

**TOWN OF WOLFEBORO
BUDGET COMMITTEE
APPROVED MINUTES
January 11, 2023**

I. Call To Order

Chairman MacDonald opened the meeting at 7:02 pm at the Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall.

Members Present: John MacDonald, Chairman, Bob Tougher, Vice-Chairman, John Burt, Bob Loughman, Brian Black, Tom Bell, Bob Moholland, Matt Plache, Members, Brian Deshaies, BOS Representative, Linda Murray, BOS Alternate Representative.

Member Absent: Steve Johnson, Members (excused).

Staff Present: Jim Pineo, Town Manager, Kathy Carpentier, Finance Director, Lee Ann Hendrickson, Administrative Assistant.

The Committee participated in the pledge of allegiance.

II. Public Hearing - Warrant Articles

Public Safety Building Renovation and Expansion; \$12,500,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Moholland and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Public Safety Building Renovation and Expansion warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Libby Museum Renovation and Expansion Project; \$4,000,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Suzanne Ryan stated the CIP Committee voted seven in favor of the project and the Heritage Commission unanimously supports the project and forwarded a letter to the BOS.

Jody Persson stated he doesn't believe the \$2.2 million has been raised and feels it is irresponsible to move forward without having the total amount raised.

John MacDonald asked Mr. Pearson if he would think differently if he knew the funds had been raised.

Jody Persson replied no.

Tom Bell stated there is a co-sharing agreement between the Town and the Libby Museum.

John Wilkins, Treasurer, Friends of the Libby Museum stated there is a partnership between the Friends of the Libby Museum and the Trustees; noting a memorandum of understanding was developed. He stated the original agreement included a 70/30 split however, due to inflation in the cost to construct the \$2.2 million was the most the Friends of the Libby Museum could contribute to the total project cost.

Bob Loughman confirmed the \$2.2 million has been secured.

John Wilkins stated \$2 million has been raised.

Bob Loughman stated the Town has increased their commitment by 14% with a 55/44 split.

Brian Black stated the question was raised as to what would happen if the Friends didn't raise the \$2.2 million.

Linda Murray stated the bank would not guarantee bonding if the \$2.2 million was not secured.

Matt Plache stated he sees the project as a want and not a need.

It was moved by John MacDonald and seconded by Brian Black to recommend the Libby Museum Renovation and Expansion Project.

Discussion of the motion:

Suzanne Ryan stated the warrant article reads "not more than \$1.4 million" and noted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) exists as to the amount that is raised. She stated that if the warrant article passes and the Friends do not have the funds, the BOS doesn't have to move forward if there is an imperative reason not to.

John MacDonald stated the Town Hall and Library has had partnerships with the "friends" that have raised money for projects. He stated he feels the Friends of the Libby wants to do this for the community and feels it is a project worth supporting. He asked the Committee to support the motion to recommend.

Brian Black stated a good point was made at the Budget Committee meeting the night prior - a succession plan is included in the project. He stated the Town has a responsibility to the building (per the trust). He stated that if the project were to move forward and the building was made more viable that the Friends of the Libby Museum would gain ownership; noting there would be less responsibility for the Town in the future.

Matt Plache stated it would be great if the Friends took over the building however, he doubts they will take over the bonds. He stated he doesn't think the Finance Act contemplates municipal bonds being issued to support something the Town doesn't own. He stated a legal opinion regarding such has not been provided.

John Wilkins stated In 1956 the previous trustees succeeded the Town voters and the Town voted to accept the responsibility of the trust. He stated the Friends have developed a long term business plan to move the operations of the museum from the Town to the Friends.

Jim Pineo stated the Town contacted bond counsel and it was concluded that the project could be bonded.

John Burt questioned the 70/30 agreement.

Jim Pineo stated an agreement was in place regarding a 70/30 split between the BOS and Friends of the Libby Museum however, there is language in the MOU that states the agreement does not include escalation. He stated the BOS decided to place the project on the warrant and vote in favor 4-0-1.

Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – no, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – no, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – no, Bob Loughman – no. The motion failed (3-5-0).

It was moved by Bob Tougher and second by Bob Loughman to not recommend the Libby Museum Renovation and Expansion Project. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – no, Tom Bell – no, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – no, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (5-3-0).

Water Main Replacement South Main Street at Center Street to Smith River Bridge; \$2,000,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Moholland and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Water Main Replacement South Main Street at Center Street to Smith River Bridge warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Sewer Line Extension – Forest and Varney Roads; \$1,000,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Tom Bell to recommend the Sewer Line Extension – Forest and Varney Roads warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – no, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (6-2-0).

Municipal Electric Boat; \$170,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Moholland and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Municipal Electric Boat warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Mini Excavator; \$130,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the Mini Excavator warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Sewer Pump Station Upgrades; \$648,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Tom Bell to recommend the Sewer Pump Station Upgrades warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Police Vehicle Replacement; \$66,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Tom Bell and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Police Vehicle Replacement warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – no. The motion passed (6-2-0).

AFSCME Contract; \$107,733

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the AFSCME Contract warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Police Union Contract; \$64,780

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Tom Bell to recommend the Police Union Contract warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Town Road Upgrades; \$850,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Bob Moholland to recommend the Town Road Upgrades warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Green Street Upgrades; \$530,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the Green Street Upgrades warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes. The motion passed (8-0-0).

Veteran Tax Credit

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Tom Bell and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Veteran Tax Credit warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – abstain, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – abstain, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – abstain. The motion passed (5-0-3).

School Resource Officer; \$72,706

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Suzanne Ryan asked if other towns are contributing to such since the School Resource Officer (SRO) is for the Kingswood campus, noting such is a cooperative school district.

John MacDonald stated other towns would be contributing through their school taxes.

Suzanne Ryan stated the Wolfeboro taxpayers are getting taxed twice.

Brian Black confirmed that a part-time SRO is currently being funded at the two elementary schools and asked why such is a priority over the middle school position that is being sought. He questioned why the part-time position couldn't be utilized at the middle school.

Shawn Coope stated Carpenter School and Crescent Lake School are not part of the regional district and responsible by only the Wolfeboro taxpayers. He stated he disagrees with the statement of paying taxes twice because the cost is being shared by the entire school district. He stated the district is paying for the officer while school is in session. He stated the school board has a warrant article that mimics the Town's warrant article and noted that if one of the articles fails, the position fails.

Brodie Deshaies stated Carpenter and Crescent Lake Schools are paid for by all the taxpayers of all six towns.

Dean Rondeau stated the Police Commission wanted to repurpose the juvenile officer into an SRO. He stated the position is needed.

Steve Johnson entered the meeting remotely at 8:23 pm and noted he is present and alone in the room.

Mark Livie stated the offenses in the schools have increased significantly and Officer Devine requested help.

Bob Loughman confirmed the analysis that was provided to the Committee included both the middle school and high school.

John Burt asked if any other towns have warrant articles for the position.

Mark Livie stated the SAU has a warrant article that mimics the Town's warrant article.

Bob Loughman asked if the position would be an increase in staffing for the Police Department.

Mark Livie replied yes, the position would be considered as an additional officer.

Bob Loughman questioned the non-school year cost when the SRO is acting as a police officer.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$39,000 for the summer months when the SRO is working as a police officer and not at the school.

Jody Persson stated he feels this is the most important warrant article and supports the article.

Luke Freudenberg, 68 Center Street, stated at the school board meeting SRO Devine spoke about her role in the school and the connections that are made in the schools with the students. He stated he supports leading the way in school safety 100 percent.

Suzanne Ryan stated her comments are not about the need or lack of security rather, her comments are directed to representing the costs clearly. She stated the Town under the State law are a cooperative school district therefore, the Town will be in the pot with the district's warrant article with the other towns in addition to Wolfeboro's warrant article. She stated she is opposed to the way the article is represented and financed and not opposed to school safety. She disagreed with bundling positions and if another officer is needed then hire another police officer and not bundle it with the SRO position.

Mark Livie stated the district is getting taxed when the officer is at the school; noting the district pays for such. He stated the SRO comes back to the Town for patrol when school is not in session.

Kathy Carpentier stated the cost for the police officer during the summer months to the Town (summer policing) is \$39,000 and the Town is paying \$32,000 for the SRO position. She stated the SAU is paying \$55,000 for the SRO position (the SAU will pay the Town \$55,000 (coming out of the gross appropriation of the school) for the SRO position).

Brodie Deshaies stated it is his understanding that the school district only pays for the hours that the SRO is working at the school. He stated the school district expects the SRO to work 8 hours/day however, if the SRO works less than 8 hours/day then it is prorated quarterly. He stated the Town pays 35% of the school district's budget.

Linda Murray explained the breakdown of the taxes.

Tom Bell confirmed that \$55,000 will be coming back to the Town from the school district.

Matt Plache agreed with Jody Pearson and Luke Freudenberg's comments and stated there is nothing more important than protecting our children and it only takes one incident. He stated the protection is needed.

John MacDonald asked Mr. Plache if he would support funding a Deputy Sheriff to go to the schools within the district and asked what makes Wolfeboro different from the other communities.

Matt Plache stated he wouldn't oppose having a Deputy Sheriff at other schools and stated such is up to the sheriff and delegation to fund such.

John Burt stated the first target of a gunmen would be the SRO.

Bob Tougher stated he reviewed the data that was put out by the NH Department of Education and noted that during the 2021-2022 school year at the middle school there was very little activity during the school year that would have required police assistance. He stated the school district does not have a security force of their own and there is a great deal of data available that instructs school districts on how to secure their buildings. He stated a school district would be best served to have their own security and doesn't feel there is enough activity in the middle school to warrant a full time SRO. He noted the population of the middle school is approximately half the population of the high school.

John MacDonald noted that Steve Johnson has been present for the discussion.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Matt Plache to recommend the School Resource Officer warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – no, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – no, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – no, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion failed (4-5-0).

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to not recommend the School Resource Officer warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – no, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – no, Matt Plache – no, Bob Loughman – no, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (5-4-0).

Fire Truck Lease Purchase; \$850,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman confirmed that the warrant article replaced the capital reserve fund appropriation.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the Fire Truck Lease Purchase warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

Public Works Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Funding; \$300,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman questioned the balance of fund.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$34,078.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Public Works Vehicle and Equipment Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John

MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson - no. The motion passed (8-1-0).

Sidewalk Capital Reserve Funding; \$75,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman questioned the balance of the fund.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$66,804.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the Sidewalk Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson - yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Funding; \$50,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman questioned the balance of the fund.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$116,563.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Loughman to recommend the Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson - no. The motion passed (8-1-0).

Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Reserve Funding; \$200,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman questioned the balance of the fund.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$0.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by John Burt to recommend the Wastewater Treatment Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson - yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

Water Resources Non-Capital Reserve Funding; \$100,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Brian Black to recommend the Water Resources Non-Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – abstain, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – no, Steve Johnson - yes. The motion passed (7-1-1).

Abenaki Ski Area Capital Reserve Funding; \$25,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Loughman to recommend the Abenaki Ski Area Capital Reserve Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes,

Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

Tree Removal and Replacement Expendable Trust Funding; \$125,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Loughman to recommend the Tree Removal and Replacement Expendable Trust Funding warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – no, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – no. The motion passed (7-2-0).

Warmth and More Fund;

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Loughman to recommend the Warmth and More Fund warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

Petition Warrant Article – Carpenter School; \$50,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Brian Deshaies stated he worked at Carpenter School as a paraprofessional for fourteen years and saw the playground deteriorate over time. He stated the playground is used by all the community and it is time they get help to replace the playground.

John MacDonald questioned the total cost of the project.

Brian Deshaies stated he doesn't know.

Brodie Deshaies stated the original proposal was \$150,000.

John MacDonald confirmed the district is not contributing to the project.

Brian Black questioned the BOS' vote for the project.

Jim Pineo stated the BOS was advised by counsel to not take a position on the petition warrant article.

Bob Loughman stated he has an issue with the BOS not voting on the warrant article and doesn't appreciate such.

Steve Johnson stated the warrant article should fall under the Governor Wentworth Regional School District's budget.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Moholland to recommend Petition Warrant Article (Carpenter School). Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – no, Bob Loughman – no, Steve Johnson – no. The motion passed (5-4-0).

Petition Warrant Article – Cate Park; \$81,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

Bob Loughman questioned the balance of the sidewalk capital reserve fund.

Kathy Carpentier replied \$66,804 and noted the Budget Committee just approved an additional appropriation of \$75,000.

Bob Loughman stated the project should be included as a sidewalk improvement and should be covered under the sidewalk capital reserve funding.

Bob Tougher disagreed with Mr. Loughman's comment and stated there is not enough funds in the capital reserve fund to repair the existing sidewalks. He stated he is handicapped and appreciates the article.

John MacDonald questioned the type of construction proposed.

Jim Pineo replied concrete.

John MacDonald asked if there would be an impact to the parking lot if the sidewalk were constructed.

Jim Pineo replied no.

Matt Plache asked if the project would be bid.

Jim Pineo replied yes.

Steve Johnson stated the project would be a second access to Cate Park and feels it can wait.

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Tom Bell to recommend Petition Warrant Article (Cate Park). Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson - no. The motion passed (8-1-0).

Petition Warrant Article – Town Beautification/Landscaping \$50,000

Jim Pineo read said warrant article.

John MacDonald asked Christine Collins her position on the warrant article.

Christine Collins supports the article and noted that it has been difficult to maintain the gardener position that was approved a couple of years ago. She reviewed the locations of the areas to be included in the landscaping efforts.

John MacDonald asked when she was approached about the petition warrant article.

Christine Collins replied two weeks ago.

John MacDonald asked if the article passes whether it would be an annual appropriation.

Jim Pineo replied no.

Brian Black expressed concern for the precedent being set by voting on petition warrant articles.

Christine Collins stated she sees it as an opportunity to receive assistance from a landscaper; noting there is not enough staffing to address the issue.

Bob Loughman agreed with Brian Black's comment.

It was moved by Bob Loughman and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend Petition Warrant Article (Town Beautification/Landscaping). Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – no, John MacDonald – no, Tom Bell – no, Bob Moholland – no, Brian Black – no, Matt Plache – no, Bob Loughman – no, Steve Johnson – no. The motion failed (1-8-0).

It was moved by Bob Tougher and seconded by Bob Moholland to not recommend Petition Warrant Article (Town Beautification/Landscaping). Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – no, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (8-1-0).

Operating Budget; \$31,226,190

It was moved by Tom Bell and seconded by Bob Tougher to recommend the Operating Budget warrant article. Roll call vote: Bob Tougher – yes, John Burt – yes, John MacDonald – yes, Tom Bell – yes, Bob Moholland – yes, Brian Black – yes, Matt Plache – yes, Bob Loughman – yes, Steve Johnson – yes. The motion passed (9-0-0).

III. Other Business

None.

IV. Public Comment

None.

V. Adjournment

It was moved by John Burt and seconded by Bob Tougher to adjourn the January 11, 2023 Wolfeboro Budget Committee meeting. All members voted in favor. The motion passed.

There being no further business before the Committee, the meeting adjourned at 9:36 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lee Ann Hendrickson

Lee Ann Hendrickson