisted on doing it. Dottie states that she would like that event to go back to the ACO with the proceeds to go into Welfare or the General Fund. Shawn responds that he's "up for keeping a well-oiled machine that has been working and working very well." He notes that he's "up for keeping it the way it is and having the Police Dept. do it." Dottie disagrees. Steve asks where the proceeds go if the Police Dept. does it. Sheila states they were putting the funds in their Police Association, then the funds went to Recreation. Shawn explains the funds paid for movie nights, etc. Dottie notes that she "just thought it would be a good thing." Sheila states that "it just seems funny to me that they request to do an ACO issue when they don't even want to help with Animal Control at all. Yet they want to participate and do something that they have no clue." Shawn admonishes Sheila "that's a pretty harsh statement... 'have no clue'". Shawn notes that he has participated multiple times and "that rabies clinic is run like a well-oiled machine." Sheila responds that "if you know what you're doing, they all do." Sheila states that she "would like to have the rabies clinic back and have the funds go into Welfare." Shawn states that he disagrees and will be voting accordingly. Shawn motions for the Police Dept. to move forward with the rabies clinic as they have already outlined on April 10. Steve seconds for discussion.

Dr. Farah asks if the clinic has been advertised. Sheila states it has not. Steve asks Sheila where she would hold her clinic. She points and states "right there" and if not, she could hold it outside at the Community Center. Steve confirms the funds would go to Welfare. Shawn clarifies with Sheila that she is directing the funds to Town Welfare. Shawn notes it will be important because the years that she did it, the funds went into "her fund". Sheila states that "her fund" is no different than the Police Association. Shawn states the Police Association benefits the Town. Sheila responds that her "Association ( Danville Rainbow Association) also benefits the Town, people with...." Shawn responds "at least according to you. Your documents that you have for your non-profit are not well descriptive and you do not really make...." Sheila states that "I don't have to give you...." Shawn agrees. Sheila explains "You and another officer went through Town Counsel to get my bank statements". She tells Shawn not to deny it.

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Sheila states “I blacked out names because it’s none of your business who requests information off my Rainbow Association and Precious Paws. But anyways, I want it (the proceeds) to go to Town Welfare.”

Dr. Farah asks if the Police Dept. would have an issue if the proceeds go to the Town Welfare Dept. Shawn states the Police Dept. is planning on holding it, they’ve been holding it “how many years now”. Sheila states “just a couple.” Shawn asks “when was the last time you organized one (a rabies clinic) for the Town of Danville. You wouldn’t even attend it or help promote it. You even held other ones on the same day, just so you could have conflicts.” Sheila states “that wasn’t true.” Sheila asks Steve what the motion was. Steve explains that he seconded Shawn’s motion so the BOS could discuss it.

Steve asks Sheila if she had a “tentative date, have you thought about this, or is this a knee-jerk reaction to the Police.” Sheila responds “no”. Shawn asks what she has lined up for dates. Sheila states that she is not going to line up any dates until she’s going to do it. Shawn responds “so you don’t even know if you can get it.” Shawn notes that she has no dates and would be starting at “ground zero” if she was to win her motion. Sheila notes that all she would need to do would be to get the veterinarian. Shawn asks if Sheila knows if it conflicts with any other activities at the Safety Complex. Dottie notes Sheila would have to check with Kim about what’s going on at the Safety Complex. Steve states that Kim doesn’t run the Safety Complex. Dottie apologizes. Kim notes she schedules the Community Center. Dottie clarifies that is she meant. Dr. Farah confirms that the Police Dept. already has a veterinarian lined up and asks to call the question. Shawn calls for a vote. The vote is 3-yes (Shawn, Steve, Dr. Farah) and 2- no (Sheila and Dottie) (3-2-0). Motion passes. The Police Dept will be holding a rabies clinic on April 10, 10:00AM-1:00PM at the Safety Complex.

Dr. Farah notes that she’s not against the ACO running the rabies clinic, but the Police Dept. had the veterinarian already lined up. She suggests that next year, the ACO gets things straightened out sooner and come to the BOS. Sheila asks if the proceeds were going to Town Welfare. Dr. Farah notes the motions did not dictate where the proceeds would go. Sheila motions that the funds raised by the rabies clinic go to the Town Welfare Dept. Second by Dottie. Vote is 3-yes (Dr. Farah, Dottie, and Sheila) and 2- no (Shawn and Steve). (3-2-0). Motion passes. The proceeds from the rabies clinic will go to the Town Welfare Dept. **Town of Danville NH Board of Selectmen’s Minutes March 22, 2021.** Online at [www.townofdanville.org](http://www.townofdanville.org). November 1, 2021.