

## **Selectmen's Meeting Monday, November 7, 2022**

These minutes were transcribed by Angela Eldridge, Secretary. Matthew Sawyer Jr., Town Administrator, and T.J. Eldridge, Public Works Director, was also in attendance. The meeting was held in the Bub Avery Gymnasium at Town Hall.

**Call to Order/Roll Call: Completed in the Work Session.**

**Smith reconvened the meeting at 4:15 PM.**

Smith opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

### **Public Input:**

Dallas Emery asked about the report for Schools Out. Smith advised that they haven't submitted the Warrant Article yet. Matt Sawyer Jr. spoke with the executive director, and she advised that she is waiting on data from the business office of the SAU as they are the fiscal agents. She will forward it to Matt when she receives it. Emery also mentioned that he asked about the Selectmen's Representatives report regarding Schools Out. He wants to know what School's Out plan is. Smith advised that it is part of the Warrant Article. T.J. Eldridge also advised that it is part of the SAU report as well. Matt Sawyer Jr. advised that he thinks what Dallas Emery was saying is that the Board assigned a representative to go to the Schools Out meetings and present a report on what the program is doing. He will reach out to the recreation director, but it will be similar to a department head report. He also advised that the program does not have to do a funding application to submit a Warrant Article. Emery explained that we should know what the program is doing because everyone at Town Meeting wanted the program to continue even though there was an issue with money. Emery mentioned that we have a representative to keep an eye on that and nothing has happened and now they don't want to go to the Budget Committee or the Selectmen. He mentioned that it seems like they do not want to explain themselves. Smith advised that School's Out is not submitting as an Outside Agency but doing a Warrant Article instead, which eliminates the Budget Committee from zeroing it out. They will still come and see the Board of Selectmen for review with financial documents and the Board will vote to recommend or to not recommend it, and then it will go to the Budget Committee for their vote. Also, once passed at Town Meeting, the Selectmen do not have to expend those funds. The Board has that authority. The people can vote the Board out of office in March if they want to. He advised that School's Out is not circumventing it, but just doing it a little different. Discussion ensued.

Chris Elliot asked if there would be a Police presence at the Election. Smith advised yes. The polls are open from 8am-7pm.

### **Budget Review:**

Smith discussed the Water & Sewer Budget. Water is increased by 3% which is \$7,500. This is for wages, retirement, Medicare, etc. There were small changes in the equipment line and heating fuel increased as well. Smith advised that they have separated the Water and Sewer so they can fund themselves as they are supposed to do. The rates may need to be adjusted next year or the year after. T.J. advised that is so there can be a little extra for anything that happens throughout the year. The proposed budget for Water is \$223,180. Smith made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. Sewer also increased by 3% for wages to \$232,150. Smith made a motion

to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken. These proposed budgets go to the Budget Committee on Wednesday.

#### **Meeting Minutes:**

M. Eldridge made a motion to approve the Selectmen's Meeting Minutes for 10/31/2022. Simpson seconded. Smith abstained.

#### **Accounts Payable & Payroll Manifest:**

The Payroll Check Voucher total was submitted for the week ending 11/02/2022 with a pay date of 11/08/22 in the amount of \$41,197.40. The General Fund is \$45,799.62. Water accounts payable was \$1,885.58 and Sewer was \$5,246.57. The Whittier Covered Bridge amount is \$469,032.50. The total was \$563,161.74. M. Eldridge made a motion to approve. Simpson seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

#### **Review of Red Folder:**

The Board received a Yield Tax Levy for \$2,215.16 for Map 267, Lot 009. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Yield Tax Levy for \$1,208.84 for Map 053, Lot 001. Simpson made a motion to approve. Smith seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Water & Sewer abatement for Map 087, Lot 023 for \$38.67. this is because during the final reading the account was billed twice. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Sewer Warrant for \$11,202. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

The Board received a Water & Sewer Warrant for \$33,084.91. Simpson made a motion to approve. M. Eldridge seconded. A unanimous vote was taken.

#### **Announcements:**

Smith advised that they stopped recycling plastic almost a year ago. T.J. checks on pricing regarding recycling. Greenpeace is an environmental group and they put out a statement regarding plastic. Smith read the statement that said recycling plastic has failed and always will because its difficult to collect, virtually impossible to sort, environmentally harmful to reprocess, and often made of and contaminated by toxic materials, and non-economical to recycle. Chris Elliot mentioned that the key is to reduce not recycle. Don't use plastic to begin with. Smith said this has to be fixed in the manufacturing process. Discussion ensued.

The Tax Rate has been approved. The Town portion went down 10 cents per thousand due to good fiscal management from the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee. The County also had good fiscal management and went down 10 cents per thousand. The school increased by 71 cents per thousand. The State Education Tax Warrant or SWEPT went down 46 cents per thousand as legislation gave back 100 million dollars in surplus funds to lower the warrant. Smith mentioned that the County Delegation and the State is run by Republicans, and they were able to reduce by 56 cents per thousand. The total rate is up by 5 cents. Smith mentioned the Education Freedom Accounts

being the cause of the tax increase, which is false. The Education Freedom Account gives parents \$4600 per year of the States portion to pay for private school or to be used to educate their children how they see fit. The other 15 or 16 thousand dollars, the school gets to keep. He reiterated that the Education Freedom Accounts are not the driver of the tax increase for the schools. Discussion ensued.

Lynne Parker asked if the precincts taxes were set. Smith advised yes and they are as follows.

Center Ossipee Fire increased from \$1.78 to \$2.01.

Ossipee Corner increased from \$2.15 to \$2.28.

West Ossipee decreased from \$2.37 to \$2.35

Smith read a letter from Kellie Skehan, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, stating that by law her office needs to be open from 3-5pm the day before the Election for any absentee ballot requests. The General Election polls will be open from 8am-7pm on November 8, 2022.

Smith read the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's monthly report. The receivables for October were \$123,879.39 for motor vehicles, boats, and vital records. Taxes collected were \$99,999.09. The outstanding balance for taxes and Water & Sewer are \$863,699.31. Tax bills will go out in November and be due 30 days from the mailing date.

Budget Committee meeting is Wednesday at 6:30pm at the Freight House.

Smith mentioned that Ed Comeau of Government Oversight films the meetings free of charge and expressed his thanks and appreciation for that service. He advised that donations are excepted on Ed's webpage at [www.governmentoversite.com](http://www.governmentoversite.com).

T.J. Eldridge mentioned that Marsh Lane has been paved. They had it ground up and reshaped. He said Tim did an excellent job.

### **Old Business:**

None

### **New Business:**

None

### **Second Public Input:**

Chris Elliot, Vice Chair of the Friends of Constitution Park, discussed hunting season and asked if the Board ever thought of posting no hunting signs at Constitution Park. He checked with Fish & Game and there is no hunting allowed within 250 or 300 feet of a recreation or residential area. Discussion ensued.

Dallas Emery asked how many more payments we will have for the Whittier Covered Bridge. Matt Sawyer Jr. advised that there is only a little left to pay. They have a final walk through with DOT and the engineers in the next week or two. He is also working on getting reimbursed from the State. Emery asked if the bridge was open yet. Sawyer Jr. advised no and that they still have some stuff to complete. T.J. Eldridge advised that they have guardrail work and landscaping work to finish. Discussion ensued.

Dallas Emery asked Smith about the 49,000 illegal votes and Smith advised him to call the Secretary of State. He also stated that our elections are well run. Emery advised that he doesn't have any

concerns with the elections in Ossipee. Emery also advised that he was not happy that the Secretary of State didn't allow him to look at who signed up the day of the election. Smith advised that he will ask about that as well. Discussion ensued.

The next meeting will be on November 14, 2022.

**Adjournment:**

Being no further input, Smith made a motion to adjourn. Simpson seconded.

Adjourned at 4:38 PM.

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Jonathan H. Smith, Chairman

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Martha B. Eldridge

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Susan J. Simpson

To be approved 11/14/2022