

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
TOWN OF HAMPTON FALLS**

**JANUARY 12, 2022 – 6:00 PM  
TOWN HALL**

*FINAL*

**PRESENT:** L. Gargiulo, Chairman; M. R. Lane, Vice Chairman; E. B. Beattie, Selectman  
K. Anderson, Town Administrator; R. D. Webb, Town Secretary

**GUESTS:** J. Lord, Fire Chief; R. Dirsia and R. Veno, Police Chief and Police Lieutenant;  
M. Sikorski, Building Inspector, M. Hill, Chair of Conservation Commission;  
S. Grant, Town Clerk/Tax Collector

Chairman Gargiulo called the meeting of the Board of Selectmen to order at 6:00 PM.

**PUBLIC HEARING re: BUDGET:**

L. Gargiulo opened the Public Hearing on the Budget for the Town of Hampton Falls, NH.

**PROPOSED 2022 DEFAULT BUDGET – \$2,927,055**

L. Gargiulo described how the Default Budget was constructed based upon last year's Operating Budget, and changes due to contracts. If the actual budget is not approved at Town Meeting then the Default Budget is the budget with which the Town will move forward. There were no questions on the Default Budget.

**PROPOSED 2022 OPERATING BUDGET – \$2,980,822**

The 2022-MS-636 is the State form that is completed and contains the proposed budget, and lists line items under various categories. This budget has been examined thoroughly numerous times, with many meetings with multiple changes. This Public Hearing is the opportunity for the general public to comment on the budget, and then the budget will move to Town Meeting (Deliberative Session February 5<sup>th</sup>) and the ballot in March 2022.

General Government category includes the Board of Selectmen, Elections, Legal expenses, Cemeteries, Insurance, Advertising, and an array of general government operating accounts. The total amount proposed for this category is \$959,609 compared with \$983,880 budgeted and \$945,785 spent last year. There were no questions from the public regarding this budget category.

Public Safety category includes the Police, Fire, Ambulance, Building Inspection and Emergency Management services. The category is increasing to \$1,005,957 from \$949,640 budgeted and \$933,627 spent last year, due primarily to the Police Department line as a result of the Department staff increasing from four to five full-time Police officers. E. Beattie mentioned that Emergency Management is also increased over last year due to the bi-annual Nuclear Regulatory Commission drills. There were no questions from the public regarding this budget category.

Highways and Streets category includes highways, streets and street lighting, and is proposed at \$338,157 compared with last year's spent amount of \$223,139. K. Anderson clarified that the budgeted amount for the prior year was \$319,635 so the savings realized of \$96,496 has been due to the mild winter so far. E. Beattie confirmed with K. Anderson that the \$174,000 left over at the end of 2021 budget includes the savings in this line item. There were no questions from the public regarding this budget category.

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Sanitation category includes Solid Waste Collection and Solid Waste Disposal and the proposed Budget is \$271,550 compared with \$252,077 spent last year. The Town of Hampton Falls is fortunate that the Town locked-in a five-year contract with Covanta in Haverhill, MA last year, compared with other towns that are suffering the high cost of solid waste that has recently increased exponentially due to China not accepting recyclables.

Beverly Mutrie asked about the cardboard recycling and whether that has been a good decision for the Town, and L. Gargiulo said that yes, it has reduced the cost for the Town. The Town used to pay the same rate to recycle cardboard as the rest of the recycling, but now the Town gets paid for their cardboard. It is not a huge amount of money, but it is off-setting revenue. Additionally, the contract increases with a CPI inflationary aspect, and the Town is budgeting for an increase in tonnage as well. E. Beattie confirmed that the tonnage rate increases by \$2 per ton to \$95 per ton. K. Anderson clarified that the revenue shows on the Revenues pages under Charges for Services, the line-item Income from Departments. E. Beattie added that the Town is also not paying for the disposal cost of the cardboard in the weight of tonnage, so that's another cost savings, especially with cardboard being the heaviest component of recyclables comprising 60% of the average weight. The timing was great in terms of when the five-year contract was locked-in, right before China decided not to accept recyclables and the market exploded. Hopefully the recycle stream will change at some point and improve, and then there may be some additional opportunities for the Town to realize more savings.

Health category includes Pest Control, Health Officers, and Administration adjacent to wetland areas with concerns about mosquito borne illnesses is budgeted \$44,276 for next year, compared with \$60,626 spent last year. L. Gargiulo said that he hopes that the public votes for the warrant article #9 for mosquito control. There were no questions from the public regarding this budget category. K. Anderson explained that \$21,000 for mosquito control in 2022 shows as a Warrant Article.

Welfare category is budgeted for \$5,580 for next year and \$2,820 was spent this year; however, the Town typically budgets \$6,000 for this purpose so the amount proposed is a bit less than previously budgeted, based on use. This use is for welfare issues in town, if a resident is facing an eviction, or has an illness it gives our Welfare Agent the ability to assist the person, and this is how welfare is handled in NH. There were no questions from the public regarding this budget category.

Culture and Recreation category includes Parks and Recreation, Library, and Patriotic Purposes which includes Veteran's Day and Memorial Day events, and is budgeted at \$206,323 compared with \$187,706 spent last year. The increase in this category is due to the Parks and Recreation and also due to the Cemeteries' new mowing contracts. E. Beattie explained that the frequency of mowing will increase seasonally, according to specifications detailed in each mowing contract. The Board of Selectmen carefully put together new mowing contracts by collaborating with both the Parks and Recreation Commission, and also with the Cemetery Trustees. M. Lane stated that the Governor Wearer soccer field requires a couple of mowings per week for approximately six weeks during soccer season, so that when little kids kick the ball, the ball can roll on the grass. The problem is that the grass grows so well, that it needs to be mowed more frequently. L. Gargiulo said that the Selectmen changed the specifications of the mowing contracts to get the best price with the increase of service, due to concerns expressed by people regarding cemeteries prior to Memorial Day, and concerns from parents regarding the length of the grass at the soccer field.

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Bev Mutrie asked a clarifying question regarding the mowing costs that are spread out across the various line items (Parks and Recreation as well as Cemeteries), and L. Gargiulo responded that all line items were included in the responses to the RFPs. E. Beattie explained that the Town ended up with two (2) vendors for the mowing contract, namely one to do the Cemeteries, and another one to do the Town Common and the soccer field.

Conservation and Development category went from \$8,200 spent last year to a budgeted amount for next year at \$12,510, with the increase due to the addition of a part-time staff person, Conservation Coordinator. L. Gargiulo said that the Conservation Commission has done an exemplary job of protecting our natural resources with not a lot of money.

Debt Service category is based upon long-term bonds principal and interest. K. Anderson explained that there is only one bond which is the Applecrest Farm Conservation Easement, and there are four (4) more years until it is complete. L. Gargiulo said that the Town can look forward to the future savings from no longer having that debt service cost after four years. Next year's budget proposed \$136,860 with \$139,960 spent last year on debt service.

The total budget proposed by the Board of Selectmen is \$2,980,822 for the 2022 year.

**PROPOSED 2022 MONEY WARRANT ARTICLES:**

L. Gargiulo presented the following 2022 Money Warrant articles, on which the public will have a chance to vote on Election Day in March 2022.

<u>WARRANT ARTICLE</u>		<u>DOLLAR AMOUNT</u>
#	<u>WARRANT ARTICLE PURPOSE</u>	
9	Mosquito Control	21,000
4	Highway Maintenance CRF	250,000
6	Police Cruiser CRF	23,000
7	Revaluation CRF	8,000
8	Master Plan CRF	5,000
5	Government Buildings ETF	25,000

Mosquito Control is proposed at \$21,000 and is a third-party contract that services the Town on a seasonal weekly basis. Mosquito Control was discussed previously during this meeting.

Highway Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund is proposed for \$250,000 for highway maintenance and is mostly spent on replacing culverts in Town. L. Gargiulo said that just about every culvert in town has failed, and the Town replaced two (2) culverts last year (at King Street and also at Curtis Road) utilizing this annual appropriation of \$250,000. Culvert replacement is something that was neglected for a long time and this current Board of Selectmen decided that they had to ensure the safety of the residents, and that it was a priority to address because there were areas in town where residents could be cut-off if there was a flood and the culvert failed. K. Anderson added that the \$250,000 proposed for 2022 is primarily for Glenwood/Woodlawn drainage.

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Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund is proposed for \$23,000 each year to facilitate purchase of a replacement police cruiser every two (2) years. This spreads out the cost of the cruiser over a couple of years, to reduce the tax impact to the residents in any one year.

Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund is proposed at \$8,000 each year to facilitate the cost of a complete revaluation of the Town, that is required every five (5) years. This spreads out the cost of the revaluation over several years, to reduce the tax impact to the residents in any one year. The Town is scheduled for their revaluation in 2023.

Master Plan Capital Reserve Fund is proposed at \$5,000. E. Beattie said that the current membership of the Planning Board has put forth this proposed amount for next year; however, they have had discussions about potentially taking on this project themselves in the future, by working on updating a chapter at a time every few years, and then this \$5,000 request in the future may not be needed. A Master Plan should be updated every ten (10) years, as recommended by the State.

Beverly Mutrie asked what the final number would be to update the Master Plan, and E. Beattie responded that he did not know because the Planning Board membership may take-on the project themselves in the future, and they may not need to tax the residents for this purpose.

Government Buildings Expendable Trust Fund is proposed at \$25,000 for the purpose to upkeep all of the buildings that the town owns, namely: the Town Hall, the Public Safety Building, the Library, the Museum, and the Town Shed. Last year, the Town did a number of projects to keep the buildings operational, and up to date, for example, this floor was done in this meeting room that was scraped, sanded, and polyurethaned, and there was significant work done at the Museum building. Due to the age of some of the buildings, there is probably more work that could be done, but the Selectmen are asking for \$25,000, knowing that there will be some government funds available to offset some costs for government building repairs and improvements. The Town did receive some COVID (ARPA: American Rescue Plan Act) monies spent on HVAC repairs and replacement in 2021, with a second ARPA tranche planned to be received in August 2022.

The total of the six (6) Warrant articles is \$332,000.

There were no citizens' petitioned articles received for the ballot in March 2022.

There were no questions on the Special Warrant articles.

**PROPOSED 2022 REVENUES:**

The MS-636 form from the State, details the origin of the Town's income, mostly from property taxes, and the Town Clerk for motor vehicle permits, in addition to Building Permits, Rooms and Meals distribution and Highway Block Grant funds.

L. Gargiulo said that the Selectmen are presenting a balanced budget which he hopes the residents will vote to approve.

**MOTION: To close the Public Hearing**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

*FINAL*

**REGULAR AGENDA OF THE SELECTMEN'S MEETING:**

**OLD BUSINESS:**

**FIRE CHIEF – MONTHLY REPORT:**

J. Lord presented his monthly report for the month of December 2021. There were no questions regarding the monthly report of the Fire Chief.

E. Beattie commented that he attended the COVID-Booster Blitz event last Saturday at Exeter High School, that was organized and run by the Fire Chief and his staff, and J. Lord is to be commended for doing an outstanding job. Thank you. J. Lord responded with some statistics saying that they had a total of 4,000 appointments available, with 3,300 people who signed-up for boosters, and an actual total of 2,700 people who showed-up within the six-hour period of time.

**POLICE CHIEF – MONTHLY REPORT:**

R. Dirsa and R. Veno presented the monthly report for the month of December 2021. There were no questions regarding the monthly report of the Police Chief.

L. Gargiulo asked the Police Chief if he would like to go on record to discuss what he shared with the Board of Selectmen in Non-Public Session last Thursday. R. Dirsa shared his intent to retire with an effective date of April 30, 2022. He offered his appreciation to the Town for the time that he has been here, and said that the past twenty-six (26) years have gone by in a flash. He offered his appreciation for the Boards for whom he served and the Town Administrators with whom he served, and the townspeople, and he thanked the Board of Selectmen for accepting his intent to retire.

L. Gargiulo thanked R. Dirsa for all that he has done over these long years, for his dedication, professionalism, and for bringing the Police Department to the level to which he has brought the department. As Chairman of the Selectmen this year, L. Gargiulo thanked R. Dirsa and congratulated him and wished him well on his retirement, and, offered to make a motion to accept R. Dirsa's intent to retire, with regrets, effective April 30, 2022.

**MOTION: To accept Police Chief Robbie Dirsa's intent to retire, with regrets, effective April 30, 2022.**

**MOTION: L. GARGIULO**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

The Board of Selectmen is ascertaining the next steps toward appointing a successor to the Police Chief, and the new Board would be making a selection shortly after the election in March when that Board reconstitutes, or, there may be a decision made before then.

**BUILDING INSPECTOR – MONTHLY REPORT:**

M. Sikorski presented his monthly report for the month of December 2021. There were no questions regarding the monthly report of the Building Inspector.

L. Gargiulo asked if there were any updates on any issues. M. Sikorski responded that the Historical Society's Museum building heating system upgrade is underway, the electrician is working there this week with the new service going in Friday, and the heating contractor will be coming soon after to install the mini-split units. The electric baseboard heating units have already been installed in the kitchen and in the bathroom and are currently functioning. L. Gargiulo mentioned that it will make the building

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much more usable and habitable, and the people involved with it will be running a lot of programs because now they will have the ability to do it and won't have to worry about environmental issues of being cold in the winter and hot in the summer. The approximately fifty-year-old heating system is planned to be replaced. It is a big step for the Town, and gives the Town another building, and it gives the residents an opportunity to have another place to have events and to see all of the historic relics from a long history in the Town. L. Gargiulo said that the Board appreciates M. Sikorski for his involvement in helping get the work at the Museum done.

Other than that, M. Sikorski said that he has been trying to help to keep everything warm. K. Anderson reported that M. Sikorski was a huge help today, as the heating went out (and the temperature was down to 53 degrees) in the main part of the Town Hall building when a condensation line froze, and Mark was able to know what was wrong and took his blowtorch to melt the ice, and got the heat back on. The Town had been 30<sup>th</sup> in line for a service call to a heating vendor for the repair call, and Mark's efforts were appreciated.

L. Gargiulo inquired with M. Sikorski if there were any developments on the conservation land encroachment issue. M. Sikorski reported that he did the site walk with the Conservation Commission representatives, and had discussions with some affected parties, and the Town is preparing some informative letters that will help people understand the uses of the land and what is allowed without damaging the environment. The Conservation Commission recently met, so the Town will be in contact with some of the residents about adding some clarity to using that beautiful space. L. Gargiulo asked if that information should be made available regarding all conservation lands, to add clarity, maybe put it in the Newsletter, so that everyone would know that encroachment and cutting of trees, and building trails in conservation lands is not appropriate. M. Sikorski agreed that including information in the Newsletter would be good, and that he is also discussing possibly adding a section in the Town Report.

L. Gargiulo asked Mary Ann Hill of the Conservation Commission what she thought about putting some information, perhaps in the Newsletter, regarding the use of conservation lands or things not to do like cut trails, or ride ATVs on conservation land, so that the Town can get in front of these issues before they happen. M. Hill said that she could put something in the Newsletter with that content, and she further expressed that the Town should also insert a flyer in the tax bills because those go to everybody. Her point was that everyone reads their tax bill, but not everyone reads the Newsletter, and not everyone reads the signs at the Raspberry Farm and at Marsh Lane. The Conservation Commission is working on a letter to address the issues of recent concern. The "rule of thumb" is that in wetlands, *No Motorized Vehicles*, even on your own property, on Town property, or on Conservation property because motorized vehicles destroy the soil structure and the plants and animals that require the soil.

One thing that confuses people is that there several wetlands in Hampton Falls, that fall into, or are classified in three different categories of 1) Prime Wetlands, 2) Shorelands (including both rivers in town), and 3) Wetlands. Three violations this year involving Prime Wetlands were reported to the State. Other wetlands violations the Conservation Commission handles but informing people about prohibited uses is most important.

**Financial Reports:**

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN  
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K. Anderson reported that the end of year expenditures have been calculated on a preliminary basis and will be closed Friday in preparation for the Audit next week. There will be Audit adjustments made next week. The 2021 appropriated funds remaining at the year-end are \$173,000.

**General Fund Balance: \$3,802,960.56**

**Executive: Accounts Payable:**

K. Anderson presented the payroll and accounts payable warrants for the Selectmen's consideration.

- 1) **Payroll Warrant #564 dated January 7, 2022, in the amount of \$27,856.73**
- 2) **Accounts Payable Warrant #796 dated January 7, 2022, in the amount of \$11,432.20**
- 3) **Accounts Payable Warrant #797 dated January 12, 2022 in the amount of \$718,608.33**
- 4) **Treasurer's Warrant #5 dated December 31, 2021 in the amount of \$222,674.72**

The major part of the Treasurer's Warrant was the transfers that have been received through the Fire Department for COVID reimbursement for Booster Blitzes and COVID vaccine clinics, thereby reimbursing the General Fund.

**MOTION: To approve the Payroll Warrant #564 dated January 7, 2022, in the amount of \$27,856.73**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION: To approve the Accounts Payable Warrant #796 dated January 7, 2022, in the amount of \$11,432.20**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION: To approve the Accounts Payable Warrant #797 dated January 12, 2022 in the amount of \$718,608.33**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION: To approve the Treasurer's Warrant #5 dated December 31, 2021 in the amount of \$222,674.72**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

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

**OLD BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no Old Business Public Comment.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

**Executive: 2022 Budget Adjustments, Approval of the Budget, & Warrant for Posting**

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K. Anderson said that for the 2022 Budget, all of the lines for the budget were open for discussion so the Board of Selectmen has the ability to make budget adjustments at this time, based upon public comment or need.

K. Anderson requested the following two budget adjustments, namely, one to Employee Benefits account #4155, and the second to Police account #4210.

The first adjustment request was to Employee Benefits, account # 4155 - to add \$15,200 for changes to health insurance plans based on 6-months of a new hire (with the Police Chief's retirement) and a necessary adjustment for a current employee

**MOTION: To approve the budget adjustment to add \$15,200 to account # 4155 for health insurance plans.**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

The second budget adjustment request was to Police account #4210 to add \$15,000 to cover the retirement obligations for the Police Chief's unused vacation and sick leave. L. Gargiulo stated that pursuant to the Town's Personnel policies that the Chief is entitled to 240 hours of accrued sick leave and an estimated 95 hours of accrued vacation time.

**MOTION: To approve the adjustment to add \$15,000 to account # 4210 to cover the retirement obligation for the Police Chief's unused vacation and sick leave.**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION : To approve the proposed 2022 Budget of \$3,011,022, including the two adjustments, and to move the proposed 2022 budget forward to Deliberative Session.**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**MOTION: To approve and post the Warrant as amended.**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND; M. LANE**

**UNANIMOUS**

**Planning:**

**Rockingham Planning Commissioner Appointment: Andrew Brubaker**

K. Anderson reported that the re-appointment of Andy Brubaker as an RPC Commissioner has been recommended by the Planning Board.

**MOTION: To re-appoint Andrew Brubaker as an RPC Commissioner for a term expiring January 12, 2026.**

**MOTION: E. BEATTIE**

**SECOND: M. LANE**



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**Other Selectmen's New Business:** M. Lane reported that the School Board is holding it's Public Hearing on the School Budget tonight, and the School Board is proposing a budget of \$6,998,260 that is an increase of 1.91%. E. Beattie added that the School Board meeting starts at 7:00 PM tonight, so people could go attend if they are available, starting in a few moments.

L. Gargiulo requested that K. Anderson send the proposed list of accomplishments of the Board of Selectmen to all of the Selectmen to review, for the purpose of inclusion in the Selectmen's Report for the Town Report.

**NEW BUSINESS PUBLIC COMMENT:** There was no New Business Public Comment.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: December 29, 2021**

**MOTION:** To approve the minutes of December 29, 2021 as written.

**MOTION:** E. BEATTIE

**SECOND:** M. LANE

**UNANIMOUS**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**MOTION:** To adjourn the Board of Selectmen's meeting at 7:00 PM.

**MOTION:** M. LANE

**SECOND:** E. BEATTIE

**UNANIMOUS**

Next Selectmen's Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, February 02, 2022, at 6:00 PM, Town Hall.

These minutes prepared by Rachel D. Webb, Town Secretary; Town of Hampton Falls, NH.