

**TOWN OF DEERFIELD
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
March 14, 2022
MINUTES**

Call to Order

5:30 – Chairman McGarry called the meeting to order

Present: Fred McGarry, Chairman, Richard Pitman, Vice Chairman, Alden Dill, Cynthia McHugh and William Huebner, Selectmen.

Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

Reorganization of Board:

Chairman McGarry:

Starting with the agenda the reorganization of the Board, that my wife has a significant health issue and didn't know if I'd be able to take and continue on as chair but after speaking with her, she said she would support me as chair and not complain too much when I come home and complain of being chair so I'd be willing to stay on.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to nominate Frederick McGarry as chairman

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Motion: Selectman Huebner moves to nominate Richard (Dick) Pitman as vice chairman

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Thank you, Mr. Pitman for being vice chair.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Thanks for allowing me to help out.

Chairman McGarry: All right. We have the Planning Board and the Budget Committee.

I'm willing to stay on as Planning Board ...

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to nominate Frederick McGarry as liaison to the Planning Board

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Will, what do you think about

Selectman Huebner: Yeah, I'd like to be considered for the Budget Committee. I think my, I bring to the table the budgeting and accounts payables and all of the commercial aspects of my business and my knowledge there would make me a good fit for the Budget Committee and I have a heart for it.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Whose been on the

Selectman Dill: I've been on the Budget Committee. I took over for Andy. I was his backup last year.

Selectman Huebner: I think that's my wheelhouse though so I think I can do a good job there.

Selectwoman McHugh: I'd second that.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to appoint William (Will) Huebner as liaison to the Budget Committee

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: My only concern would be, there's a big difference between municipal budgeting and private budgeting.

Selectman Huebner: That's true.

Selectman Dill: That would be my only concern there and it is a lot of meetings.

Selectman Huebner: I recognize the difference. Certainly not the same but there are a lot of the same skills in terms of budgeting process and reviewing things and financial fiscal skills.

Chairman McGarry: The one thing I want to make sure you really are aware of is that you'll be representing the Board of Selectmen before the Budget Committee period regardless of what personal opinions you may end up having. You will be responsible for representing our budget to the Budget Committee.

Selectman Huebner: Right. I fully understand that I'm not acting as an individual, I'm am a representative of the full board.

Chairman McGarry: Any further discussion?

To be honest I'd rather see Alden but we have a motion before us with appointing, to appoint Will and it's been seconded.

Selectwoman McHugh: What? Are you going back to Rec?

Selectman Dill: We have Rec and that's the only other official one we have, correct?

Mr. Harrington: Correct.

Selectman Dill: Yeah, if need be. If need be.

Vote: Yea 3, Nay 2, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's 3-2. Vote in the affirmative.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to appoint Alden Dill as liaison to the Parks and Rec

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: Nobody else wants it?

Selectwoman McHugh: I thought you said you wanted it?

Selectman Dill: No, I'll do it. I'll do it. I think Dwight was a much better fit.

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Better pitcher, that's all.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Selectman Dill: You have a meeting tomorrow at 7:30 pm.

Chairman McGarry: You have Janet Menzies on the agenda.

Mr. Harrington: Yes.

Could you please move the microphone closer to your mouth?

Selectman Dill: I thought we'd solved this problem?

(couldn't hear, multiple conversations going)

Yeah, ask Kevin. He's better at remembering this.

Chairman McGarry: So, I guess, with the fact she's not here, we'll continue on.

Regular Business:

Review of Outstanding Minutes of February 28, 2022 and March 2, 2022.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve both sets of minutes as written

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

Selectman Dill: Well, we assumed you were abstaining. I mean, it's up to you.

Selectman Huebner: Oh, because I wasn't in that meeting?

Selectman Dill: Yeah, that's what we had figured.

Selectman Huebner: Fair enough.

Vouchers/Payroll Manifest/Accounts Payable Manifest:

Chairman McGarry:

Payroll Manifest for March 14th, 2022 - \$72,967.84

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the Payroll Manifest in the amount given

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Signatures/Vouchers:

Land Use Change Tax – Andrew Sokol and Alyssa Milano, 37 Meetinghouse Hill Road

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to collect the LUCT in the amount of \$60.00

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Selectman Dill: That's why I don't have the mic that close.

Veteran's Property Tax Credit – Paul and Judith Asselin, 2 Blue Heron Lane, \$750.00

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the Veteran's Tax credit in the amount of \$750.00 for Paul and Judith Asselin
Second: Selectwoman McHugh
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Wood/Timber Tax – Peter and Elise Mahoney, 50 Blakes Hill Road \$744.59.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to collect the timber tax of \$744.59 from Peter and Elise Mahoney
Second: Selectman Dill
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Application for Property Tax Credit for Solar Energy System – Joanne Bradbury Living Trust, \$12,240.00

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the Solar Energy System property tax credit as presented
Second: Selectwoman McHugh
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Application for Property Tax Credit Exemption for Solar Energy System – Rachael A. Coombs, 47 Range Road - \$16,800.00

Motion: Selectwoman McHugh moves to approve the property tax credit exemption for Rachael A. Coombs as presented
Second: Selectman Dill
Discussion:
Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Selectman Huebner: That's a solar exemption for putting in some kind of solar powered panel?

Selectman Dill: Yeah, we had a petition warrant article a couple of years ago and basically, we exempt the value of the solar system from the property based on that petition warrant article.

Selectman Huebner: Forever.

Selectman Dill: Forever.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Right now, we're closing in on \$2 million.

Selectman Dill: It's been a very popular exemption.

Selectman Huebner: So, when you say we're closing in on \$2 million, what do you mean, Dick?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Exempted value.

Selectman Dill: Exempted value.

Selectman Huebner: So, \$2 million in less appraised property value that we can assess.

Vice Chairman Pitman: That's correct.

Chairman McGarry:

Notice of Intent to Cut Wood/Timber: Shannon Boyle, 193 North Road

Selectman Dill: Perfect. State Road.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the intent to cut wood/timber

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Mr. Harrington: Actually, you don't vote on intents.

Notice of Intent to Cut Wood/Timber: 15 Harvey Road, Benjamin Carlson.

Selectman Dill: Again, we don't need a motion. You read them out and its habit, Fred.

Now that one, we'll have to watch the road.

Vice Chairman Pitman: I'll correct the name. It's Boyle, Shannon Boyle, Jon's daughter.

Chairman McGarry: Oh, okay.

And, we have an MS-232 form; Report on Appropriations Actually Voted.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the MS-232 as presented

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Mr. Harrington: Basically, it's the result of the vote.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

(Conversations between board members)

Personnel Action Request: Salary increase for Kelly Roberts, the town clerk/tax collector.

Basically, it reflects the vote at the town meeting.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the personnel action request for Kelly Roberts to \$58,100.00 and for the chair to sign on behalf of the Board

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Personnel Action Request: Salary increase for Kim Crotty, deputy town clerk/tax collector.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the personnel action request for Kim Crotty to \$19.71 per hour and for the chair to sign for the Board

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Vice Chairman Pitman: They did a great job last Tuesday.

Chairman McGarry: Yes, they did.

Selectman Dill: And that was one of the longest elections I remember in a while. It was a late night.

Selectman Huebner: It was a good turnout.

Selectman Dill: It was. It was a great turnout with a lot of write ins.

Chairman McGarry:

Payroll Manifest for week ending March 8th, 2022 – Steve Rollins.

Is it just Steve Rollins?

Mr. Harrington: That's the final check.

Chairman McGarry: Final check for road agent, Mr. Rollins \$4,608.39 (gross) and \$3,297.35 (net).

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to approve the final paycheck for Mr. Rollins

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Finally, we have Forest Fire Warden appointment form for candidate, Matt Fisher, 28 Griffin Road. The chief.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to reappoint Matt Fisher as Forest Fire Warden

Selectwoman McHugh: There's more than that.

Mr. Harrington: You may just want to make one motion and read off the names.

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yeah, let's do that.

Chairman McGarry: Yeah, that sounds like a good idea.

So, we have Matt Fisher, Chris Gallant, Todd Dignard, Jeff Smith, Raymond Bushey, John Dubiansky, Dianne Kimball, Jeremy Bacon, Rich Butler, Debora Wyman, Adam Schaub, Matt Dube and Cynthia McHugh.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to approve the appointments for forest fire wardens/deputy wards and agents as presented

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Selectman Huebner: So, I just asked the obvious question which is, I assume these people are all qualified to be Forest Wardens? Is there any qualification needed?

Vice Chairman Pitman: Yes.

Selectman Huebner: Or is it just by virtue of being on the volunteer fire department?

Selectwoman McHugh: Most of his wardens are officers.

Selectman Huebner: You mean firefighter officers? You mean that have been trained in that?

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes

Selectman Dill: And these are the people that the chief recommended.

Selectwoman McHugh: There is a certification class that we have to go to.

Selectman Huebner: So, they know what to do.

Selectwoman McHugh: Yes.

Selectman Huebner: Okay.

Vote: Yea 4, Nay 0, Abstained 1 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote 4 yes and one abstained.

Selectwoman McHugh: People do it mostly online now anyway.

Selectman Dill: Yeah, that's pretty much it's burn permits, isn't it?

And the green placard on the front of your truck.

Selectwoman McHugh: I don't know if he's going to go back to having people at station certain days on the weekend in case someone wanted one.

Selectwoman: What does that mean?

Selectman Dill: I'm not sure. I pretty much ignore that screen unless there's weird noises coming from it or sparks.

They should know we have five selectmen in town.

Selectwoman McHugh: Debbie and I are agents. We're not wardens.

Chairman McGarry: Okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: Is that a difference?

Chairman McGarry: Yeah, but there's no place for us to sign actually.

Selectwoman McHugh: Okay.

Mr. Harrington: So those are forms that the fire chief handed me. I am not familiar with them.

Chairman McGarry: There's no actual place for the town to sign.

Selectwoman McGarry: Yeah, they should only be two of them. Are there two of those?

Selectman Dill: Yeah, those were all the same ones.

Selectwoman McHugh: Deputy wardens

Chairman McGarry: Four, you, Matt Dube, Deb Wyman and Adam Schaub.

Selectwoman McHugh: Are agents so can we only write permits.

Chairman McGarry: Okay.

Selectwoman McHugh: I believe the wardens can do like seasonal ...

Chairman McGarry: Actually, so it doesn't require us to sign.

This is the correspondence taken care of. Time for the town administrator report.

Town Administrator's Report:

Mr. Harrington: I have one announcement this evening.

The town clerk asked me to announce that on Thursday, March 17th, which is this week, they will be closed for software updates. They'll reopen the next day which is Friday, the 18th.

And that's it for me tonight.

Unfinished Business:

Chairman McGarry: Okay, any unfinished business?

Selectman Dill: I guess it's probably new business.

Chairman McGarry: Okay.

Selectman Dill: We technically should take a vote on road posting. Steve did it the other day which was good, but I think, we, I'll make a motion that we accept the road agent's recommendation to post the roads.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to accept the road agent's recommendation to post the roads

Second: Vice Chairman Pitman

Discussion:

It is per order of the selectmen so I figured we'd probably ought to make an official vote.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Selectman Dill: And a follow-up on that. I got a bunch of calls over the weekend about people that wanted to move stuff. I assumed our new road agent is working and they can contact him how?

Mr. Harrington: His number is posted on the web page. Currently because he has, he's chosen to use his own cell phone, he has T-Mobile and he doesn't have any service, I've ordered him a town phone which should be in in a couple of days.

Selectman Dill: On Verizon probably so we won't have anything ...

Mr. Harrington: It will be Verizon, and in the meantime if anybody has any difficulty, they can call the office and we will get the message to him.

Selectman Dill: I think a lot of people wanted to travel to travel Sunday when it was cold but it was, but I don't think we're moving much this week.

Mr. Harrington: Sunday, Ray Ellis was on.

Selectman Dill: Oh, okay.

Thanks, John.

Chairman McGarry: Has the new road agent started?

Mr. Harrington: He started today. Today was his first day.

Chairman McGarry: Okay. Very good.

Okay, brings up one item. By looking at the budget, that with regard to the highway department, our sand line is at 116 percent of the budgeted amount. Salt line we're at 88 percent. Winter contracting line is 113 percent so we're two and a half months into this year and we've already over expended the sand line and the winter contracting line. We still have ...

Selectman Dill: Winter.

Chairman McGarry: Still got maybe a month left of potential winter and then we have the rest of the 22/23 winter coming up so we're going to have to be finding other sources of pots of money to be able to take in ...

Selectman Dill: I'm not sure why we kept ordering sand.

Chairman McGarry: Yeah.

Selectman Dill: We have a lot of sand.

Vice Chairman Pitman: That's the one good thing. We do have a surplus.

Selectman Dill: That is and sand sticks around but ...

Chairman McGarry: Right. So anyways, that was my comment.

Selectman Huebner: So is this a different bucket Fred than the extra 250 that we voted on to get. That's for road repair...

Selectman Dill: Yes.

Selectman Huebner: For road repair not for this kind of refilling for sanding or salting.

Selectman Dill: Yeah. That separate warrant article isn't for winter maintenance.

Now, that raises the other question though, we do have that winter maintenance emergency fund that we've set aside that we may have to look at this year.

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Selectman Dill: I don't know what's in that trust fund.

Mr. Harrington: It hasn't been on the warrant the past several years. I think it's maxed out at the present time. I don't have the figure with me.

Selectman Dill: That might save us this fall.

Chairman McGarry: Yeah, exactly.

Selectman Dill: Because we keep getting these long duration, low accumulation storms that they're staying out. You know Saturday was a long night spreading sand on that ice. That chews through the budget pretty quick.

Selectman Huebner: I'm new to the table so excuse me if I ask a question that's been discussed before but why are we blowing our budget this year so badly compared to other years. You know, what is it, is it just that the storms have been greater as you've just stated.

Is it that the road agent maybe is putting out people for longer periods of time?

Chairman McGarry: As Dick says, we had some issues in regards to management on those lines but also ...

Selectman Dill: That and we're on an eight-year-old salt and sand budget.

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Selectman Dill: Which is another huge aspect of it. I mean salt was, what the heck was our bid price on salt? It was four times what we've been paying.

Mr. Harrington: \$67.00 a ton.

Selectman Dill: And that was up from \$21.00 a ton which was up from \$8.00 a ton.

Selectman Huebner: So why did we buy so much sand?

Selectman Dill: No, that was salt.

Selectman Huebner: So that salt.

Selectman Dill: The sand, I would agree with ...

Selectman Huebner: So why did we buy so much salt?

Selectman Dill: We needed the salt.

Selectman Huebner: And that much of it?

Selectman Dill: Yes, we need the salt.

Selectman Huebner: And we're buying it at a premium price.

Selectman Dill: No, that was actually, I got to give the road agent credit on that one. He saved us probably \$5.00 a ton when we got that over Epsom and Raymond so that one, we did well on. The sand, I'm not sure

We had a fill-in who stopped ordering sand and then when that temporary bit was over, we ordered a lot more sand.

Selectwoman McHugh: Will we have some type of policy that says when our road agent will call in the contractors?

Mr. Harrington: Yes.

Selectwoman McHugh: Maybe that will help that.

Mr. Harrington: There's going to be likely a lot more oversight on usage of winter contractors, materials ordered tracking usage so that data will be available for the Board and I believe this new road agent, Fred Wallace will be more closely monitoring the budget than in the past.

Selectwoman McHugh: I'd like to see his plan on it.

Mr. Harrington: I already have him scheduled for the next meeting after he has a couple of weeks to settle in. He'll be coming in to talk to you.

Selectwoman McHugh: Great. Thank you.

Chairman McGarry: All right. Any other business?

Selectman Dill: Just to piggyback on that one for you Will, the reason we use contractors is we have a lot of road miles and few and a limited amount of town employees so we have to use a large number of contractors to cover. So that's why we have that line there.

I mean, there's no way we could cover the town with just the town employees and town trucks so that's how we've always done that one.

Selectman Huebner: Right, I'm not suggesting that we should be using in-house...

Selectman Dill: No, but I figured I'd explain that one as well.

Selectman Huebner: I just wondered why it's so much different than perhaps the previous year although maybe we would do the budget on the previous year.

Selectman Dill: Pretty much have.

Selectman Huebner: Since we have been on the default budget for some time.

Chairman McGarry: At least four years anyways on the default budget so we're looking at prices that were at least four years old so.

All right, I guess we'll go into non-public.

Selectman Dill: Well, I have one other quick one for John if we could, just on the sprinkler idea. I think ...

Mr. Harrington: I had put that material in there. I didn't have figures. Tim Pappas was caught up with another emergency situation today.

I will have those numbers for you at the next meeting.

Selectman Dill: I just want to say that having a way to blow out the moisture so we can keep that place shut down in the winter is ...

Mr. Harrington: I've asked him for two options. To do the repairs to bring the system up to its current status and also what it would take to retrofit the system.

I think Cindy made the suggestion so that it enables the choice of the Board to not heat the building. He'll have a figure for that as well.

Selectman Dill: No, that's a great idea. I think it was my suggestion.

(Someone from the audience commenting but couldn't hear)

Chairman McGarry: And correspondence though, we have two items after the meeting. One is the accounts payable for March 7th which is in the amount of \$842,322.27 of which \$800,000.00 went to the school and the Board had by majority vote, had approved that and also the, do we need a vote on this or not?

Vice Chairman Pitman: No.

Chairman McGarry: No. That's just a statement and then we also had the payroll manifest for week ending March 2nd in the amount of gross payroll of \$80,447.16 (gross), \$51,200.26.

And, we also have the Planning Board agenda, notice from the Board of Adjustment and Planning Board minutes and a report from Ted Gatsas on his activity at the Executive Council.

A check from Atlantic Broadband for \$28,549.00.

Mr. Harrington: That's our franchise check that we get annually as part of the contract.

Chairman McGarry: And then we have a notice from the Pittsfield Planning Board with regard to a proposed telecommunications facility and they're required to notify towns within a specific radius of the proposed facility. I can't remember what the actual distance is but it includes us.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to go into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3, II(I) Consideration of legal advice provided by legal counsel, either in writing or orally, to one or more members of the public body, even where legal counsel is not present.

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: No votes were taken in the non-public session and need a motion to seal the minutes.

Motion: Selectman Dill moves to seal the minutes of the non-public session

Second: Selectwoman McHugh

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: All right.

Citizen's Comments:

Ms. Greig: I'm sure that I'm her as a citizen but Denise Greig, Emergency Management/Welfare.

Town-wide clean up day. Earth Day is approaching and April 23rd, this, Easter is the weekend before so with your approval, we'll move forward with town-wide clean up from 9 to 11 am and once I get approval, I would encourage citizens to sign up or give me a call at 463-8811 extension 310 to let me know which roads they may be cleaning up. We'll have blue bags available here and various places around town.

We'll meet that morning at 9:00 am if folks want to swing by and pick up blue bags and a road assignment then. For families, we do have options that are not on the roads but our parks and various fields and grounds so that would be

again, April 23rd. It's a Saturday morning and we encourage everyone to wear bright clothes, orange vests, work boots, work gloves and stay safe out there.

We'd also let to have highway swing by and pick up the trash bags either at the town hall and again we're meeting at the town hall.

Selectman Dill: Denny, the boy scouts are planning on doing something, too so I don't know if you want to talk to Brad and try to coordinate with them but they were hoping to do a scout work day on that one as well.

Ms. Greig: Okay. Great.

Selectman Dill: Figured you'd take the help.

Selectman Huebner: We also have the PLPA, the lake association is planning this year to have a lake, what we call the watershed cleanup so everything that's in the watershed of the lake which eventually would work down at the lake, we have a program going this year for that but it won't be anywhere near the April time frame. It will be out in June or July or August.

Ms. Greig: Okay. Right.

Selectman Hueber: So, I don't know if we could use some of the same resources actually. The kind of bags and facilities.

Ms. Greig: The bags are from New Hampshire the Beautiful. We pick them up from the Northeast Recycling Association that the town is a member of.

We actually, more or less, track the areas that we work on so with your approval.

Motion: Selectman Huebner moves to allow the Earth Day activities as presented by Ms. Greig

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Selectman Dill: You guys doing the chili cookoff again?

Ms. Greig: No. Limited. We'll have fruits.

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Chairman McGarry: Vote's unanimous.

Ms. Greig: Thank you.

Selectman Huebner: Thanks for doing that.

Kevin Verville – McCarron Road

Good evening. Kevin Verville. McCarron Road.

Just crunching some numbers post municipal and school district elections and this is only for warrant articles and you know, break it down in order of the big winners down to, you know, those that receive the least votes to say it politely and there really aren't too many surprises in here.

Roads came out a huge winner, right, 72 to 28 percent. Fire vehicle, Pleasant Lake, town buildings, rescue vehicle, athletic fields, anti-milfoil, one of the cemetery funds, the one from surplus.

And even, you know, it goes on, employee raises right, which is no surprise. School repair.

The only municipal items that didn't pass was two cemeteries and they came close but I think it was a tough year for that.

The Parks and Rec vehicle and the police building, it's pretty clear the voters in Deerfield are not in the mood for building much of anything right now and I can't say as I blame them.

Both budgets went down and they both went down pretty handily and the last couple of years, I've been coming, making a pitch, asking the select board to maybe reevaluate how it is we craft and propose town budgets and whether or not certain priorities that we believe are going lacking maybe would be better served as stand-alone warrant articles.

The voters are telling us the stuff they support and there's no downside to giving them more options to pick and choose what they want to invest their money in and what they don't.

And if we take those priorities out of the operating budget and get the operating budget increases down from these, you know, mid-level, double-digit increases year on year, the operating budgets will have a much better chance at passing.

You know, Mr. Dill brings up a great point. You know, you're on a four- or five-year default budget. The cost of sand, salt, everything is skyrocketing but we're putting so many little priorities in the budget that it's just making that bottom line so big that the voters, they, you know, are telling you year after year after year they're not going to approve it so I only bring this to your attention so that you know, maybe later, later on we can talk about that when we get closer to budgeting.

The other one I want to mention and I know the majority will of the board because of the actions you've taken relative to the highway agent and I understand you guys had less than a stellar experience with the last highway agent, right and a year ago a question was put on the ballot and we had almost record low turnout and that question got approved.

So, out of fairness, I tried to put that question back on the ballot and it got watered down at the deliberative to make it advisory only which is fine but it passed with twice the turnout, twice the voter turnout, it passed by the same margin, virtually the same margin as the previous question passed which means it got more than twice as many votes in support.

Selectman Dill: I'd recommend that you re-read the final warrant article. Passage meant to stay appointed.

Mr. Verville: Oh, I might stand corrected then.

Selectman Dill: I had to read it twice when I sat down to vote. It took me by surprise but.

Vice Chairman Pitman: It's true, Kevin.

Mr. Verville: No, no I don't ...

Selectman Dill: It took me because I was reading through it, like wait a second...

Mr. Verville: I was, so I was at the deliberative session and I misunderstood that that was the intent of the motion so I guess that's my error.

Selectman Huebner: I made the same error. I voted in favor of it thinking that it meant just the opposite of what it said.

Mr. Verville: Yes, all right so maybe we'll, maybe we'll play the game citizen petition one more time and see what we get but anyway, the point is because the voters approved more spending in standalone warrant articles than they rejected by almost a two to one margin.

So, the voters of Deerfield will spend money on things that represent their priorities and instead of leading up the operating budget and watching it go down in flames, perhaps we should give them more of an a la carte option.

Thank you.

Erroll Rhodes – Church Street

Mr. Rhodes: Good evening. Erroll Rhodes, Church Street. Is this on?

Mr. Harrington: Yes.

Mr. Rhodes: It is? Okay. Doesn't have the same sound as it used to have. I'm sorry for the viewers.

One of the things that I took away from the process that just ended last Tuesday is that and it was a consistent theme is that I think people in this town will be happier and also have less to complain about if we had a conflict-of-interest policy which is drafted and supported by the Board which would make, which would take some of the sand out of the oyster, if you will.

And so, I'm proposing that you take up. I can work with Mr. Harrington. There's a bunch of different kinds models. I would propose that it'd be a policy to begin with, with procedures and that we implement it so that the people of Deerfield understand what, who's doing what to whom in, with a clarity.

I don't think it hurts anything, quick frankly, in terms of anything but perception and I think it would actually improve the perception of what various boards do if we had a clear, conflict of interest policy that everybody played with or played along with so that's my proposal for you all and I don't know if this is something that you can make a decision on but I'd certainly be happy to work with the board or Mr. Harrington to look at the options and see what's most sensible for the kinds of issues that we're seeing in town.

That's what I've got.

Selectwoman McHugh: Thank you.

Mr. Rhodes: Any questions?

Chairman McGarry: As a follow-on in that, doing, worked with the Town of Plaistow and Plaistow has a conflict-of-interest committee to look into any elected officials to make sure there's no conflict in their town's elected officials.

Selectman Dill: It surprised me because in Northwood, the first thing you do when right after you swear with the town clerk, is you sign the Board of Selectmen Conflict of Interest policy and I was kind of surprised that we didn't have one to sign.

Mr. Rhodes: The Plaistow model is actually fairly extensive in terms of what they have...

Chairman McGarry: You have looked at that.

Mr. Rhodes: A little bit but no, there are a lot of factors and issues to, you know, to think about but ultimately, I think it ends up, this is going to sound a little odd but it ends up greasing the wheels in a good way because people know what they're dealing with. They get a sense of you know, who's doing what and it's just clearer.

Selectman Huebner: Aren't these already covered in the RSA's? I read through RSA's and there is a conflict-of-interest statement or guidelines in the RSAs.

Mr. Rhodes: Every town as far as I can see, has ... RSA's give the towns the ability to come up with their own ordinances or policies but the towns have to do that as I designed.

Selectman Huebner: I thought I read in there that it was basically saying, this is how the working should be? Maybe it's just that that's how it should be and we just need to have it.

Mr. Rhodes: You need to have one and you need to have, you know, a conflict policy and by the way, I should think that it would, to the extent of that the select board takes it up, it would also be applied to the other boards in town so that everybody feels comfortable with what their dealing with.

Selectman Dill: I think it's up to us to set it for the other ones.

Chairman McGarry: Right.

Mr. Rhodes: Oh, and to promulgate it.

Thank you very much.

Motion: Vice Chairman Pitman moves to adjourn

Second: Selectman Dill

Discussion:

Vote: Yea 5, Nay 0, Abstained 0 – Motion Carries

Next Meeting: Monday, March 28, 2022 at 5:30 pm

*The Minutes were transcribed and respectfully submitted by Dianne L. Kimball, Recording Secretary
Pending approval by the Board of Selectmen*