

TOWN OF WOLFEBORO DELIBRATIVE SESSION
Minutes
February 6, 2024
Great Hall, Wolfeboro Town Hall

Being 7:00 PM Moderator Randy Walker called the session to order. He entertained the Pledge of Allegiance.

➤ ***Welcome and Introductions***

Moderator Walker introduced the following Town Officials present this evening:

Budget Committee members: Chairman John MacDonald, Bob Molholland, Bob Loughman, Paul O'Brien, Bob Tougher, Tom Bell, Bobbi Boudman and Brian Black.

Board of Selectmen members: Chairman Brad Harriman, Vice-Chair Luke Freudenberg, Linda Murray, Dave Senecal and Brian Deshaies.

Staff and others: Town Clerk Patricia Waterman, Town Manager James S. Pineo, Finance Director Kathryn Carpentier, Electric Department Director Barry Muccio, Public Works Director Steve Randall, Water & Sewer Superintendent Rod Dempsey, Fire Chief Tom Zotti, Deputy Fire Chief Nate Nichols, Police Chief Chris Warren, Police Captain Mark Livie, Tax Collector Brenda LaPointe, Parks & Recreation Director Christine Collins, Director of Operations of Abenaki and Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Arena Chuck Smith, Planning and Development Director Tavis Austin, Library Director Alison Rutley and Town Counsel Nathan Fennessey.

Moderator Walker explained the process of the Deliberative Session and the purpose of the meeting is to determine the form of the articles for the ballot on March 12, 2024. He stated there are 25 warrant articles in total and they will not discuss Articles, 1-3 (1 relates to the election of candidates and 2 - 3 are relative to Planning and Zoning articles which already had their own public hearings).

Warrant Articles

Article 4: Port Wedlen Drainage Upgrade (additional funding)

Moderator Walker read the Warrant Article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$769,710 for the purpose of securing drainage easements in Port Wedeln and for engineering and construction of an adequate stormwater drainage system. Further to authorize the issuance of \$769,710 in bonds or notes for this project in accordance with the provisions of RSA 33, the Municipal Finance Act. Also to further authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell, and deliver such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon, and the maturity, and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to participate in the State Revolving Loan Fund (SRLF) RSA 486:14 established for this purpose and to allow the Board of Selectmen to accept such monies as become available from the Federal and State governments and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any action or to pass any other vote relating thereto.

This project was approved by the voters in 2022 in the amount of \$430,290 (Warrant Article 14). With \$231,203 in bonds or notes and \$199,087 in funds from American Rescue Plan Act. This Warrant Article, if approved, will provide the additional funds needed to complete the project for a total amount of \$1,200,000.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2025 \$0.03 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2026 \$0.03 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 7-1
3/5 Ballot Vote Required

Linda Murray introduced the article. She read the following amendment to be included after the last sentence of the first paragraph; "Also, no construction can start until 1) The Port Wedlen Association has signed an agreement to pay the Town \$100,000 for the stormwater drainage system 2) The Town has in hand all signed easements."

It was moved and seconded to amend Article 4 as read above.

DISCUSSION:

A discussion was held relative to the amendment.

It was moved and seconded to amend the amendment to include "by December 31, 2025" (at the end of sentence one). Majority in favor, the motion passed.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint summarizing the project.

Discussion on the project.

It was moved and seconded to amend Article 4 to include the language "not to exceed" in the first line before \$769,710.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pineo clarified they would only bond that amount.

Motion to amend was withdrawn.

It was moved and seconded to amend Article 4 to include the language "not to exceed" in the last line before \$1,200,000. The majority was in favor, the motion passed.

Mrs. Murray noted she'd like to amend the date above to December 31, 2030.

It was moved and seconded to amend Article 4 changing the date to December 31, 2030. The majority opposed; the motion failed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as amended.

It was moved and seconded to restrict consideration of Warrant Article 4. The majority was in favor, the motion passed.

Article 5: Operating Budget

Moderator Walker read the article as follows.

Shall the Town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by the vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling \$34,372,097. Should this article be defeated the operating budget shall be \$33,300,799 which is the same as last year's operating budget, with certain adjustments required by the 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.

Estimated Tax Rate: 2024 \$6.34 per \$1,000 of Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 7-1

John MacDonald introduced the article summarizing the proposed budget and significant changes.

Steve Johnson addressed Article 5 and commended the work done by the Budget Committee, Town Manager and Board of Selectmen, but he feels more could be cut and proposed the following amendment:

It was moved and seconded to amend Warrant Article 5 reducing the proposed budget by \$96,416 to \$ 34, 275,681.00.

DISCUSSION:

Mr. Pineo clarified this would be from the General Fund and not the enterprise funds?

Mr. Johnson replied correct.

More discussion was had on the proposed decrease.

It was moved and second to move the question. The majority being not in favor of the amendment, the motion failed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

It was moved and seconded to move up discussion of Article 24.

Suzanne Ryan stated she feels this article should be located on the ballot after the Operating Budget to let the voters know there is a solution should the budget fail and the Town be under Default Budget.

Article 24: 911 Ambulance Municipal Operations Contract

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500,000, without further action by town meeting, for purpose of a 911 Ambulance Municipal Operations Contract should the Warrant Article for the 2024 Operating Budget fail, and the town enter into a Default Budget.

This Warrant Article shall be null and void if the Town passes the 2024 Operating Budget Warrant that includes ambulance funding.

(Submitted by Petition)

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.21 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 7-0-1

Discussion of the petition Warrant Articles purpose incurred.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration on any prior Warrant Articles. The majority was in favor, the motion passed.

Article: 6 Town Road Upgrades

Moderator Walker read the article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$700,000 for the purpose of upgrading and engineering Town roads and drainage systems. This appropriation is non-lapsing pursuant to RSA 32:7, VI and shall lapse on December 31, 2025, or upon completion of the project, whichever occurs first.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.29 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Brad Harriman introduced the article.

Steve Randall reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

Kayla Hewitt addressed the Article and noted the amount has reduced over the past few years and based on prior storm damages she feels, an increase is needed to this line.

It was moved and seconded to increase Article 6 to \$900,000.

Discussion incurred on the increase.

Being majority in favor, the amendment passed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as amended.

Article 7: Ambulance Service Evaluation

Moderator Walker read the article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of hiring a consultant to evaluate whether the Town should operate a Fire-Rescue Department based Ambulance Service or should maintain contracted Ambulance Service.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.01 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 4-1

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-2

Linda Murray introduced the article.

Mr. Pineo summarized the PowerPoint.

Discussion incurred on the Article.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article: 8 South Main Street Center Street to Smith River Bridge

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 for the purpose of engineering a replacement sewer line from South Main Street at Pickering Corner to the Smith River Bridge. This appropriation is non-lapsing pursuant to RSA 32:7, VI and shall lapse on December 31, 2025, or upon completion of the project whichever occurs first.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.08 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0 Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 9-0

3/5 Majority Vote Required

Luke Freudenberg introduced the article and summarized the purpose.

Steve Randall reviewed the PowerPoint.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

ARTICLE: 9 Maplewood and Highland Terrace Water Main Installation

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$200,000 for the purpose of installing 800 feet of new 8-inch waterline between Maplewood and Highland Terrace. This appropriation is non-lapsing pursuant to RSA 32:7, VI and shall lapse on December 31, 2025, or upon completion of the project whichever occurs first. This project shall be paid for by the Water Enterprise Fund and will not result in any increase in the tax rate.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0 Recommended by
the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Dave Senecal introduced the article and summarized the purpose.

Steve Randall reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 10: Jockey Cove Stormwater Engineering

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of engineering a drainage system from Sewall Road down the Jockey Cove side of Forest Road to the Carry (Map and Lot 228-048). This appropriation is non-lapsing pursuant to RSA: 32:7, VI and shall lapse on December 31, 2025, or upon completion of the project whichever occurs first.

Further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept monies as they become available from the Federal and State governments or through donations and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to take any other actions or to pass any other vote relating thereto, and to authorize the Town Manager to sign any relating documents.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.01 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Linda Murray introduced the Article.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration of the previous articles, being majority in favor, the motion passed.

Article 11: Municipal Electric Bucket Truck Replacement

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$400,000 for the purpose of replacing the 2014 Municipal Electric Department ME-3 Bucket Truck and associated equipment. The amount of \$400,000 shall be funded by the Electric Enterprise Fund. This appropriation is non-lapsing pursuant to RSA 32:7, VI and shall lapse on December 31, 2025, or upon completion of the project whichever occurs first. This project shall be paid for by the Electric Enterprise Fund and will not result in any increase in the tax rate.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Brian Deshaies introduced the article.

Barry Muccio reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 12: Parks & Recreation Tractor Purchase

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 for the purpose of purchasing a new Parks and Recreation Tractor with attachments.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.04 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 3-2
Not Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 6-2

Luke Freudenberg introduced the article.

Christine Collins introduced Jim Aponas, Maintenance Supervisor, to summarize the request for the tractor.

It was moved and seconded to decrease the request from \$100,000 to \$0.

Discussion incurred on the tractor and the question was moved.

Being the majority against the amendment, it failed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 13: Police Vehicle Replacement

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$74,000 for the purchase of a Police cruiser replacement vehicle and ancillary vehicle equipment with \$3,000 from the Police Detail Revolving Fund created by Article 23 in 2006 which has accumulated from special details with the remainder to come from general taxation.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.03 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 5-3

Brian Deshaies introduced the article.

Captain Livie reviewed the PowerPoint.

Discussion incurred.

It was moved and seconded to amend the article from \$74,000 to \$0; being majority against the amendment, the amendment failed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration on the previous articles, being majority in favor, the motion passed.

Article 14: Public Works Vehicles and equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$380,000 to be added to the existing Public Works Vehicles and Equipment Capital Reserve Fund which is under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with Selectmen designated as agents to expend.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.16 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Dave Senecal introduced the article.

Steve Randall reviewed the PowerPoint.

Discussion incurred on the Article.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 15: Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the existing Building Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund which is under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with Selectmen designated as agents to expend this Capital Reserve Fund.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.02 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Brian Deshaies introduced the article.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as amended.

Article 16: Water Resources Non-Capital Reserve Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the existing Non-Capital Reserve Fund which are under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with the Selectmen as agents to expend from this Non-Capital Reserve Fund.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.02 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Linda Murray introduced the article.

Discussed incurred on the Article.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 17: Abenaki Ski Area Capital Reserve Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the existing Abenaki Capital Reserve Fund which is under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with Selectmen designated as agents to expend.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.01 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Dave Senecal introduced the article.

Chuck Smith reviewed the PowerPoint.

Discussion incurred on the Article.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration on the previous articles, being majority in favor, the motion passed.

Article 18: Tree Removal & Replacement Expendable Trust Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be placed in the existing Tree Removal and Replacement Expendable Trust Fund which are under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with the Selectmen designated as agents to expend.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.01 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0 Recommended by
the Budget Committee by a vote of 7-1

Brad Harriman introduced the article.

Steve Randall reviewed the PowerPoint.

It was moved and seconded to amended Article 18 to designate \$15,000 for tree removal and \$10,000 for replacement of trees.

Sabet Stroman stated she would like to ensure some replacement is done.

Discussion incurred.

Being majority against the amendment, it failed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 19: Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Reserve Fund

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$175,000 to be added to the existing Wastewater Treatment Plant Capital Reserve Fund which is under the custody of the Trustees of Trust Funds with Selectmen designated as agents to expend this Capital Reserve Fund. This appropriation will come from taxation.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.07 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0
Recommended by the Budget Committee by a vote of 8-0

Linda Murray introduced the article.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

It was moved and seconded to increase the \$175,000 request to \$275,000.

Discussion incurred and Suzanne Ryan withdrew the amendment.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 20: Bingo

Moderator read the next article as follows:

Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 287-E relative to the conduct of games of bingo and the sale of lucky 7 tickets?

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Brian Deshaies introduced the article.

Christine Collins reviewed the PowerPoint.

Discussion incurred.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 21: Historical Society Lease

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to lease the Clark Museum Complex to include Buildings and land located on South Main Street (Wolfeboro Tax Map 231 Lot Number 054) to the Wolfeboro Historical Society, a New Hampshire non-profit corporation, for a period of ten (10) years with the option of the Historical Society to renew the lease for a second ten (10) year term, and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to negotiate the terms and conditions of said lease. This lease shall become effective on or about July 30, 2026, and shall expire on or about July 29, 2036. The optional renewal period would be negotiated by the Board of Selectmen and would run from on or about July 30, 2036, and shall expire on or about July 29, 2046. The area to be leased shall be 49,407 Square feet bound by East Clark Road, the sidewalk along South Main Street, Clark Road, and the Clark Park Parking lot. The parking lot is excluded from this lease.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 5-0

Brad Harriman introduced the article.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 22: Pop Whalen Ice & Arts Center Locker Room Leases

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the Town will authorize the Wolfeboro Board of Selectmen to enter into a 40-year Locker Room Use Agreement with the Back Bay Hockey Association for exclusive rights to use one locker room at the Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Center, to enter into a 40-year Locker Room Use Agreement with the Friends of Kingswood Hockey for exclusive rights to use two locker rooms at the Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Center, and to enter into a 40-year Locker Room Use Agreement with Brewster Academy for exclusive rights to use two locker rooms at the Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Center. These proposed agreements are intended to extend the current 5-year Locker Room Use Agreements that the Board of Selectmen has previously entered into with these organizations. The extensions of the proposed Locker Room Use Agreements will not impact the tax rate.

Estimated Tax Rate Impact: 2024 \$0.00 per \$1,000 Assessed Valuation
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen by a vote of 4-0

Luke Freudenberg introduced the article.

Mr. Pineo reviewed the PowerPoint presentation.

Discussion incurred on the Article.

It was moved and seconded to amend the number of years of the lease from 40 to 10.

Discussion occurred on the amendment and the question was moved.

Being the majority against the amendment, the motion failed.

More discussion was had on the Article.

It was moved and seconded to terminate debate on this Article and being majority in favor, the motion passed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 23: Reaffirm 2002 Warrant Article 16 Surplus Policy

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

To see if the town will vote to reaffirm 2002 Warrant Article 16 Surplus Policy "Each year the Town shall reduce the "Surplus" (General Fund Undesignated Fund Balance) carried over from the prior year to an amount no greater than 10% of the Operating Budget voted the current year by applying the excess as "Fund Balance to Reduce Taxes". And further said amount to reduce taxes shall be affirmed, disclosed, and voted by the Board of Selectmen at a regular Board meeting.

(Submitted by Petition)

Suzanne Ryan addressed the petition as a policy that has been in place since 2002 but feels it needs to be reaffirmed.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as written.

Article 25: Rescind and Abolish the Wolfeboro Police Commission

Moderator Walker read the next article as follows:

Shall the voters of the Town of Wolfeboro vote to rescind and abolish the Wolfeboro Police Commission pursuant to New Hampshire R.S.A, 105-C:7 to be effective upon the passage of this article. (Submitted by Petition).

It was moved and second to amend the Article 25 to replace everything after the word "rescind" with the following: "the actions of the March 1960 Town meeting establishing the Wolfeboro Police Commission, which would have the effect of abolishing the

Wolfeboro Police Commission effective May 31, 2024.” Majority in favor, the motion passed.

Discussion incurred on the Article.

Being no further discussion, Moderator Walker declared the article will appear on the ballot as amended.

It was moved and seconded to revisit Warrant Article 22, and being the majority opposed, the motion failed.

Being no further business, Moderator Walker called for a motion to adjourn.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn at 11:57 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Amelia Capone-Muccio
Recording Secretary