

Town of Grafton, New Hampshire

Deliberative Meeting

February 10, 2018

Moderator Travis Anderson called the meeting to order with the Pledge of Allegiance at 9:00am at the Millbrook Christian Church. The Moderator then made introductions of all of the election officials present. Noted: Absent: Selectman Leon Dugan. He then went over the rules for the meeting. Town Clerk Bonnie Haubrich announced the names of the residents who passed away in 2017 and then shared a Warrant Article submitted in 1969 which was written by the “women of Grafton who were petitioning the Town to have the dump open midweek due to their garbage smelling”.

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 \$1,124,705. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$1,067,204, 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	\$58,338
Elections/Town Clerk	40,409
Financial Administration	42,777
Reappraisal of Property	16,320
Legal Expense	20,000
FICA & Medicare	25,000
Planning Board	375
General Government Buildings	41,230
Cemeteries	8,000
Insurance	98,574
Advertising/Regional Dues	1,350
Contingency	2,000
Subtotal	\$354,373

Public Safety

Police	\$192,793
Ambulance	25,000
Fire Department	22,000
Emergency Management	100
Forest Fire Warden	1,000
Subtotal	\$240,893

Highway and Streets

Highway and Streets	\$394,011
Lights	2,900

	Subtotal	
	\$396,911	
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 (As amended)		14,814
Patriotic Purposes		300
Subtotal		\$17,864
Debt Service		
Tax Anticipation Note (TAN)		\$4,000
<u>Operating Budget Total</u>	(As Amended)	<u>\$1,124,705</u>

The Budget committee noted that they approved of the submitted budget. No motion was presented to review the operating budget line by line.

Deb Clough presented an amendment to the library budget to increase the budget for the library by \$700. She stated that the Library Trustees were under the impression the selectmen were going to approve a 5% increase, but the Budget Committee then rejected it. Amendment second by Sue Jukosky.

Explanation by Deb Clough – after all fixed cost, the town cost is \$12,000. The library will subsidize \$2,000. They are only left with \$809 for supplies, books, and ink and that a 3 pack of ink is \$60. She noted that this doesn't leave much for the rest of the year.

Ed Grinley asked what the \$700 was for? He stated that they already got raises granted by the Library Trustees even though the Selectboard and Budget Committee did not approve it last year. Ed stated that we go under the rule that no means no, but the library did it anyways. Deb noted that the increase was used for more than just wages and it only lost by 12 votes. Deb Clough noted that the Library Trustees recognized the good job that the employees were doing and the need for an increase.

Cindy Kudlick noted that even if the voters approve a \$700. increase the Board of Selectmen have the authority to decide where that money is directed. **Vote on amendment: In favor: 20 Opposed: 19. Amendment passed. Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Deb Clough. Second by Sue Jukosky. Motion Passed.**

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 stated that there is one bridge on the State red list. He stated that the State identified two more being placed on the pink list, which are on the verge of going on the red list, but that the Town has not been told which ones these are. The next one that is slated to be done is on Wild Meadow Road.

No discussion further discussion. **Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Merle Kenyon, second by Angela Barry. Motion passed.**

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.

No discussion.

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.

No discussion.

6) To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) for the purpose of placing ledge pack on town dirt roads.
The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

No discussion

Motion to Limit Reconsideration for Articles # 4, #5 and #6 by Merle Kenyon and seconded by Jennie Joyce. Motion passed.

7) To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be placed in the previously established Library Capital Reserve Fund.
The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Elaina Bergamini stated that the Library's future requires support from the tax payers. The Library Trustees have committed to cover the cost for the architect's proposals and it is an important step in the construction of a new Library to know that the taxpayers support the Library. Approval of this Warrant Article would speak to that matter. The Library Trustees thank the Town for their support.

8) To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be placed in the previously established Roll-Off Truck Capital Reserve Fund.
The Selectmen recommend this article/the Budget Committee recommends this article.

Angus Gorman asked what a "roll-off truck" is. Ed Grinley explained it is the vehicle to haul rubbish to the Lebanon Landfill.

9) 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.

No discussion. Motion to Limit Reconsideration for Warrant Articles #7, #8 and #9 by Merle Kenyon. Seconded by Rich Blair.

10) 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

No discussion.

11) 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.

No discussion.

12) To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) to be placed in the previously established Storage Vault Capital Reserve Fund.

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

No discussion.

13) 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.

No discussion.

Motion to Limit Reconsideration by Merle Kenyon. Seconded by Bruce Frost. Motion passed.

14) To see if the Town will vote to modify the net income provisions of RSA 72:39-a for elderly exemption from property tax in the Town of Grafton, based on assessed value for qualified payers, to be as follows: If Single, not more than \$25,000 and if Married, a combined income of not more than \$36,000. The current net income limits are Single: \$20,000; Married \$27,000.

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

No discussion.

15) To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the position of elected Road Agent and to designate the position of appointed Road Agent. If this article passes, then under State Law (RSA 669:17-b) the existing elected position will remain in effect until Town Meeting 2019, at which time the Selectmen will appoint a duly qualified Road Agent. **(By Petition) Amendment presented by Catherine Mulholland which read, "To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the position of elected Road Agent and to designate the position of appointed Road Agent. If this article passes, then under State Law (RSA 669:17-b) the existing elected position will remain in effect until Town Meeting 2019, at which time the Selectmen will appoint a duly qualified Road Agent. Seconded by Sue Jukosky.**

Catherine Mulholland stated that she had a couple of people approach her with the idea and they thought it was good for Grafton. She further stated that people in small towns in NH are opposed to change, but that we should not be committed to a 'win' because it's a job, but to look for people who are qualified, which sometimes means going outside a small town to secure these employees. She noted that she had received feedback where people objected to the term, "highway supervisor" which they felt was advocating a desk job. She further stated that we have a very good road agent, we aren't contesting that, but that he's looking towards retirement and that we should not be handling these positions as a popularity contest. Catherine noted that the Warrant Article simply means changing it from an elected Road Agent to appointed Road Agent. **Amendment passed.**

Motion to Limit Reconsideration of Warrant Articles #14 and #15, by Merle Kenyon and second by Karen Meyers. Motion passed.

16) Will the Town vote to ratify (approve) the Conservation Agreement between James W. Quigg and the Town of Grafton, dated August 2, 1977? *The Selectmen are recommending this action because through an apparent oversight, there was no Town Meeting approval in 1977 when the agreement was signed.*

Jennie Joyce stated that the Selectboard identified this problem recently when they were requested to walk the property boundaries for the Quigg property. They discovered that a conservation easement was recorded in Haverhill, but there were no known Selectmen Minutes or Warrant Articles to support how this easement was obtained. The Town Counsel has suggested the 3 Warrant Articles in order to rectify the problem. She stated that if you vote yes, that gives the Selectboard permission to go ahead and take care of this. If you vote no the Town will take it to court so it can be settled.

Sue Jukosky asked what precipitated realizing this omission? Jennie stated that they had received the request from the property Caretaker to walk the property and noted that there is no benefit to the Town in this easement and that the Board members, in general, "are too old to be walking this property".

Cindy Kudlick inquired as to who asks the Selectboard to walk it and if there is anyone related who lives in Grafton? Jennie Joyce stated that it is Trustee Pamela Proctor Fitzgerald.

Sharon Duffy asked if the Selectboard are the only ones who could walk the property? She noted that in other towns appoint someone to do it.

Jennie reiterated that the Town does not benefit from this easement in any way, but that the property owners received federal monies by having it in conservation protection. Jeffrey Weiss asked if an amendment should be presented to ensure that the Warrant Article ratifies any decisions that may have been made since the easement was registered in Haverhill, so we can clear this up going forward.

Jennie Joyce assured that no one has addressed this easement and that no signatures have been obtained over the years and noted that these articles are on recommendation by the attorney.

Deb Clough asked what is the conservation agreement.

Jennie Joyce responded that no one is allowed on the property, it is fenced and gated. There is no hunting, fishing or hiking allowed on the property. Deb Clough asked if the easement could be rewritten to allow townspeople access to the property for hiking, fishing and hunting.

17) If the Town votes "yes" to ratify the Conservation Agreement, will the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to explore and amend the Agreement?

No discussion.

18) If the Town votes "no" against ratifying the Conservation Agreement, will the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to file an action in court to confirm that the Agreement is invalid and to determine an orderly process to transition the conservation easement to a responsible party?

Jennie said the Selectboard would work with the Attorney General's Office and the Society for the Protection of Forests.

Deb Clough stated, to be clear, if the town votes yes on 16 & 17, the selectmen will be able to amend the agreement that would allow recreational use. Let's amend it so we can use it. Cindy Kudlick stated that

they pay property taxes, and get federal funds. If we vote against ratifying what exists, and giving it over to them, would taxes be paid and if so, by who?

Angus Gorman reiterated, to clarify, is the purpose of this to make sure that they are doing what they ought to be doing? Jennie Joyce responded in the affirmative.

Meeting adjourned at 9:50 a.m. by Moderator Travis Anderson.

Respectfully submitted:

Bonnie J. Haubrich

Town Clerk