



Town of Amherst, NH

BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES

Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Wednesday, January 23, 2019

1 **1. Call to Order**

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3 Chairman Dwight Brew called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

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5 Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Selectmen John D'Angelo, Tom Grella, Peter Lyon,
6 and Reed Panasiti. Also present: Town Administrator Dr. Dean Shankle.

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8 **2. Pledge of Allegiance** – Kristan Patenaude, minute taker for the Board, led the pledge.

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10 **3. Citizens' Forum** – none

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12 **4. Proposed change to the FY20 interest and principal amounts**

13 Chairman Brew explained that there is an interest and principal decrease that needs to be
14 discussed because the Board already voted on the presented budget number.
15 He also explained that the Town found out today that they were not awarded the grant to
16 be used for the Bike/Ped path. That warrant article was contingent on receiving the grant,
17 so that item needs to be removed from the ballot.

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19 Regarding the interest and principal changes, there are five (5) interest amounts being
20 reduced. The proposed budget was carrying last year's interest in it, but all of the Town's
21 notes are leveled in principal, so an adjustment needs to be made.

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23 There is also one (1) principal /interest amount for road construction work done in 2018
24 that needs to be discussed. The figure for the exact balance of this note has been called
25 into question.

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27 Town Administrator Shankle explained that he would like to know what the exact figure is
28 for this note before going forward with it. There is no penalty in putting this off for a year.
29 He would like to pullout the FY18 interest and principal for this and simply shift it
30 forward a year.

31
32 In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Chairman Brew stated that he believes
33 he or Ms. Eileen Demers, Finance Director, found the error regarding the five (5) interest
34 amounts. The road construction amount was discovered by Ms. Demers and confirmed by
35 the auditors.

36
37 In response to a question from Selectman Panasiti, Chairman Brew stated that the previous
38 proposed budget would have been a 1.66% increase over the previous year. With these

changes added in, the proposed budget now shows a 0.85% increase over the previous year.

In response to a question from Selectman D'Angelo, Chairman Brew explained that each year that the Town did road "bond" work that is eligible for the bond funding approved in 2010, it borrowed the money to pay back for the work done. It was thought that this was done in the past year, but there is a question as to if there was any carry-over from the prior year that wasn't borrowed that should be included in that note.

Town Administrator Shankle explained that there was money carried over. In trying to work through the numbers with everyone, there were three different numbers that came up and so he would prefer to wait for the auditors to work through this and come up with the real information and numbers before carrying forward.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned if this was essentially borrowed from the unassigned fund balance. Town Administrator Shankle stated that this apparently hasn't washed out each year and that concrete facts are needed.

Chairman Brew stated that the DRA and the auditor would both agree that the Town did not spend from the unassigned fund balance. In searching for the lowest balance, he found about \$ 3-4 million of "flow" and then the undesignated fund balance on top of that; so the total lowest amount is about \$8 million.

Town Administrator Shankle stated that for this particular fund the numbers range from \$400-650,000. In 2010 the authorization was received to borrow around \$15 million, and currently about \$12 million has been borrowed.

Chairman Brew explained that he had a conversation with the DRA regarding the Town borrowing money from the unassigned fund balance and repaying it once reimbursed from the state for large projects, such as bridges. The DRA explained that, if the voters give authorization, the Town is ok to spend that money and then put it back in the bank once reimbursed. They were very clear that that is not spending from the fund balance.

Selectman Lyon stated that it is unfortunate that the Board finds itself in this situation at this time, but that the exact amount will be discovered and fixed.

Selectman D'Angelo questioned if the Town wants to stick with this auditor, now that there have been issues. He would also like for the auditor to talk in some detail regarding the unassigned fund balance when they present to the Board.

Executive Assistant, Mary Guild, stated that the warrant article totals are now at \$862,500, with the removal of the Bike/Ped article.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to amend the proposed operating budget to \$14,012,849 and the default budget to \$13,784,083.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman D'Angelo to remove Warrant Article 28: Bicycle and Pedestrian Network Capital Reserve Fund from the warrant.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.

A MOTION was made by Selectman D'Angelo and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to sign and move forward the Amherst Town Warrant, minus the vote by the Ways & Means Committee on Warrant Article 36.

Selectman Panasiti stated that the wording for the Veteran's Tax Credit Warrant Article was reviewed and it is the correct wording, per the DRA.

The Board and Town Administrator Shankle entered into a discussion regarding if the Board's/Ways & Means Committee's votes should/could appear on the ballot itself.

The previous motion made by Selectman D'Angelo was stricken.

A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Grella to approve, sign, and post the budget and warrant as presented to the Board.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.

5. Signing of the FY20 Warrant

The Board signed the FY20 Warrant.

6. Adjournment

A MOTION was made by Selectman Lyon and SECONDED by Selectman Panasiti to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 p.m.

Voting: 5-0-0; motion passed unanimously.

NEXT MEETING: January 28, 2019 - Monday

SIGNATURE ON FILE

01.28.2019

Selectman Reed Panasiti

Date