

**Town of Haverhill
Select Board
Budget Public Hearing
MINUTES**

**Monday, February 13, 2023, at 6:00 PM
R. E. Clifford Memorial Building
65 South Court St.
Woodsville, NH 03785
Or on ZOOM**

CALL TO ORDER: Vice Chair Steve Robbins called the meeting to order at 6:04 PM.

Select Board Attendance: Kevin Knapp (Here), Katie Williams (Here), Mike Graham (Here; online), and Vice Chair Steve Robbins (Here). A quorum was met.

Town Employees Present:

Town Manager (TM): Brigitte Codling
Assistant Town Manager (ATM): Jennifer Boucher
Recording Clerk: Joanna Bligh

Members of the Public Present

In Person:

Dustin and Marilyn Vigneault	Darwin Clogston	Valerie Morse
Joe and Margo Longacre	Matt and Marie Bjelobrk	Jim McKinnon
Vickie Wyman	Jay Holden	David Robinson
Marilyn Blaisdell	Dave Joslin	Steve Wheeler
Dawn Lavoie	Howard Hatch	Dottie Joy
Regis Roy	Shawn Bigelow	Shawn Dennis
	Ed Ballam	Zachary Dube
	Greg Mathieson	

Online:

Mike Graham	Robert Maccini	Sandra Willoughby
Delcia Vinnacombe	Carolyn Hofmann	Paul Hayes (<i>Caledonia Record</i>)
Joanne Young	Kathleen Vasconcelos	Justin Boulter
Guy Mitchell	Ron DeRosia	Mike Lavoie
Alex Nuti-de Biasi (<i>Journal Opinion</i>)	Gary Hebert	Colton Grant
Evelyn Elms	Fred Garofalo	
	Jake Cochran	
	Kathleen Vaillancourt	

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

AGENDA APPROVAL

MOTION #1: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the Agenda as written.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

CONSENT AGENDA

Approve minutes from the previous meetings

MOTION #2: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the Minutes from the **January 30, 2023**, and **February 7, 2023**, meetings as written.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Sign Manifests, Forms, Abatement, and Other Warrants

MOTION #3: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the Minutes from the **January 30, 2023**, and **February 7, 2023**, meetings as written.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION #4: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to close the public meeting at 6:06 PM.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION #5: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to open the Public Hearing on the Proposed Operating Budget at 6:07 PM.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Vice Chair Robbins noted that the Board will review each budget section once during the Public Hearing with public comments and the second time during the public meeting for a Board vote.

Executive (-4130.10)

Vice Chair Robbins noted that -143 Human Resource Administrator was added to Executive and replaced the Finance Clerk that was removed from Accounting & Auditing. Vice Chair Robbins added that the HR Administrator would not be hired until the study by Municipal Resources, Inc. (MRI) was complete. There were no public comments.

Town Administration (-4130.20)

No public comments.

Town Meeting (-4130.30)

No public comments.

Trustees & Trust Funds (-4130.40)

No public comments.

Town Clerk (-4140.10)

Vice Chair Robbins noted that the Town Clerk's salary increase with benefits and COLA will be put to the voters as a warrant article. There was discussion about the Deputy Town Clerk's salary increase and hourly increase to 30 hours.

Elections (-4140.20)

Vice Chair Robbins noted the two voting machines that were included in the budget for \$12,750.

Accounting & Auditing (-4150.10)

No public comments.

Tax Collection & Property (-4150.40)

No public comments.

Treasurer (-4150.50)

No public comments.

Information Technology (-4150.60)

Knapp asked about the cost and use of cell phones. Vice Chair Robbins noted that at the Budget Work Session, the Board reviewed the computer inventory, and the server will be updated in 2024.

Revaluation of Property (-4152.10)

No public comments.

Legal Expense (-4153.10)

Mathieson suggested that a new code be inserted for the settlement payments. TM Codling stated that she will put a note in the Town Report.

Benefits Not Otherwise Allocated (-4155.20)

Vice Chair Robbins noted that the health benefits renewal is in July and the Administration will be researching lower cost health benefits. Joslin noted that the Advisory Budget Committee reduced the Merit Bonuses (-190) by half. Robinson stated that during his 3 years on the Budget Committee, they discussed that health benefit savings were needed.

Planning Board (-4191.10)

No public comments.

Zoning Board (-4191.30)

No public comments.

Maintenance (-4194.30)

No public comments.

Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building (-4194.10)

No public comments.

James R. Morrill Building (-4194.20)

No public comments.

Haverhill-Bath Covered Bridge (4194.30)

No public comments.

Center Haverhill Armory (-4194.40)

No public comments.

Hazen Park (-4194.60)

No public comments.

Railroad Park (-4194.70)

No public comments.

Highway Garage (-4194.90)

No public comments.

Trails (-4194.80)

TM Codling noted that these Blackmount Trail Project costs (-430) will be included in the warrant for Town vote.

Cemeteries (4195.10)

No public comments.

Insurance Not Otherwise Allocated (-4196.10)

No public comments.

Regional Associations (-4197.10)

Bjelobrk asked if the North Country Council had any changes. TM Codling noted that the Council has new engineers to study road safety, which will align with Haverhill's Safe Streets for All grant.

Business Park (-4199.10)

Vice Chair Robbins asked if the Business Park road was maintained by the Town. TM Codling replied, "Yes," and the \$500 allocated to the Business Park goes toward mowing and maintaining the sign.

Police Department (-4210.10)

Robinson asked about the increase in Equipment (-740), and TM Codling replied that the expenses go toward the liability insurance for each officer from the Fraternal Order of the Police, which provides legal services. Holden asked about the increase in Overtime (-140). TM Codling noted that Chief Appleby explained the overtime increase due to increased training.

Ambulance (-4215.10)

Clogston commented that the ambulance staff were extremely professional during a recent call to his household, but was unable to do a transport. Vice Chair Robbins stated that NH does not consider EMS an essential service; therefore, there is little funding available. Commissioner Wheeler noted that the increase is due to transportation costs and that Medicare pays only one-third of the ambulance costs.

Fire Department (-4220.10)

No public comments.

Emergency Management (-4290.10)

No public comments.

Airport (4301.10)

Vice Chair Robbins stated that the Airport is funded differently and have \$0 tax impact. TM Codling noted that the sewer and the airport are funded from the Enterprise funds, and she will show the revenues and expenses on the same page in the Annual Report. TM Codling enumerated the revenue streams for the airport. Wyman asked to have the airport and sewer put as a warrant article for Town vote; however, Vice Chair Robbins noted that if the warrant article fails, the Town cannot spend money on these services.

Highway Department (-4312.20)

Knapp asked about the cost of the Winter snowplow assistance (-443). Wyman recommended from the Advisory Budget Committee that a rental excavator is better to use as needed. Dennis, Assistant Road Agent, stated that the department cannot be without the backhoe, but the excavator can be rented. Discussion continued relating to ditching and maintenance of equipment. Vice Chair Robbins asked if the Equipment Maintenance (-430) line item was enough. Road Agent Grant stated that a new truck is being build and will be available in 4 to 6 weeks and then the department can focus on the rotation of equipment. Discussion continued about adding one additional staff person. Grant noted that it would be easier with a sixth man because then he would not have to always be in the equipment and could have supervisory hours.

Sanitation (-4323.20)

No public comments.

Sewer Pump Station & Sewer Line (-4326.10)

Vice Chair Robbins stated that this has \$0 tax impact and is part of the Enterprise funding. Wheeler asked about the two Hookup Fees (-810). TM Codling noted that the Town is selling two lots.

Health Officer (-4411.10)

Vice Chair Robbins noted that the Town has a \$40,000 grant to clean up the Railroad St. property.

Animal Control (-4414.10)

Long commented that the former Animal Control building (East Haverhill Armory) needs the doors painted. McKinnon thanked Long for the comment.

General Assistance (-4441.10)

Vice Chair Robbins reported that Morse, Administrator, saved the Town \$500,000 in 2022 in emergency shelter costs. Morse noted that currently there is an additional \$3,500,000 available from the state for emergency shelter. TM Codling stated that Morse is working with organizations to provide workforce housing options in Haverhill. Wyman commented that the \$72,000 in the unassigned balance fund be returned to the General Assistance budget.

Parks & Recreation Department REC Administration (-4520.11)

No public comments.

Parks & Recreation Department REC HARP Staff (-4520.20)

No public comments.

Parks & Recreation Department REC HARP Operations (-4520.21)

No public comments.

Parks & Recreation Department REC All Other (-4520.50)

No public comments.

Libraries (-4550.30, .31, .32)

No public comments.

Patriotic Purposes (-4583.10)

No public comments.

Conservation Commission (-4611.20)

No public comments.

Economic Development (-4652.10)

No public comments.

Debt Service (-4700.20, .30)

No public comments.

WARRANT ARTICLES

On Ballot

Article 1 Election of Officials

No public comments.

Article 2 Adopt Revised Floodplain Ordinance

Clerk Bligh noted that title of the ordinance is Flood Prone Area Ordinance. Robinson asked if these ordinances are voted down, and TM Codling stated that FEMA will institute the regulations.

Article 3 Adopt Airport Zoning Regulations

No public comments.

Article 4 Transition to an SB2 Town

TM Codling noted that this could be placed on the ballot for Town vote. Holden suggested that this warrant be removed. Robinson noted that SB2 is good for large towns but not necessary for smaller towns. Graham suggested having Public Hearings throughout the year to disseminate more information about SB2. Bjelobrk stated that the voters may be better informed. Wheeler noted that SB2 has been voted down in the past.

WARRANT ARTICLES

At Town Meeting

Article 5 Elect Cemetery Commissioner

Vice Chair Robbins noted that Article 5 should be the results from the ballot vote of Article 1 through 4.

Article 6 Acceptance of Annual Reports

No public comments.

Article 7 Appointment of Advisory Budget Committee

No public comments.

Article 8 Operating Budget 2023

No public comments.

Article 9 Vehicle CRF

No public comments.

Article 10 Fire Vehicle CRF

Ballam asked to have the amount doubled considering the high cost of a fire vehicle.

Article 11 Buildings CRF

No public comments.

Article 12 Parks & Recreation Facility Development CRF

No public comments.

Article 13 Police Vehicle CRF

No public comments.

Article 14 Discontinue Tannery Road

TM Codling stated that this was recommended by the Road Agent, and Vice Chair Robbins stated that during a Public Hearing no one showed up.

Article 15 Discontinue Anderson Lane

No public comments.

Article 16 Upgrades to the Blackmount Trail

No public comments.

Article 17a Select Board Authority to Acquire and Sell Land, Buildings, or Both

ATM Boucher stated that this is related to the properties that are not tax deeded and that the Town actually owns, which are listed in the next article.

Article 17b Select Board Authority to Sell Land

Hatch stated that he has a 20-year lease on Map 406, Lot 003.

Article 18 Purchase/Lease Highway Equipment

Wyman stated that this article will be removed.

Article 19 Highway Equipment – Equipment Trailer

No public comments.

Article 20 Readopt the Optional Veterans Tax Credit

ATM Boucher announced that the state expanded the tax credit criteria to include active military.

Article 21 Petitioned Article – Second Chance Animal Rescue

No public comments.

Article 22 Petitioned Article – Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc.

No public comments.

Article 23 Petitioned Article – North Country Home Health & Hospice

No public comments.

Article 24 Petitioned Article – Horse Meadow Senior Center

No public comments.

Article 25 Petitioned Article – WISE

No public comments.

Article 26 Petitioned Article – Tri County Community Action Program

No public comments.

Article 27 Petitioned Article – Good Shepherd Ecumenical Food Pantry

Ballam stated that he would like to double the amount requested. ATM Boucher replied that the petitions are amended on the floor of Town Meeting.

Article 28 Petitioned Article – Court Street Arts

No public comments.

Article 29 Petitioned Article – Cottage Hospital

No public comments.

Article 30 Petitioned Article – Distribution of Precinct Taxes

Vice Chair Robbins stated that the Town pays the district portion. ATM Boucher noted that if the amount is less than \$100,000.

Article 30' Petitioned Article – Remove Town Manager

Vice Chair Robbins stated that this article is advisory only.

Article 31 Petitioned Article – Fund the Woodsville Highway Department

Blanchard asked the Board if they will vote to support this article. Clogston asked the tax impact of this article and asked what Woodsville pays in taxes to the Town.

Article 32 Petitioned Article – Fund the Woodsville Fire Department

Vice Chair Robbins reported that \$50,000 in legal fees are included in these two warrant articles. Blanchard asked to see the Woodsville Fire Department budget, which TM Codling provided. Blanchard noted \$30,000 in legal fees and \$70,000 towards a ladder truck. Hebert stated though CHAT that secret ballots are allowed by law for any article.

Article 33 Take Any Action

No public comments.

MOTION #6: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to close the Public Hearing on the Proposed Operating Budget at 9:26 PM.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

MOTION #7: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to resume the public meeting at 9:27 PM.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

BUDGET VOTE BY THE SELECT BOARD

Executive (-4130.10)

The Board and Administration discussed the COLA increases for Town employees. TM Codling had a worksheet of percentage of COLA increases vs. overall budget increases. For a 3.5% COLA increase with no merit increase, the budget impact will be an increase of \$20,743 and with SS, Medicare, and retirement, the increase is \$25,933.

MOTION #8: Knapp made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the Executive budget of \$191,348.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Town Clerk (-4140.10)

The Board and the Administration recalculated the Town Clerk's wage increase to include COLA and recalculated the total Town Clerk's budget as \$88,644.

MOTION #9: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the Town Clerk's total budget of \$88,644.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Total Operating Budget

MOTION #10: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Town of Haverhill's total budget of \$5,129,822.

Voice Vote: Three approved, one opposed, none abstained. The motion passed.

SELECT BOARD VOTE ON WARRANT ARTICLES

On Ballot

- Vice Chair Robbins suggested that the Select Board does not recommend or not recommend or post the vote results on the Warrant Articles.

Article 4 Transition to an SB2 Town

- Williams stated that this should not be on the warrant.
- Graham suggested that more information be gathered at another Public Hearing.

- Knapp suggested the SB2 be tabled until another Public Hearing.

WARRANT ARTICLES

At Town Meeting

Article 8 Operating Budget 2023

MOTION #11: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Town of Haverhill's total budget of \$5,129,822 and a 3.5% COLA for Town staff.

Voice Vote: Three approved, one opposed, none abstained. The motion passed.

Article 9 Vehicle CRF

MOTION #12: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Vehicle CRF of \$10,000.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 10 Fire Vehicle CRF

MOTION #13: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Fire Vehicle CRF of \$20,000.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 11 Buildings CRF

MOTION #14: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve Buildings CRF of \$20,000.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 12 Parks & Recreation Facility Development CRF

MOTION #15: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the Parks & Recreation Facility Development CRF of \$10,000.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 13 Police Vehicle CRF

MOTION #16: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve Police Vehicle CRF of \$20,000.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 14 Discontinue Tannery Road

MOTION #17: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to discontinue Tannery Road.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 15 Discontinue Anderson Lane

MOTION #18: Knapp made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to discontinue Anderson Lane.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 16 Upgrades to the Blackmount Trail

MOTION #19: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve upgrades to the Blackmount Trail.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 17a Select Board Authority to Acquire and Sell Land, Buildings, or Both

MOTION #20: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to remove Article 17a from the warrant.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 17b Select Board Authority to Sell Land

MOTION #21: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve selling the listed properties except for Map 406, Lot 003, which is a leased property.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 18 Purchase/Lease Highway Equipment

MOTION #22: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve removing Article 18 from the warrant.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 19 Highway Equipment – Equipment Trailer

MOTION #23: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve this article with amendments from the Road Agent.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 20 Readopt the Optional Veterans Tax Credit

MOTION #24: Knapp made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the optional veterans tax credit article.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article XX Town Clerk

MOTION #25: Knapp made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the addition to the salary amounting to \$3,623 for the Town Clerk with a 35-hour work week and benefits.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 21 Petitioned Article – Second Chance Animal Rescue

MOTION #26: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$2,750 to Second Chance Animal Rescue.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 22 Petitioned Article – Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc.

MOTION #27: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$6,800 to Ammonoosuc Community Health Services, Inc.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 23 Petitioned Article – North Country Home Health & Hospice

MOTION #28: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$15,000 to North Country Home Health & Hospice.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 24 Petitioned Article – Horse Meadow Senior Center

MOTION #29: Vice Chair Robbins made the motion and Williams seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$25,000 to Horse Meadow Senior Center.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 25 Petitioned Article – WISE

MOTION #30: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$500 to WISE.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 26 Petitioned Article – Tri County Community Action Program

MOTION #31: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$9,170 to Tri County Community Action Program.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 27 Petitioned Article – Good Shepherd Ecumenical Food Pantry

MOTION #32: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$4,585 to Good Shepherd Ecumenical Food Pantry.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 28 Petitioned Article – Court Street Arts

MOTION #33: Williams made the motion and Vice Chair Robbins seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$7,500 to Court Street Arts.

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 29 Petitioned Article – Cottage Hospital

MOTION #34: Williams made the motion and Knapp seconded the motion to approve the appropriation of \$25,500 to Cottage Hospital (with amended language).

Voice Vote: All approved, none opposed, none abstained. The motion passed unanimously.

Article 30 Petitioned Article – Distribution of Precinct Taxes

No vote required.

