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Town of Danville  
Board of Selectmen  
Monday, January 04, 2023  
7:00 PM

7:00 PM

Meeting is Video-Recorded

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

Others Present: Kimberly Burnham, Selectmen Administrator; Nicole Armata, Danville Youth League

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. Delegate Session**

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

**Softball Field Warrant:** Dennis states that Nicole Armata is present to support one of the warrants he has put together for the softball field and requests permission to discuss the item out of order to accommodate people who are not on the board but are attending the meeting. Dennis has put together a proposed Warrant article for the new softball field. He provides a copy of the Warrant to the BOS and notes it’s the last one on the page. The Warrant is as follows:

*“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to construct a new softball field for youth athletics. The Danville youth league will match a minimum of 50%, \$12,500 from the League’s donation-based fundraising to contribute to the overall effort.”*

Dennis notes that this is just a first-draft proposal. Shawn asked if the cost of the project is \$25,000. Dennis states that Mr. Seaver’s (Road Agent) estimate is based on quotes that he received and is in the ballpark of \$25k. He notes that the BOS needs to bear in mind that is based on the minimum amount of work needed to get the field up and going. He notes that they were discussing Colby Field at the time. These costs included skimming the field, getting backstops and the dugout, and a portable fence. Dennis explains that the League does not need a permanent fence and is willing to bring a portable fence in and out.

Shawn expresses his concern that the only item on the Warrant article is the amount that he is looking to raise and appropriate. The actual amount that he is looking to appropriate is only \$12,500 because the Youth League is offering to pay the other half for a total of \$12,500. Dennis explains that he is asking the Town to raise the \$25k by the town and then the Youth League will match one-half of that amount to bring it to a total of \$37,500. He states that he believes that \$37,500 is closer to what it is really going to cost and it was his intent to have that flexibility. Dennis states the with a little bit more money the League could make the new field an attractive location and more accessible for little league or little guys and girls, as well as being able to construct the field for multiple uses. Ms. Amata explains that “the softball field can also be used for a baseball field with a portable mount.” Shawn explains the BOS will move the Warrant article forward and put it on the ballot for a vote. Before that it will go to the Deliberative Session where it can be modified.

Sheila asks who will maintain the new field when it’s done. Dennis states it will be maintained by the same process as for Goldewaite Park. Ms. Amata states the league and the town will collectively maintain the field and there is a process in place to put those responsibilities in writing for next year. Sheila asks how much money has already been saved.

Ms. Amata states almost all of the money has been raised. She explains that the Youth League has been waiting a long time for a location. They are currently doing fundraisers and have two more fundraisers planned before the season begins. There are other fundraisers in place as well. Dennis confirms with Ms. Amata that the League has more than \$12,500 in its funds.

Sheila expresses her concern the Warrant article may fail due to “the economy and taxes coming down the road for the School may cause this to fail,” and that she “doesn’t think things look good for getting passed for the town.” She suggests that if the Youth League has the money....” Ms. Amata states that the League “has the part that they would be contributing and that has taken 5 years to raise this much money. The League would like their own field, but it doesn’t own land anywhere. They need the Town’s help for the land/field. Sheila asks if there is a field they can convert. Ms. Amata states Goldwaite has space around the field on the outside and currently that is the only space the League uses. Goldwaite has the 1670 ballfield and outside that fence, there is plenty of space to put a softball field. Ms. Amata states that from her perspective, the League would prefer that location because she currently maintains the field beyond the town mowing.

Sheila asks about a current field. Dennis states there is the field at Colby that has a soccer field and outside of that field there is a grown over field that was a baseball field in the past. Ms. Amata states she believes that the field was “grassed over for a soccer field.” Dennis states that he believes there is space there that can be used and he didn’t want to specify a location in the Warrant article because the League doesn’t know where that field may be yet. Sheila asks what field are they using now and if that can be converted. Dennis states the Baptist church allows the Youth League to use their field and they have been excellent to work with. Sheila explains that there was a deal made when the church moved there, they would allow the community to use certain parts of the land, if you use it for softball now why not continue, and what would happen to that field? Dennis states when the new one is constructed that one would not be used because that field has issues, it is very hard and it floods with 2-3 inches of water every spring. This has caused them to cancel all home games in the past and only have away games. Sheila asks if that is the problem can the money be put towards that to repair it?

Ms. Amata states they have asked the church that but they are not able to help and can not allow the Town to help because it is not Town property. This leaves maintenance and repairs to the parents, coaches, and kids. They are not able to remove the water or excavate the field, so the Church allows them to use it and do basic upkeep but that’s it. Sheila states that she has seen the Town contractor mowing that field. It is clarified that the Church pays for that service, not the Town. Sheila states the Youth League can still use it.

Dennis states he is asking for a Town field that can be in the League’s control, not a borrowed field that is stipulated not to be played on during certain times on certain days. He explains that the League knows that when spring comes and the snow melts, the teams can’t play right away and end up in the gym with whiffle balls. He also makes the point that this year is the first year that the Danville League Youth Girls 10U Softball team won a championship and that shows a lot of dedication, not to mention it is the first championship Danville has seen. Ms. Amata states that the Youth League has now added 6U to the League so girls can now enter their softball careers in softball. Ms. Amata states because of that championship more girls want to play and that opens up a whole new age category and more teams. Even if we do have basic use of the church field, we may potentially need 2 fields. Dennis states as of right now we have enough players for 5-6 teams that will need to have games and practices scheduled.

Shawn asks if there are no more questions and if they can make a motion to move Dennis’ Warrant article forward. Steve makes the motion. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0). Steve motions that the Warrant article for the Softball Field be recommended by the BOS. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

*“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to construct a new softball field for youth athletics. The Danville youth league will match a minimum of 50%, \$12,500 from the League’s donation-based fundraising contribute to the overall effort.”*

**Moved Forward by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

As no more members of the public wish to speak, Shawn closes the Delegate session at 7:15 PM.

## II. Budgets

**4156.90- Personnel Budget:** Kim reminds the BOS that they approved \$25,000 for this line. Shawn reminds the board this was to cover a Family plan in case an employee needs to change their insurance. Kim states that the Unemployment and Workman's Comp insurances were not included in that budget. She explains that the charges for Unemployment insurance costs are based on previous claims. Sheila motions to approve the #4155.90- Personnel budget for \$61,000. Second by Dottie. Vote is 4 yes, 0- no, 1- abstention (4-0-1) Dennis is not present for the vote.

✚ **#4155.90- Personnel budget is approved for \$61,000**

**4130.10- Executive Budget:** Kim explains that when she submitted the budget for Government Buildings, she accidentally omitted the FICA. The correct amount for that line is \$77,740 including FICA. Sheila states that BudCom noticed this information was missing at last night's meeting. Dottie motions to approve #4194.10 Government Buildings' correct budget for \$77,740. Second by Sheila. Vote is 4-yes, 0-no, 1-abstention (4-0-1). Dennis is not present for the vote.

✚ **#4194.10- Government Buildings corrected budget is approved for \$77,740.**

**#4196.10- Property, Liability, Cyber Crime, etc. Insurance:** Kim briefly explains these costs. Dottie motions to approve #4196.10- Property and other Insurances budget for \$65,745. Second by Sheila. Sheila confirms these costs are all by contract. Shawn notes these are all updated policies. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

✚ **#4196.10- Property Liability, Cyber Crime, and other Insurances budget is approved for \$65,745.**

**#4130.10- Selectmen's Budget:** Shawn reminds the BOS of their previous discussions for serval of these lines and their decision to level fund these lines at the current rates. Sheila confirms that BOS had also added the 6% COLA increase to those lines. Dottie motions to approve #4130.10- Selectmen's budget for \$233,302. Second by Sheila. Vote is 4-yes, 1-no, 0- abstentions (4-1-0). Shawn voted no.

✚ **#4130.10- Selectmen's Budget is approved for \$233,302**

Shawn confirms that this completes the BOS review of all the Town's budgets.

**Tax Information:** Kim passes out a tax document for the BOS to review. Dottie reads the following:

The year's tax line is \$270,050. The Excavation taxes are \$200,000. Tax Penalties are \$10,000. Shawn states that the information is the year-to-date closing numbers. The BOS needs to take these numbers and the income savings that they have including the different accounts and plug them into a form that has been previously used. He states these numbers need to be put into a spreadsheet and summed up. Shawn explains that one of the things the BOS evaluates is looking at the year-to-date number. He notes this report will be accurate because the Town has closed the FY22 budget. He explains the BOS needs to determine if this is an anomaly because they don't want to estimate revenue that is a one-time thing. Shawn notes that this information was last minute and asks Kim to put it in its correct format and bring it back to the BOS next week.

## III. Agenda

**Highway Snow Contract:** Dennis states that he spoke with Mr. Seaver after he left tonight's meeting and that Mr. Seaver wants to go with a guarantee of 40 hours per week for the snow plowers' contract. Dennis notes the conversation was all out of context, but that Mr. Seaver could not stay for tonight's meeting. Shawn reminds the BOS that they were looking to guarantee the snow plowers a minimum salary. At 40 hours per week, this is a guarantee of \$5000 for the season. Shawn states that he can support that number and if at the end of the season, a snow plower has not made that amount, the Town will pay them the difference. Shawn reiterates this reconciliation would take place at the end of the season, and this way the BOS will not have to worry about chasing anyone because they were paid in advance but did not provide any services.

Steve agrees with the new amount of \$5000 and of waiting until the end of the season to settle up. There is a brief discussion and the BOS agrees with this. Shawn motions that the snow plow drivers that have been selected will be paid from the Winter Maintenance budget. The part-time snow plowers will be guaranteed a minimum of \$5000 for the contract season and this amount will be made whole at the end of the season. Second by Sheila. Vote is 4-yes, 0-no, 1-abstention (4-0-1). Steve abstains.

**Town Election Hours:** Shawn reminds the BOS that this is for Town Meeting. Sheila clarifies that this is for the Town Elections, not for the Deliberative Session. Dennis confirms that it is all part of Town Meeting: Part 1 is the Deliberative Session and Part 2 is the Elections. After a brief discussion, Sheila confirms the BOS is discussing the Elections on March 14, 2023, as Voting Day. She suggests the hours should be 8:00 AM- 8:00 PM. Shawn states that the Town Voting Day hours are usually 8:00 AM- 7:00 PM. Sheila notes there was a Citizen's Petition that passed, but it did not specify which elections.<sup>i</sup> Shawn states that he's okay with the hours of 8:00 AM- 8:00 PM. Dennis agrees. Shawn confirms the consensus of the BOS is that Town Elections will be held on Tuesday, March 14, 2023, from 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM.

**Default Budget:** Sheila states that the FY23 Default budget is "semi-done." She states that she has sent it to Kim. Kim will forward it to the BOS. Shawn asks that it be put on next week's agenda for BOS approval.

**Historic Buildings Insurance:** Kim explains that she had a company that specializes in historic buildings appraise the buildings, but not the contents. Their values were completely different than what the BOS have previously discussed. Kim confirms with Dottie that the BOS valuations were lower. Kim explains that the only thing the BOS can prove is the value of the buildings based on the Town's assessment because the BOS are not insurance adjusters or appraisers. She states that based on the current policy, the Town's historic buildings are undervalued. The company she spoke to did take the time to come out and give her the proposal. Kim explains that she was trying to get an answer to binding coverage, because the Town is 1:1 and has to accept what it has with Travelers. She notes that she did send an email to Ben at American National Insurance that the quote was tentative. Kim explains the BOS can either accept the policy based only on the numbers that they feel the buildings are appraised for. Shawn confirms that this is not Traveler Insurance, but is the insurance company that specializes in Historic Buildings. Sheila confirms that would mean the Town would have two (2) insurance policies, one with Travelers and one for the historic buildings with this other company.

Kim explains that the BOS would have to put an outside security system in place in order to bind with this second company. She stated she did talk to International Signal. The representative went out and looked and as they are historical buildings, stated that International Signal cannot touch them. They cannot add solar as it is very expensive and would have to go on a pole. The system would still need electricity because of all the trees and an Internet service drop from Comcast to broadcast the signal. Kim suggests that the BOS takes the policy in place because they will not be able to have the required security system.

Steve asked what the buildings are valued at. Kim stated the quote was very close with the addition of 1.5% increase that was included. She believes the policy is very close in numbers with the replacement value for the Town Hall. The Olde Meeting House, the Stage Coach Stop, and the Red Schoolhouse continue to be underinsured. Dottie states she believes there is a power source outside the Olde Meeting House that was installed for the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration and the Town could connect to that power. Kim explains that they would still have to put solar on the Stage Coach Stop. Kim notes the bigger concern is the Old Stage Coach Stop because of all the contents in that building. Steve, Dennis, and Shawn state their bigger concern is the Olde Meeting House vs the Stage Coach Stop. Kim is concerned with vandalism and spray paint damage. Steve expresses his concern about a lightning strike, noting the building is "a tinderbox." At least if there was security on the building, the Fire Dept. would receive notification of a strike and that would be key (to saving the building.) Sheila thinks there is a lightning rod on the Olde Meeting House. Shawn wants more detail and to possibly find a way to add it to the budget. He expresses his concern that the Town has been insuring these historic buildings under "false pretenses of their value. Some of them are a little bit accurate, and some of them are undervalued." He feels the BOS should take some time to understand the issue. He states the BOS also needs more information to ensure that they don't become insurance poor.

Sheila expresses her concern that if the insurance is not kept up and something happens “you get what you get.” Shawn states that insurance companies increase their charges to keep up with the value of the house and the contents for replacement. He notes there is a difference in that with private property because the land and foundation are already there. Shawn reiterates that the BOS needs to do more analysis to come up with a realistic value and bring it back to the table. Sheila questions if the BOS has to stay with the current policy or if they can change it. Kim explains that once the BOS buys a policy, it is a contract for the year. Kim confirms for Dennis that the BOS can increase their policy with Travelers, but cannot decrease it. Shawn reiterates that he just wants the BOS to have better information so they can make a decision for FY23, or in the best case, have that information to know what direction to go in FY24. Dennis asks if the BOS has to accept the number Traveler provides.

Kim explains it is based on the current assessment with a 1.5% increase, Travelers did not agree so she has requested a field appraiser to come out and review the buildings. If the Historic Buildings insurance is no longer part of the discussion, she has to accept the coverage based on Traveler’s appraisals right now. Shawn confirms that this is what the Town has had in the past, so it is no worse off than before. Shawn tables the discussion pending further information.

#### **IV. Warrant articles (2023)**

**New Police Station Warrant article:** Dennis presents his first draft of a Warrant article to use the funds from the sale of 599 Main St. to fund the new Police Station.

*“To see if the Town of Danville will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Twenty Thousand, Three Hundred Fifty Dollars and 15/100 (\$420,350.15) to be added to the New Police Station Capital Reserve, previously established (WA 2019-19), with said funds to come from the unassigned fund balance.”*

Dennis explains that this is a first draft and is missing components. He states that he is just putting the wording out there and there is clearly a need to also do something with the Town Hall building as well. Sheila has looked into other locations. He suggests that the BOS also carve out some of the money from the sale of 599 Main St. to focus on what could be done at the Town Hall. He notes that he has put a second Warrant together for that. Shawn suggests starting the discussion with the Warrant article for the new Police Dept.

Shawn confirms that one change that Dennis is suggesting is using only \$300,000 of the profit from the sale of 599 Main St. for the Police Dept. rather than the full amount. Shawn explains that everybody he’s talked to has stated that they want that money to go to the new Police Station. Shawn states that starting this way may not be the best way to go with it, but if that’s what everybody’s consensus on it.... Shawn notes that it could change by putting forward and discussing it at the Deliberative Session. The funds will be coming from the unassigned funds balance because that’s where all that money from the sale of 599 Main St. has been placed. Sheila states she thought it went into the General Fund. Shawn explains that at the end, all that money will go into that fund as unanticipated revenue and at the end, we have a big dollar amount in the Unreserved Fund balance that can be taken out, just like when the BOS uses it to reduce taxes.

Sheila, states she did some homework, she spoke to the NH Municipal and she spoke to the NHDRA. If the BOS takes the money in the fund right now and give it back to the taxpayers, that action does not need to go to a vote. The BOS can do that when they set the tax rate. However, if the BOS take this money and wants it to go to a different specific purpose, that action needs to go to a Town vote. Shawn explains that is the purpose of the Warrant article. Dennis explains that if the Warrant doesn’t pass, the money will automatically go into the Unreserved Fund balance.

Sheila states that she was looking to have this money go back to the taxpayer and the reason being.... She agrees the Police Dept needs a new police station and there are other needs for the Town Hall as well. However, she feels that “the Town has been working on 599 Main St. for eleven (11) years. It has been working on it and the taxpayers have footed the bill for all this time.” Shawn states that the taxpayer foots every bill. Sheila states that “for this particular bill, this money should be coming back to the people in their taxes, this is money that was taken out and is money that should be coming back to the taxpayers.”

Steve states it is (coming back to the taxpayers) in a roundabout way. Sheila expresses her concern about what will happen if the FY23 budget passes, and that she believes things aren't going to pass. Steve states whether the Town put all these funds toward the new Police Station, or splits it up and gives the Police the majority and some between the Fire and Highway Depts., the BOS is still saving the taxpayer money. Dennis agrees, noting these are needs that need to be paid through taxes and this (the new Police Station) is just one specific need.

Sheila states that with all the talk about the new Police Station and "the Police Dept hasn't even helped themselves." She continues that "all the towns around us, Hampstead, Kingston, Sandown, Kensington; all these departments worked very diligently to get their new stations. They worked hard to sell their (new stations) to their towns. That is not happening." Sheila reiterates that the Police Dept. is not helping themselves.

Dennis agrees this is true. He explains that this year he was put in charge of it and in all honesty the nature of this position (as a BOS member) and the work of that job in addition to his full-time job and his family was more than he anticipated. Dennis explains that he "started to look into the police station planning and he wanted to know more of what is needed and what he was doing before he could get into a place for a clear direction." He admits that didn't happen. S

Sheila expresses her concern that the Police Dept. should be trying to help themselves. Dennis explains that in 2023 there will be a committee that will be meeting and members will have assignments based on their expertise so that in 2023 they will have a design plan, communication and marketing, and an understanding for voting in March 2024. This Warrant article is just talking about being able to add these additional dollars to the funds that exist in the New Police Station Capitol Reserve Fund, approximately \$105,000. He explains that the BOS is asking to add \$300,000 to that amount and also to get authorization to spend some of that money in 2023 as part of our planning and design process. When the committee comes up with a final number, that will be offset by the amount of money in the Capital Reserve Fund. Dennis states that he is actively in conversations with our state rep, Chris Pappas and his office, our Executive Counselor, and our representative at the State House. He explains that there are some things in place where (the building committee) will be applying for money through some grant situations and some federal earmark situations. Dennis states that he is taking the lead on that process. Dennis states that he and Police Chief Wade Parsons has a meeting with Chris Pappas next week. Dennis reassures the BOS that there is "absolutely action and he would ultimately like to get the federal government to pay for the whole thing so the Town can give the money back to the taxpayers.

Steve states that with a couple of Warrant articles, he believes "the dance studio was a gift from heaven and would love to see a Warrant article go to the town ballot for the dance studio" Steve states that after a conversation a couple of weeks ago, he spoke to Mr. Ed Delorey and he is not coming down on his price. Steve suggests that the Town use financing or use some of the funds from 599 Main St. He states that he recalls previous discussions that those funds would be dispersed between the Highway, Fire, and Police Depts., with the Police getting the majority of the funds. He notes that "if the BOS is going to ask for \$800,000 (to purchase the dance studio) and there is currently \$125,000 in Capitol Reserve and at least \$200,000 or \$250,000 from the other, that is almost one-half of that money in the accounts now. So, we are only looking for an additional \$400,000 (to purchase the dance studio.)

Sheila expresses her concern that if the Town was to purchase that building, it would be purchasing the building for well over what it is worth. Her second concern is what it will cost to renovate the building, noting that it is one great big open building. Dennis states the building is almost 4000 square feet. Steve states that the amount of space can't be built for the asking sale price in today market.

Dennis states the building also has a second floor in the room where they do the very high ariels that could be used for storage. Steve notes that to get by, the Town could go to the state surplus and get cubicles to set up in the building. He states the Town needs "to think outside the box and can't hire people to do everything in these small towns." Steve explains that when the building next door was built ( the Safety Complex) the Fire Association paid to finish the first floor where the current Police Station is and paid to finish the second floor with a lot of volunteer labor. Sheila states that she "understands now, and didn't before, that the Fire Association's mission statement is to do things for the Town." Steve notes that the Fire Association does this.

Dennis thinks the location is a good location and the building is ready to be made into whatever the Town wants it to be. He notes that some parking adjustments need to be made. The Police Dept is willing to pick up all their things “ including the dust under the copy machine and forego buying anything new and just get into a new space.” Sheila states that she finds that to be an interesting conversation, noting that has not been part of previous conversations with Chief Parsons. Dennis states that Chief Parsons is very flexible at this point.

Dennis states that from his perspective, he’s not so sure that the building necessarily needs to be a new Police Station, it could be the new Town Hall. It’s an empty building, the property is ideal, the while value is too high based on the market eight (8) months ago, the market is much different now and will get worse. Steve notes that the BOS only has one opportunity each year to do this kind of stuff. Dennis states he has no issue putting together a Town Warrant to ask to purchase that building, noting it would give the Police Dept. an option. Sheila expresses her concern with knowing the cost, if the Town have to buy it for \$800,000. Dennis states that he doesn’t agree that they should buy the building at that price. Sheila asks what it will cost to do what needs to be done to make the building usable.

Dennis explains they would need to hire someone to design a “minimal inside” but while it needs to be updated inside, it does not need to be updated to a brand-new space, which is what is needed today. Sheila questions the septic and the wetlands outback. Dennis confirms that the septic is on the side of the building and can be enclosed in a concrete case that will allow it to be driven over. Dennis states that they have done the legwork and he has been out there with the Planning and Zoning people, they have walked it and talked about it... The issue is the seller doesn’t want to move off the \$800,000 sale price.

Sheila states this is going to cost \$800k plus whatever it's going to cost (to update the building) and she believes it will cost more than \$200K to renovate it. Steve admits this project is a double edge sword. If the Fire Dept gets the first-floor offices, they would make it ADA compliant in the receptionist area for the public to get permits. Upstairs, the Fire Dept would have a media room and there is additional room for personnel or for bunk rooms if the Fire Dept. ever went to 24-hour coverage. There is a shower and a kitchen. The fire dept would not need anything in the next 20 years if it had access to the first floor. Steve explains the history of why the Police Station is in the Safety Complex. In 1987 the Fire Dept and the Fire Association funded the process of getting the building. The Police Chief at the time asked the Fire Chief if he could have the first floor for the next 5 years. Sheila notes that it was a gentlemen’s agreement. Steve agrees, noting there’s nothing in writing and it is still a town-owned building; but the Fire Dept and the Fire Association put in all the volunteer labor and all the funds from the Fire Association to finish that building. Sheila states that is what the Fire Association is for.

Steve asks if Sheila knows where the Association funds came from. Steve states those funds “came from the Community Center where they used to host things and rent the hall. It also included volunteer labor. There was a lot of sweat off people's backs.” Steve reiterates that he thinks “it’s a gift at \$800K and the Police Dept. could live with it for a year with their stuff and cubicles. It’s still ten times better than what they have.” Dennis agrees, noting it’s an open, trussed building with so much possibility. He agrees that the Police Dept. won’t need anything other than a moving company and it’s simply a switch from one location to the next and Chief Parsons likes the idea. Dennis notes they would like more land space for a car impound lot or to do outside training, etc. but those are things that are wants more than needs. He states the opportunity has been presented and he would back Steve and put it to a vote.

Sheila expresses her concern that they would just move the Police Station out of one building to another building and this is just on a temporary basis. Dennis disagrees and notes that if the Town move them (the Police Dept.), it will be the final location and would free up space at the Fire Dept. Steve reiterates that it will allow the Fire Dept to stay in its space for the next 20 years without coming back to the board. He states “the building was built in 1987 and we are practical.” Dennis notes it took six (6) years and three (3) votes to pass to get that building and that he doesn’t see the Fire Dept outgrowing it. Steve states he wants to propose a Warrant article to purchase the building at \$800k and he feels it’s a good deal. The Town can add to it for expansion and there is enough room to follow all the codes. Dennis notes that the owner also owns the shop next door that he would be willing to sell.

Shawn states that this would be a separate Warrant article and he supports it. He notes that if it passes, the Town would be completely done with the issue and would have a new Police Station. Dennis agrees, noting that the building will still need to be painted and dressed up. Shawn explains that the Warrant article could specify that those costs could be expended from the New Police Station Capital Reserve Fund. The BOS would need to draft a separate Warrant article in order to do that.

Shawn asks the BOS which Warrant article they want to move forward; the one for \$300,000 for the New Police Station Capital Reserve Fund, or the one to purchase that building for \$800,000.

**Town Hall Capital Reserve Fund:** Dennis asks to read the second Warrant article he has proposed before the BOS decides on which Warrant article from the previous discussion is moved forward. The second Warrant article that he is proposing is to create a Town Hall Capital Reserve fund

*“To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve fund for the purpose of providing elevator access to the second floor and renovations to the second floor to provide new business offices and additional space for Town business.”*

Sheila states that the BOS tried to create a capital reserve fund for the Town Hall once before. Dennis states that’s where he got the idea. He notes that it was 6-7 years ago and was about \$50,000 to add the elevator. Shawn states the actual costs were about \$225,000. Dennis explains that he added \$120,000 and that was the balance from the \$420,000 profits from 599 Main St. minus the \$300,000 for the new Police Station. He explains that his idea was to utilize the second floor, which is a massive open space.

Shawn explains there are a whole lot of logistic issues with that part of the building. One issue is the lack of insulation and the other one is building codes. Shawn states the floor is sinking and according to a structural engineer a new subfloor and new walls would need to be installed. He states that he can’t support putting more weight and more stuff on the second floor. He would like to use the space but it’s not practical because it is an old building. Dennis confirms that Shawn does not believe the bones of the building would support this idea.

Dottie states there is a previous plan in the drawer and she can get that to Dennis. She states there was a study done and she likes the idea of putting more offices upstairs as long as there would be ADA access. She would rather utilize the building more than it is currently being used. Dennis states that perhaps with the paperwork and information from before, the BOS could get someone to tell it where the second floor would need to be shored up for a certain amount of people, desks, equipment, and furniture and to see what can and can’t be done. If it’s not a viable idea, then scratch it off the list. Sheila states some of the stuff is just not doable.

Sheila expresses her concern that “some things need to be looked at before a Warrant article is put forward.” She states that “if you put the article out there for the Town to vote on, there needs to be more information and there are no numbers to go with this Warrant article.” Dottie disagrees. She states all they are asking to do is to establish a capital reserve fund. If later on, it is not needed, it can be dissolved.

Dennis states he broke the Warrant article down into 2 pieces, one to establish the capital reserve fund and a second part to fund that capital reserve fund. Shawn explains that it can be put forward as one Warrant article to create the capital reserve fund and then fund it. Sheila notes that the Warrant article also needs to specify where the appropriated funds would be coming from, in this case, from the General Fund. Dennis explains that he was trying to provide the funding information around the sale of 599 Main St.

Dennis offers to re-work the wording on the Warrant article. Shawn suggests just getting the Warrant article on the Town Warrant and making the wording adjustments at the Deliberative Session. Shawn rereads the Warrant:



*“To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve fund for the purpose of providing elevator access to the second floor and renovations to the second floor to provide new business offices and additional space for Town business.”*

The second part of the Warrant article would read *“and to appropriate said fund in the sum of \$120k....”* Sheila states that the Warrant should say *“from the General Fund,”* otherwise the appropriations would come from taxes.

Steve expresses his concern that the BOS is “putting the cart before the horse about the dispersal of the funds from 599 Main St.” There is a discussion of how these Warrant articles would impact using the 599 Main St. funds for other departments. Steve states that he intended to try to defer the pump house and still go for a new truck this year. He states that if the Town didn’t have to appropriate any money, he thought they would be able to do that with zero impact on the taxpayers. Steve notes that he hasn’t confirmed it, but has heard that ARPA funds can be used for the new fire truck. He explains that he was going to ask for \$70k for the pump house, but would be willing to defer that request and put the \$70k towards the new truck. With what he currently has in the Fire Dept’s Capital Reserve fund, he would have \$500k and would only need to raise \$50k for a new tanker truck that would complete the Fire Dept. fleet for another twenty (20) years. Steve notes that if the Fire Dept gets its first floor and the truck, it won’t need to come to the Town for another 15-20 years. Sheila asks what the Fire Dept will do if they don’t get the first floor and what will they do with the equipment. Steve states they will live with what they have and the new truck is replacing an existing truck.

Sheila states Steve needs to find out if he can split the ARPA funds with other funds for the fire truck. Steve explains that if he can use the ARPA funds, and his portion of the 599 Main St. funds, that will cover the costs of the new truck. Dennis asks Steve that when he calls to ask if the ARPA funds can be used to split funding, if he will also ask if they can be used to cover the costs of an ADA elevator. Dennis notes that if ARPA funds could be used for that, it would free up approximately \$150K of the 599 Main St. money proposed for the Town Hall. Dennis states he will get the information together and see if the numbers work. He states the Police Station is a project that needs to be done and he believes the funds from the sale of 599 Main St. should be used for capital projects. Sheila disagrees and states that she doesn’t believe the Town should pay \$800K for a building that isn’t worth that (amount). Dennis asks what the impact of using the 599 Main St. funds to reduce the tax rate would be. Shawn explains the math. Sheila reiterates that it would reduce the tax rate. Shawn reminds her that it would do that for only for one year, then the money is gone and the tax rate goes back up.

Dennis reiterates that he will re-work and combine the two Warrant articles for the Town Hall and will reword the Warrant article for the new Police Station/ Purchase of the building. Shawn explains that in the Warrant articles, he needs to specify that the funds for that will come from the “unassigned fund balance” in order to use the funds from 599 Main St.

Shawn explains the BOS decides how much it will keep in the unassigned fund balance up to the 17% that the State allows. Shawn states it has not been decided for reduced taxes, the board has the discretion of how much to use of those unassigned funds. He notes that the Town is at the very low end of the amount the State allows them to keep those funds. The total intake of funds which includes the school and the town is approximately \$12 to \$15 million dollars and the Town can keep up to 17% of those revenues as unassigned funds. Shawn reiterates the Town keeps a very low balance in the “unassigned funds.” He notes that if the 599 Main St. funds are eventually moved to the “unassigned funds,” the BOS is not obligated to use all of those funds to lower the tax rate.

Sheila states that the BOS can use all of that \$400K to bring down the tax rate. Shawn explains that there is no guarantee that the BOS will vote to do that. He reminds the BOS that they did not use any unassigned funds to reduce the tax rate this year because there was a windfall in revenue from registrations this year and the tax rate was already significantly reduced without using any additional funds.

Shawn reiterates that if the \$400K from 599 Main St. is used to offset the tax rate, it will be approximately a \$1.00 reduction on the rate for one year. The taxpayers are going to have to raise and appropriate more than \$400K of taxpayer money to fund a new Police Station. He notes the taxpayers have already paid the taxes on 599 Main St.

and that \$400K is already there without any additional taxes. Sheila reiterates her concern that it makes no sense to put \$800k into a building that is going to cost more to renovate.

Shawn reminds her that the original Police Station Warrant article was for \$2M and the taxpayers wanted that cut down. The proposal to purchase the new building and use that as the new Police Station is only \$800K, plus perhaps an additional \$200K to renovate it, which is much less than the new Police Station that was originally proposed. He also reminds Sheila that she supported reducing the costs of the new Police Station and that now she is not supporting a proposal that reduces those costs even more. Sheila reiterates her concern that the building is being sold for more than it's worth. Shawn agrees that he has concerns with that part of it. Steve notes that houses are still selling close to \$600K+ in Danville and that while the market may have declined, it has not been that dramatic a decrease in sale prices.

Steve states that if Sheila goes forward with her proposal to use the \$400K to reduce taxes, he's still going forward with the Fire Dept. Warrant to purchase a new fire truck, but instead of expending money (from that \$400K), he will have to ask to "raise and appropriate" those funds which is an increase in the tax rate. He notes that he believes the Townspeople support public safety and that he was surprised by the number of people on social media that want and support a new Police Station.

Dennis states he's happy that the Townspeople are supporting the new Police Station but expresses his concern that they don't know all the other things that need to be done. The Police Dept is the most visible and they may not understand there are issues that the Town Hall faces.

Shawn confirms how the Warrant articles they have discussed will be reworded and reiterates that they will need to state that they will be funded from the "unassigned fund balance" to use the 599 Main St. funds.

Steve asks Dennis if there is already a Town Hall reserve fund established. Dennis states that he could not find one in the books, so his Warrant article would establish one and then fund it. There is a non-capital reserve fund for infrastructure, but his Warrant article would be more specific. There is a discussion about the best way to word the Warrant articles so that any funds can be used throughout the Town Hall in case it is not possible to use the second floor as hoped. Sheila states that because the Town Hall is on the Historic Register it doesn't have to be accessible. Dennis asks if that prohibits them from making changes to the building. Dottie suggests he review the study for more information.

Shawn reiterates that the Warrant articles will be reworked and come back to the BOS for another review.

**Veteran's Property Tax Credit:** Shawn reads the following proposed Warrant article: *Veterans' Property Tax Credit:* "Shall the Town of Danville vote to maintain the Veterans' and the All-Veterans' Property Tax Credits in the amount of \$750 per year (as previously adopted by the Town under the provisions of RSA 72:27-a)? If adopted, it is with the understanding that the eligibility for the credit has been expanded by the legislature to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces."

Dennis confirms that the BOS understands the changes to this tax credit is due to changes made in 2022 to the State Statute by House Bill 1667 expanding the definition of eligibility to include persons still engaged in active service.<sup>ii</sup> Dennis explains that this change to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service will increase the number of people who may qualify for the credits. The legislature has required that communities, such as Danville, that have adopted credit amounts above the minimum of \$50 to readopt the existing or a new amount.

Dennis explains that he believes the intent of the readoption requirement is because it grants the larger credits with the knowledge that the application pool has been expanded. Should the Town fail to pass a reaffirmation Warrant—all credits would revert to the minimum \$50 amount. Dottie motions to move the Warrant article forward as presented. Second by Sheila. Vote is unanimous (5-0). Dottie motions for the BOS to recommend the Warrant article. Second by Sheila. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

*Veterans' Property Tax Credit:*

*Shall the Town of Danville vote to maintain the Veterans' and the All-Veterans' Property Tax Credits in the amount of \$750 per year (as previously adopted by the Town under the provisions of RSA 72:27-a)? If adopted, it is with the understanding that the eligibility for the credit has been expanded by the legislature to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces."*

**Moved forward by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Cemetery Capital Reserve Fund:** *"To see if the Town of Danville NH will raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00) to be placed in the existing Cemetery Capital Reserve for future cemetery expansion."*

Sheila asks if anyone knows what the balance currently is. Shawn notes that information would need to come for the Cemetery Trustees. Sheila motions to move this Warrant article forward. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0). Dottie motions for the BOS to recommend this Warrant article. Second by Steve. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

*"To see if the Town of Danville NH will raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1000.00) to be placed in the existing Cemetery Capital Reserve for future cemetery expansion."*

**Moved forward by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Animal Control Warrant article:** Sheila asks that the BOS put forward the following ACO Warrant article: Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Non-Capital Reserve Fund: *"To see if the Town of Danville will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be added to the Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established for future replacement of Animal Control Vehicle Purchases."*

Shawn confirms that this non-capital reserve fund has already been established and has been funded with \$5,000. Dennis confirms that the fund is for animal control vehicle replacement and given the way it is written, it is not a capital reserve. He asks if these funds can be used to maintain and operate the current ACO vehicle. Sheila states that the funds can only be used to replace the ACO vehicle. She notes that it failed by three votes last year.<sup>iii</sup> Dennis confirms that there is currently \$5000 in the fund and if the Warrant article passes this year, there would be \$10,000. Sheila notes it's not enough to buy anything, but she doesn't think she will need to replace (the current ACO van) soon and that she thinks it still has plenty of life in it. Dottie believes it is wise to save the money slowly to do this. Dottie motions to move the Warrant article forward. Second by Sheila. Vote is unanimous (5-0). Steve motions for the BOS to recommend the Warrant article. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0).

*Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Non-Capital Reserve Fund:*

*"To see if the Town of Danville will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be added to the Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established for future replacement of Animal Control Vehicle Purchases."*

**Moved forward by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0**

**Town Employee Retirement Fund:** Dottie has provided the BOS with a proposed Warrant article for the Town Employee Retirement fund: Adoption of Retirement Plan for Employees and Elected Officials *"To see if the Town will adopt a retirement plan for Employees and Elected Officials at a cost of Forty-Four Thousand Six Hundred Eighty-Four dollars (\$44,684) for nine(9) months of the first year."*

Dottie outlines the costs as follows in her e-mail: NH Retirement for Full-time Group 1 employees-employer rate is 14.06% and will apply until June 30, 2023. From July 1, 2023, forward it will be 13.56%. For three (3) Full-time employees to join NH Retirement as Group 1 employees, it will cost the Town an additional \$21,534 beginning on April 1, 2023. Mission Square employer (Town) costs for part-time employees will be 3%: \$23,160. Shawn states he reviewed Dottie's e-mail and expresses his concern with the proposal. He states his understanding from the 2022 Warrant article was that the BOS was going to look into this issue. He confirms that Dottie had agreed to lead this

research and discussion and that there had been no discussion of this with the BOS in 2022. Dottie states that she did mention that she was working on it in a meeting and she has had a couple of discussion with Steve on it.

Shawn states from his viewpoint “there has been zero work done on this the whole season from the last election until now and in his opinion, this is just a Warrant article that was just thrown together.” Shawn states that in NH retirement when the BOS looked into a remote 401k, it was such a better option and would be more efficient for the stakeholders (the Town and the employees that would be paying into it). According to NH retirement, the cost of all the positions she listed is well above 10%. Employers are not putting in 10% toward people’s retirement. Shawn states that he would stay away from the NH retirement unless the Town was forced to participate in it as it has to because the Town has a full-time Police Dept. He notes that if the Town also had a full-time Fire Dept. the Town would also have to participate in NH Retirement for them. Shawn explains that because the Town does not have a full-time Fire Dept. and has other Town employees who are not part of the Police Dept. it could do something else like a 401K. Dottie explains that the fund would be a 457B. Dennis confirms that a 457B is the equivalent of a 401k but for government/municipal employees.

Steve states he is confused about the numbers Dottie shows in the salary lines. She explains that she included all the part-time Town employees. She notes that she may have missed some staff and has asked Tom Billbrough Sr. to pull the correct salary information from the budget. Steve confirms that her proposal is what she discussed with him where the town puts in 3% and the employee matches it. Dottie states that is correct, but there are over 30 different plans and she needs more information. Her understanding is that the Town would contribute 3% and the employees can pick whatever amount they want to for their contribution. She was also proposing that the three (3) full-time employees participate in NH retirement as Group One at 14.06% until June 30, 2023. On July 1, 2023, the Town’s contribution drops to 13.56%. She believes the Group One employees’ matching contributions are 7%. Steve states when he retired as a Group Two employee, he was contributing 11%. The Town’s current contribution to Fire and Police employees is 30%. Dottie reiterates that she is throwing this information out there for discussion and expects it to be discussed at Town Meeting (Deliberative Session).

Steve states that he believes the Town should set up something for the Town’s employees. He notes that he has been with the Fire Dept 40 years part-time, but once he leaves, he leaves with nothing. Dottie notes that she worked for the Town for fifty (50) years and retired with nothing. Steve state he believes this would be good for the retention of employees and reiterates that he thinks it’s something the Town should do.

Sheila notes that Dottie has included Elected Officials in her salary lines and expresses her concern about how an Elected Official would participate in a retirement program, particularly if they were not re-elected. Dennis and Dottie explain those people would then need to withdraw their contributions from the Town-sponsored plan and roll their funds into a private retirement account.

Dennis agrees that the Town should stay away from NH retirement and that he likes the 457B idea for municipal employees as it gives the Town the ability to decide what percentage it can put towards an employee’s contribution. He notes that municipalities rarely match employee contributions, or even contribute at a municipality level. What it does, is allows is for the Town to offer its employees the ability to take money pretax and have an optional investment vehicle available to the employees. Over time the Town could decide on a percentage match but the Town is under no obligation to match those contributions. Dennis states that he understands there would be costs to the Town to administer this kind of retirement program. Dottie explains that the Town would not pay for anything with the plan that she has looked at unless the Town does any kind of contribution. Dennis explains that he is talking about “soft costs” like providing information, setting up payroll deductions, etc. Dottie explains that based on the salaries if the Town did a 3% contribution for the first nine (9) months in 2023, it would cost \$23,160 for the part-time employees and \$21,534 for NH Retirement. but she reminds the BOS that if they want the full-time employees to participate in the 457B instead, the board will need to add in the salaries of those three (3) full-time Town employees.

Dennis states that he would be in favor of a Warrant article that would ask the Town to adopt a 457B Retirement Plan and then have a separate Warrant article that would ask the Town to approve a contribution percentage. Dottie would prefer both questions to be in one Warrant article. Dennis explains that by separating the questions if the

Town approves the establishment of a 457B, the Town's employees will have an opportunity to start contributing tax-deferred dollars into a retirement account regardless if the Town is contributing anything. Steve agrees, noting that if the Town doesn't vote to have any Town contributions, at least the plan could be started for the Town's employees.

Shawn confirms that Dottie will re-write her proposed Warrant article into two separate articles for the BOS to review at the next meeting. She notes that she will take out moving the full-time employees into NH Retirement as Group One employees and add all the employees in for the 457B retirement plan. Dottie states that she is pleased that the BOS has some agreement with her proposal. Sheila thanks her for all the work she did on this issue. Dennis notes that Dottie could also propose a Town contribution up to "x" amount of dollars per employee instead of a straight percentage. Shawn explains to Dottie that she can also figure on that 3% for a full year because the Town would be allowed to "catch up" if the Warrant article passed. Once the fund is established, it will be governed by IRS limits.

## **V. Old/New Business**

**Minutes:** The BOS review the minutes for the December 12, 2022 BOS public meeting. There is a brief discussion on the status of the December 19, 2022 minutes due to a new transcriptionist temporarily working on them. Dennis asks if Kim reviews the minutes to confirm the dollar values of the budgets. Kim explains the minutes are usually verbatim from the video and if the recording secretary can't hear the amounts clearly, she notes that in the minutes. Shawn questions how the December 19 minutes were done. Kim explains that the new transcriptionist sent her the raw transcriptions and she tried to put them into the correct minute format with line numbers, headings, etc. Steve motions to approve the minutes for the December 12, 2022 BOS public meeting as written. Second by Dottie. Vote is unanimous (5-0). The draft minutes for December 19, 2022, are tabled until they are completed.

**Signature File:** The BOS review and sign the documents in the Signature File.

**Town Announcements:** Shawn reads the one Town Announcement listed below.

**Technology Update:** Dennis asks if RMON had returned the information requested on how much space was available on the current Town Hall server (because the new proposed server is the same size.) Shawn states that he has not received that information. Dennis informs the BOS that the two laptops that RMON had previously quoted for the Highway Dept. and the Cemetery Trustees for a total of \$3000 have been re-negotiated to \$700 each with an additional fee of approximately \$300 each for RMON to configure them for the Town's IT system.

**Town Employee Retention Bonus Pay:** Dennis asks if the BOS reviewed the final numbers for the FY22 budget to ensure there was enough left to pay the previously discussed and approved Town Employee Retention bonuses. Dottie explains that she had questioned the numbers that she had been given but she reassures the BOS that there was more than enough left to pay the bonuses. She notes that she is curious to see an accurate year-end statement for the FY22 budget. Dottie confirms that the bonuses were approved at the meeting. Shawn agrees the bonuses were approved and the expenditure was authorized.

**ARPA funds for Town Hall Server:** Sheila notes that when the BOS approved the \$37,417.56 for the new Town Hall server, she had reminded them that it qualified for ARPA funds, but it was not further discussed at that time. Shawn explains that he and Dennis want to keep a "placeholder" in the FY23 budget for a server, noting that they still do not support that amount. Dennis explains that he doesn't currently even have a quote on a product that he could give to Sheila to put into the ARPA requests. Shawn explains that if the BOS comes to an agreement with RMON on an actual product, he would support removing the server costs from the budget before the Deliberative Session. Dennis explains that the Town needs the server, but there is still disagreement on the pricing. Because they know that the Town needs to buy something, they are using the current quote as a "placeholder" in the budget, believing that the price is at the "high end." Shawn notes that he believes in 2023, the BOS will go out to bid on IT services.

## **VI. Town Announcements**

## Calendar

 **January 9- Monday:** Board of Selectmen's meeting at the Town Hall at 7:00 PM

As there are no further items to discuss, Shawn requests two Non-Public sessions under NH RSA 91-A 3:II (a) and NH RSA 91-A 3:II (e). Dottie makes the requested motions. Second by Sheila. Roll call vote: Shawn-yes, Steve-yes, Sheila-yes, Dottie-yes, Dennis-yes.

The public session of the BOS meeting ends at 9:05 PM.

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

Respectfully Submitted  
Deborah A. Christie

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<sup>i</sup> **Official Ballot of the Annual Town Election of Danville, NH March 10, 2020. Article 2020-26: Citizens Petition: Increasing the hours the Danville polling location is open by Petition of Rob Collins et al.** Shall the voters of Danville request that the Danville polling location remain open until 8:00 PM. Vote: 756- yes, 310- no. Article passes. Town of Danville, NH Town Election results. March 10, 2020. Online at [SKM C36820031108060 \(townofdanville.org\)](https://www.skm.com/record/C36820031108060/townofdanville.org). January 4, 2023.

<sup>ii</sup> **State of New Hampshire. NH RSA 72:28 Standard and Optional Veterans' Tax Credit**  
IV. The following persons shall qualify for the standard veterans' tax credit or the optional veterans' tax credit:  
(a) Every resident of this state who is a veteran, as defined in RSA 21:50, and served not less than 90 days on active service in the armed forces of the United States in any qualifying war or armed conflict listed in this section, **and continues to serve** or was honorably discharged or an officer who continues to serve or was honorably separated from service; or the spouse or surviving spouse of such resident, provided that training for active duty by a member of the national guard or reserve shall be included as service under this subparagraph.;” (Emphasis added) Online at [www.gencourt.state.nh.us/html](https://www.gencourt.state.nh.us/html). January 4, 2023.

<sup>iii</sup> **Official Ballot of the Annual Town Election of Danville, NH March 10, 2020. Article 2022-14: Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Capital Reserve Fund:** To see if the Town of Danville will vote to raise and appropriate To see if the Town of Danville will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be added to the Animal Control Vehicle Replacement Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established for future replacement of Animal Control Vehicle Purchases.” Vote: 416- yes, 460- no. Article fails. Town of Danville, NH Town Election results. March 10, 2020. Online at [SKM C36820031108060 \(townofdanville.org\)](https://www.skm.com/record/C36820031108060/townofdanville.org). January 4, 2023.