

Town of Amherst, NH
BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
Barbara Landry Meeting Room
2 Main Street
Monday, December 11, 2017

1. Call to Order

Chairman Dwight Brew called the public meeting to order at 6:32 p.m.

Attendees: Chairman Dwight Brew, Vice Chairman Peter Lyon, Selectmen Mike Akillian, Tom Grella, and Reed Panasiti. Also present: Town Administrator, Jim O'Mara, and Suzanne Beauchesne taking minutes.

2. Pledge of Allegiance – Ways and Means Committee member, April Savino, led the pledge.

3. Citizens Forum - None

4. FY19 Budget Discussion

4.1 Police Station Renovation

Chief Mark Reams came forward and provided a PowerPoint presentation indicating initial plans for the police station renovations. He expects the work would be done in phases over the next three years or thereabouts if approved by the Board. The Chief said that the current station was built in 1980 and was last renovated 21 years ago in 1996. The inadequate size is becoming more apparent with time. Renovation on all three floors will improve safety, reduce town liability exposure and improve administrative services. Chief Reams went over the benefits of the renovations as detailed in the attached presentation. Overall, Board members liked the proposed plan. Selectman Akillian asked if there had been any thought given to constructing an addition to the building and whether it would be less disruptive to do the work all at once rather than in stages, presuming the finances were available. He said, in the past, action was deferred for longer than it should have and he would not want to have to revisit this matter ten years from now. Chief Reams said that with the proposed renovations, he expects the station to be serviceable for another 25 years. Regarding when the work is to be done, in phases or all at once, Chief Reams said "it's a wash".

4.2 Budget Draft #3

Chairman Brew referred to notes from the Ways & Means Committee wherein they recommended that the Town Administrator hire a Human Resource Specialist and proposed a two percent COLA rather than a 2.5 percent increase proposed by the Board. They also asked if the COLA was inclusive of step increases. Chairman Brew said the COLA increase is not inclusive of steps.

At the Board's request, Chairman of the Conservation Commission (ACC), Rob Clemens, and Jared Hardner, ACC member, came forward to provide clarification on their program and request for funding. The Board and the ACC are seeking approval, via a warrant article, to receive 100 percent of the Land Use Change Tax (LUCT). Currently, the town and the ACC share 50 percent of the LUCT. The Board and ACC also requested: \$13,500 for updating the forest management plans, and \$15,000 for controlling invasive plant species. Selectman Akillian asked for an explanation to help him get a better grasp of land acquisition criteria and "what's the order of magnitude that we should fund the ACC".

The ACC report indicated that:

- a. The ACC's activities are guided to ensure compliance with RSA 36-A and most activities are supported by volunteer time and donated materials.
- b. The ACC manages 2600 acres (13% of Amherst).
- c. The ACC acquires properties for the purpose of conserving priority lands in town – working farms, public trails. They have no specific open space target, and irreplaceability is a priority.
- d. The ACC would like to focus on three zones: northern, eastern, 101A; i.e., the great meadow, Lindabury, and managed grassland.
- e. They currently have half a million dollars available but need at least \$1 million to acquire property in those three zones.

The Selectmen appreciated the thorough presentation. Selectman Akillian suggested the information would be valuable to the Planning Board members who are working on the Master Plan that includes a chapter on Natural Resources. He invited the ACC to meet with the Planning Board which also ties into Economic Development. The Board discussed how the warrant article might best be structured. April Savino of the Ways and Means Committee questioned including the cost to control invasive species onto the warrant since work would have to be delayed if the warrant is not approved by the voters. After some discussion, Selectman Akillian moved, second by Chairman Brew for sake of discussion, to include in the ACC operating budget, \$13,500 for updating the forest management plans and \$15,000 for controlling invasive plant species. Motion failed, 1-4 [Selectman Akillian in favor].

Town Administrator O'Mara stated that he had met with all departments and cut an additional \$63,964 from the budget. The Board discussed the road reconstruction (\$762,000) and road maintenance (\$338,000) budgets as well as changes to the Community Development budget. The Board agreed that a broader strategy needed to be developed regarding data management, and agreed to the following overall budget changes:

- The proposed increase to medical is now a not to exceed figure of 9.98%
- Removed \$3,000 from HDC grant match

- Decreased Master Plan Update cost from \$15,000 to \$5,000
- Decreased Stormwater NOI & SWMP Development from \$75,000 to \$64,300
- Decreased migrating data to GIS from \$32,500 to \$17,500
- Decreased PD Renovation CRF from \$200,000 to \$100,000
- AFR Vehicle & Equipment CRF decreased from \$325,000 to \$257,000

4.3 Default Budget

Town Administrator O'Mara went over the default budget calculation. The only difference to last year's default budget is the Police CBA. The FY18 default budget amounts to \$13,611,700.00.

4.4 Warrant Articles

ARTICLE 22: Operating Budget

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth herein, totaling **\$ 13,894,881**. Should this article be defeated the default budget shall be **\$ 13,511,243**, which is the same as last year with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. This operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other Warrant Article. (Majority vote)

Vice Chair Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 23: Contingency Fund

Shall the Town vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year, in accordance with NH RSA Section 31:98-a, for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred and twenty thousand dollars (**\$120,000**) to go into the fund. Said sum shall come from the undesignated fund balance and no amount to be raised from taxation. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. (Majority vote)

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 24: Discontinue Capital Reserve Funds

Shall the Town vote, pursuant to RSA 35:3, to discontinue the following Capital Reserve Funds with said funds with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal to be transferred to the town's unassigned fund balance.

NAME	DATE ESTABLISHED	AMOUNT
Rescue Squad Fund	Unknown	\$14.40
Fire Station Renovation Fund	2015	\$156.38
Structural Repair Fund	2013	\$ - 0 -
Forest View Design Fund		\$ - 0 -

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 25: Assessing Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Assessing Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. (Majority vote)

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 26: Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Communications Center Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. (Majority vote)

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 27: Fire Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Purchase and Repair Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred fifty seven thousand dollars (\$257,000) to be added to the Fire Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Purchase and Repair Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. (Majority vote)

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Grella, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 28: Bridge Repair and Replacement Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred and fifteen thousand (\$115,000) to be added to the Bridge Repair and Replacement Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. (Majority vote)

Selectman Akillian moved, second by Selectman Panasiti, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 29: Amherst Conservation Commission 100% of LUCT Funds

Shall the Town vote, pursuant to RSA 79-A: 25, II, to change the amount of revenues of all future payments collected pursuant to RSA 79-A (as amended) Current Use Taxation that will be placed in the Conservation Fund in accordance with RSA 36-A:5, III (as amended) from 50%, which is the current level, to 100% which shall take effect on April 1, 2018. (Majority vote)

Selectman Akillian moved, second by Vice Chairman Lyon, to support this article which will be in effect until amended or rescinded, and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 30: Appropriation of Previously Collected Land Use Change Tax Funds

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty three thousand five hundred dollars (\$43,500), said sum to come from the amount collected and deposited into the Land Use Change Tax Fund

(LUCT) in the preceding fiscal year and to transfer said amount into the Conservation Account to be used for a trail grant match, update the town forest management plan and control of invasive species. No additional amount to be raised by taxation. (Majority vote)

Vice Chairman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Panasiti, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 31: Appoint Agents

Shall the town vote to appoint the Board of Cemetery Trustees as agents to expend from the Cemetery Lot Trust Fund previously established by passage of warrant article No. 22 at the March 1987 annual town meeting. (Majority vote required).

Vice Chairman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

ARTICLE 32: Police Station Renovation Capital Reserve Fund

Shall the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1, for the purpose of renovating the Police Station and to raise and appropriate up to the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (**\$100,000**) to be placed into said fund and to further name the Board of Selectmen as the agents to expend. (Majority vote)

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Vice Chairman Lyon, to support this article and place it on the warrant for the public hearing. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

5. Town Administrator

5.1 The Moving Wall Road Race

Vice Chairman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Panasiti, to approve the request of Marie Grella to direct a 5K Walk/Run on June 14, 2018 in the Village to benefit the Moving Wall which will be in Amherst in July 2018. Motion passed, 4-0-1 [Selectman Grella abstained].

5.2 Social Service Agencies Contributions

Selectman Akillian moved, second by Selectman Grella, to award the police cruiser bid to Irwin Automotive Group, being the lowest qualified bidder, for the amount of \$25,480, and to authorize the Town Administrator to sign all related documents on behalf of the Board of Selectmen. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0. It was noted that a cruiser was totaled during the recent October windstorm and that Primex will be covering the majority of the vehicle replacement cost through their insurance payout of \$20,875, leaving the town to pay a total of \$5,605.

5.3 New Hire - APD

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to approve the hiring of Frederick D. Hannon to the part-time position of Special Officer-Crossing Guard effective December 11, 2017. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

232
233 **6. Approvals**
234

235 **6.1 Hawkers and Vendors Application**
236

237 Vice Chairman Lyon moved, second by Selectman Grella, to approve a Hawkers and Vendors
238 application for David Theriault to sell Christmas trees in December 2017 at Moulton's Market and
239 to authorize the Chairman to sign related documents on behalf of the Board. Motion passed
240 unanimously, 5-0.

241
242 **6.2 Payroll**
243

244 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to approve one (1) FY18 Payroll
245 Manifest in the amount of \$234,109.07 dated December 7, 2017, subject to review and audit.
246 Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

247
248 **6.3 Accounts Payable**
249

250 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to approve one (1) FY18 Accounts
251 Payable Manifest in the amount of \$30,830.13 dated November 30, 2017, subject to review and
252 audit. (Town Clerk Transfers to the State of NH) Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

253
254 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Vice Chairman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY18 Accounts
255 Payable Manifest in the amount of \$414,895.22 dated November 14, 2017, subject to review and
256 audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

257
258 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Vice Chairman Lyon, to approve one (1) FY18 Accounts
259 Payable Manifest in the amount of \$2,159,545.00 dated December 18, 2017, subject to review and
260 audit. (Hillsborough County Tax Payment). Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

261
262 **6.4 Concentration Account**
263

264 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to approve one (1) FY18 Concentration
265 Account Manifest in the amount of \$5,314.09 dated November 28, 2017, subject to review and
266 audit. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

267
268 **6.5 Previous Meeting Minutes – November 27, 2017**
269

270 Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to approve the Board of Selectmen
271 meeting minutes of November 27, 2017, as presented. Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.


272
273 **7. New/Old Business**
274

275 Selectman Akillian said there was a nice article in the Amherst Cabinet regarding Strategic
276 Governance. Selectman Panasiti said the tree lighting went well with hundreds in attendance.
277 Town Administrator O'Mara mentioned a lot owned by Amherst at the Bedford/Amherst town line
278 where the culvert is compromised. The property is under the Conservation Commission's
279 management. He will check in with, and inform, the Commission of the situation.
280

8. Non Public Session

Selectman Panasiti moved, second by Selectman Akillian, to enter non-public session at 9:38 p.m.
Motion passed unanimously, 5-0.

NEXT MEETING: December 18, 2017



Selectman Reed Panasiti
Clerk, Board of Selectmen



Date