

**Board of Selectmen  
December 14, 2022**

**Present:** Richard C. Edwards, Chair; Mark P. Duffy; Kenneth G. Fifield; Dino A. Scala, Town Administrator; and Toni Bodah, Secretary.

Mr. Edwards called the posted meeting to order at 6:15 p.m. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (b). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:18 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board voted to hire David Skelly as a call FF/EMT at the certified rate of \$20.32/hour. **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:27 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board authorized an increase for Joe Gore, Transfer Station Manager, to \$26.31/hour (Step 2). **Mr. Fifield moved to enter Non Public Session under RSA 91-A:3, II (a). Mr. Duffy seconded the motion. Roll call vote: Mr. Fifield – ‘aye’; Mr. Duffy – ‘aye’; Mr. Edwards – ‘aye’.** The motion passed unanimously, and the Board immediately entered Non Public Session.

The Board returned to public session at 6:40 p.m. During the immediately preceding Non Public Session, the Board vote to revise the process for earned time accumulation, effective as of January 1, 2023. Mr. Edwards then called for a recess.

The meeting reconvened at 7 p.m. Those present at this time included Police Chief Mike Fenton and Larry Moody. Mr. Edwards led all in the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Edwards then directed the Board members to the proposed Town Warrant. Mr. Scala advised that the Budget Committee has reviewed the proposed articles and has asked that the Selectmen revisit several articles as follows (each article being read aloud by Mr. Scala):

Article #9 – Establish an ETF for improving and repairing Town owned boat launches, \$10,000. The Budget Committee has suggested that the article not list the locations of specific boat launches. **Mr. Duffy moved to present the article without listing specific locations of boat launches. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Article #10 - \$125,000 Bridge CRF. Mr. Scala stated that the Budget Committee did not think it appropriate to increase this ask by \$50,000 at this time. **Mr. Fifield moved to reduce this article to \$75,000. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Article #21 – Establish CRF for Union Fire Station Overhead Doors and Roof, \$23,000. Mr. Fifield noted that the Budget Committee felt it would be better to combine both the East Wakefield station and the Union station into one CRF for maintenance and repairs. **Mr. Duffy moved to rename the new CRF as East Wakefield and Union Precincts, for the purpose of maintenance and repairs of both facilities, keeping the appropriation at \$23,000. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Article #24 - \$35,000 PSB CRF for sally port AND Article #25 - \$23,500 PSB CRF for Fire side floor. The Budget Committee suggested that these articles be combined without reference to either the sally port or the Fire side floor. **Mr. Fifield moved to combine these into 1 article for the PSB CRF at \$58,500, without reference to the specific work to be done. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Article #29 - \$10,000 GWRC CRF. The Budget Committee believes this will result in our being 'short' to complete the GWRC roof in 2023. **Mr. Duffy moved to increase this request to \$13,000. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Article #31 - \$7000 for Mini Split at Railroad Museum. The Budget Committee has voted to not recommend this article. Not only has it not been removed from the Heritage Commission section of the operating budget, but also they were of the opinion that the cost should be borne directly by the Heritage Commission Fund 4. **Mr. Fifield moved to strike this article. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

Reference was made to other articles that the Budget Committee may have voted to not recommend. Mr. Edwards stated it is the job of the Selectmen to put forward articles in order to let the people decide. Article #8 - \$38,500 for the Parks & Rec Field Maintenance CRF, was discussed. Mr. Scala referred to an issue between the Ballfield CRF and the Parks & Rec Field Maintenance CRF—specifically, how they are listed on TD Bank's spreadsheet. This issue will be addressed by the Trustees of the Trust Funds. Mr. Robinson has recommended the \$38,500 in order to address issues with the existing fields—drainage at one field, old stumps resurfacing in the outfield of another. The current balance is around \$2500. Mr. Fifield suggested the Ballfield CRF be closed next year, with any balance being transferred to the General Fund. The Board agreed to leave the article as is.

Article \$14 - \$500,000 to establish a Road Renovation CRF. This article relates to work on Bonnyman Road. The Budget Committee voted to not recommend this article. Mr. Fifield stated the Board has studied the existing problems, surveyed the area and considered the damage. It is the Board's job to propose a complete renovation of Bonnyman Road. The cost was guestimated and the article was prepared to determine how the voters felt. The Budget Committee strongly disagreed with recommendation of this article. Mr. Fifield proposes striking this article and adding \$50,000 to the Highway Construction Projects CRF (from \$275,000 to \$325,000) in order to address repairs on this road. **Mr. Fifield moved to strike Article #14 for \$500,000. Mr. Duffy noted that Brooks Construction did confirm that \$500,000 should be sufficient to complete the anticipated project. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion.** Mr. Duffy noted it is unfortunate that we have come to this point. He has served on the Board for a number of years, and has been met with roadblocks every time we try to address issues on this road. It is a Town road and must be maintained, which the Town will continue to do. He is very tired of the Town not being able to maintain this road. The survey shows the boundaries. The Town must maintain it as long as it remains a Town road. Mr. Edwards agreed 100%. **The motion then passed 3-0.**

Reference was made to Article #13, which Mr. Scala read aloud. **Mr. Fifield moved to increase the request for the Highway Construction Projects CRF from \$275,000 to \$325,000. Mr. Duffy seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

**1. Appointments**

**a) Richard House, UVCA re: Drew Mill Dam** – Mr. House is not present. This appointment was tabled to the December 28 meeting.

**b) Larry Moody re: Bonnyman Road Warrant Article** – Mr. Moody is pleased to hear that the Board will strike the \$500,000 article from the warrant. He is still baffled that after 32 years of living there he is unaware of the complaints to which Mr. Duffy refers. Mr. Moody believes there are other alternatives for the Board to consider. Assuming Mr. Moody is referring to taking over Towle Farm Road, Mr. Fifield stated that the Board held many public meetings on that proposal and took much public input. Mr. Moody stressed that nobody has taken this proposal to the Towle Farm Community. The Board disagreed, noting that the meetings were open to all. Mr. Moody indicated that 21 out of 25 property owners on Towle Farm Road were in favor of that option. Mr. Fifield asked whether Mr. Moody had any other options to discuss. Mr. Moody referred to other options available to the Town to obtain Towle Farm Road. Mr. Fifield stated it was made clear that the Town would face a Court battle, and the Board is not willing to take the road by eminent domain. Since there is no other option, the Board will move forward with repairs and maintenance as it sees fit.

Mr. Edwards advised the Board will review recommendations of the DPW Director. Mr. Moody referred to a failed catch basin that he has watched for 30 years. Mr. Fifield stressed the Board has just voted to raise additional funds to allow the DPW Director to fix the road. Mr. Moody noted that residents have asked to be part of a committee to explore options, but have heard nothing. Mr. Fifield reiterated that the Board has given everyone numerous options to speak, following which the Board made the best decision they could. The option to renovate the road was explored without success; therefore, the Board will need to address the road to the best of its ability.

Mr. Edwards had been told that the most important issue on the road to the residents was safety. But it has gone far beyond that. The Board just presented the option to raise \$500,000 to make that road safer, but instead the Board is being told by Mr. Moody how to address the issues. The Board is trying to fix that road, funded by all taxpayers, to address safety. The Budget Committee that represents the people has indicated that cost is too much money to spend on that road. Therefore, the Board will attempt to fix the road as best it can. Mr. Moody stated that they never asked for that kind of fix.

Mr. Duffy stressed that the voters of this Town voted not to pursue the Towle Farm Road option. Bonnyman Road must be maintained regardless of whether other options were pursued. Mr. Fifield noted the Board has explored various options and we now have a survey, which will make it easier for the Highway Department to accomplish the work. Significant time has been spent to hear various points of view. The Board has listened to the people. Although fundamentally being against taking peoples' property, that ship has now sailed; and the Board will attempt to fix Bonnyman Road just as it does other Town roads.

Mr. Scala stressed that each time there is a call or email regarding Bonnyman Road, it is forwarded to the Board. He has provided much information to the people. The Town has actually been threatened with court action as a result of all information that has been shared. Everyone has been fairly represented.

Mr. Moody stated that the people were waiting for a plan that they never received, and they were afraid their land would be taken. Mr. Fifield reiterated that the survey has been completed, and people who fix/build roads have said there would be room to address issues without taking the land of others. However, that option is now dead. Mr. Moody stressed that Bonnyman Road is not a safe road. Discussion followed to the number of roads in town that have as many, or more, issues as Bonnyman Road. Much discussion followed regarding the results of the survey.

**2. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #1** - None forthcoming.

**3. Unfinished Business** – None scheduled.

**4. New Business**

**a) Review/Adoption of Town Investment Policy** – This policy is reviewed each year. No changes have been made. **Mr. Duffy moved to approve the Town Investment Policy as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.**

**5. Proposed Capital Reserve Fund Expenditures** – None scheduled.

**6. Correspondence** – None forthcoming.

**7. Unscheduled Matters/Public Comment #2** – None forthcoming.

**8. Administrative Matters**

**a) Town Administrator's Update**

--A 'Shout Out' to Parks & Rec for both the Tree-Lighting event and the Annual Breakfast with Santa! They raised more this year at BWS than in any other year. Mr. Edwards added a special thanks to Alyssa Hall for making a small event into a fabulous event—shopping, wrapping and obtaining donations. The Board agreed by consensus to send Alyssa a Letter of Appreciation.

--A public meeting was held last week regarding the proposed Multi-Generational Facility project. Please take a look at the Town's web site for more information. The session was well-attended. Mr. Fifield added that it included a great presentation. More facts and figures continue to come available—stay tuned for more updates.

--The Budget season is winding down. We met with the Budget Committee last night and will now finalize the Town warrant for the January 10, 2023 public hearing scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m.

--Mr. Scala will be sending to the Board a final draft of the Town's Personnel Policy. He asks that the Board review the draft with a view to approve same at the December 28 meeting.

**b) Building Permit Releases** – Mr. Duffy moved to approve the building permit release for Map 109, Lot 8 on Acton Ridge Road/Daniel Drive, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

**c) Tax Collector's Month/Year Comparison** – Provided for the Board's information.

**d) Minutes** – Mr. Duffy moved to approve the minutes of November 30, 2022, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Duffy moved to approve the November 30, 2022, minutes of Non Public Session #'s 1,2, & 3, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

It was noted that the Budget Committee has suggested that the Selectmen consider an article to direct land use change tax revenue to the General Fund rather than the Conservation Fund. This could be changed again in the future if the Conservation Commission has a project on the table. This must be accomplished by vote of the people. Mr. Scala will obtain more information.

**e) Payment Manifests** – Mr. Duffy moved to approve PR #26 in the amount of \$107,488.69, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Mr. Duffy moved to approve AP #48 in the amount of \$1,603,583.58, as presented. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

**f) Selectmen's Work Session**

Mr. Edwards stated we have had a very successful year; and he wishes everyone a Merry Christmas!

Mr. Duffy referred to outstanding budget issues. A brief discussion followed regarding an article related to the elderly exemption. That will be considered by the Assessors.

Mr. Fifield noted there will be several articles regarding amendments to the zoning ordinance on the warrant for consideration by the voters. He believes these articles would ease restrictions for the townspeople. Mr. Scala stressed that those interested should attend the Planning Board public hearings, as these articles cannot be addressed at Deliberative Session, not being money articles.

Confirmation: The Town Hall roof was last replaced in 2009.

Mr. Duffy moved to adjourn at 8:18 p.m. Mr. Fifield seconded the motion, which passed 3-0.

Respectfully submitted,  
Toni Bodah, Secretary

Approval of Minutes:

  
Richard C. Edwards, Chair

  
Mark P. Duffy

  
Kenneth G. Fifield