

WARREN BOARD OF SELECTMEN BUDGET HEARING MINUTES
Tuesday, February 10, 2026

Present: Peter Boncek, Richard Spaulding, Jayne Spaulding, Donna Bagley, Cindy Bemis, Christina Hytinen, Chanda Cunningham-Spence, Clayton Spence, Rachel DeRaymond, Justin Monninger, Kathryn Ducharme, Dolores Fox, Kaitlin Baker, Ashley Clark, Charlene Mathews, Amber Kingsbury, Suzanne Flagg, Bryan Flagg, Heather Sackett, Lisa Mantz, Tom Mantz, Sheila Foote, John Semertgakis, Don Bagley, Donna Campbell, Sam Click, John Alias

Chairwoman McCartin called the public hearing to order at 6:00 PM. Charles Sackett, Shirley McCartin, and Jeremy Hair were present.

Chairwoman McCartin welcomed the public to the Town's budget hearing.

The Selectboard presented the 2026 Proposed Warrant, 2026 Budget by Line-Item, 2026 MS-636, as well as, a summary of the Trust Funds as of December 31, 2025.

Town Administrator, Austin Albro provided an overview and began the review of the 2026 budget by warrant article.

The amount to be raised by local taxation this year is estimated to be \$1,025,821. That is \$39,873 less than the 2025 proposed budget amount.

Our operating budget has increased \$62,218. We're going to explain why throughout our presentation tonight!

Special articles require \$622 more than last year. A special warrant article is a town meeting question that asks voters to approve a specific spending purpose, such as a major project, a bond, or money placed into or taken from a reserve fund. It is treated separately from the regular operating budget so voters can decide on it separately. These articles are: 3, 4, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23.

There is no first year tax impact for articles 3 & 4. The Select Board does not recommend passage of article 3 or article 4 at this time. If approved and bonded at current rates (3.43%) for 20 years, you could estimate first year payments of \$82,935 (\$.77 per thousand) for Article 3 and \$101,365 (.94 per thousand) for Article 4. Bond payments would decrease slightly each year after that. There is a Public Hearing on February 18th at 6:00 PM at the Town Hall and we encourage you to attend.

Individual articles require \$57,091 less than individual articles last year. An individual warrant article is a separate town meeting question that asks voters to decide on a single, specific issue or expenditure on its own but that does not meet the criteria of a special warrant article. Individual articles are 19, 20, 21, 25 and 28. The Select Board does not recommend passage of Article 28 at this time. Administrator's Note: C. Sackett later clarified that the non-recommendation applies to Article 32, not Article 28.

Estimated Revenues and Credits are \$45,622 greater than last year. This is a combination of

revenues and use of fund balance in Articles 15, 16, 17, 18, 20. We will also review anticipated revenues tonight.

	2026 Budget	2025 Budget	Change (\$)
Operating Budget Appropriations	\$1,335,121	\$1,272,903	+\$62,218
Special Warrant Articles	\$131,715	\$131,093	+\$622
Individual Warrant Articles	\$43,000	\$100,091	-\$57,091
Total Appropriations	\$1,509,836	\$1,504,087	+\$5,749
Less Estimated Revenues & Credits	(\$484,015)	(\$438,393)	-\$45,622
Estimated Taxes to Be Raised	\$1,025,821	\$1,065,694	-\$39,873

Article 01 Election of Town Officials

To bring in your votes to elect all town officers which appear on the official ballot for the ensuing year, as follows:

Selectboard: 3 year term
 Moderator: 2 year term
 Treasurer: 1 year term
 Chief of Police: 1 year term
 Planning Board: 3 year term
 Planning Board: 3 year term
 Cemetery Trustee: 3 year term
 Library Trustee: 3 year term
 Trustee of Trust Funds: 3 year term
 Supervisor of the Checklist: 6 year term

Article 02 Hear and Accept Reports

To hear and accept the report of the Selectmen and other Town Officers and to vote on any subject relating thereto.

Article 03 Highway Garage Construction

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,100,000 for the construction of a new Highway Department Garage, \$200,000 will come from the Capital Reserve for this purpose, further to authorize the issuance of not more than \$900,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the building is complete or by December 31, 2031, whichever is sooner. The Selectmen do not recommend this appropriation. (3/5 ballot vote required).

Article 04 Public Safety Building Construction

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,265,000 for the purchase of land and for construction of a new Public Safety Building, \$165,000 will come from the Capital Reserve for this purpose, further to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,100,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the building is complete or by December 31, 2031, whichever is sooner. The Selectmen do not recommend this

appropriation. (3/5 ballot vote required).

Selectman Sackett spoke to the Board's decision to include Warrant Articles 3 and 4 for the resident's consideration at Town Meeting. Selectman Sackett explained that the buildings are needed but explained that the loss of State revenues for Warren Village School is expected to result in an increased tax burden on our residents. The Board unanimously voted not to recommend articles for passage this year.

Fire Chief Heath clarified that if Article 4 passes, Article 32 would not be necessary. Selectman Sackett added that if a property is purchased by the Town, it would be removed from the tax rolls resulting in lost tax revenue and that should be considered by the residents.

The Town Administrator disclosed that the location for the Public Safety Building, proposed by Fire Chief Arthur Heath, is the Administrator's privately owned land located beside the Town Hall across from the Rocket.

Article 05 General Government

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$491,174 dollars for the following:

GENERAL GOVERNMENT

- a. Executive \$108,701
- b. Elections/Registration \$30,590
- c. Financial Administration \$36,637
- d. Tax Collector \$24,808
- e. Assessing Services \$32,000
- f. Legal Expenses \$7,500
- g. Personnel Administration \$47,002
- h. Planning Board \$601
- i. Buildings & Grounds \$103,029
- j. Insurance \$80,055
- k. Cemeteries \$20,000
- l. Town Clock \$250
- m. Contingency Fund \$1

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$433,198 for General Government. The Town spent \$402,594.

This budget includes necessary IT updates and increased support (\$13,600), increased expenses associated with 3 elections, wage increases for election workers, and state mandated polling equipment (\$5,900), a wage increase for the Treasurer and Deputy Treasurer positions (\$4,935), a new tax collecting computer and wage increase for the Deputy Tax Collector (\$3,200), increased payroll taxes and NHRS contribution (\$5,000), a wage increase for the Facilities Manager, Dam registration fees for Week's Crossing, septic system and building maintenance (\$16,463), increased health insurance costs (\$8,766) and a wage increase for the Town Administrator, Tax Collector, Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk (\$3,877). Other budget adjustments were made (\$667).

There was no discussion.

Article 06 Advertising and Regional Associations

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,196 for the following:

ADVERTISING & REGIONAL ASSOCIATIONS

- a. Advertising \$500
- b. NHMA \$1,230
- c. North Country Council \$870
- d. Pemi-Baker Solid Waste \$816
- e. NH Assoc. of Assessing Officials \$20
- f. NH Tax Collectors Assn. \$20
- g. NH Town Clerks Assn. \$40
- h. NH Health Officers Assn. \$50
- i. NHGFOA \$70
- j. Baker River Watershed Assn. \$350
- k. NH Local Welfare Admin Assn. \$30
- l. NH Assn. Chiefs of Police \$200

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$4,084 for Advertising and Regional Associations. The Town spent \$4,110.

This budget includes increases to advertising and association dues.

There was no discussion.

Article 07 Public Safety

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$421,676 for the following:

PUBLIC SAFETY

- a. Police Department \$87,108
- b. Fire Department \$330,716
- c. Emergency Management \$3,501
- d. Animal Control \$1
- e. E-911 \$350

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$138,171 for Public Safety. The Town spent \$125,739.

This budget includes the contractual obligation with Plymouth for transport ambulance service (\$243,275), non-transport EMS expenses (\$29,402) and increases to Fire Department personnel expenses, communication equipment, dispatch services (\$6,331). Other minor adjustments were made to the Fire Department budget (\$801). This budget includes a reduction in Grafton County Dispatch (\$3,000) and wage increase for the Chief of Police (\$2,344).

Resident Charlie Chandler inquired whether the Town would receive reimbursement from insurances for EMS calls for Warren residents. The Board explained that reimbursement was expected. The 2026 budget includes 125 calls at \$1,947 per call. Selectman Hair provided details relative to the efforts to create a regionalized ambulance service for Warren, Rumney, Hebron, Dorchester, and Wentworth. According to Selectman Hair, first year costs associated with establishing the regionalized district was estimated at \$1,600,000 and would be included

on your tax bill similarly to the County. Wording similar to Article 26 will be included on each of the potential towns 2026 warrants.

Article 08 Highways and Streets

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$218,219 for the following:

HIGHWAYS AND STREETS

- a. Administration \$69,414
- b. Highways and Streets \$60,001
- c. Bridges \$5,100
- d. Vehicles & Equipment \$48,703
- e. Sub-contracted Work \$25,000
- f. Street Lights \$9,000
- g. Equipment Rental \$500
- h. Mileage \$500
- i. Other \$1

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$219,154 for Highways and Streets. The Town spent \$185,782.

This budget includes reallocation of funds within the highway department budget resulting in an increase to Maintenance and Repairs (\$5,001), a reduction of bridge funding and subcontractor wages (\$10,000), and a wage increase for the Road Agent (\$2,250).

There was no discussion.

Article 09 Sanitation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$90,272 for the following:

SANITATION

- a. Transfer Station Administration \$49,521
- b. Recycling \$10,320
- c. Solid Waste Collection/Compactor \$27,130
- d. Tires \$1,200
- e. Monitoring \$2,100
- f. C&D Tonnage/Trucking \$1

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$75,239 for Sanitation. The Town spent \$75,672.

This budget includes wage increases for our Transfer Station attendants (\$12,720), increases for recycling (\$1,372), and other minor adjustments (\$941).

There was no discussion.

Article 10 Non-Profits/Health

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$27,185 for the following:

NON-PROFITS / HEALTH

- a. Ammonoosuc Community Health Services (ACHS) \$4,500
- b. Warren Wentworth Food Pantry \$1,000

- c. Grafton County Senior Citizens \$2,750
- d. Tri-County CAP \$1,650
- e. Warren Historical Society \$3,000
- f. Transport Central \$500
- g. Pemi-Baker Home Health & Hospice \$4,113
- h. Willing Worker's Society \$5,000
- i. Court Appointed Advocates \$1,000
- j. Voices Against Violence \$3,172
- k. Mid-State Health \$500

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$338,577 for Non-Profits and Health. The Town spent \$187,857.

This budget includes all non-profit requests, as submitted, for the voter's consideration at Town Meeting. This budget does not include EMS funds.

There was no discussion.

Article 11 Welfare

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,001 for the following:

WELFARE

- a. Direct Assistance \$1
- b. Vendor Payments \$5,000

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$5,001 for Welfare. The Town spent \$3,424.

There was no discussion.

Article 12 Culture and Recreation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$59,731 for the following.

CULTURE AND RECREATION

- a. Parks and Recreation \$7,101
- b. Library \$42,780
- c. Patriotic Purposes: Old Home Days \$9,200
 - Flags \$650

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$55,816 for Culture and Recreation. The Town spent \$50,816.

This budget includes an increase for the library general budget (\$809) and library assistant wages (\$3,120).

There was no discussion.

Article 13 Conservation/Debt Service

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$17,667 for the following:

CONSERVATION

- a. Care of Trees \$1

DEBT SERVICE

- a. Principal – Bonds & Notes \$12,911
- b. Interest – Bonds & Notes \$4,753
- c. Interest on TAN \$1
- d. Other Debt Service \$1

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$1 for Conservation and Debt Service. The Town spent \$0.

This budget includes the payment for the Town's new highway department truck (\$17,664).

There was no discussion.

Article 14 ETF/CRF Appropriations

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$72,000 to be placed into the following funds. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

- a. Fire Truck CRF \$5,000
- b. Highway Building Fund CRF \$5,000
- c. Highway Equipment CRF \$5,000
- d. Police Cruiser CRF \$5,000
- e. Missile CRF \$800
- f. Bridges CRF \$2,500
- g. Town Hall CRF \$2,000
- h. Paving Fund ETF \$25,000
- i. Major Road Projects ETF \$10,000
- j. Fire Department/Pub Safety CRF \$5,000
- k. Dam Maintenance ETF \$1,000
- l. Veteran's Memorial ETF \$200
- m. Fire Department SCBA CRF \$5,000
- n. Joseph Patch Library ETF \$500

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$92,000 for ETF/CRF Contributions. The Town spent \$92,000.

This budget includes the approved amounts following the 2025 Town Meeting and the removal of \$20,000 which was allocated for the completion of our cyclical revaluation set to occur in 2026.

There was no discussion.

Article 15 Fire Department Fund Deposit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,769 to be added to the Fire Department Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2025, with no funds to be raised from taxation. This amount represents a portion of the surplus of the 2025 fire department budget. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

There is no direct tax payer impact associated with this article.

There was no discussion.

Article 16 Emergency Management Fund Deposit

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,906 to be added to the Emergency Management Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2025, with no funds to be raised from taxation. This amount represents a portion of the surplus of the 2025 emergency management budget. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

There is no direct tax payer impact associated with this article

There was no discussion.

Article 17 Cemetery Fund Deposit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,004 to be added to the Cemetery Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2025, with no funds to be raised from taxation. This amount represents a portion of the surplus of the 2025 cemetery budget. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

There is no direct tax payer impact associated with this article

There was no discussion.

Article 18 Library Fund Deposit

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,536 to be added to the Joseph Patch Library Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance as of December 31, 2025, with no funds to be raised from taxation. This amount represents a portion of the surplus of the 2025 library budget. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

There is no direct tax payer impact associated with this article

There was no discussion.

Article 19 McVetty Town Forest Maintenance

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000 for the purpose of rebuilding structures within the McVetty Town Forest.

In 2025, the Town budgeted \$3,000 for McVetty Town Forest. The Town spent \$4,021.

The cost to replace the 60' walkway exceeded the budgeted amount.

There was no discussion.

Article 20 Gravel Road Maintenance

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for road maintenance, with said funds to come from the unassigned fund balance, representing the unspent portion of the 2025 Highway Department operating budget.

In 2025, the Select Board received and spent a \$19,076 grant from Grafton County to unpaved roads. These funds were used primarily on the Glencliff side of Swain Hill to address resident concerns. This budget includes \$20,000 from the 2025 highway budget to continue maintenance on other unpaved roads.

There was no discussion.

Article 21 Employee Longevity Stipends

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 to provide a longevity bonus of \$5,000 each to the town's 3 full time employees in lieu of retirement benefits. This article does not include the Chief of Police who is required to participate in the New Hampshire Retirement System.

The Select Board seeks to support full time employees not currently enrolled in the New Hampshire Retirement System (NHRS). Currently, employees receive no retirement benefits. If the Town joined NHRS the estimated costs associated with offering retirement to the Town Administrator, Facilities Manager, and Road Agent would total \$21,377 and require a long-term commitment by the Town.

Resident John Alias asked whether the Town employees receive any retirement benefits such as a 401(k) or other retirement plan. The Board reiterated that the full time Town employees do not receive a 401(k) or any similar offering.

Article 22 Perform Cyclical Revaluation

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 for the purpose of performing the cyclical property revaluation and authorize the withdrawal of \$20,000 from the Revaluation Trust Fund created for that purpose. The balance of \$20,000 is to come from general taxation. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

The Town is due to complete its cyclical revaluation in 2026. This is required by law at least once every 5 years. Property values are expected to increase. There is an information packet available that explains this process.

There was no discussion.

Article 23 Landfill Monitoring Well

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,500 for the purpose of drilling a new monitoring well at the Warren Transfer Station and authorize the withdrawal of \$9,500 from the Landfill Expendable Trust Fund created for that purpose. The Selectmen recommend this appropriation.

The State is requiring a new well for landfill monitoring. The Town is required to sample the monitoring wells every year to ensure no leaching from the capped landfill at the Warren Transfer Station.

There was no discussion.

Article 24 Accept Willing Workers Hall

To see if the Town will vote to accept the gift of the former Willing Workers Hall, located at 1381 NH Route 25, Tax Map 205, Lot 007, from The Willing Workers Society, said gift to be accepted at no cost to the Town and free and clear of all liens and encumbrances; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to execute any documents necessary to complete the acceptance of said gift.

There was no discussion.

Article 25 Willing Workers Hall Maintenance Costs

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) from taxation for annual operating and maintenance expenses associated with the former Willing Workers Hall, located at 1381 NH Route 25, Tax Map 205, Lot 007, contingent upon the Town's acceptance of said property.

If the Town votes to accept the Hall, the \$5,000 allocated in Non-Profits/Health would not be paid to the Society. If the Town does not vote to accept the Hall, \$5,000 in Non-Profits/Health will allow the Willing Workers Society to offset insurance and other expenses.

There was no discussion.

Article 26 Relative to Discussions of EMS Village District

To see if the Town is in favor of discussing with neighboring towns the creation of an ambulance/EMS village district under RSA 52:1, I(n). This is a nonbinding article to give the Select Board direction.

There was no discussion.

Article 27 Modify Elderly Exemptions

Shall the town modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for elderly exemption from property tax in the Town of Warren, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$36,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$49,000; for a person 80 years of age or older \$71,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married to each other for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$30,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$45,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$70,000 excluding the value of the person's residence.

This article raises the Town's Elderly Exemption amounts and income limits to reflect the approximate averages for Grafton County. Additionally, property values are expected to increase due to the total revaluation to be completed in 2026. In 2024, 7 elderly residents qualified and were granted exemptions. Exemptions granted by the town totaled \$145,000.

Previous exemptions were:

65-74: \$15,000

75-79: \$20,000

80 and older: \$25,000

Previous income limits were:

Single Income: \$25,000

Married Income: \$45,000

Single Asset: \$50,000

Married Asset: \$50,000

There was no discussion.

Article 28 Modify Service Connected Total Disability Credit

Shall the town modify the provisions of RSA 72:35 for an optional tax credit of \$1,200 for a Service-Connected Total Disability on residential property?

The State law changed and no longer allows recipients of the Service Connected Total Disability Credit (\$700) to receive the Standard Veteran's Credit (\$500). This article modifies the Service Connected Total Disability Credit to be equal to the amount received by these Veterans prior to the law change.

Selectman Sackett clarified that the Board does support Article 28. The initial overview provided by the Town Administrator stated the Board does not support Articles 3, 4, and 28 and should have stated Article 32 instead of Article 28.

Article 29 Pre-Payment of Taxes

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the prepayment of property taxes in accordance with RSA 80:52-a, and to authorize the Tax Collector to accept payments in prepayment of property taxes prior to notice of the amount of taxes assessed, and to credit such payments toward the taxes eventually assessed against the property; further to require that the Tax Collector provide such bond as required by the Commissioner of Revenue Administration; and to provide that no taxpayer shall be allowed to prepay property taxes more than two (2) years in advance of the due date, and that no interest shall accrue to or be paid to the taxpayer on any such prepayment, including any portion later subject to rebate or refund.

There was no discussion.

Article 30 Food Pantry Support

To see if the Town is in favor of allowing the Select Board to consider the limited use of Town owned facilities to support the Warren Wentworth Food Pantry's continued presence in the Town of Warren as an independent organization, without the Town assuming responsibility for its operation or management. This is a nonbinding article to give the Select Board direction.

There was no discussion.

Article 31 Sale of Town Property to Habitat for Humanity

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen, in accordance with RSA 41:14-a, to negotiate the potential sale of Town owned property identified as 287 NH Route 25, Map 244, Lot 034, to Habitat for Humanity, for purposes consistent with the organization's mission, under such terms and conditions as the Board of Selectmen deems to be in the best interest of the Town. This is a nonbinding article to give the Select Board direction.

Fire Chief Arthur Heath asked if the land was sold to Habitat for Humanity whether the property would be taxable. It was explained that the property may not be taxable while owned by the non-profit but once sold, it would return to the tax rolls.

Selectman Sackett explained that it is typical procedure for the Board of Selectman to sell tax-deeded property at a live auction and further explained that he did not believe the Board of Selectmen should make this decision without the Town's support. He explained that he believed the Board of Selectmen should not have authority to do so otherwise.

Resident Justin Monninger asked to invite Frank McClane to the Town Meeting to answer resident questions.

Resident Peter Boncek asked for the value of the property which was determined to be \$45,400. Mr. Boncek suggested that the property be sold at auction.

Article 32 Petitioned Article - Land Purchase for Public Safety Building

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75,000 to acquire a certain tract of land known as Map 240, Lot 138; for the future construction of a public safety building. This article was submitted by petition. The Selectmen do not recommend this appropriation.

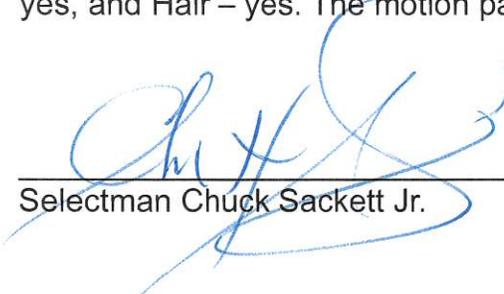
There was no discussion.

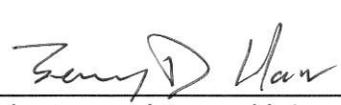
Article 33 Conduct any other business

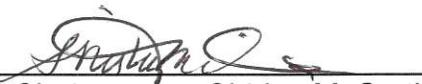
To transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

Chairwoman McCartin asked whether there were any additional questions. There were none.

Chairwoman McCartin moved to adjourn the Town budget hearing at 6:48 PM. The motion was seconded by C. Sackett. Voting in favor of the motion were Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes, and Hair – yes. The motion passed 3-0.


Selectman Chuck Sackett Jr.


Selectman, Jeremy Hair


Chairwoman, Shirley McCartin