

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN
TOWN OF HAMPTON FALLS**

**JANUARY 04, 2023 – 6:00 PM
TOWN HALL**

FINAL

PRESENT: M. R. Lane, Chairman; E. B. Beattie, Vice Chairman; L. Gargiulo, Selectman
K. Anderson, Town Administrator; R. D. Webb, Assistant Administrator
GUESTS: R. Veno, Police Chief; J. Lord, Fire Chief

Chairman Lane called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:00 pm and opened the Public Hearing for the 2023 Proposed Default Budget, the Operating Budget, and Warrant Articles.

PUBLIC HEARING: 2023 Proposed Default Budget, the Operating Budget, and Warrant Articles.

Chairman Lane presented the 2023 proposed Default Budget of \$3,268,769.00. That is arrived at by taking the 2022 approved Budget of \$3,011,022 and adjusting as allowed by law – removing one-time expenditures and adding contractual increases. Of note is that Selectmen's policies, such as COLA's or the pay plan are not considered contractual and are not included in the Default Budget.

Chairman Lane presented the **changes for the Default Budget from the 2022 operating budget** are:

<u>Account #</u>	<u>Line Item</u>	<u>\$ AMOUNT</u>
4130-130	Elected Officials (1 election) - Decrease	(-200)
4140-305	Election Services (1 election) - Decrease	(-4,574)
4150-312	Assessing – Revaluation Increase	41,792
4150-301	Auditing-Contractual Increase	3,000
4155-210	Health/Dental Rate Increase	57,758
4196-480	Property Liability Insurance Increase	3,240
4155-260	Worker's Compensation Premium Decrease	(-1,678)
4220-560	Hampton Dispatch Contract Increase	200
4312-574	Winter Road Maintenance Increase	139,015
4324-365	Cardboard Recycling Increase	1,200
4550-210	Health Insurance Increase-Library Increase	23,154
4721-981	Debt Service Interest -Decrease	(-5,160)

Chairman Lane asked if there were any questions on the Default Budget, and none were seen nor heard.

Chairman Lane presented the **2023 proposed operating budget** is \$3,329,275 that is an increase of \$318,253 from 2022. The major increases are:

- Winter Road Maintenance – increase of \$126,876
- Assessing Revaluation – increase of \$54,692
- Employee Benefits (insurance, employer taxes, COLA) – increase of \$96,345

These major increases total \$277,913 – the remaining increase of \$40,340 is spread out in fuel, salt, cardboard baling, and electricity cost increases.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any questions on the Operating Budget, and none were seen nor heard.

2023 Warrant Articles, with Appropriations:

Article #14 – Purchase of Fire Department Mini Pumper Truck for \$340,000 – funds to be withdrawn from the Fire Department Vehicle Fund and the Special Detail Revenue Funds.

No tax impact.

Mark R. Lane, Chairman – Edward B. Beattie, Vice Chairman – Lou Gargiulo, Selectman

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Article #16 – Lafayette Road Sewer Study \$100,000 – application to State SRF Loan fund with 100% loan forgiveness. No tax impact.

Article #17 – Police Cruiser and Body Cameras for \$21,576. A grant for \$14,081 has already been awarded and the amount to be raised by taxation is \$7,495.

Article #18 – Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund - \$150,000

Projects for 2023 include Evergreen Road drainage and balance of Woodlawn area drainage project and paving as needed in town.

Article #19 – Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund - \$23,000

Annual deposit towards the bi-annual purchase of a police cruiser.

Article #20 – Mosquito Control - \$21,000 vendor cost for mosquito control in town.

Article #21 – Heritage Commission - \$1,000 to be deposited into the Heritage Commission Fund.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any questions on the Money Warrant Articles.

Bev Mutrie, Brown Road, asked about Article 14 and what a Mini-Pumper is, and Fire Chief Lord responded that it is a small version of a Fire Truck. She asked where a Mini-Pumper would be used, and Chief Lord responded, in driveways where larger Fire Trucks wouldn't fit. Chief Lord continued describing that the proposed Mini-Pumper will be able to go to the water supply to fill the other trucks, instead of taking all the equipment away from the fire to fill the trucks, which is the current practice. The Mini-Pumper can hold 500-gallons of water, whereas the larger truck holds 2,500-gallons.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any other questions on the Warrant articles, and there were none.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any changes requested by the Board of Selectmen, and E. Beattie said that he had some changes. E. Beattie proposed reducing the Police Budget as follows: \$7,764 from health insurance, \$375 from dental, and \$29,254 from Police Dept wages, that total a reduction of \$37,293 from the three areas. E. Beattie explained that the timing of hiring a fifth Police Officer, taking into account training, may not have someone in place before July 01, so he did not want to raise taxes for an expense that may not be incurred for some time.

MOTION: To reduce the Police Department Budget by the total amount of \$37,293, by adjusting the following line items: \$7,764 from health insurance, \$375 from dental, and \$29,254 from Police Dept wages.

MOTION: E. BEATTIE

SECOND: L. GARGIULO

DISCUSSION: Chairman Lane asked if there was any discussion, and Police Chief Veno requested to comment. Chief Veno stated that the Town has not had success finding a candidate to hire as a fifth certified Police Officer over the past six-months. He reported that he recently advertised the position for a non-certified Officer, by taking Selectman Gargiulo's recommendation to increase the social media sites to advertise the opening in locations throughout the Seacoast. Chief Veno continued that they have five or six interviews scheduled for the last week of January, with a goal of having the person on board

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by March 01st. He said that given that likely scenario, he recommends that the proposed budget stands and that the wage figure will be accurate. Chairman Lane asked if the candidates scheduled to be interviewed are certified, and Chief Veno responded no, that they would have to go to the Police Academy. L. Gargiulo asked what the cost was to attend the Police Academy, and Chief Veno explained that there is not a particular cost to attend but rather while the person is attending the Academy (for 14 weeks or approximately 3 months) they are a full-time employee of the Town. Chairman Lane asked if the salary advertised for the position was for a certified Police Officer, and Chief Veno explained that it was at the lowest salary step prior to COLA at \$57,000. He said that last September the position was advertised at a higher wage when they were seeking a certified officer. Chairman Lane inquired of Chief Veno from where did the five or six candidates he plans to interview originate, and was it because of the elimination of the certification requirement? Chief Veno responded that there have always been people interested in the non-certified position, but the priority had been to try to get a certified officer so that the Town would not have the delay of that officer needing to go to the Police Academy for training. E. Beattie said that the officer would not be providing services to the Town before June 01. Chief Veno said that the next Police Academy training would start in April through June/July, so August would be when the new officer would be providing services to the Town, fully trained. L. Gargiulo asked if any of the applicants are local, and Chief Veno responded that there is one candidate with previous police experience in New Hampshire, and there are one or two candidates who are either currently or formerly officers in other states, and all of them would need to go to the Police Academy. Chief Veno further explained that the Town can petition to have an officer “test out” of needing to go to the Academy, but that cannot happen until the officer is hired by the Town. E. Beattie said that previously, the decision had been made to remove a couple of months of benefits, understanding that a new hire would not be on board for a few months. Now, with this new information regarding the wage and potential starting date, E. Beattie does not want to raise money for someone who is not on staff yet, but also does not want to cut the funding of the Police Department too short. Chairman Lane asked if the Selectmen could revisit this issue at Deliberative Session on February 04th, after the interviews scheduled at the end of January, to know if there is a real opportunity to sign a candidate. K. Anderson responded that the Selectmen could make budget adjustments at the Deliberative Session.

WITHDRAWAL OF MOTION: E. BEATTIE

WITHDRAWAL OF SECOND: L. GARGIULO

Discussion to be continued February 04th at the Deliberative Session.

E. Beattie asked for confirmation of what had already been adjusted, and K. Anderson confirmed that two (2) months of health and dental insurance had been deleted from the Police Department budget. Chairman Lane asked why the interviews were being scheduled at the end of January, and Chief Veno responded to give time for the recently advertised social media posts to respond.

Chairman Lane asked if there were any other questions regarding the Warrant Articles, the Default Budget, or the Operating Budget, and there were none seen nor heard.

MOTION: To move the Warrant Articles, Default Budget, and Operating Budget to the Warrant for Deliberative Session.

MOTION: E. BEATTIE

SECOND: L. GARGIULO

UNANIMOUS

CLOSE PUBLIC HEARING

MOTION: To close the Public Hearing.

Mark R. Lane, Chairman – Edward B. Beattie, Vice Chairman – Lou Gargiulo, Selectman

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**MOTION: L. GARGIULO
SECOND: E. BEATTIE
UNANIMOUS**

OLD BUSINESS:

Financial Reports: General Fund Balance: \$3,479,208.87 K. Anderson stated that the Tax Collector reported that as of the close of the due date for property taxes she had collected 93% of the warrant. K. Anderson commented that Hampton Falls has a wonderful tax collection rate. All checks that were being held due to cash flow (to the school and to the county) have now been released.

Executive: Payroll Warrant, Accounts Payable, and Escrow Warrant:

MOTION: To approve Payroll Warrant # 590 dated 12/21/2022 for \$41,458.02; Accounts Payable Warrant # 828 dated 12/21/2022 for \$498,580.08; and Escrow Warrant # 21 dated 12/21/2022 for \$11,704.70.

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE
SECOND: L. GARGIULO
UNANIMOUS**

Other: Selectmen's Old Business: There was no Selectmen's Old Business.

OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:

B. Mutrie, Brown Road, asked about the current balance of the General Fund and whether the balance listed was before or after the previously held payments to the School and County, and K. Anderson responded that the General Fund balance listed was after the payments.

Renewal of Lease with Hampton Falls Historical Society: K. Anderson explained that the lease with the Historical Society for the Museum building expires on May 1, 2023. After reviewing the applicable NH Statutes (RSA 41:11-a), the Board of Selectmen are authorized to renew the lease approved by Town Meeting under the same terms. The lease as prepared would extend the lease for five years at the annual rate of \$1.00 per year. The Historical Society is responsible for all utilities and the Town is responsible for repairs, outside maintenance, landscaping and snow removal.

MOTION: To renew the lease between the Town of Hampton Falls and the Hampton Falls Historical Society for the Museum building located at 45 Exeter Road from May 2, 2023 – May 1, 2028.

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE
SECOND: L. GARGIULO
UNANIMOUS**

K. Anderson reported that the Historical Society is gifting to the Town their refrigerator and stove, because they are changing their kitchen into an Archival Room. The appliances from the Historical Society will be installed in the kitchen upstairs in Town Hall, after the room has been cleaned, and after the old appliances from that room are removed with the assistance of the Road Agent and the Fire Dept.

Household Waste Disposal Days: K. Anderson reported that Road Agent Russ Hilliard has received the State permit as the principal operator of the Brush Dump and the Town will be authorized to, once

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again, hold the Waste Collection Days. Based on the Selectmen's suggestions, they have worked together to develop a schedule and some recommendations for the Board to consider.

The Brush Dump would be open for bulky waste disposal on the first Saturday of each month from May 6th to October 7th – providing six (6) Saturday mornings that residents can dispose of the large items that cannot be put in the regular trash. Specific hours are not determined yet, but may be 8am-11am (with 11-12 to close) or from 9am-12pm.

Currently, residents do not need a Brush Dump sticker for the two collections that had been taking place, but in order to make it easier for the Road Agent to quickly determine residency we are recommending that Brush Dump stickers be required. The \$30 permit is good for three (3) years and will help cover the additional costs and allow residents with up to three (3) small items to dispose of them without needing to pay a \$20 full load fee. Residents will need to pre-pay for their load and/or items at the Town Clerk's office and will have a slip/receipt with them to show what they have paid for.

Chairman Lane asked if dumpsters will be available for the six (6) Saturdays, and K. Anderson responded yes. Chairman Lane said that the Town is going to need to educate the residents about how to do it so that people do not show up having not pre-paid, and K. Anderson agreed, and said that she has committed to R. Hilliard to help him out at the first couple of events. E. Beattie said that the message needs to be reemphasized that residents need Brush Dump stickers to dump brush as well. He asked about the rates of fees, and if there are any changes, and K. Anderson said she made no changes to the fees. E. Beattie asked about whether there was going to be a "Swap Area" as those can reduce the tonnage, and K. Anderson said yes, she has written an article for the next Newsletter asking for volunteers to assist with a swap area. In her discussions with the Road Agent, the proposal was to keep items for a month in the swap area, and then clear it out prior to the next Waste Disposal Day. E. Beattie asked if there would be a collection of metal items for the town to sell to Nichols Scrap Metal (or other vendor), since metal is valuable, and K. Anderson responded yes.

Chairman Lane asked if the expense was compared for offering the Household Waste Days twice annually versus six-times annually, and K. Anderson responded she expects the same amount of tonnage, just spread out over time, so there will be no new disposal costs. The dumpster costs are by weight, not frequency. Chairman Lane suggested that the Selectmen reconsider the fence, if there are going to be dumpsters and a swap area on site, from an aesthetic point of view, and said that he has the name of a fence company to pass along to K. Anderson. E. Beattie said that Drinkwater Road should be the first property line considered for fencing at the Brush Dump. Chairman Lane recalled a prior decision by the Selectmen to plant evergreen shrubs along the Drinkwater Road edge, and K. Anderson confirmed that R. Hilliard will be doing that in the Spring. E. Beattie reiterated that it will be important to educate residents about how to bring materials and how to pre-pay for Household Waste Day fees in order to participate in 2023.

MOTION: To require Brush Dump Stickers for the Household Waste Disposal days.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: E. BEATTIE

UNANIMOUS

FINAL

MOTION: To hold Household Waste Disposal days on the First Saturday of the month from May through October.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: E. BEATTIE

UNANIMOUS

E. Beattie inquired about the Fee Schedule, if that also needed to be approved, and K. Anderson stated that it is the Fee Schedule currently in effect, so it did not need approval. K. Anderson stated that she drafted a proposed News and Announcement regarding the Household Waste Disposal days, and read the proposed document as follows:

“Monthly disposal of household bulky waste will be taking place on the first Saturday of the month from May through October 2023. Residents must have a valid Brush Dump Sticker (\$30.00 for 3 years) and pre-pay for the disposal at the Town Clerk’s Office, at Town Hall. A per trip fee of \$20.00 and/or specific item fees are charged and must be pre-paid. If only bringing an item with a specific fee, such as electronics, tires, propane tanks or items containing freon – no additional trip fee is charged. Mixed loads require both the trip fee and the cost item fee. The price list is available on the Town’s website at www.hamptonfalls.org Scheduled Bulky Waste Saturdays in 2023 are: May 6, June 3, July 1, August 5, September 2, and October 7.”

E. Beattie said that he was fine with the proposed News and Announcement. He asked who was handling the financial aspects of the Household Waste Disposal Days in Town Hall, and K. Anderson responded that the Town Clerk handles issuing the Brush Dump Stickers and the fees for disposal, issuing receipts that residents provide to the Dump Attendants, to prove pre-payment.

Encumbrance – Police \$3,109.30: K. Anderson said that she was presented with the Police Department’s request to encumber funds, this afternoon, in the amount of \$3,109.30, for purchases made on the Town Credit Card for which the bill has not yet been received.

MOTION: To encumber \$3,109.30 in the Police Department budget, for credit card purchases for which the bill has not yet been received.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: E. BEATTIE

UNANIMOUS

Irrigation Pump Update – Governor Weare Park: K. Anderson reported that the pump for the irrigation system at Governor Weare Park reached the end of its useful life last week when it was being started up for the Ice Rink. Epping Well confirmed that the well pump failed, not from anything the ice rink volunteers had tried to do, but rather that it had reached the end of its useful life and they anticipated that it would need to be replaced in the Spring.

K. Anderson stated that the new irrigation pump is \$3,000 with the related wiring estimated to be under \$1,000. The installation is scheduled for January 6, 2023 – as there were not funds available to do so in 2022. The pump will only be used for topping off the ice when needed during the Ice Rink season. As this is an infrastructure cost, it is appropriate that the cost come from the General Fund, Parks, Maintenance and Repairs line item, and not from the Recreation Revolving Fund.

Special thanks to Jim Ziolkowski for donating two (2) truckloads of water from Buxton to fill the Ice Rink at Governor Weare Park.

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MOTION: To authorize the replacement of the irrigation pump at Governor Weare Park, not to exceed \$4,000, from the General Fund, Parks, Maintenance and Repairs line item.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: E. BEATTIE

UNANIMOUS

Other Selectmen's New Business: There was no Other Selectmen's New Business.

NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:

B. Mutrie, Brown Road, asked for clarification about the expenditure for the Irrigation Pump and whether it would be from the 2022 or the 2023 budget, and K. Anderson stated that it would be from the 2023 budget because there were not funds available in the 2022 budget. B. Mutrie commented that the Recreation Commission would have the opportunity to increase their budget by that amount at Deliberative Session. K. Anderson explained that the Recreation budget has been divided into the two sections of Parks separate from Recreation, so that the Town is handling all of the infrastructure of the Parks, and the Recreation Commission is handling programs. B. Mutrie asked if there would be enough money available in that account to handle this expense, and K. Anderson responded yes, that the Town plans to have some funds available in case this type of thing happens.

B. Mutrie asked what type of pump it is, and K. Anderson explained that it is an insulated one, and E. Beattie stated that he thought it would be a dry well, so that it does not freeze in the Winter.

Chairman Lane thanked Jim Ziolkowski for donating two (2) truckloads of water from Buxton to fill the Ice Rink at Governor Weare Park. Chairman Lane said that was very generous of him.

Monthly Reports: Selectmen's Representative Reports:

Planning Board: E. Beattie reported that Joe Faro, Sr of 12 Lafayette Road returned to the Planning Board for a second meeting of Design Review December 20th, with a revised proposal from their first meeting with the Planning Board in September. The total number of residential units was reduced to 104, the number of stories of the buildings was reduced from five (5) to three (3) stories, and there will be two access points on Route 1. The project needs approval from the Town of Seabrook to extend sewer to the site. And there will be a 10–12-month period of review by the State for permits for wetlands and driveways before the applicant will first go to the Zoning Board of Adjustment for approval of Variances prior to returning to the Planning Board with a Site Plan application. E. Beattie stated that it is an interesting project, and that it would generate substantial tax money for the Town, but that is not a reason to approve it, but it is a factor. The project is an age 55+ proposed community, that would reduce the potential impact on schools. E. Beattie mentioned that Chairman Lane was present at that Planning Board meeting, so he got to see and hear the project proposal firsthand.

The other potential application before the Planning Board is the continued Subdivision application of 5 Kensington Road to three (3) lots, that may be heard by the Planning Board in February, pending the outcome of the Appeal of the Administrative Decision and Variance application at the Zoning Board of Adjustment meeting in January.

Brown Road removal of apple trees has been noticed by residents. E. Beattie stated that the property has a two-year old Planning Board approval for a Subdivision, that includes underground utilities. K.

FINAL

Anderson reported that the property owners contacted Town Hall to inform us that they are not moving forward with the Subdivision plan at this time, the apple trees were non-producing and needed to come out, and the owners are planting the land with hay grasses.

Library Trustees: E. Beattie asked B. Mutrie for an update on the roof repair of the Library. She said that the vendor is looking for ways to fix the tower, examining the flashing, and may consider putting a rubber roof underneath. They are having trouble finding contractors to do the work. E. Beattie stated that everything else is going OK at the Library except for a leaky roof.

Chairman Lane asked E. Beattie, going back to a Planning Board topic, what the potential property tax revenue was estimated for the 12 Lafayette Rd proposal, and E. Beattie responded \$1-million in taxes, where the Town's total budget is approximately three million (\$3-million). K. Anderson responded that the proposal is for high-end one and two bedroom residential condos. E. Beattie said that the proposed project is a mixed-use development with retail and restaurant space on the first floor, and residential condos above in one building. The other two buildings are proposed to be residential on all three floors. E. Beattie continued that there is some wetlands mitigation which needs to be reviewed by the State. And he stated that the Planning Board encouraged the applicant to present the buildings as Colonial in structure. Chairman Lane stated that that property could have a significant improvement to the Town in terms of tax revenue to the residents. E. Beattie said that there will be costs associated with the proposed development such as Fire and Police services but overall it is a huge plus. Traffic is an issue and there will be a traffic study done as part of the project review. It is a significant project but E. Beattie stated that his interest is in not changing the dynamic of the town, and the way it looks. Chairman Lane asked if there was going to be access from behind the parcel, and E. Beattie responded no, that the rear of the parcel is lowland and is largely wet, and the State will be reviewing the project proposal for wetlands mitigation. E. Beattie said that the Planning Board deals with the issue of people in town not wanting anything to change; however, the lot at 12 Lafayette Road has been a vacant lot for at least fifteen (15) years, and he said that it is time for it to change.

L. Gargiulo asked if the sewer is provided from Seabrook to this proposed project (at 12 Lafayette Road), would that open up the potential for sewer along Route 1 for the rest of Hampton Falls? E. Beattie responded that it does, dependent on the Town of Seabrook's response to the request for sewer currently pending with the Seabrook Board of Selectmen. E. Beattie said that he attended a meeting some time ago where Seabrook said that it would have to be a Warrant Article, to make the decision. The Planning Board did a sewer flow study to provide to the Town of Seabrook to determine the sewer need of Hampton Falls along Route 1, and the result was that it would not put the Town of Seabrook at risk of capacity. E. Beattie summarized that he felt that it is a very do-able project, as K. Anderson has done similar work in Greenland, the economic development technical assistance the State is willing to provide, the potential applicant is ready, willing, and able, so that the timing may be right for this to happen. Chairman Lane said that the sewer project is more attractive to Seabrook as they would gain 104 new customers with the proposed mixed-use project at 12 Lafayette, than without the proposed project. E. Beattie said that if there is a betterment charge, then the cost gets reduced dramatically because of the 104 new customers.

K. Anderson said that the request for water service has not been made to the Town of Seabrook. She is talking with Aquarion Water from Hampton to determine the cost effectiveness for them to propose

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bringing water from Hampton, that currently terminates at Drakeside Road. E. Beattie stated that the proposed development at 12 Lafayette Road would be like an anchor store at a mall, in that it would provide an impetus for future development along that corridor, and around Whittier/Dodge Pond.

Recreation Commission: Chairman Lane said that there was not much to comment on as the Ice Skating Rink was discussed earlier in the meeting tonight. He said that the Ice Rink was functional for a couple of days prior to the current heat wave.

LAS: Chairman Lane said that the Public Hearing on the School Budget is January 9th at 7:00 PM in the Cafeteria. L. Gargiulo asked if there was any interest in the School having a combined Deliberative Session, and K. Anderson responded, not this year.

Heritage Commission: L. Gargiulo said that there was not much to report.

Conservation Commission: L. Gargiulo said that the Conservation Commission is interested in a grant application by SHEA to provide a person to be shared by their member towns, to identify parcel ownership along the Marsh, in preparation for potential future projects, such as the Rail Trail, and a possible dock, etc.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: November 15, 2022

MOTION: To approve the minutes of December 21, 2022, as written.

MOTION: L. GARGIULO

SECOND: E. BEATTIE

UNANIMOUS

ADJOURNMENT:

MOTION: To adjourn the Selectmen's Meeting at 7:10 PM.

MOTION: E. BEATTIE

SECOND: L. GARGIULO

UNANIMOUS

Next Selectmen's Meeting is Wednesday, January 18, 2023 at 8AM.

Minutes prepared by Rachel D. Webb, Assistant Administrator.