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Town of Danville
Board of Selectmen
Monday, December 11, 2023
7:00 pm

Meeting is Video-Recorded

Selectmen present: Shawn O’Neil, Chairman; Annemarie Inman, Vice Chair; Joe Hester; Sheila Johannesen; Dennis Griffiths

Others present: Kim Burnham, Jimmy Seaver arrived at 7:15, Carsten Springer arrived at 7:30

Shawn called the meeting to order 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

No one was present as a delegate.

II. Agenda

Income Statement Budget Discussion

This will be on next week’s agenda.

2024 Warrant Articles

In response to the request by Kim, two warrant articles have been received for review by the Board. These are both from the Road Agent regarding the Highway Department. The first one discussed was regarding the capital reserve fund:

Highway Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000.00) to be added to the Highway Capital Reserve Fund for the purchase of future Highway Vehicles and Equipment previously established.

Shawn said his philosophy for the Board of Selectmen is that they need to think of things to put into the voter’s hands. He explained that voters may be hesitant about warrant articles such as this due to the recent tax bill, but the Board needs to be able to let the voters decide. Sheila suggested reducing the dollar amount may make it easier to pass on the ballot. Shawn said the process of reducing the dollar amount can be debated and adjusted at the Deliberative Session during which the Road Agent would be able to explain his reasoning for putting this in the voter’s hands.

Sheila asked if it’s known what the Road Agent plans to purchase. It is unknown but it may be for the replacement of a dump truck. The Road Agent should have a plan, but first the funds need to be set aside to make a purchase.

Dennis asked if this is the type of Warrant Article that has the Selectmen’s recommendation. It was explained that it is, and if the article is amended during the Deliberative Session, the Board would vote

again regarding their recommendation. Dennis said that he personally would vote against this. He said that unless the Road Agent gave a compelling argument for why this needs to be done this year, asking for any funds does not feel right to him. Annemarie said that the role as a Select Board member requires wearing two hats: one is as a Board member and the other is as a taxpayer. The Board has been asked to put a warrant article on the ballot and each member's vote, whether in favor or against, will be counted on the ballot as an individual.

Joe made and Annemarie seconded a **motion to place the highway capital reserve fund Warrant Article on the ballot**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Dennis made and Joe seconded a **motion to add a recommendation by the Board of Selectmen**. Sheila and Dennis voted no; Shawn, Annemarie, and Joe voted in favor. The motion **passed, recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-2)**.

The second Warrant Article proposed by the Road Agent is regarding the future expansion of the highway garage:

Capital Reserve Fund for Future Expansion of the Highway Garage

To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund for Future Expansion of the Highway Garage for future expansion as previously established.

Joe made and Annemarie seconded a **motion to place on the ballot the capital reserve fund for future expansion of the highway garage Warrant Article**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

Dennis made and Joe seconded a **motion to add a recommendation by the Board of Selectmen**. Joe and Dennis voted no; Shawn, Annemarie, and Sheila voted in favor. The motion **passed, recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-2)**.

When Jimmy Seaver arrived, the Board member's vote on the proposed warrants was briefly explained. Jimmy said he essentially copied what was on the ballot this prior ballot. He anticipates needing to purchase a roadside mower soon. He's obtained some quotes, around \$160,000.00, for a tractor with two different style mowers. He's been renting an excavator with a cutting head. He explained how this piece of equipment does not adequately mow along the sides of the roads. He also said there are two 2001 trucks in the fleet that may need to be replaced. The issue is also that if a truck is ordered today, it may not arrive in town until 2025.

Jimmy also explained a company that is able to supply work-ready trucks. These range from fully loaded trucks equipped with software to a basic model being the cheapest. He said the cheapest are about \$244,000.00, and are available by the end of the year. He said he's also a taxpayer in the town and understands how this may look to taxpayers. Joe asked about lease options and Jimmy said the truck that should be paid off next year was a five-year lease. Money had been set aside so this was paid ahead of schedule. There is also an option to lease for seven years, after which the vehicle is returned, and another vehicle is leased. He said with either leasing or buying, the money is the same and at the end of the lease, the truck is still worth over \$200,000.00. He said he doesn't need a truck loaded with all the recent technology as his department currently has a way to regulate how much salt is put on the roads. He further explained that with one storm event, they can go through about 100 tons of salt very quickly. This is approximately three tractor trailer loads worth of salt.

Jimmy further explained that he wasn't really sure what number to put into the suggested Warrant Article and Shawn said the reserve fund is still new and being established. Jimmy said the three of them in the department use all the vehicles all of the time, thus none of the vehicles sit idle.

Jimmy said the fund currently has about \$20,000.00. Some funds were put into it last year and the loader was purchased. Sheila explained that she's concerned about the dollar amount in light of the recent tax bill and wondered, if the amount were lowered, would that enable to article to pass. Jimmy said again that he understands since he is a taxpayer also. Annemarie said that the town is in the situation its in because of the vote last March. She said we need to be clear that our town budget and our needs shouldn't suffer because of where we put ourselves last March. Shawn mentioned his frustration with the school taxes and Joe suggested to Jimmy that he be prepared to speak to the town about the Highway Department needs.

Jimmy said that he's heard the complaints from residents regarding when their roads will be re-paved. He said that if we calculated all the roads in town and how much it would cost for hot top, it would be about \$30 million. He said we can only do so much, and equipment doesn't seem to last like it used to. He's done what he can to be frugal with the budget and plan well with the resources he has, including moving the hot topping from the fall season to the spring because prices are cheaper then. He's also locked in a contractor until the end of 2025 with a set price.

Sheila reaffirmed she thinks a lower dollar amount on the Warrant Article would be more agreeable to the taxpayers and Annemarie said there will probably be a robust debate about this at Deliberative. Jimmy said one of the trucks is going on 23 years old and there are issues with some of the other trucks. Andy, a Highway Department employee, has come up with a solution, but they have still been waiting for a part for over four months. Shawn said he's just glad the Warrant Article is moving forward, and Sheila said it would be better if it could go forward with a unanimous recommendation by the Board.

III. Minutes

The minutes of December 4, 2023, were reviewed. Two amendments were made to the minutes. Sheila made and Joe seconded a **motion to approve the December 4, 2023, minutes as amended**. The motion **passed** unanimously.

IV. Signature File

Sheila had a question regarding an Intent to Cut filed with the town. The application was reviewed. The lots listed in the intent are in Map 1, Lots 52, 54, and 57. Sheila asked how Tuckertown Road and the surrounding land can be cut if they haven't been surveyed. Carsten pointed out that the survey was recorded twenty years ago. He said the back end of one of the parsonage lots may have timber taken off of it and this has already been accounted for in its sequestration of proceeds. The net proceeds go to the meetinghouse to offset our taxes. Anything in the back from the parsonage lot, the school property, or the library lot, are delineated and he said if someone goes out there, there are pins marking boundaries, placed as recently as two years ago. Carsten said he'd be happy to walk out there and point out the pins and discuss the area.

Dennis had a question about the start date listed in the Intent to Cut. It is listed as winter 2024. Carsten explained that another Intent may be filed as these are weather dependent. A hard freeze versus a milder, wetter winter are determining factors. He said the Intents run from March to March, with a Report of Cut being due April 1 of the following year. A Report can show that nothing has been cut and a new Intent will

need to be filed. The Intents are filed and in place so that when conditions are right, the work can commence.

V. Old/New Business

There was a short discussion about when the Board will meet the week of Christmas since a public hearing needs to be scheduled. The hearing is to discuss the unanticipated revenue. Kim said she’s aware of one block grant received for approximately \$12,000.00 and Jimmy explained he knows of one for \$31,000.00. Shawn suggested that since the funds won’t be used for a little while, the amounts will be verified and one public hearing will be held in January. Jimmy said he’ll send the information he found to the office.

It was agreed to see what other Boards are meeting that week and possibly meet on Thursday the 28th unless there is a Planning Board meeting. If there’s a conflict with the Planning Board, the Selectmen meeting will be held Wednesday the 27th. This will allow the Board to encumber any funds necessary before the end of the year.

VI. Announcements

Monday, December 18, 2023: Board of Selectmen’s meeting at 7pm.

Thursday, December 28, 2023: tentatively scheduled Board of Selectmen’s meeting at 7pm.

Monday, December 25, 2023: Town Hall is closed in observance of Christmas.

Wednesday, December 29, 2023: Senior coffee hour at the Community Center, 10am to 12pm.

Monday, January 1, 2024: Town Hall is closed in observance of New Year’s Day.

Friday, January 5, 2024: Last day for voters to petition Select Board to include articles proposing bonding.

Tuesday, January 9, 2024: Last day for the Selectmen to publish notice of hearing on a bond or note.

Tuesday, January 9, 2024: Last day to submit Citizen’s Petition Warrant Articles to the Town Clerk.

Tuesday, January 23, 2024: NH Primary Elections at the Community Center from 8am to 8pm.

Wednesday, January 24, 2024: Declaration of Candidacy begins this day and continues through Friday, February 2, 2024

Saturday, February 3, 2024: Town Meeting Deliberative Session, 10am at the Community Center.

Thursday, February 8, 2024: TRSD Deliberative Session, 40 Greenough Road, Plaistow, NH at 7pm (Timberlane Performing Arts Center or PAC)

At 7:45, Joe made and Sheila seconded a **motion to go to a non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II (c and d)**. A roll call vote was taken:

Shawn: yes
Dennis: yes
Sheila: yes
Annemarie: yes

Joe: yes

The motion **passed** unanimously.

Shawn stated the public portion of the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Janet Denison