

**Town of Deerfield, NH**  
**Municipal Budget Committee**  
George B. White Building  
8 Raymond Road, Deerfield, NH 03037

**November 2, 2021**  
**Meeting Minutes - Draft**

The meeting was called to order at 6:04pm by the chair Mr. von Hassel. The roll call was taken and in attendance were: JoAnne Bradbury, Bill von Hassel, Bonnie Beaubien, Jocelyn Messier, Kevin Verville, Alden Dill, the new BOS Representative, Terry Roy, Zach Langlois, School Board representative, Phil Bilodeau, Joshua Cresswell, Maureen Quinn.

The Minutes for the September 7, 2021 meeting were reviewed and an adjustment was made to the attendance record to include Maureen Quinn and she was present at the meeting but not listed on the minutes. The minutes for the meeting were then unanimously approved with the addition of Ms Quinn.

The Chair confirmed with every member that they had received the 2022 Town Budget packet from the Town Administrator. There was a discussion that Mr. Bilodeau and Mr. Langlois had not been receiving their email messages and the chair said that he would make sure that all the emails were correct going forward and if there were any further issues that he would contact the Town IT person.

Mr. Verville stated that it appeared that the MBC has been presented with a Town budget that has increased from last year by 15+%. He stated that it appeared that the majority of the increases were due to employee salary increases. He presented a document to the MBC, that he stated, documented that when the salary increases were included into the Town Budget, that those increases failed when the Town voted in a default budget. He felt that was unfair to the Town employees and that the salary increases should be removed from the budget and placed in warrant articles.

Mr. Verville then made a motion that the MBC send an advisory notice to the BOS that the salary increases be removed from the Town Budget and changed to warrant articles. This motion was seconded by Mr. Roy and the motion was opened to the committee for discussion. Mr. Dill stated that last year the Town had the least number of warrant articles and he felt that it was better and less confusing for the voting public. It was reiterated by Mr. Verville and Mr. Roy that moving the salary increases to a warrant article was really in the best interest of the Town employees, and the Town, as his document showed that moving the salary increases to a warrant article had the best rate of success of passing.

The discussion on the motion was closed by the chair and a vote taken. The vote was 4 in favor of the motion, 6 against the motion, the chair abstained. The motion failed.

Mr Dill asked if there would be any time limitation to speaking on a budget item. The chair stated that in fairness to everyone, and so that everyone would have a chance to ask questions or express their thoughts regarding a particular budget topic, that the chair would impose a 3 minute limit in asking questions, and that a 1 minute limit would be implemented with regards to follow up questions. The follow up question, must pertain to the original question asked.

Mr. Dill the, BOS representative, then made a motion to move the bottom line of the proposed 2022 Town budget and the motion was seconded by Mr. Langlois, the School Board representative. Discussion was opened by the chair regarding this topic.

Mr. Dill stated that since, in years past, the MBC has dealt with the school budget as a bottom line budget to the MBC. It stood to reason that the Town budget should be treated the same way. Mr. Dill felt that this was a much faster process to just move the bottom line of the Town budget. Mr. Verville stated his disagreement with the bottom line approach recommended by Mr. Dill. Mr. Verville felt that the line by line or department by department discussions have been extremely productive in the past and he voiced strong opposition to move the bottom line of the budget. Mr. Roy also voiced his strong opposition to moving the bottom line Town budget because as elected officials the MBC members have an obligation to those who elected us, to review the budget and make adjustments. He stated that the MBC operates as a check and balance committee during the budget process. Ms. Beaubien asked Mr. Dill why this would be best for the Town of Deerfield, Mr. Dill reiterated the Towns position and stated that the BOS took a vote last night and was in favor of this approach 4 to 1. Mr. Langlois voiced his support for moving the bottom line of the Town budget as it's exactly the same thing the School Board has done in the past. Mr. Bilodeau voiced his opposition to moving the bottom line of the Town budget.

Ms. Bradbury asked Mr. Dill if there any evidence from the department heads that they were reluctant to come before the MBC. Mr. Dill responded that that there was some opposition by some of the department heads to appear before the MBC to present their budgets, answer questions, and explain their justification for the budgets they are presenting. Mr. Dill stated that the BOS had sought legal counsel on this matter and the BOS felt they were on solid ground here. Mr Dill advised the MBC members that the MBC did not have subpoena powers, even though no one on the MBC even suggested that they would subpoena any of the department heads.

The chair weighed in and commented that a move like this would disenfranchise every single taxpayer and voter in Deerfield.

The discussion on this topic was concluded when the chair moved the question. A vote was taken and the results were as follows: 4 yes 5 No 2 Abstain. The motion failed.

Mr. Dill stated that in the past the MBC meetings have been too long, and the overall intent to move the Town budget was to move things along. After the motion failed Mr.

Dill stated that the BOS was still awaiting the insurance numbers to put into the budget and that they were always late. The chair then asked how Mr. Dill was going to move the bottom line, when the Town didn't even have the final numbers in the budget? And that the previous 20 minute discussion regarding moving the bottom line Town budget was a waste of time.

Mr. Roy then asked Mr. Dill to provide examples of where the BOS reduced the budget amounts originally requested by the various Department heads. Mr. Dill agreed to provide some examples of this.

We then moved on to a school update from Mr. Langlois. He stated that they were working on the school budget but that they wouldn't have anything available for several weeks which is in line with years past. Mr. Langlois did state that a draft statement would be available on the SAU website. Mr. Langlois did say that the School will be returning \$1.2 Million surplus back to the Town. Mr. Dill stated that the returned school surplus was used to set the new tax rate last night to \$18.80.

Mr. Langlois stated that the School Board, along with the architects, will be holding a meeting tomorrow night November 2, 2021 at the school to present some of the architectural plans and options for the existing facility and proposed addition. Mr. Langlois encouraged everyone, who was able, to attend the meeting.

Mr. Verville asked the chair if we would be reviewing and addressing the "low hanging fruit" items in the budget which are typically line items and departments in the budget that rarely change or have little impact to the overall bottom line of the Town budget. The chair informed Mr. Verville that we would not be addressing these items because they had not been included in this meeting notice. The chair stated these items would be addressed at our next meeting on November 9, 2021.

The chair asked for any citizens comments, there were none.

Motion to adjourn made by Mr. Verville, seconded by Mr. Roy unanimous consent to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned 7:35PM

