

Town of Amherst, NH
WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES
2 Main Street
Monday, November 25, 2019
6:10 p.m.

The Ways & Means Committee was assembled by 6:00pm. Members in attendance: Peter Moustakis, Elaina Bedio, Danielle Pray, Sarah Bonnoit, Scott Tuthill, and Mike Parisi.

Prior to joining the selectmen meeting, Ways & Means engaged in a quick and impromptu meeting with Chris Buchanan and George Bower of the Bike and Pedestrian Committee (6:20pm). They explained why they eliminated two of the three warrant articles they proposed. W&M expressed that they largely felt the side path proposed on Boston Post Road between the high school and middle school was the more immediately needed project (because of safety issues with students walking in that area). Chris explained that the Amherst Street side path was selected because there is planned roadwork being conducted during FY21 which will reduce the cost of the project by 50%. The section of BPR mentioned previously was recently worked on and is not scheduled for road work this coming year. Also, a culvert would need to be moved which would cost almost as much as the project itself to extend it out to accommodate a side path. Chris also addressed W&M concerns regarding potential property issues along Amherst Street in the village. He explained that this portion of Amherst Street used to be part of route 101 and is already wide enough. They can narrow the vehicle lanes and have plenty of room for the side path.

Next, George Bower explained his confidence level with regard to the cost estimations. He believes they have done their due diligence in speaking to Continental and getting the appropriate estimates. He said that they will evaluate and re-calibrate the cost of the project as they proceed with it to make sure they will not run over budget. DPW would theoretically cover overages. George stated that he is 90% certain about their estimated cost.

Ways and Means joined the selectmen meeting at 6:35pm. We heard from representatives from the Department of Community Development with an updated figure for development of the town's Master Plan. \$14,800 was added to the previous \$25,000 figure to cover any potential contingencies that may arise in the development of the Master Plan (total now \$39,800).

Next the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee (Chris Buchanan and George Bower) updated their status with the Board of Selectmen in a similar fashion as they did with Ways and Means previously. Cost of side path (Article 32) went from \$235K to \$287,500.

The BOS reviewed Draft #4 of the operating budget and the warrant articles with Ways and Means. We decided to hold off on voting in light of some missing information:

1. Figures in regard to the police union contract (Warrant Article 33)
2. Health insurance figures for town employees. (Operating Budget/Article 22)

This information is expected to be available by the next BOS meeting on December 9, 2019. Therefore, Ways and Means decided it might be appropriate for us to attend this meeting even though we were not scheduled to do so. BOS agreed.

W&M was dismissed from the BOS meeting at 7:40 and convened downstairs to review.

The date of our next meeting was confirmed. W&M adjourned at 7:45pm.