

# **July 21, 2025 6:30pm Town Budget Committee Meeting Minutes**

Attendees: Susan Finnegan, Christine Abdelnour-McKenna, Bill Chase, John Snowdon, Kevin Powell.

6:33pm Susan called the meeting to order

## **Committee Organizational business:**

One correction was made to the April minutes: it was clarified that all members are not required to sign the meeting minutes. Kevin made a motion to strike this sentence. John made a motion to approve the April minutes as corrected. Kevin seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Susan and Bill reported, after extensive research, that our town is not an RSA 32 town and is therefore not bound by those strict guidelines. We are working to obtain the budget from the Selectboard earlier so the committee can meet sooner and avoid last-minute time constraints. Additionally, we will be using the NHMA budget timeline as a reference for scheduling meetings earlier in the year.

It was also noted that the budget committee serves in an advisory role and does not have authority over Selectboard spending.

## **Budget Discussion**

The budget is extremely tight this year, and we are currently over budget.

The Selectboard plans to install stop signs on Route 63 in front of Town Hall. This project will be funded entirely through a grant, resulting in no cost to the town.

The town also purchased three speed monitors, costing under \$9,000 in total, to address the increased speeding caused by the River Road bridge closure. The monitors have been effective, and we discussed additional cost-efficient options for further slowing traffic.

We were unable to secure a representative to present recycling center projections and their potential budget impact. We hope to have someone from the Recycling Committee at our next meeting to explain how this initiative will save the town money.

The highway and road budget is currently over due to a particularly harsh winter, which led to increased spending on salaries and salt to keep the roads clear and safe. At the town barn, both the septic system and well have been installed, with much of the preparation work completed by the road crew.

The Town Hall painting project has been completed. The contractor, who submitted the lowest bid, worked efficiently, painted the clock with gold leaf, and even repainted the exterior sign at no additional cost.

There is no new update on the River Road bridge. The last communication from NHDOT and the engineers estimated the cost at \$3.6 million. The project remains on the state's 10-year plan, which would require the state to cover 80% and the town 20%, with a current total cost estimate of approximately \$4 million.

In March, the town submitted paperwork, with county assistance, requesting \$5.6 million for the 147-foot bridge. The county has not offered financial support for the project.

As required by state law, the town must reassess property values every five years. This reassessment will take place next year and represents a significant expense. It was noted that assessments are spread proportionally over five years, but clarification will be sought on whether some properties might be reassessed in consecutive years.

The ambulance contract with the county has ended. With ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funding no longer available, the increased pricing will take effect next year.

Susan called the meeting to close at 7:47 Susan seconded, all in favor of closing the meeting.

Meeting adjourned Next meeting is to be determined sometime in the fall

The meeting minutes were taken by Christine Abdelnour-McKenna.