



Office of the Board of Selectmen
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NEWTON BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE 2020 TOWN BUDGET AND WARRANT ARTICLES
DATE: MONDAY, JANUARY 18, 2021
TIME: 7:15PM
LOCATION: NEWTON TOWN HALL, 2 TOWN HALL ROAD and
ZOOM VIDEO CONFERENCING

PUBLIC HEARING MEETING MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Chairman Burrill called the meeting to order at 7:15pm. In attendance were Selectmen, Matthew A. Burrill; Chairman, Lawrence B. Foote; Vice-Chairman, Lisa L. Gonyer, Kathryn Michaels, Charles R. Melvin Sr., Town Administrator Nancy J. Wrigley, and Selectmen's Secretary Diane M. Morin and members of the public.

Chairman Burrill read the following public hearing announcement:

The Board of Selectmen will hold a Public Hearing on Monday, January 18, 2021 beginning at 7:15pm at the Newton Town Hall, 2 Town Hall Road, Newton, NH for the following:

In accordance with RSA 32:5, notice is hereby given to all residents of Newton, New Hampshire, that a Public Hearing for the purpose of gathering public input on the proposed 2021 Town Budget and Warrant Articles will be held on Monday, January 18, 2021 at the Newton Town Hall starting at 7:15pm. Snow date is Tuesday, January 19, 2021 at 7:15pm. The public is encouraged to attend.

Zoom conference number 9292056099. Meeting ID 86907536632

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86907536632>

II. Scheduled Business

Chairman Burrill stated that tonight's meeting is to provide the voters with the proposed 2021 Town Warrant. The Board will vote on whether to recommend each article after listening to public input. After tonight's public hearing the 2021 proposed Town Warrant will be published no later than January 25, 2021. The Deliberative Session is scheduled for January 30, 2021.

Chairman Burrill read the following propose 2021 warrant articles.

To the inhabitants of the Town of Newton, N.H. in the County of Rockingham, in said State, qualified to vote in Town Affairs; you are hereby notified to meet for the first session of the annual meeting, which shall be for the explanation, discussion and debate of each warrant article and the transaction of all business other than voting by official ballot to be held at the Newton Town Hall on Saturday, January 30, 2021 at 9:00 AM; the second session to be held at the Newton Town Hall, in said Newton, on Tuesday, the ninth day of March next, at eight o'clock in the forenoon, to choose all necessary Town officers for the ensuing year by official ballot, and to vote on all issues before the Town of Newton on the official ballot; the polls to be open at eight o'clock in the forenoon and to close not earlier than eight o'clock in the evening.

Article 1: To elect all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year.

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Article 2: "Shall the Town of Newton 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 vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$3,693,448.00**. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$3,678,940.00, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Newton 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."

The estimated budget increase from the 2020 ACTUAL budget to the 2021 PROPOSED budget represents a tax impact increase of \$0.139 per \$1,000.00 of assessed value.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recommend Article 2. Seconded by Selectman Melvin for discussion.

Selectman Gonyer explained that part of the increase will be used to repair Town Buildings that cannot wait a year for repairs. Chairman Burrill stated that at the January 14th meeting the Board prioritized which repairs had to be done this year.

Ms. Collyer asked what percentage of salary increase was given? Selectman Gonyer stated that the median was 2.5%. Chairman Burrill stated not every employee received a raise and that some of these raises were deferred from last year.

Ms. Collyer asked which buildings needed repairs. Selectman Gonyer, Town Administrator Wrigley and Secretary Morin stated that the Town Hall Clerk's floor needs repairs. The outside stairs to the Selectmen's Office. The library roof needs to be replaced. The lobby at the Police Station needs to be ADA compliant. The Marshall House roof needs to be replaced.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,200.00 to be deposited into the Engineering & Renovation Capital Reserve Fund created in 2015; said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. This represents the Rental Fees received.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill recommends the article contain the address of where the rental fees come from, which is 8 Merrimac Road.

Selectman Foote moved to recommend Article 3. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer with a unanimous vote.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$300,000.00 to be deposited into the Town Buildings Capital Reserve Fund created in 2006; said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance with no amount to be raised from taxation. This sum represents part of the proceeds from the sale of the Old Fire Station at 35 South Main Street.

This amount would result in no increase in the amount to be raised in taxes.

Chairman Burrill stated this would represent part of the proceeds from the sale of the old Fire Station. Once the funds are available, they could be used to pay for the needed repairs described earlier.

Selectman Foote asked if the original warrant article stated that the funds could be used to offset the Fire/Rescue Station Bond. Town Administrator stated that the bond is fixed and cannot be paid down.

Selectman Gonyer stated that if the article passes then the funds allocated in the budget for repairs would go back into the general fund.

Mr. James Baker asked if that information could be in the warrant. Selectman Gonyer stated that it would be in the voters' guide.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recommend Article 4. Seconded by Selectman Foote. Burrill – aye, Gonyer – aye, Michaels – aye, Foote – aye. Melvin – nay. The motion passed 4-1.

Selectman Melvin stated that he believes the money should go back to the taxpayers. Selectman Michaels stated using the funds this year could help to reduce the taxes for next year. Chairman Burrill stated that the money is not being taken away from the taxpayers.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to name the Board of Selectmen as Agents to the Gale Library Building Capital Reserve Fund, established in 1982 and renamed in 1998.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Town Administrator Wrigley stated that when the fund was created there were no agents named to expend the funds. If the article passes, the funds could be used for the repairs at the library.

Selectman Gonyer explained that because no agents were named the funds are just sitting there. Naming the Selectmen as the agents will allow the Town to use funds for the library.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recommend Article 5. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote **to increase the Veterans' Tax Credit to \$750.00** as provided in a recent amendment to RSA 72:28. If adopted, this **will increase the credit from \$500.00 to \$750.00** that will be available to any resident who is eligible for the standard or optional veterans' tax credit or the All-Veterans' Tax Credit as previously voted by the Town of Newton under RSA 72:28 and RSA 72:28-b.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill, Selectmen Melvin and Foote agreed that there is an increase in the taxes. Town Administrator Wrigley stated that DRA has approved the wording and that we are not raising and appropriating any funds. The credit comes off the tax bill for those Veterans that apply and qualify for the credit. Selectman Gonyer stated that there is no way to know how many Veterans will apply for the credit.

Chairman Burrill stated that the State raised the tax credit limit to \$750.00 and allows Towns to choose if they wish to offer the credit and how much.

Selectman Melvin moved to recommend Article 6. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$25,000.00 for the purpose of holding a HAZARDOUS WASTE DAY**, for Newton Residents only, with \$25,000.00 to come from the Transfer Station / Recycling Special Revenue Fund created in 2003 for this purpose.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Selectman Foote moved to recommend Article 7. Seconded by Selectman Melvin for discussion

Ms. Collyer asked given that the current recycling fees keep increasing how will the fund be replenished? Town Administrator Wrigley stated that the balance in the fund is \$208,000.00. Chairman Burrill stated that Ms. Collyer is correct in that the fund is not being replenished as quickly due to several factors. One being the Town voted to provide vouchers for bulk items every year. This coming year the Board will need to look more closely at how to fund the fund.

Selectman Melvin stated that the Board needs to take a closer look at which bulk items can be dropped using the voucher card.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, via Zoom Chat, asked if there are any revenues coming into the fund. Town Administrator Wrigley stated that the Transfer Station is still collecting bulk items fees from residents and surrounding towns. Selectman Melvin and Michaels stated that the Town receives money from the metal recycling. Selectman Gonyer will provide the amount of revenue received in the voters' guide.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote, as proposed by the Board of Selectmen, to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$5,000.00 for the purpose of repairing the tractor**, with the \$5,000.00 to come from the Transfer Station / Recycling Special Revenue Fund created in 2003 for this purpose.

This article would result in no increase in the amount to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill explained that the funds will be used to maintain and make repairs to the tractor which is used to compact the contents in the containers.

Selectman Foote moved to recommend Article 8. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer with a unanimous vote.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen, **to enter into a five-year lease / purchase agreement to purchase 19 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus, known as SCBA's** and all related equipment, payable over a term of five years at a rate of \$51,482.24 annually and **to raise and appropriate \$51,482.24 for the first year's payment.** The full cost of the 19 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus is \$243,793.25. The amount of the lease reflects the trade-in value of \$25,000.00 on the 19 Self Contained Breathing Apparatus being replaced. *This agreement does contain an escape.* (Majority vote required)

This article would result in an estimated \$0.080 increase per \$1,000 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chief Alcadinho addressed the Board. He stated that the Fire Department has applied for a FEMA grant twice and has been rejected both times. They recommend that the Fire Department bring the matter to the voters to pay for the SCBA's. If the article fails, the Fire Department may have one more chance at the FEMA grant if it is available.

Chief Alcadinho explained that the equipment has an oxygen bottle with a mask, hose and fittings. that covers the firefighters face. They are used on different types of emergency calls. The current 19 SCBA's will expire at the end of 2021.

Selectman Foote moved to recommend Article 8. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer.

Ms. Collyer asked what is the amount of the FEMA grant? Chief Alcadinho stated that it will depend on what the Federal Government allocates. There are several steps that need to be followed. Even if they apply there is no guarantee that they will receive the grant.

Mr. Baker asked where the number of SCBA's needed comes from? Chief Alcadinho stated that for every seat in a vehicle, a SCBA is needed. It is not assigned to an individual.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as proposed by the Police Chief, the sum of **\$25,000.00** to be deposited into the **"POLICE CRUISERS AND EQUIPMENT" Capital Reserve Fund created in 2020** for the purpose of maintenance, repairs and purchase of cruisers and equipment.

This article would result in an estimated \$0.039 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chief Jewett addressed the Board. The funds will be used to offset equipment repairs/replacement in the fleet. Some of the equipment is from 2002 and needs to be replaced.

Selectman Melvin asked if the fund would carry year over year. Selectman Gonyer stated that it is a Capital Reserve Fund. It allows the taxpayers to save for new cruisers/equipment instead of asking for one large sum.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recommend Article 10. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,263.00 for the following Community Services:

AREA HOMECARE & FAMILY SERVICES	\$ 3,800.00	
CHILD ADVOCACY CENTER	2,000.00	
DRUGS ARE DANGEROUS	2,500.00	
HAVEN	3,050.00	
NHSPCA		750.00
ROCKINGHAM COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION	5,000.00	
ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION MEALS ON WHEELS	2,927.00	
ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION MEALS ON WHEELS TRANSPORTATION	1,600.00	
SOROCK COALITION FOR HEALTHY YOUTH	4,936.00	
VIC GEARY CENTER	2,700.00	
WAYPOINT (f/k/a CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES)	1,000.00	
	<hr/>	
	\$30,263.00	

This article would result in an estimated \$0.047 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill stated that these are important community services. Selectman Gonyer stated that the Town is required to provide some of these services. The Welfare Agent and Police Department use these services as well.

Chief Jewett stated that the Police Department relies heavily on helping residents in need.

Selectman Foote moved to recommend Article 11. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer with a unanimous vote.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission the sum of **\$4,500.00 for Recreational Programs and Trips for Newton Senior Citizens.**
This article would result in an estimated \$0.007 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill stated that the trips are widely attended and appreciated by seniors. This is a way to give back to them for paying school taxes.

Selectman Foote asked if the funds were expended last year. Chairman Burrill stated that some of the funds were expended. Meals were distributed from the Fire/Rescue Station to seniors.

Selectman Melvin moved to recommend Article 12. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, as proposed by the Recreation Commission, the sum of **\$16,500.00 to hire four Part-Time Lifeguards, one Part-Time Supervisor of Lifeguards, and to purchase necessary Safety Equipment,** to oversee the safety of all swimmers at the Town Beach between May 2021 and September 2021.
This article would result in an estimated \$0.026 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill stated that slight increase is for managing the program.

Selectman Gonyer moved to recommend Article 10. Seconded by Selectman Melvin.

Mr. Fitzpatrick asked if this is rolled into the budget as a baseline and the article is over and above what is included in the budget. Chairman Burrill stated that it is not included in the budget. It is a warrant article to make sure the Town supports the program.

Mr. Fitzpatrick stated that it would be good to clarify that this is to renew the program.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Article 14: On a petition of 25 or more legal voters, to see if the Town will vote to **establish a Skateboard Park Expendable Trust Fund for the purpose of repairing, constructing / reconstructing, and maintaining the skateboard park located in Greenie Park** and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000.00** to be deposited into this fund, and to name the Board of Selectmen as the Agents of the fund.

This article would result in an estimated \$0.016 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Chairman Burrill stated that the skate park is in disrepair and the resident is asking to create a fund to help repair it. Selectman Melvin stated that the resident is looking for grants to offset the cost. Selectman Gonyer stated that this project would be similar to the playground equipment upgrade.

Selectman Melvin moved to recommend Article 14. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer.

Ms. Collyer stated that when she was on the Recreation Commission, and they looked at improving the park, they estimated 80 people used the skate park a week.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Article 15: On a petition of 25 or more legal voters, shall the Town of Newton vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,500.00** to support a **Lake Host Program** at the Newton Town **Boat** Ramp for the 2021 summer season. The Lake Host Program is a collaborative effort between NH Department of Environmental Services, NH LAKES and local lake associations. It trains and employs individuals to provide courtesy boat inspections to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive plants, such as milfoil, from one lake to another thereby protecting public lake uses such as swimming, fishing, and boating.

This article would result in an estimated \$0.004 increase per \$1,000.00 of assessed value to be raised by taxes.

Selectman Melvin moved to recommend Article 14. Seconded by Selectman Gonyer.

Selectman Gonyer stated that this program is the same as last year. The program helps to protect the lake. Mr. Baker stated that in the Town there is an additional assessment for properties on the lake. If passed the NH Lake Association will match the amount which will allow for more hours that inspectors can be at the boat ramp. Kingston voters will be asked to support the program as well.

The motion passed with a unanimous vote.

Chairman Burrill read the following:

Given under our hands and seal this 18th day of January in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Twenty-One. Matthew A. Burrill, Chairman. Lawrence B. Foote, Vice-Chairman. Selectmen Lisa L. Gonyer, Kathryn Michaels, and Charles R. Melvin Sr.

Selectman Gonyer moved to authorize the Board to sign the final 2021 Town Warrant. Seconded by Selectman Foote with a unanimous vote.

III. Adjourn

Selectman Gonyer moved to adjourn at 8:18pm. Seconded by Selectman Melvin with a unanimous vote.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane M. Morin
Board of Selectmen Secretary