

**Town of Grafton, New Hampshire
Deliberative Session
Saturday, February 11, 2017**

Present: Travis Anderson, Moderator, Leon Dugan, Merle Kenyon, Jennie Joyce, Selectmen, Ed Grinley, Catherine Mulholland, Pamela Curran, Budget Committee, Dorothy Campbell, Treasurer, George Curran, Jeffrey Weiss, Marguerite Conley, Supervisors of the Checklist, Angela Barry, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector and Bonnie J. Haubrich, Town Clerk/Tax Collector.

Meeting called to order at 9:04 by Moderator Travis Anderson.

Pledge of allegiance

Introductions

Moderator Travis Anderson discussed the rules for the meeting.

Bonnie Haubrich, Town Clerk was asked to acknowledge the Grafton residents who passed away in the 2016 year.

Article #2

- 2) Shall the Town 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 the vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling \$1,053,058. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$1,036,009, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous actions of the Town of Grafton or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised budget only. It excludes special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately.

General Government

Executive	\$53,593
Elections/Town Clerk	37,225
Financial Administration	41,615
Reappraisal of Property	16,320
Legal Expense	20,000
FICA & Medicare	25,000
Planning Board	375
General Government Buildings	40,975
Cemeteries	7,700
Insurance	102,728
Advertising/Regional Dues	1,500
Contingency	2,000
Subtotal	\$349,031

Public Safety

Police	\$139,573
Ambulance	23,000
Fire Department	22,000
Emergency Management	200

Forest Fire Warden	1,000
Subtotal	\$185,773
Highway and Streets	
Highway and Streets	\$383,511
Street Lights	2,915
Subtotal	\$386,426
Solid Waste	\$81,000
Health and Welfare	
Health Agencies	\$8,964
Health Officer	0
Public Assistance	20,000
Subtotal	\$28,964
Culture and Recreation	
Parks & Recreation	\$3,450
Library	14,114
Patriotic Purposes	300
Subtotal	\$17,864
Debt Service	
Tax Anticipation Note (TAN)	\$4,000
<u>Operating Budget Total</u>	<u>\$1,053,058</u>

No discussion or amendments. Appears as written.

Article #3

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty thousand dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in the previously established Bridge Capital Reserve Fund.

The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Ed Grinley, Budget Committee, explained that these funds are for thereplacement bridge on Wild Meadow to Grants Pond to be done in 2018. No discussion. Appears as written.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration Articles #2 and #3 by Merle Kenyon, Selectman and seconded by Jennie Joyce. Motion passed.

Article #4

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) to be placed in the previously established Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund.

The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Ed Grinley explained that these Capital Reserve Funds are a savings account when it becomes necessary to repair aging equipment or purchase new, expensive equipment. No discussion. Appears as written.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz and Merle Kenyon seconded. Motion passed.

Article #5

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty thousand dollars (\$40,000) for the purpose of paving roads.

The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Leon Dugan, Selectman, explained that these funds would be used for repaving existing roads. Merle Kenyon noted that it is less expensive to maintain tar roads versus dirt roads. Adam Franz questioned if these funds would only be used to fix what has already been paved? Leon noted that it is meant for repairing existing paved roads, but the final decision is up to the Road Agent, Bob Bassett. Appears as written.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Bonnie Haubrich. Seconded by Merle Kenyon. Motion passed.

Article #6

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the purpose of placing ledge pack on town dirt roads.

The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Leon Dugan stated that many of the dirt roads have been treated with ledge pack over the last few years, Ledge pack comes from the pit in Grafton, and saves grading time and is successful in keeping the roads in good condition. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz. Seconded by Merle Kenyon. Motion passed.**

Article #7

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to be placed in the previously established Fire Department Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund. *The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article*

Leon Dugan stated that the fire equipment is aging and it's good to have funds to prepare for replacements. No discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz. Seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #8

To see if the Town will vote to establish a capital reserve fund for a roll-off truck for the Recycle Center and raise and appropriate ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in that fund. (Majority vote required) *The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.*

Ed Grinley noted that the Town has saved over \$20,000 since purchasing our own hauler and need to start a fund to replace the existing one as it was purchased used and is aging. No discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz and seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #9

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in the previously established Town Hall Repairs Capital Reserve Fund. *The Selectmen recommend this article/ the Budget Committee recommends this article.*

Leon Dugan noted this is a savings account for the Town Hall to address existing issues such as wiring and sill work which needs to be addressed. He noted that the voters decided to keep it through an Article last year and these are necessary repairs. A new roof was installed and the Highway Department put a parking lot in. No further discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsider by Adam Franz, seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #10

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of nine thousand dollars (\$9,000) to be placed in the previously established New Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund. ***The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article***

Ed Grinley stated that the Town has two fairly new cruisers, and this is a savings account when it comes time to replace one of them. Chief Poitras noted that it is approximately \$40,000 to replace a police vehicle. The Town owns a 3-year old vehicle and a new one. Warranties run out at 4 years, and at that time it would be cost effective to replace the oldest one. No further discussion. Appears as written.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz. Seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.

Article #11

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) for the restoration of the Town's historical records.

The Selectmen recommend this article / the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Bonnie Haubrich, Town Clerk, informed the voters that there are approximately 40 more books left to restore. This project started with Donna Dugan approximately 25 years ago, and laid dormant for many years. We are back on track and the books can be handled by the public, where they couldn't before. She noted that this is a very worthwhile project, preserving our history. No further discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz, seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #12

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two thousand one hundred eighty-four dollars (\$2,184) to increase the Road Agent's annual salary by 5%. (Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Leon Dugan stated that due to the fact that the Road Agent is not up for reelection these are the legal steps to give the position a raise. No further discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz and seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #13

Are you in favor of changing the term of the elected town treasurer from one year to 3 years, beginning with the term of the town treasurer to be elected at next year's regular town meeting? (Majority vote required).

Leon Dugan stated that the Selectboard recommended changing the term to three (3) years because it takes any person more than 1 year to get trained. Merle Kenyon noted that the voters have changed the terms in all of the other offices so it makes sense to do it with this one. No further discussion. Appears as written. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Adam Franz, seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion passed.**

Article #14

To raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,735. to be added to the 2017 budget for the Grafton Public Library, thus raising the library budget from the lowest position to an average one in comparison with NH towns of similar population and income. This will allow us to adequately fund new expense increases, such as the rising costs of internet service, new books/media and audiobooks/e-book memberships, as well as the renewal of our bar-code software licensing, ensuring adequate and up to date compensation for employees, etc., much of which includes expenses which have been either beyond our control or previously approved by the Selectmen. Additionally this will ensure full compliance with various state and federal regulations (i.e. RSA 202-A:1, RSA 202-A:4, RSA 279:21, LAB 803.5 and the United States Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938). **(By Petition).**

The Selectmen do not recommend this article/the Budget Committee does not recommend this article.

Debbie Clough presented an amendment and seconded by Adam Franz read as follows: “To raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,735. to be added to the 2017 budget for the Grafton Public Library, thus raising the library budget from the lowest position to an average one in comparison with NH towns of similar population and income. This will allow us to adequately fund new expense increases, such as the rising costs of internet service, new books/media and audiobooks/e-book memberships, as well as the renewal of our bar-code software licensing, ensuring adequate and up to date compensation for employees, etc., much of which includes expenses which have been either beyond our control or previously approved by the Selectmen. Additionally this will ensure full compliance with various state and federal regulations (i.e. RSA 202-A:1, RSA 202-A:4, RSA 279:21, LAB 803.5 and the United States Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938).”

Deb Clough noted that after a discussion with Amie Jacques it was felt that the Library is more important than the money requested and that they firmly believe the Library deserves an increase. She also noted that they are aware that the voters might think it was too high of an increase seeking the \$11,735. They discussed this with the Library Trustees and decided to decrease the petitioned warrant article amendment. If passed, the employees and the Library Trustees are asking the Selectmen and the Budget Committee to reconsider their recommendation. She further commented that the Library can help restore pride and dignity in the community. She noted that it would be beneficial to have Selectboard members join the Library meetings for the future library, for input and to create a working relationship rather than just presenting ideas.

Karen Myers asked if someone would speak as to what was deleted from the plan with the cut? Deb Clough stated that 95% were wages. She further noted that the Library would work with whatever the budget ends up being. She noted that most of the increase was for wages, which might have allowed extra work outside of the open hours.

Adam Franz spoke on the amendment and stated that both Deb Clough and Aime Jacques recognized the importance of the Library and agreed to lower increases. Ed Grinley, Budget Committee noted that there appeared to be budget problems from the start of the budget season and that the Budget Committee had repeatedly asked for the gross base budgeting reports and they have not, to date, been received, nor has the Selectmen’s Office, in order to include it in the annual Town Report. He further stated that the Library Trustees had requested a \$4/hr increase for the Librarian, which was never heard of in Grafton’s history. He stated that there appear to be many issues with the Library, including 3 copy right infringements, where warnings have actually been given to the Town of Grafton. He stated that the Trustees can take and do whatever they want with the allocated money because they can spend at their will.

Deb Clough noted that there are WiFi hot spots and every public building, such as libraries, McDonalds and Dunkin Donuts have the same issues regarding copyright issues and that she had passed on the information to the Trustees. Adam said that having spoken to “officials” they have been told that the Town cannot control what people do on their private devices in a public place nor can you limit their internet access.

Adam Franz stated that the Library offers free WiFi and that the Town is not in any legal jeopardy. He further stated that they were requesting a \$3.25 hourly increase simply to normalize wages, not \$4.00 and that the increase has nothing to do with copy righting issues. He further stated that he was not sure regarding the gross budget report. He said that he was under the impression that the Office has everything needed for the Town Report. Ed Grinley said that he was recently told that the report was still needed.

Amendment voted on and passed, which reads, “To raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,735. to be added to the 2017 budget for the Grafton Public Library, thus raising the library budget from the lowest position to an average one in comparison with NH towns of similar population and income. This will allow us to adequately fund new expense increases, such as the rising costs of internet

service, new books/media and audiobooks/e-book memberships, as well as the renewal of our bar-code software licensing, ensuring adequate and up to date compensation for employees, etc., much of which includes expenses which have been either beyond our control or previously approved by the Selectmen. Additionally this will ensure full compliance with various state and federal regulations (i.e. RSA 202-A:1, RSA 202-A:4, RSA 279:21, LAB 803.5 and the United States Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938)."

Steve Kudlik presented an amendment and seconded by Ed Grinley, which read, "To raise and appropriate the sum of \$1174 to be added to the 2017 budget for the Grafton Public Library." He stated that he is not against the Library, and looking at the rest of the Town budget, Highway goes down, the amendment requests are over 50%,. He questioned why should the library should get a raise, when the rest of the Town lives within its means.

Debbie Clough stated that she understood what Steve was saying and appreciated what he was saying. She stated that the Library has been severely underfunded for years. The budget was increased from \$3,400 to \$3,600 thanks to a previous board

Adam Franz stated that they did comparisons between the Grafton Library and other libraries and what they were spending and percentages. He noted that it would not make any significant increase in property taxes.

Sue Jukosky noted that the second amendment would be too drastic.

The Moderator was asked to vote on the amendment.

Daniel Bergamini noted that he would be interested in knowing what Steve Kudlik would cut.

Amendment accepted once signed by first and second petitioner, Steve Kudlik, and Ed Grinley. Amendment #2 failed. Discussion reverted to Amendment #1, which had passed.

Adam Franz presented information to the voters, which included the budget process they followed and how they determined that the Library was severely underfunded. They did a study and determined Danbury has a higher income base, and stated that their library is less progressive and does not offer as much as Grafton's Library. He stated that the Trustees took the findings to the Selectboard and the Budget Committee, but were unsuccessful in getting them to change their minds. He showed his study data comparing salaries within Grafton and companies, such as Walmart.

He further noted that it would increase property taxes merely one cent per \$1000.

Leon Dugan stated that some of the numbers are quite skewed, one of the reasons the Selectboard struggled with the Library budget and the comparison figures used. Leon noted that as a Selectboard member he takes issue when taking land and homes away from the people due to unpaid property taxes.

Sue Jukosky stated that this library was neglected for many years. She noted that she had not patronized the Library in the past, but now there is vibrancy, it's the heart and soul of the community. She said that the costs are reasonable and that the taxpayers should support the people that are volunteering and putting in this effort. She noted that it is a communication hub. She further noted that if the townspeople want communication to happen, it seems to be the one source where communication to the townspeople is happening.

Cindy Kudlik asked why are we were discussing this since the Amendment had already passed.

Moderator Anderson responded that discussion was acceptable.

Steve Kudlik made a Motion to Move the Question. Second by Cindy Kudlik. Motion passed.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Merle Kenyon, seconded by Adam Franz. Motion Passed.

Article #15

To see if the Town will vote to direct the Selectboard to establish a “Town Administrator Study Committee” for the purpose of exploring the pro’s and con’s of the Town of Grafton hiring a part-time Town Administrator. The “Town Administrator Study Committee” shall consist of no less than 6 positions, representing a broad overview of Grafton’s population derived from a simple division of the Town’s tax maps. The Committee shall present its findings at a public hearing before this year’s end, and if deemed appropriate, place an article on the 2018 Town Warrant that would appropriate funding for the purposes of hiring a part-time Town Administrator. **(By Petition)**

Sue Jukosky stated that she had signed this petition because there were a number of people that met in early December to discuss the difficulty finding appropriate people to run for political office, especially Selectmen. This position would also allow Grafton to access available money for Grafton that is out there, which may actually pay for this position.

Steve Darrow stated that he also signed the petition and agreed with much of what Sue said. He stated that if the Town looked into the possibility of having a town administrator it might free up a lot of the time, and would make the job of Selectman more attractive to professionals, and this would give them the time to serve the town. He noted that the Town has had trouble with committees in the past and it might set a good example in forming committees to help us improve our town. He noted that we get into our comfort zone and it is healthy to take a look at what we do and to find new ways of doing it. It is good to have a committee to help us figure out how to do things differently and make it a better place to live.

Adam Franz asked if there were any funds attached to this Article.

Elaina Bergamini noted that she could not run for Selectmen because it is such a time commitment but saw an administrator as an asset and might encourage good people to run for the Selectman position. She asked who would appoint the members of this Committee.

Moderator Anderson responded that the Article states the Selectboard would establish such a Committee.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Sue Jukosky and seconded by Leon Dugan. Motion Passed.

Meeting adjourned by Travis Anderson, Moderator at 10:08 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Bonnie J. Haubrich
Town Clerk