

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
December 11, 2023
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman Pitman called the meeting to order

Present: Chairman Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman Fred McGarry, Selectwoman Cynthia McHugh, Selectman Will Huebner, and Selectman Steve Barry.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to allow Selectman Huebner join remotely.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Regular Business

Review of Outstanding Minutes 12/4/2023:

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the 12/4/2023 minutes as written.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Mr. Harrington states he has some corrections:

1. Page 4 – line 20 – Selectman Huebner asks about Veasy Park Chair and it should read, asks about Veasey Park platform and buoys.
2. Page 5 – line 15 – vote reads 1 yea, 4 nays, 0 abstained motion carries and it should read motion fails.

Selectman Barry amends his motion to include the corrections and Vice Chairman McGarry amends his second.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

- Accounts Payable (AP) – \$39,964.41

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve the accounts payable in the amount of \$39,964.41.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner asks if the same items that Selectwoman McHugh had questions about at the last meeting with the previous weeks accounts payable are in this week's accounts payable and Selectwoman McHugh states, they are not on this week's AP.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Payroll Manifest – Check date 12/12/2023 – \$93,283.48 Gross - \$59,901.17 Net

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the payroll with a check date of 12/12/2023 in the amounts of \$93,283.48 Gross, \$59,901.17 Net.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Vouchers – No Vouchers

Signatures/Correspondence:

- Signatures
 - Report of Timber Cut. \$4,850.36 tax amount. Karl Schlichte.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the collection of a timber tax in the amount of \$4,850.36 from Karl Schlichte.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Deerfield special one-time bridge payment in accordance with House Bill II; payment for maintenance, construction, reconstruction of municipality owned bridges. \$27,058.42.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the collection of the special one-time bridge payment from the state in the amount of \$27,058.42.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner asks if there are any strings attached and Mr. Harrington, Chairman Pitman, and Vice Chairman McGarry all say, no.

Mr. Harrington states that this is added to the amount received last year in the amount of \$95,915.00 and this brings the total to \$122,973.42.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Yearly Contract with Sanders Searches LLC. This is used by Kelly Roberts (TC/TX) for deed research. Selectman Huebner states that they all have their backup date and if there are no objections, he will make a motion to approve this contract.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to approve the contract with Sanders Searchers LLC for another year.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Oath of Office. Anne Dealy. Library Board of Trustees. Term ending March 2024.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the oath of office for Anne Deely and the Library Board of Trustees.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Chairman Pitman states they received a letter from the Bosiak to the Deerfield Road Agent about wanting to improve Dow Road, a class VI road, so they can get to their land. Mr. Harrington that explains that because this is a class VI road land owners need approval from the Road Agent and BOS to make improvements to the road and this letter is asking for that permission.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve the Bosiak's working on Dow Road to improve it.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner asks what the nature of the repairs are and Mr. Harrington explains that he believes they already spoke to the Road Agent who has already approved the work they would like to do.

Selectwoman McHugh asks if the work needs to be overseen by the Road Agent and Mr. Harrington states, yes and they are aware of this.

Vice Chairman McGarry asks if they have a house there and Mr. Harrington states they have land in Epsom that abuts Dow Road and they access the land via Dow Road in Deerfield.

Chairman Pitman states they are looking at the first part of 2024 for forest management activities.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

- Correspondence

- Memo from Kelly about extending the interest time-period. Mr. Harrington reads the memo to the Board.

"I write to you today to request your consideration and approval for a temporary increase in the waiver limit for tax interest as per New Hampshire Revised Statutes NH RSA 76:13.

Currently, as per the statute, I am permitted to waive interest due up to \$5.00. This waiver can be implemented when, in my judgement, the administrative and collection costs involved do not warrant the collection of the amount due.

Given the current circumstances and the administrative burden associated with the collection of small interest amounts, I propose that we temporarily increase the waiver limit from \$5.00 to \$25.00. This change, if approved, would be effective immediately and would remain in place until December 31st, after which it will revert back to the original \$5.00 limit.

My request is in compliance with NH RSA 76:13, which allows for such discretion with the approval and consent of the Board of Selectmen and the Board of Assessors. I believe this temporary adjustment will enhance our operational efficiency without significantly impacting our overall tax revenue.

I kindly ask the Board to make a motion to approve this temporary increase in the interest waiver limit. I am more than willing to provide further information or clarification should it be needed.

Thank you for your time and thoughtful consideration on this matter.

Best Regards, Kelly Roberts"

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to approve a temporary increase in the waiver limit for tax interest from \$5.00 to \$25.00 in compliance with NH RSA 76:13.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

The Board discusses dates why this increased dollar amount works.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Town Administrator's Report

Mr. Harrington states that he only had the Bridge statement to make and since that has been completed, he has no further updates.

Unfinished Business/New Business/Other Business

- Unfinished Business

- Wage and Salary Scale: Vice Chairman McGarry states he pulled out and looked at Rochester's wage and salary scale for all their employees and made copies for all the BOS members to show

what he had anticipated seeing at the end of the survey for the Town of Deerfield employees. He explains what is on the survey and the Board members agree to take it home and look it over.

- Letter to Town about the tax rate: Mr. Harrington states he has included a sample statement, Board requested, on the Deerfield tax rate. Vice Chairman McGarry suggest on adding information on the waiver of interest for the remainder of the year that was just improved and Selectman Huebner agrees this should be added. Mr. Harrington agrees to add this and to communicate it to the public in all the available means he has.
- 2024 Draft Warrant Articles: Selectman Huebner starts by asking if the procedure consists of 2 votes and it is explained that there is only one vote and that is whether to put it on the warrant or not. Mr. Harrington states that the MBC has not completed their work on the budget so it's agreed that they will go through last year's warrants only at this time and decide yea or nay.
 1. Budget – This is being deferred to the next meeting as the MBC has not completed their work.
 2. \$350,000.00 Reconstruction of Existing Roads – Selectman Huebner reminds the Board that they had adjusted the highway budget down during the budget meeting with the idea that they will do a warrant article for the remaining amount needed. Selectwoman McHugh asks what monies is left in from this warrant article this year and Mr. Harrington states, around \$92,000.00. Vice Chairman McGarry points out the language of non-lapsing so they would be caring money over to the next year. Selectman Huebner brings up the other highway warrant article and explains the contents of it and the Board discusses the meaning of the article. Mr. Harrington lets the Board know that the accurate balance is \$97,184.00. Selectman Huebner states that he brought this other article up to refer to the restrictions in the article and to maybe add the restrictions to this Reconstruction of Existing Roads article. They discuss whether or not to add, not use for personnel support, to this article and in the end because the article is very specific, they decide not to add that wording. The Board and Mr. Schibbelhute (Road Agent) then discuss changing the dollar amount.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to approve putting warrant article # 2, Reconstruction of Existing Roads, as written on the warrant with a dollar amount of \$350,000.00.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 2, Nay 3, Abstained 0 - Motion Does Not Carry

Selectman Huebner asks for someone else to make a motion with a different dollar amount.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve putting warrant article # 2, Reconstruction of Existing Roads, as written on the warrant with a dollar amount of \$250,000.00.

Second: Selectman Huebner

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 2, Nay 3, Abstained 0 - Motion Does Not Carry

Selectman Barry reiterates his previous statement that he feels no warrant articles requesting extra monies should be on the warrant this year and Selectman Huebner disagrees stating

they should put money towards things that are absolutely necessary and he feels that the voters will approve this warrant because they feel it's absolutely necessary.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to approve putting warrant article # 2, Reconstruction of Existing Roads, as written on the warrant with a dollar amount of \$150,000.00.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

3. Selectman Huebner explains the article that this article was only if the budget didn't pass and asks if this article is necessary.

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to strike this article from the warrant.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Vice Chairman McGarry feels they should check with the Road Agent first before totally striking this article. The Board discusses whether this is necessary or not and Selectman Barry feels a roller could be used and Selectman Huebner feels this would affect article 6 and not article 3. Mr. Harrington provides what's left in the general overall support warrant for the Highway, \$47,949.00. He then provides the trust fund balance of \$75,393.00. Selectman Barry states the discussion of the roller has nothing to do with warrant articles. The Board decides the wording in article 6 does not allow for the purchase of a roller as they do not currently have one. They would have to currently own one and it would have to be in disrepair to be able to use the article 6 funds.

It is clarified that article will stay stricken.

4. \$120,000.00 Police Department building architectural plans. Selectman Huebner reminds the Board that they had discussed this at a previous meeting and they had agreed not have this on that warrant this year. The Board agrees to strike it.
5. \$112,000.00 for a 5% COLA for Town employees. Selectman Huebner asks if they would like to consider any amount of COLA based on costs. Vice Chairman McGarry asks what a 3% COLA would be and Mr. Harrington states he will not have that figure until the Board votes on percentage for COLA or not and states that they typically base the COLA on the increase of Social Security which is 3.2 for next year.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to put a 3.2% COLA article to on the warrant.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Mr. Harrington agrees to get a figure for COLA to the Board the following week.

It's clarified that these warrants will go to the MBC to recommend or not recommend them but not to change. Then they are discussed at deliberative session and finally they go on the ballot for the people to vote.

6. Vehicle maintenance for the Highway department at \$75,000.00. Selectman Huebner goes over the amount currently in the account and asks if they would like this on the article again this year. Vice Chairman McGarry asks the Road Agent to come forward and talk about

possible work that might needed on the vehicles. Mr. Schibbelhute goes over the current trucks and feels they should go ahead and put this out there and if the people say no, they'll work with what they have.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to put article 6 on the warrant with a dollar amount of \$25,000.00.

Second: Selectman Huebner

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

7. Cemetery Trustees. Column Barium. Selectman Huebner states this was passed last year and not needed again so they can strike it from the warrant and the Board agrees.
8. Fire Apparatus and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Selectman Huebner states that this fund currently has a balance is a little over \$400,000.00 and Mr. harrington states the balance of this account as of 9/30 is \$369,950.00.

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh makes a motion to strike this article form the warrant.

Second: Selectman Barry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

9. Municipal Government Buildings and Related Infrastructure Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance \$41,605.00. They clarify that a motion is needed to strike the articles only to put them on the warrant. Selectman Huebner explains his understanding of this fund as an emergency fund they are trying to build up and he feels it wise to keep building this fund so if and when something happens, they have the funds.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to put article 9 as written with the wording on the warrant but with a reduced dollar amount of \$20,000.00 for the Municipal Government Buildings and Related Infrastructure Expendable Trust Fund.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Mr. Harrington asks if the Board would like to continue using the language of the funds coming from the unassigned fund balance and the Board agrees, no. Selectman Huebner states he shouldn't have said, as written, and asks if the phrase, no amount to be raised form new taxation, will be changed as well and the Board agrees it will be changed. Mr. Harrington states that the period will end after, Trust Fund.

It is agreed that this is not the first year this article has been done at this dollar amount.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Selectman Barry states he does feel all these things are necessary and needed but he feels a line needs to be drawn and with the people saying the recent tax increase has been crippling there should not be any warrant articles for money other than the budget.

10. Cemetery General Maintenance Expendable Reserve Fund for \$35,000.00. Current balance is \$71,504.00. The Board agrees the current balance is adequate funding and can be scratched from the warrant.
11. Recreational Facility Maintenance. Current balance is \$33,846.93. The Board agrees this is enough funding so this article can be scratched from the warrant.
12. Fire Department Vehicle and Equipment Expendable Trust Fund. Current balance is \$58,669.97. The Board agrees this is enough funding so this article can be scratched from the warrant.

13. Rescue Vehicle Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Current balance is \$83,020.83. The Board agrees this is enough funding so this article can be scratched from the warrant.
14. Northwood Lake Association for \$8,000.00. Selectman Huebner states he has researched this budget and feels the money is being well spent and recommends putting this on the warrant.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to put the Northwood Lake Association article for \$8,000.00 on warrant with changing the wording from, to control milfoil on Northwood Lake, to, for aquatic species and aquatic bacteria education, prevention, treatment to control in Northwood Lake.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

15. Pleasant Lake Expenditure. \$2,500.00. Selectman Huebner explains what this is for.

Motion: Selectman Huebner makes a motion to put the Pleasant Lake Expenditure article in the amount of \$2,500.00.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

It is determined there are 40 Deerfield properties on Northwood Lake.

16. & 17. Veteran's Tax credits. Mr. Harrington states that this was a one-time change and it will now stay where it's at and it does not have to be voted on again. The Board agrees that 16 and 17 can be scratched from the warrant.
18. Rescind SB2 and go back to Town Meetings.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to include article 18 on the warrant.

Discussion: Selectman Huebner states that this article was voted down last year so he doesn't feel it needs to be on this year's warrant but Selectman Barry explains why he feels it needs to be on the warrant again anyways.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

New Articles:

Mr. Harrington states that the warrant article is a suggested article to add money to Emergency Management for a director as they have been unable to attract a volunteer candidate and the Board agrees not to put it on the warrant at this time.

Police Department Vehicle Maintenance Trust Fund. The Board agrees it's something that needs to be done but not this year.

Library Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund. Mr. Harrington explains why the library created this article.

Motion: Vice Chairman McGarry makes a motion to include the Library Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund for \$20,000.00 on the warrant.

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner reminds the Board that the library roof is not included in their budget so this article is a good idea.
It is confirmed that the library would not have to go through the Board to spend this money.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Deerfield Community Power Plan.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to put the Deerfield Community Power Plan article on the warrant.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

It is determined that the Board would like to with the alternate version of the Deerfield Community Power Plan article so Selectman Barry amends his motion and Vice Chairman McGarry agrees to the amendment.

Selectman Barry reads the amended article out loud.

Roll Call Vote: Yea 4, Nay 1, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Land Use Change Tax. 50/50, 50% to the Town and 50% to the Conservation Commission.

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to put the Land Use Change Tax article on the warrant adjusting the taxes so that 100% does not go to the Conservation Commission and it goes back to 50/50, 50% to the Town and 50% to the Conservation Commission

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Selectman Barry brings up a discussion he saw about taxes and people wanting it to be a quarterly tax payment rather than semi-annually. He asks if the Board would like to create an advisory article about this to see what the people want but it is agreed that this is not needed as taxpayers can pay quarterly without needing to receive a tax bill. They also agree to talk to Kelly about it to see what she thinks.

They talk about whether the COLA article was tabled or not.

- New Business
- Other Business

Non-Public Session

No non-public

Citizen's Comments

- No comments

Adjournment

Motion: Selectman Barry makes a motion to adjourn.

Second: Vice Chairman McGarry

Discussion:

Roll Call Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 - Motion Carries

Next Meeting: December 18, 2023 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Randi Long, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*