

BUDGET COMMITTEE

January 12, 2023 in the Selectmen's Meeting Room

Chairwoman Harake called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM.

Chairwoman Harake led the pledge of allegiance.

Chairwoman Harake noted the passing of community members Dick Nichols and Norm Silberdick.

- Mr. Warburton gave remarks regarding the contributions each of the men gave to the town of Hampton.
- The Budget Committee paused for a moment of silence in honor of the two community members.

Introduction of Members (Roll Call)

Katherine Harake, Chairwoman
 Matthew Saunders, Vice-Chairman
 Steve Henderson
 Brian Warburton
 Larry Quinn
 Mike Plouffe
 Bob Ladd, Village District Representative
 Rusty Bridle, Selectmen's Representative
 Frank Deluca, School Board Representative

I. Acceptance of the 12/20/22 minutes

Mr. Warburton MOTIONED to accept the 12/20/2022 minutes. SECONDED by Mr. Quinn. Vote: Unanimous.

II. Public Comment

- **SAU90 Budget and Warrant Articles presented by Dr. Lois Costa and Mariah Curtis.**

Ms. Harake MOTIONED to waive the reading of the warrant articles. SECONDED by Mr. Ladd. Vote: 4-4-0. In Favor: Ladd, Harake, Saunders, Deluca. Opposed: Henderson, Warburton, Plouffe, Quinn.
 Motion Fails. The warrant articles will be read verbatim.

■ Article 1: Operating Budget for FY 23-24

- Dr. Costa and Ms. Curtis read this article verbatim.
- No public comments.

■ Article 2: Long-Term Maintenance

- Dr. Costa and Ms. Curtis read this article verbatim.
- No public comments.

- **Article 3: Retention of 5% of the Districts Net Assessment**
 - Dr. Costa and Ms. Curtis read the article verbatim.
 - Ms. Harake asked why the Budget Committee’s vote on this article is not reflected in the information presented.
 - Ms. Cutis noted that this article is at the sole discretion of the School Board and does not need a recommendation from the Budget Committee.
 - No public comments.
 - **Article 4: Child Benefit Services for Sacred Heart School**
 - Dr. Costa and Ms. Curtis read the article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
 - **Article 5: Citizen’s Petition Regarding Redistribution of School Funds to Private, Charter, or Religious Schools or Institutions.**
 - Dr. Costa and Ms. Curtis read the article verbatim.
 - Mr. Ladd asked if the petitioner was present in the room.
 - Dr. Costa stated that she did not see the petitioner in the room.
 - No public comments.
- **Town of Hampton Budget and Warrant Articles Presented by Jamie Sullivan, Town Manager.**

Mr. Bridle MOTIONED to waive the reading of the warrant articles.
 SECONDED by Mr. Ladd. Vote: 4-4-0. In favor: Ladd, Harake, Bridle, Deluca. Opposed: Henderson, Warburton, Plouffe, Quinn.
 Motion Fails. Articles will be read verbatim.

- **Article 9: Bicentennial Sea Wall**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 10: Default Budget**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 11: Fire Engine**
 - Ms. Harake read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 12: Kings Highway Flooding**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 13: Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund.**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments;
- **Article 14: Highway Block Grant**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 15: Vehicles for DPW**

- Ms. Harake read the warrant article verbatim.
- No public comments.
- **Article 16: Town Hall Roof HVAC Security**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 17: Police Body Cams**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 18: Additional Police Lieutenant**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - Mr. Warburton noted a mistake regarding the Budget Committee's vote which reads '5-3-0'. According to the minutes, the vote was 3-5-0. Mr. Sullivan will review and revise in accordance with the minutes.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 19: Recreation Infrastructure**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - Mr. Warburton commented that he feels as though his position has been misrepresented in previous minutes due to the numbers associated with some of the warrant articles changing over time.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 20: Human Services**
 - Ms. Harake read the warrant article verbatim.
 - Mr. Lessard asked why the Richie McFarland Fund was not on the list this year. Mr. Sullivan explained that the fund was merged with Waypoint.
- **Article 21: Hampton Hub Planning**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 22: Ice Pond and Grist Mill Pond Study**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 23: Debris Pile at Transfer Station**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 24: Manhole Rehabilitation**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 25: Police Forfeiture Special Revenue Fund**
 - Ms. Harake read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 26: Compactor Replacement Special Revenue Fund**
 - Ms. Harake read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 27: Cemetery Dump Truck/Plow**

- Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
- No public comments.
- **Article 28: Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Capital Reserve Fund**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 29: Conservation Land**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 30: Firefighters Turnout Gear/PPE Capital Reserve Fund**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - No public comments.
- **Article 35: Holiday Parade**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.

Mr. Warburton MOTIONED to approve the sum of \$3,000 for the 2023 Hampton Holiday Parade organized by Experience Hampton, article 35. SECONDED by Mr. Henderson. Vote: 8-0-1. In Favor: Warburton, Henderson, Bridle, Saunders, Quinn, Ladd, Deluca, Plouffe. Abstained: Harake.

- No public comment.
- **Article 36: Gather**
 - Mr. Sullivan read the warrant article verbatim.
 - \$5,000 would be raised for Gather to provide residents of Hampton with food during the summer via markets twice per month.
 - Mr. Warburton asked where the market would be located
 - Mr. Sullivan noted that the markets move around, but it has mostly taken place uptown.
 - Mr. Henderson commented that there is a need for this service in-town.
 - Mr. Bridle commented that they were at Centre School one day per week all summer long.
 - Ms. Harake stated that if she abstains, it is because she feels this is something the town should decide on their own.

Mr. Bridle MOTIONED to approve warrant article 36 in the amount of \$5,000 dollars. SECONDED by Mr. Henderson. Vote: 8-0-1. In favor: Bridle, Warburton, Henderson, Ladd, Quinn, Saunders, Deluca, Plouffe. Abstained: Harake.

- No public comment

III. General Discussion

- Mr. Warburton asked about the Budget Committee meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 17th. He noted that he feels it is important for the committee to meet and discuss the warrant articles in-depth. The Budget Committee begins discussing the need for another meeting and information that would be desired. This topic is revisited later.
- Ms. Harake offered to make a list of questions to ask various town employees and take a vote on the questions at the end of the meeting.
 - Mr. Warburton stated that he would like to know how many people in SAU 90 have left in the past five years. He would like the numbers to be differentiated between those who left via retirement versus those who left for other reasons.
 - Mr. Deluca asked for comparable salaries between SAU 90 and SAU 21.
 - Mr. Plouffe noted that he would like information regarding encumbrances. *(This was asked later in the meeting).*
- Mr. Henderson asked for clarification regarding how the committee can ask questions. He noted that he feels it is wrong to vote on every question.
 - Ms. Harake stated that the protocol is in-place to maintain order. She does not recall ever having a question thrown away due to a vote.
 - Mr. Warburton stated that he does not feel he should need to get permission to ask a question. He stated that he feels the protocol has created animosity and he should be able to go into the town hall and ask any question he wants.
 - Ms. Harake stated that she is unaware of any animosity.
 - Mr. Ladd reminded the committee that the protocol was voted on during the committee's reorganization to comply with the Municipal Budget Law via the NH Municipal Association. The issue can be revisited after the new Budget Committee is formed in March.
- Mr. Warburton noted that he had sent a question via email to the school and never received a reply. He added that previously he had never followed protocol and conversations would happen consistently outside of the meeting settings.
 - Dr. Costa noted that she received Mr. Warburton's email, and her understanding was that questions need to be asked as a committee via the chairperson. She emphasized that she would never withhold information.
- Mr. Henderson agreed with the protocol that all questions should be asked via the chairperson as to not overwhelm town employees with questions from individual people.
 - Mr. Saunders agreed, while acknowledging that sometimes questions are thought of outside of meetings. He emphasized that conversations via email outside of meetings can become a legal gray area.

Ms. Harake MOTIONED to suspend voting on questions at the end of the meeting and to gather questions during the meeting. SECONDED for

discussion by Mr. Deluca.

- Mr. Warburton voiced concern about questions that may be had outside of meetings. He would like to be able to send those to the chairperson.
 - Ms. Harake stated that questions should be brought to meetings.

Vote: 8-1-0. In favor: Harake, Saunders, Plouffe, Ladd, Bridle, Deluca, Quinn, Henderson. Opposed: Warburton.

- Mr. Warburton asked what happens if he has a question next week.
 - Ms. Harake stated that she would appreciate it if he brought his questions to the meetings.
- Ms. Harake asked for clarification on why more questions would be asked on a budget that they have already voted on.
 - Mr. Warburton stated that he feels the questions being asked would not have affected the vote, but it is important information for the voters.
 - Mr. Saunders stated that the information being asked is relevant to voters and may be relevant to the deliberative session.
- Mr. Deluca suggested a 'drop-dead' date for questions.
 - Mr. Saunders noted that information should be free-flowing with the understanding that if a question is asked too late it may not be possible to gather the information in-time.
- Mr. Warburton noted that he feels the committee is not cohesive.
- Mr. Henderson stated that he liked that the articles were read in-full. He feels that it keeps the public informed.
- Mr. Plouffe asked for more information recording the re-evaluation.
 - Specifically, he would like clarification on if the town will do a re-list or a re-evaluation.
- Mr. Warburton would like a deeper explanation regarding the bond for the sea-wall. He would like to know why the town wants to take out a 3 million dollar bond with 2.3 million dollars in interest.
- Mr. Bridle suggested that the Budget Committee request a copy of the encumbrances for the Board of Selectmen.
- Ms. Harake will request all of the information that is being asked for and have it sent along to the Budget Committee via email. There will be no meeting on January 17th.

IV. Adjournment

Mr. Bridle MOTIONED to adjourn. SECONDED by Mr. Ladd. Vote: Unanimous.