

Town of Boscawen
 Budget Committee Public Meeting
 Boscawen Municipal Complex
 February 6, 2020 at 6 p.m.

Present: Barbara Randall, Chair, Alan Hardy, Mark Varney, Roger Sanborn, Edward Cherian Jr., Lorrie Carey, Katie Phelps, Kevin Wyman, Dean Hollins, Nicole Hoyt, Sherlene (Doddy) Fisher, Bruce Crawford, Brian Fleury, Paul Dickey, Rhoda Hardy, Kellee Easler, Kearsten O'Brien, Sarah Gerlack, Sue Croft, Lawre Murphy, Gail Egounis.

Barbara Randall started the meeting at 6 pm. Ed Cherian was asked to go through the budget and Warrant Articles.

Roll call was taken. 1.23.20 Minutes were reviewed. Amendments: Page 1, line 21 'seconded by Doddy Fisher'. In the hart, line starting with 4153 Legal Expenses under the explanation column should read '...therefore increase is recommended.' Page 3, line 68 'backpack' is one word. Line 67 should read 'Questions regarding the increase in the welfare budget'. Page 4 line 106 should have a ',' after Town Forester. Page 5, line 156 should read ...Ross Express used to'. Motion to approve the Minutes as amended was made by Crawford, seconded by Croft and passed by a unanimous vote.

Ed Cherian ran through the budget. He discussed the process. In November the Selectmen met with each department to review their budgets. They reviewed them twice. Recommendations were made on some but not all the Warrant Articles. The increases were asked to be as minimal as possible.

Penacook Rescue Squad was funded through a separate Warrant Article. The towns of Canterbury and Salisbury have done the same thing. This gives the town 24/7 life service, assistance to the town, and quarterly information and audit rights.

	2020 Increase/ Decrease	Explanations
Line 4130 Executive Budget	-2%	Recommended by Select Board.
Line 4140 Town Clerk/Elections	-13%	Recommended by Select Board.
4150 Financial Admin.	+2%	Recommended by Select Board.
4151 Tax Collector	+38%	Recommended by Select Board.
4152 Assessing	+6%	Recommended by Select Board.
4153 Legal Expenses	+11%	Recommended by Select Board.
4155 Personnel Administration	+8%	Recommended by Select Board. Due to increase in Health Insurance and retirement.
4191 Planning/Community Development	-4%	Recommended by Select Board.
4193 AgCom	0%	Recommended by Select Board.

4194 Town Buildings	+47%	Recommended by Select Board. This includes new position for part time Facilities Director.
4195 Cemeteries	-14%	Recommended by Select Board.
4196 Insurance	+5%	Recommended by Select Board.
4210 Police	+2%	Recommended by Select Board.
4215 Ambulance	100%	Recommended by Select Board. This is a new line item.
4220 Fire	0%	Recommended by Select Board.
4240 Life Safety Officer	+5%	Recommended by Select Board.
4290 Emergency Management	+22%	Recommended by Select Board.
4312 Highway Streets	+4%	Recommended by Select Board.
4316 Street Lighting	0%	Recommended by Select Board.
4319 Other Highways and Streets	0%	Recommended by Select Board.
4324 Solid Waste	+1%	Recommended by Select Board.
4325 Solid Waste Clean-up	-25%	Recommended by Select Board.
4329 Other Sanitation	-17%	Recommended by Select Board.
4410 Health Dept.	-1%	Recommended by Select Board.
4441 Welfare Admin.	-1%	Recommended by Select Board.
4520 Parks and Rec.	+7%	Recommended by Select Board. For work down by the field.
4550 Boscawen Public Library	0%	Recommended by Select Board.
4583831 Old Home Day	0%	Recommended by Select Board.
453803 Town Beautification	-40%	Recommended by Select Board.
4611 Conservation Commission	+100%	Recommended by Select Board.

33
34 Article 13 – Environmental Cleanup - \$600,000 total request contingent on \$500,000 grant from
35 EPA. See Page 4 of the 2020 Warrants.

36
37 Article 14 – To Establish Creaser Town Forest - recommended by the Select Board.

38
39 Barbara Randall called the public hearing open at 6:17 pm.

40
41 Warrant Article 9 - Rick Jacques of Penacook Community Center spoke. They operate a before
42 and after school program. They have 86 children enrolled. They are asking for \$5,700. They
43 need a larger vehicle. They finished a new strategic plan and one of their goals is to find ways to
44 expand their programming. PCC has small classroom sizes. They did have an expansion plan 5
45 years ago, but that has been put on the back burner. They need to find new spaces. They'd like to
46 partner up with other schools and other places. They want to expand their infant programs. They
47 now have 8 infants. The infant program was an experiment for them when they started it a few
48 years ago. They are looking into doing more with the community. They do a lot of
49 intergenerational work. They can have volunteers at PCC, which is allowed as long as they are
50 not left alone with the children. They have now been partnering more with high school children
51 or NHTI students. They are doing more for families, and more community based work. They
52 have 39 children in their school age child program.

53

54 Warrant Article 4. Ray Fisher, the Town's retired Fire Chief spoke. He'd like to know what
55 happened to the \$30,080 that was in the capital reserve funds in 2019. He'd like to know what
56 happened to that money and why wasn't it continued. He now sees that they have \$33,000 for a
57 proposed new municipal building. Turning town hall into an emergency management facility,
58 rewiring it or putting in a power switch, even with the grant will be \$31,000. They have a fire
59 station that is generator control and would be perfect for that.

60
61 Ed Cherian explained that there was no money expended this year from the Capital Reserve Fund
62 for fire. The money is still there. Municipal buildings – they had a capital reserve fund that was
63 restricted to the HVAC system for this building. They went to the voters last year to repurpose
64 that fund. The recommendation is to have a town building reserve fund so the town can make
65 improvements and respond to needs. Ray Fisher wanted to confirm that this \$30,000 was not to
66 be put towards building a new building. Cherian said it was not. Mark Varney explained that the
67 Fire Station is set up and that will be the towns primary emergency operation center. NH
68 Homeland Security recommended that they set up an alternative EOC in case something happened
69 at the Fire Department. They can't do it through the Police Department. They thought they would
70 replace the generator at the town hall and they could use this area at the town building to be the
71 backup EOC. Varney recommended not to do that. His recommendation is to change out the
72 switch downstairs of the town building and they would have the backup EOC downstairs in the
73 motor vehicle area. There is money available by grant right now. That is why they amount for
74 the town is \$31,500 vs. \$63,000 which is the total cost. Chief Kenney and Varney have worked
75 together. If there is a true big emergency there will be a lot of activity at the Fire Department. The
76 school is for the shelter/sleeping area. They do not want the Operation Center operating out of
77 their shelter. Ray Fisher commented that the EOC doesn't have to pay their taxes.

78
79 Mike Fisher spoke. He agrees with his dad Ray Fisher. In a blizzard most workers would be told
80 to stay home so this town hall wouldn't need to be utilized. Spending more money to make another
81 place for EOC is getting beyond their means. Penacook Rescue is much needed and he is glad to
82 see it has gone through. The town needs ambulance coverage. The taxes are still going up though.
83 The school budget is going down. Little items seem to be adding up. Last year the budget was
84 cut and they got in a bit of trouble throughout the year because they cut it in the wrong places. He
85 believes the budget this year could be trimmed. He doesn't understand why they are getting an
86 EOC vehicle. They have enough town vehicles. He wants his taxes to go up a little because he is
87 a veteran and believes that the \$500.00 tax rebate for a veteran is a great idea.

88
89 Ed Cherian explained that the overall tax rate is going up. The town tax rate has gone down 3
90 years in a row. The municipal portion has gone down a couple of years and a row. In 2019 the
91 School District paid less than they were supposed to. They pay based on the number of students
92 in the school district. The District loses 1.5% of students a year. The overall district shrinks but
93 the overall costs increase. Next year they will get some State money. The generator and trucks
94 were a debate. You can't spend unlimited money on this. You want to plan for an emergency and
95 be ready for one. It's hard to tell how much revenue the Veterans Discount will impact. If the
96 same people that apply for the \$100 discount apply for the \$500 discount, that is about \$40,000 in
97 revenue lost.

98

99 Doddy Fisher asked what the tax impact would be if it were \$40,000. What does that equal?
100 Rhoda Hardy reported that according to last year's town report the war service credit was \$22,950.
101 Cherian explained that .12 per 1,000 would be the revenue loss. Doddy felt that was a minimal
102 amount to pay to someone that has given to their country. Crawford noted that the .12 would be
103 the minimal figure. They have no idea what the maximum figure would be. Hardy noted that they
104 can tell by the level of interest while they have been discussing this as they have had many
105 telephone calls. Barbara Randall noted that the surrounding towns use amounts from \$50.00 to
106 \$500.00.

107
108 Crawford has concerns with the town buildings and costs associated with upkeep. They had an
109 extraordinary expense last year dealing with roof. The write up for the Facilities Director, which
110 is supposed to be part time, states that it may turn into a full time position. When a part time
111 position becomes full time the hourly cost is doubled due to benefits, etc. There is a solid waste
112 tax in the legislature that the towns will have to pay and it will have to come out of this year's
113 budget and you will get it back next year. They might want to add some money in for that.

114 Cherian explained that this position was discussed extensively. It was determined that it be part
115 time. It will not have benefits. They are not looking at adding a full time employee. Right now
116 the Town Administrator is serving as a Facilities Director. The next Town Administrator may not
117 have those skills. They town has a lot of old buildings and a lot of deferred maintenance. Waste
118 will have to be hauled away as they won't have the capacity any longer. Cherian asked Crawford
119 to send him a link to the house bill he was discussing.

120
121 Mike Fisher is curious about the part time position. Is this position in addition to the part-time
122 janitor position that is held by Bernie Davis? Cherian explained that Bernie Davis is a Janitor.
123 This new position would help manage evaluation of buildings, improvements, and work with
124 contractors, etc.

125
126 Public hearing closed at 6:52 pm.

127
128 Voting regarding Warrant Articles began.

129
130 Warrant Article III: A **motion** to approve was made by Paul Dickey, seconded by Sue Croft and
131 passed by a unanimous vote.

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133 Warrant Article IV: A **motion** to approve was made by Paul Dickey, seconded by Brian Fleury
134 and passed by a unanimous vote.

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136 Warrant Article V: A **motion** to approve was made by Bruce Crawford, seconded by Brian Fleury
137 and passed by a unanimous vote.

138
139 Warrant Article VI: A **motion** to approve was made by Bruce Crawford, seconded by Doddy
140 Fisher, and passed by a unanimous vote.

141
142 Warrant Article VII: A **motion** to approve was made by Rhoda Hardy, seconded by Paul Dickey.
143 and passed by a unanimous vote.

144

145 Warrant Article VIII: A **motion** to approve was made by Doddy Fisher, seconded by Sue Croft
146 and passed by a unanimous vote.

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148 Warrant Article IX: A **motion** to approve was made by Paul Dickey, seconded by Rhoda Hardy
149 and passed by a unanimous vote.

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151 Warrant Article X: A **motion** to approve was made by Bruce Crawford, seconded by Paul Dickey
152 and passed by a unanimous vote.

153
154 Warrant Article XI: A **motion** to grant was made by Rhoda Hardy and failed with no second. A
155 motion to deny was made by Paul D., seconded by Crawford and carried by a 4-3 vote. Crawford
156 explained that they could recommend, not recommend or stay neutral. He thought the vote was
157 neutral. Rhoda Hardy was on the Board of Selectmen at the time that the present system was put
158 in place. Some of the things that should have been done there weren't because they didn't have
159 the money. They applied for a grant from the state for \$450,000 and they received \$375,000. The
160 reason that it went through town meeting that year was because they received the \$375,000 the
161 week before town meeting. She believes that this is something that should have been done in the
162 beginning, not just do part of the job, which is what they did. Crawford noted that there have been
163 arguments that they do not need this. The Fire Department has a full kitchen. Hardy gave an
164 example. When the power goes out they lose all connection to the outside world. The town
165 building is not on the generator. Only the Police Department continues to operate. This is part of
166 the work that wasn't done. There is no protection for the computer servers, etc. Everything will
167 shut down. Brian F. asked if that has happened a lot. Hardy said it hasn't gone down recently.
168 The IT room is behind the kitchen in the Police Department. The IT room in this building is in the
169 opposite corner. The minute the power goes off they won't have phones. Varney explained that
170 they will not have heat either to keep pipes from freezing, etc. Alan Hardy stated that this is not a
171 simple situation. Essential services would not include the library or the elevator. Crawford felt
172 that there is more ramification than what was explained. A **motion** by Rhoda Hardy to approve
173 the request, seconded by Brian and passed by a 6-1 vote with Paul in the minority.

174
175 Warrant Article XII: Randall wanted it noted that according to the tax record, \$662 was paid by
176 the church. They are asking for \$1,500. Crawford explained that they have maintenance cost.
177 Everyone uses that park except the church. Paul will vote no. A **motion** to approve was made by
178 Crawford, seconded by Doddy Fisher and passed by a 5-2 vote with Paul Dickey and Barbara
179 Randall in minority.

180
181 Warrant Article XIII: Cherian explained that most, if not all, can be met in kind expenditures, etc.
182 Cherian explained that they have an opportunity to get half a million dollars of government money
183 with no out of pocket money for the town. Crawford asked which buildings. A. Hardy explained.
184 Central NH Regional Planning Commission did an evaluation and found lead paint, contaminants,
185 etc. A **motion** to approve was made by Bruce Crawford, seconded by Paul Dickey and passed by
186 a unanimous vote.

187
188 Warrant Article XIV: No monetary value therefore no action taken.

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190 Warrant Article XV: A motion to approve was made by Paul Dickey, seconded by Sue Croft and
191 passed by a unanimous vote.

192

193 *Respectfully submitted by Rose Fife*

DRAFT