

## BUDGET HEARING– February 3, 2025

Present: Margo Connors, Richard Bielefield, Chris Ellms  
Jennifer Gaudette

Guests: Lissa Boissonneault, Claire & Fred Von Karls, Larry & Judy Sawyer,  
Chief Mike Ho-Sing-Loy, Road Agent Doug Glover, Sally Russell, Gary Way,  
Steve & Marilyn Monsein, Greg Connors, Brenda Aldrich, Hugh Hawkins,  
Kathy Jablonski, Tim Egan, Alice Claflin, Peter Carbonneau, Brian Beaulieu, Paul Reid,  
Martha Evelyn, Carl & Nancy Martland, Betsy Holcombe, Doug & Irene  
Amsbary, Alan Laubenstein, Ned Wilson, David & Susan Brown

JENNIFER GAUDETTE presented the budget line by line and taking questions.

The **Executive Budget** was underspent in 2024 as the Select Board do not take a salary and we did not use the assistant budget in full. **Elections** only has one election in 2025. Supervisors will have some additional training. Poll Pads will now be used at Town Meetings per the State. In addition, the town will be required to have the handicap voting machines in place for town meetings. The budget includes \$3500 for new voting machines that the State will provide and will pay the other \$3500. **Financial** is up due to an increase of \$2000 for the audit. **Planning Board** includes the balance of the Master Plan of \$7600 that will come from the Conservation Commission. **Revaluation** is down and will only include pickups, abatements and change taxes in 2025. The **Insurance** line includes an increase in health and general liability and workers compensation. Currently the health insurance is a 90/10 split with the employees. The employee payback will be \$16,105. The town has two insurance buyouts that save the town money. One plan changes this year from a one-person plan to two-person plan. **Legal** will stay the same and hope that we do not have a lot of Right to Know requests which cost the town as they are all reviewed by the town attorney. **Building and Grounds** have no major changes, increase in telephone costs across all departments and uncertainty on fuel. The second year of the truck lease is a warrant article. **Cemetery** is requesting the same funding with work to be done at Streeter Cemetery locating graves and some fences at Sunnyside. **Regional Associations** includes North Country Council and Franconia Notch Chamber of Commerce. The town received \$66,296 in Rooms and Meals Tax.

CHIEF HO-SING-LOY noted that the **Police** budget increase is 6.5% and salaries account for some of that percentage. Dispatch also increased this past year. With ARPA funds the department purchased a new radio/message trailer that can be used by all departments and for town events. A new radar piece of equipment was also purchased. With speeding on Main Street one of the major complaints they will also look at additional signs and use funds from the Special Detail Fund.

NED WILSON AND DOUG GLOVER were available to speak to both **Ambulance** and **Fire** Department budgets. The ambulance contract is in the last year and there will be a considerable increase for 2026. The department will be able to purchase the air packs using both Grafton County ARPA Funds and ARPA funds the town had to commit to expend in 2024. The furnace in the fire department building has been a problem and has now been repaired. The department saw an increase in call numbers for 2024.

**Building Inspections** are currently being funded by permit fees. The fees collected for 2024 were \$8336 and Short-Term Rentals fees were \$2250. **Emergency Management** is budgeting for the Emergency Operations Plan that the Sate requires every five years.

ROAD AGENT DOUG GLOVER noted that his budget includes the 3% increase for wages and is adjusted for buyouts of leave and overtime which is an unknow. Costs of steel is up, buying tires has increased dramatically and they are hauling a further distance for some of the road materials.

ALICE CLAFLIN, **Library** Trustee noted that the budget was under due to salary increase being budgeted for 12 months and expended over 9 months. In addition, increases in telephone and they will be funding the Friday program instead of a summer program.

**Home Health Agencies** The selectboard has chosen to place the Boys & Girls Club back into the budget as it was voted in the last two years by the town meeting attendees.

**Capital Expense** is the fourth year of a five year note for the solar system at the highway garage.

The regular CRF fund articles were discussed. Cart Martland spoke to the work the road committee has done and the need to increase the amount put in the non-lapsing by 50,000 to 125,000 so that the highway department can continue upgrading a maintaining the roadways.

The board will ask that monies received by selling the old Building and Grounds truck be put back into the Building & Grounds CRF from the fund balance. The board will also ask to have the monies expended from the Bridge CRF for both Crane Hill and Indian Brooks be returned to the CRF's from the fund balance.

Kathy Jablonski spoke on behalf of the Cemetery Trustees and explained the work they would like to have done in the cemetery on the roads which have washed out and been damaged. They propose one article where the monies will be offset by some interest and the balance 19,544 from taxation. If that WA fails then they will ask to create a Cemetery Infrastructure CRF with 6500 this year.

The tax impact as voted on at the 2024 town meeting will appear on all Warrant Articles being funded through taxation.

The board was thanked for their work on the budget and work throughout the year.

With no more business before the Board, RICHARD BIELEFIELD made a motion to adjourn, seconded by CHRIS ELLMS the meeting was adjourned at 7:17 PM. The next regular scheduled Select Board meeting is Monday February 10, 2025, at 5:00pm. at the Crapo Building.

Respectfully submitted:

Jennifer Gaudette  
Town Administrator