

Select Board Meeting and Public Hearing
Tuesday January 18, 2022
6:50 PM
Nowak Room, Town Offices
Final Minutes

1. Call Meeting to Order

Members present: Julie Gilman, Molly Cowan, Lovey Roundtree Oliff, Niko Papakonstantis, Town Manager Russ Dean, and Assistant Town Manager Melissa Roy were present. The hearing was called to order by Mr. Papakonstantis at 6:50 PM.

2. Non Public Session

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to enter into non-public session under RSA 91-A:3II(a). Ms. Gilman seconded. In a roll call vote, the motion passed 4-0 and the meeting entered non-public session at 6:51 PM.

The meeting reconvened at 7:07 PM.

3. Board Interviews

- a. There were no board interviews at this meeting.

4. Public Comment

- a. There was no public comment at this meeting.

5. Proclamations/Recognitions

- a. There were no proclamations/recognitions at this meeting.

6. Approval of Minutes

- a. Regular Meeting: January 3, 2022

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to approve the minutes of January 3, 2022 as presented. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor.

7. Appointments

- a. There were no appointments at this meeting.

8. Discussion/Action Items

- a. COVID-19 Update

Fire Chief Eric Wilking said we're still seeing large additions to the Covid numbers. Exeter had 273 positive tests in the week ending last Friday. The total number townwide is 2,075. Friday's numbers were very low at 19 new cases. The FD assisted in giving 2,700 boosters at Exeter High School. We're still hearing a number of concerns about folks not wearing masks, and we're encouraging people to do so through education.

Ms. Gilman said according to an email from the Exeter Hospital, 132 staff members either had Covid or were quarantining. Chief Wilking said we're seeing employees in and out of quarantine at the Fire Department as well.

Ms. Oliff asked if the 273 positive cases included PEA students. Chief Wilking said it's not likely unless they're Exeter residents, but we can ask the State for clarification.

b. Energy Aggregation Committee Update

Cliff Sinott, Renay Allen, and Lew Hitzrot from the Energy Aggregation Committee gave an overview of the plan and discussed a memo describing updates to the plan since the last meeting. This plan allows municipalities to aggregate their energy demand to get lower costs for energy and expand access to renewable energy. The main updates were a clarification that if the town goes with the Community Power Coalition, we wouldn't go through a bidding process, and a clarification of the Select Board role in the amendment of the plan.

Ms. Gilman said the town has already been using a power broker for municipal buildings for many years, which has saved us money.

Renay Allen, the Chair of the Energy Committee, read the Energy Committee's endorsement of the plan.

c. Public Hearings: FY22 Bonds, FY22 Budget, & FY22 Warrant Articles

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of public hearing:

The Exeter Select Board hereby gives notice of a public hearing pursuant to RSA 33:8-a on the following projects requiring bonds and notes as part of the fiscal year 2022 town warrant: 1) 10 Hampton Road Property Purchase and Upgrade, \$1,250,000; 2) Westside Drive Design & Engineering, \$330,715; and 3) Webster Avenue Pump Station Rehabilitation and Force Main Replacement, \$5,700,000. The public hearing will be held on Tuesday, January 18th, 2022, commencing at 7:00 PM in the Exeter Town Offices, Nowak Room, 10 Front Street, Exeter NH. The public is encouraged to attend. Signed, the Exeter Select Board.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to open the public hearing on the 2022 bonds. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Bond Article 3 - Webster Avenue Pump Station Design and Construction:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four million six hundred and sixty thousand dollars (\$4,660,000) for the purpose of design and construction of a new sewer pump station and force main on Webster Avenue, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$4,660,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project. The Town will receive a \$1.04 million dollar federal grant to offset the cost of the project whose gross cost is estimated to be \$5,700,000. Bond payments would begin

approximately one year after issuance. Debt service to be paid from the sewer fund. 3/5 ballot vote is required for this approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said there is a change in the amount of the bond article, to \$5.7M instead of \$4.66M. He and Ms. Roy spoke with DES last week, and were informed that they are going to issue the town a 30% ARPA grant, making it \$1.395M, with additional principal forgiveness of \$325,500. With the \$1.04M Congressional Direct Spending - which should read \$1.05M - the total project cost to be funded locally would be \$2,959,000, which is good news.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 3 as revised by the Town Manager reflecting the total cost of \$5.7M and a federal grant of \$1.05M. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 4 - 10 Hampton Road Purchase

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million two hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$1,250,000) for the purchase of land and buildings at 10 Hampton Road (aka the Qessential Building), including making minor renovations to the property, to be used by the Parks and Recreation Department as recreation space, public parking and main offices, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,250,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project. Debt service will be paid from the general fund. (Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 10 year bond at .86% interest: .06/1000, \$6/100,000 of assessed property value.) Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Don Clement of 3 Thelma Drive said he supports this purchase. He wonders if this article should say that any gain from the sale of the existing Recreation building can apply to this bond. Mr. Papakonstantis said he is reluctant to include it because we may not sell the building. If this article is passed, the Select Board has the responsibility to start to work on determining what it will be used for. Ms. Gilman said there was a bill that provides for any disposition of town-owned property needs to go through a review by the Conservation Commission, Historic District Commission (if necessary), Heritage Commission, and Planning Board. She thinks if we change the warrant article, it will be confusing. We shouldn't put forward ideas about selling in the article until we have a better assessment of how to proceed, such as through the Facilities Condition Assessment, which is also on the warrant. Ms. Cowan said if this passes and we decide to sell the building, we can have this discussion then. Mr. Dean said the Board has the authority to sell buildings and land after review by the Planning Board and Conservation

Commission, as Ms. Gilman described. If a sale were to be the outcome, it wouldn't need to be added to the warrant article in order to effectuate the sale. Ms. Gilman said there will be further opportunities for the public to speak on this.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 4 as presented. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 5 - Westside Drive Reconstruction/Engineering:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three hundred thirty thousand seven hundred and fifteen dollars (\$330,715) for the purpose of design and engineering of the water, sewer and drainage improvements in the Westside Drive area, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$330,715 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and further to authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; and further to authorize the Select Board to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, including principal forgiveness, which may become available for this project. Debt service will be paid from the general fund, water fund, and sewer fund. (Estimated Tax Impact: assuming 5 year bond at .5% interest: .006/1000, .63/100,000 of assessed property value). Bond payments would begin approximately one year after issuance. 3/5 ballot vote required for approval.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Jim Breeling of 7 Nelson Drive, who spoke via Zoom, said Westside Drive appears to be very close to Little River, which feeds an aquifer downstream. Westside Drive was built too close to, if not beyond, the buffer zone of Little River. Has this project accounted for its proximity to the river and wetland? Mr. Dean said yes. Mr. Papakonstantis observed that DPW Director Jen Perry, who was also present, was saying yes as well.

Melissa Roy said we have had discussions with the State this week, and expect \$100,000, so the net would be about \$230,000. However, we need to put the entire amount on the warrant. Mr. Dean said we can amend the article to add that information at the end.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 5 with the revision of adding the \$100,000 from the State at the end of the article. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to close the public bond hearing. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read the notice of the public hearing for the Exeter 2022 Operating Budget:

The Exeter Select Board hereby gives notice of a public hearing on the Town of Exeter Fiscal Year 2022 operating budget and all financial and other warrant articles on Tuesday, January 18, 2022 at 7:00 PM, in the Nowak Room of the Exeter Town Offices. This hearing will be held pursuant to RSA 32:5 and RSA 40:13.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to open the public hearing for the town of Exeter operating budget. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 7 - 2022 Operating Budget:

Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriation by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$20,462,242. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$20,084,542, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Estimated Tax Impact: .21/1,000 assessed property value, \$21/100,000 assessed property value.)

Mr. Dean said the budget process begins in August/September and continues through the town vote in March. The budget is vetted very thoroughly by the Budget Recommendations Committee. Deliberative Session will be Feb 5 at 9 AM at the High School, and town vote will be Tuesday March 8.

There are three separate warrant articles: General Fund (Article 7), Water Fund (Article 8), and Sewer Fund (Article 9). The warrant article for the operating budget is in a required format under RSA 40:13. Each has its own default budget should the article be voted down. CIP financial articles stand alone for separate vote. The warrant is required to be posted on Jan 31, 2022.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said we're recommending that \$75,240 be taken from ARPA funds in lieu of the operating budget, bringing that number down to \$20,387,002. This is a 2.49% increase after those adjustments are made. Without that change, it would be 2.79%. This would be primarily for the IT Department.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked what would be left from the half portion of the ARPA funds we've received already. Mr. Dean said \$718,990.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 7 as revised, with an operating budget of \$20,387,002. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Dean said the default budget is \$20,084,542, or \$302,460 less than the revised FY22 request. The Water Fund default is \$4,161,433, or \$87,957 less than the FY22 request. The Sewer Fund default is \$7,298,636, or \$87,317 less than the FY22 request. These budgets are built from the prior year budget plus any obligations that need to be fulfilled, minus any one-time expenses. The requested budget is a 2.49% increase, while the default is a .97% increase. The operating budget tax impact is \$5.66/1,000, while the default is \$5.50/1,000. Overlay and Veterans' Credits add .21/1,000. This assumes 1% increase in net taxable valuation. The latest median assessment ratio is 79%.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 8 - 2022 Water Fund Budget

Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as a water operating budget, not including appropriation by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$4,249,390. Should this article be defeated, the water default budget shall be \$4,161,433, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said in the debt service budget, we're seeing a first year payment for the Salem Street project. We're issuing a groundwater/surfacewater assessment bond that we will be paying on in July.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 8, the water fund budget as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 9 - 2022 Sewer Fund Budget:

Shall the Town of Exeter raise and appropriate as a sewer operating budget, not including appropriation by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling \$7,385,953. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$7,298,636, which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Exeter or by law.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said there's an increase of \$198,713 in debt service from the lagoon sludge removal project and the Salem Street Utility project. There's a \$101,099 increase in sewer treatment costs.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 9, the sewer fund budget as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 10 - Police Collective Bargaining Agreement:

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the four year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the Exeter Police Association, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: In FY 22, estimated salary increase of \$38,749; in FY23, \$37,431; in FY24, \$55,513; in FY25, \$78,204. And further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$38,749 for the 2022 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. (Estimated tax impact: .017/1,000, \$1.73/100,000 assessed property value.)

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said it was a successful collective bargaining process with the Police Union. This covers 22 Officers and 6 Dispatchers.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 10, the Police Collective Bargaining Agreement, for \$38,749 as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 11 - Fire Collective Bargaining Agreement:

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the three year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the Exeter Firefighters Local 3491, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: in FY22, an estimated salary/benefits increase of \$54,408; in FY23, \$72,593; and in FY24, \$68,174; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$54,408 for the 2022 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. (Estimated tax impact: .024/1,000, \$2.43/100,000 assessed property value.)

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 11, the Fire Collective Bargaining Agreement, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 12 - SEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement:

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the three year collective bargaining agreement reached between the Select Board and the SEIU (Service Employees International Union) Local 1984 covering Public Works and Administrative/Clerical employees, which calls for the following increased salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels: in FY22, \$51,227; in FY23, \$35,437; in FY24, \$59,979; and further, to raise and appropriate the sum of \$51,227 for the 2022 fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels. The amounts raised will be \$29,145 (General Fund), and \$22,082 (Water/Sewer Funds). (Estimated Tax Impact: .013/1,000, \$1.30/100,000 assessed property value.)

Mr. Papakonstantis asked for public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 12, the SEIU Collective Bargaining Agreement, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 13 - Engine 5 Replacement:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 10 year lease/purchase agreement for \$650,000 for the purpose of lease/purchasing a replacement for Engine 5 in the Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$82,355, which represents the first of 10 annual payments (a total of \$745,453) for this purpose. This lease/purchase will contain an escape (non-appropriation) clause. This sum to come from general taxation. (Estimated Tax Impact: .037/1,000, \$3.68/100,000 assessed property value.)

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said we used a 2.67% interest rate assumption for this figure.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 13, the Engine 5 Replacement, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 14 - Fire SCBA Packs Lease/Purchase:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 7-year lease/purchase agreement for the purpose of lease/purchasing SCBA (Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus) equipment for the Exeter Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$59,064, which represents the first of 7 annual payments (a total of \$385,547) for this purpose. This lease agreement shall contain an escape clause. (Estimated Tax Impact: .026/1,000, \$2.64/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said this was a CIP item vetted by the BRC, as all of these items were.

This assumes a 2.67% interest rate.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 14, Fire SCBA Packs Lease/Purchase, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 15 - Raynes Barn Improvements:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$249,000 for the purpose of making improvements to the Raynes Barn located on Newfields Road. The appropriation of \$249,000 will be offset by an LCHIP grant (\$100,000) and a withdrawal from the Conservation Fund (\$49,000) with the balance of \$100,000 to be appropriated from Unassigned Fund Balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation).

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Bill Campbell of 111 High Street said he's asking for the Board's support of this article. As stated in the article, the cost will be offset by \$100,000 from LCHIP and \$49,000 from the Conservation Fund, so we're only asking for \$100,000. The Conservation Commission has been working to preserve Raynes Barn for the public to enjoy and for educational programs. The Commission has already made many repairs, but to protect this significant historical resource, we need to make major repairs. He discussed the history of the barn as part of a cattle farm.

Ms. Gilman said the LCHIP grant was very competitive, and she's pleased that we got it. Mr. Papakonstantis thanked Natural Resources Planner Kristin Murphy and the Conservation Commission for their work.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 15, Raynes Barn Improvements, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 16 - Police Body Worn Cameras:

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Select Board to enter into a 5-year lease/purchase agreement for the purpose of lease/purchasing body cameras and associated equipment for the Exeter Police Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$42,846, which represents the first of 5 annual payments (a total of \$204,139) for this purpose. This lease agreement shall contain an escape clause. (Estimated Tax Impact: .019/1,000, \$1.91/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said the \$204,139 represents the actual cost of \$248,139 minus a \$44,000 grant from the DOJ. Ms. Gilman said that is different from the way we handled

the Raynes Farm article. Mr. Dean said Raynes Farm was going to be contingent upon receiving those grants, but this one isn't. We can put a note about the grant in this article. Mr. Papakonstantis said adding it in would show voters we're going out and getting grants. Ms. Gilman said she still doesn't understand why this article is different. Mr. Dean said it was also a 2021 grant and it's a 2022 warrant article.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 16, Police Body Worn Cameras, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 17 - Sewer Capacity Rehabilitation:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$200,000, for the purpose of engineering services related to sewer capacity rehabilitation. This sum to come from sewer funds. Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 17, Sewer Capacity Rehabilitation, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 18 - Appropriate to Capital Reserve Fund - Parks Improvements:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Parks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation). Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Don Clement of 3 Thelma Drive asked how much unassigned fund balance did we have in 2021. Mr. Dean said we just closed FY21, so that hasn't been taken into account yet, but the number we're working with is \$4.9M; that represents the net of lowering the rate with \$800,000.

Mr. Papakonstantis said the original recommendation from the Department was \$50,000, because of the large bond article for the Hampton Road purchase, but the BRC felt comfortable maintaining the \$100,000 from last year.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 18, Parks Improvement Fund, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 19 - Highway Truck Replacement:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$71,801, for the purpose of purchasing a replacement for Highway Truck #9, purchased in 2007. This replacement is for an existing 1 ton truck to a 1.5 ton "Switch and Go" Hook truck F-550. This vehicle is primarily used for light duty hauling, landscaping, asphalt work, drainage and catch basin maintenance. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation). Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 19, Highway Truck Replacement, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 20 - Replace DPW Hotbox Asphalt Reclaimer:
To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$59,481 for the purpose of purchasing a replacement hotbox asphalt reclaimer for the Highway Department. This is the Department's primary equipment to fill potholes. The current hotbox was purchased in 2005. (Estimated Tax Impact: .027/1,000, \$2.65/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 20, Replace DPW Hotbox Asphalt Reclaimer. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 21 - Intersection Improvements Plan Funding:
To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of conducting and creating an intersection improvement proposal with preliminary designs, to improve intersections and intersection areas, including Pine/Front/Linden Street, Front Street/Water Street, Clifford Street/Water Street, Winter Street/Columbus Avenue/Railroad Avenue, and others. This sum to come from general taxation. (Estimated Tax Impact: .022/1,000, \$2.23/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 21, Intersection Improvements, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 22 - Public Works Facility Garage:
To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$50,000 for the purpose of design work on a new garage at the Public Works Complex on Newfields Road. This sum to come from general taxation \$25,000, water funds \$12,500, and sewer funds \$12,500. (Estimated Tax Impact: .011/1,000, \$1.12/100,000 assessed property value). Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Kris Weeks, the Chair of the Facilities Advisory Committee, said we support this amount of money for the garage, but first we would like to see an operational study, similar to what we saw for Police and Fire, prior to proceeding with the design.

Mr. Dean said if we're going to do an operations study, we need to reword this article, because that's not what it's for. We've deliberated on what would be gained by an operations study would accomplish, and we're not clear on that. This is a very different project from the Public Safety Complex. It might be difficult to find consultants for this study.

Mr. Papakonstantis said last year, the BRC recommended this project but not at the \$100,000 initially recommended, and it was removed from the warrant. It seems like this project keeps getting pushed back year after year.

Jennifer Perry said initially we were talking about doing geotechnical evaluations of the adjoining site, and those are not inexpensive. We're looking for the next piece to

inform the town what that site may be able to provide us for a future facility. Any step forward is key.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 22, Public Works Facility Garage, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. Ms. Cowan, Ms. Gilman, and Mr. Papakonstantis voted aye, while Ms. Oliff voted nay. The motion passed 3-1.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 23 - Replace Car 3, Fire Department:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$47,969 for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a replacement for Fire Department Car 3. This purchase would replace a 2010 Ford Expedition with an F250 Pickup. The vehicle will be used for incident command. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 23, Replace Car 3 in the Fire Department, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 24 - Facilities Condition Assessment:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$45,000 for the purpose of hiring a consultant to conduct a facilities condition assessment (FCA) and set up a database for Town facilities. The assessment will include an accounting and evaluation of all Town buildings and their systems. The consultant will input the data from the assessment into a software system that will be used by the Town for facility maintenance and capital asset planning. This sum to come from general taxation. (Estimated Tax Impact: .020/1,000, \$2.01/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Kris Weeks said the Facilities Advisory Committee is seeking the Board's support for this proposal. We've spent the better part of this past year with the DPW and BRC on the implementation and how it would transition to ownership to the DPW going forward. This is something the DPW is already doing with the Sewer Treatment Plant, so this would be an extension of that work.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 24, Facilities Condition Assessment, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 25 - Replace DPW Jeep Patriot 65 with Hybrid:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$44,750 for the purpose of purchasing a replacement for Jeep Patriot #65 in the Public Works Department. This purchase would replace a 2013 Jeep Patriot with a Ford Explorer Hybrid Vehicle. (Estimated Tax Impact: .020/1,000, \$2.00/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 25, Replace DPW Jeep Patriot 65 with Hybrid, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 26 - Bike/Pedestrian Improvement Plan:

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate, through special warrant article, the sum of \$25,000 for the purpose of conducting a town wide bicycle/pedestrian plan as outlined in the Town Master Plan. This sum to come from general taxation. (Estimated Tax Impact: .011/1,000, \$1.12/100,000 assessed property value.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 26, Bike/Pedestrian Improvement Plan, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 27 - Appropriate to Sick Leave Trust Fund \$100,000:

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Sick Leave Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said this is a customary article every year. When our employees retire, we pay them half of their sick leave back, and this fund is set up to fund that. The balance is \$47,385, after a distribution of \$53,704 in 2021. This is per our personnel policy and our union contracts.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 27, Appropriate to Sick Leave Trust Fund \$100,000, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 28 - Appropriate to Non-Capital Reserve Fund - Snow and Ice Deficit \$50,000:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Snow and Ice Deficit Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Dean said this is also a customary article that's on the warrant every year. This is to hedge against any deficits in the snow and ice budget, depending on the kind of winter we have. The current fund balance is \$103,175. The budget is \$315,000, but we've spent up to \$500,000 in past years.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 28, Appropriate to Non-Capital Reserve Fund - Snow and Ice Deficit \$50,000, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 29 - Appropriate to Trust Fund - Swasey Parkway \$3,625

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,625 to be added to the Swasey Parkway Trust Fund previously established. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. This amount is equivalent to the amount of permit fees

collected during the prior year for use of the Swasey Parkway. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Mr. Dean said this fund was established a few years back, it's an expendable Trust Fund and we have to appropriate into it every year. It takes the prior year permit fees raised for Parkway use and puts it into this fund for Swasey Parkway purposes.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 29, Appropriate to Trust Fund - Swasey Parkway \$3,625, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 30 - Town Hall Revolving Fund and Funding, \$5,000:

To see if the Town will vote to establish a revolving fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, for the purpose of making capital improvements to, equipping and maintaining the Town Hall building. All revenues received from the rental of space in the Town Hall will be deposited into the fund, and the money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate year to year, and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all moneys in the fund, and shall pay out the same only upon order of the governing body, and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created. Further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in the revolving fund as an initial balance. This sum to come from the unassigned fund balance. (Estimated Tax Impact: None. No amount to be raised by taxation.) Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Don Clement of 3 Thelma Drive asked if a revolving fund can accept donations. Mr. Dean said yes.

Anne Surman of 14 Cullen Way asked how that fund squares with the town maintenance fund. Would the Town Hall be exempt from that line item? Mr. Dean said we intend to keep building maintenance in a general fund for now and if this were to pass, we could take another look at that. A revolving fund can't be run at a deficit, so it would require a good revenue stream from usage.

Ms. Gilman said this is a good idea, given that we're looking at a Facilities Condition Assessment which will prioritize what we do there.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 30, Town Hall Revolving Fund and Funding, \$5,000, as written. Ms. Gilman seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 31 - Arts & Culture Commission - Agents to Expend:

To see if the Town will appoint the Arts and Culture Commission as agents to expend from the Exeter Arts Program Donation Trust Fund created by vote of the 2009 Town Meeting in place of the Exeter Arts Committee which no longer exists. Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Ms. Oliff asked if there was a balance in this fund, and Mr. Dean said he'd have to check with finance. Any town fund is subject to our auditors, who would review it during their yearly audit.

Mr. Papakonstantis asked if a town staffer could be assigned as a liaison to the Arts & Culture Commission, perhaps Greg Bisson of Parks and Rec. Mr. Dean said he'd have to speak with Mr. Bisson about it.

MOTION: Ms. Oliff moved to recommend Article 31, Arts & Culture Commission - Agents to Expend, as written. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 32 - Community Power Aggregation:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Exeter Electric Aggregation Plan (voted upon by the Exeter Community Power Aggregation Committee on 12/29/21) which authorizes the Select Board to implement a Community Power Aggregation program as described therein. Community Power Aggregation programs, pursuant to State statute RSA 53-E, allow municipalities to purchase electric energy supply on behalf of their residents and businesses with the goals of allowing for more local control of energy sources, lowering relative costs, expanding access to renewable energy sources, and supporting the development of innovative energy projects. Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment, but there was none.

Ms. Gilman said she's looking forward to this being approved. It's a win-win for everyone.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 32, Community Power Aggregation, as written. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 33 - Swasey Parkway:

To see if the Town will vote to close and discontinue Swasey Parkway as a public roadway from Water Street to the Pavilion, while still allowing traffic to enter from Newfields Road to park and turn around. This action, if approved by the voters, will be conditioned on the following: a) Retaining the paved surface in the discontinued portion for the use of pedestrians, non-motorized vehicles, maintenance vehicles, and emergency vehicles. b) The northerly portion of the roadway shall remain a Class V highway. c) The Town obtaining approval from both the Rockingham County Probate Court and NH Division of Charitable Trusts. Majority vote is required.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Don Clement of 3 Thelma Drive said the article says "discontinuing" part of Swasey Parkway. We did that 8 or 9 years ago when we closed Gilman Lane. What is the advantage of "discontinuing" the road vs prohibiting motorized vehicles? Can you discontinue part of a road according to State law? Mr. Papakonstantis said Town Counsel has always used the term "discontinue," and Counsel was present when this article was written.

Anne Surman of 14 Cullen Way said condition c) should be the preamble to the whole article. What kind of supporting documentation will the Board have, at Deliberative Session or elsewhere, to explain this to people? As she's discussed previously, if we had the answer to c) to begin with it would be more palatable.

Ms. Gilman said the beginning of the article could state “*Subject to the town obtaining approval from both the Rockingham County Probate Court and NH Division of Charitable Trusts...*”

Ms. Cowan said we have talked to Charitable Trust, who has said they’re not going to stand in the way of town approval.

Mr. Dean said this is not a financial article, so it’s optional for the Board to make a recommendation on this article.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to recommend Article 33, Swasey Parkway, as amended by Selectwoman Gilman. Ms. Gilman seconded. Mr. Papakonstantis said we heard from a lot of folks: those that want the roadway closed entirely, those that want it open one-way as it is now, and those that would rather have two-way traffic. All the arguments are compelling. At this point, it’s up to the voters. A generous citizen in our town, Renay Allen, has offered to donate a pocket park, but has been waiting to see what will happen at Swasey Parkway. This vote will allow this positive donation to move forward. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis read Article 34 - Citizen’s Petition - by the Petition of Andrew Elliott and others - Washington Street Improvements:

Shall the town vote: to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$260,000 for the design and construction of road improvements (sidewalks, tree work, and traffic calming) on Washington Street. This sum to come from General taxation (Estimated Tax Impact: .046/1,000, \$4.55/100,000 assessed property value. Could the funds also come from “town’s unassigned fund” or “in bonds or notes in accordance with the provision of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33).

Mr. Dean said he had a discussion about this with the Town Moderator, who was going to reach out to Mr. Elliott about some of the issues with the article.

Mr. Papakonstantis opened the hearing to public comment.

Anne Surman of 14 Cullen Way asked if there's a percentage vote for it to be binding, since there's money attached. Mr. Dean said it’s a majority vote to pass, and since it does say “to raise and appropriate \$260,000,” that’s what would happen. The Board has to make a recommendation on this because it’s a financial article.

Ms. Cowan said she’s nervous about this. She can appreciate the sentiment behind the petition, but we have a process, and we would be setting a precedent if this passed. We have other pressing needs to assess. Mr. Papakonstantis said he appreciates Mr. Elliott’s work on this, but the DPW does do a good job with this process. Ms. Cowan said regardless of our recommendation, it will go on the warrant and the voters will have a say.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to recommend Article 34 as written. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were opposed and the motion failed 0-4.

MOTION: Ms. Cowan moved to close the public budget hearing. Ms. Oliff seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

9. Regular Business

a. Tax Abatements, Veterans Credits and Exemptions

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veteran's Credit in the amount of \$500 for 21/22, 19/16/106, 68/6/548/, and 80/6/12. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veteran's Credit in the amount of \$1,000 for 47/8/204. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veteran's Credit with Disability for 47/8/204 in the amount of \$2,000. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a Veteran's Credit with Disability for 80/6/12 in the amount of \$2,000. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a tax abatement for 47/1/3 and 47/1/4 in the amount of \$2,004.84 for the year 2021. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to approve a land use change tax for 70/12/1 in the amount of \$25,000 for the year 2022. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Papakonstantis said there are two requests to waive owed taxes by the Exeter River Cooperative. Both of these trailers are over 50 years old, not up to code, and present health hazards. They would be demolished at the park's expense to bring in newer trailers, which would then be sold to a tax-paying member of the town.

MOTION (rescinded): Ms. Gilman moved to request a tax waiver for 95/64/175 in the amount of \$7,243.85. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

Mr. Dean said this motion allows the Coop to remove the unit without first paying taxes on it, pursuant to RSA 80:2-a. As a condition of that waiver, they will move the mobile home without further obligation from the town.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to reconsider the tax waiver for 95/64/175 so that another motion may be made. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to request a tax waiver for 95/64/175 in the amount of \$7,243.85 pursuant to RSA 80:2-a, and to authorize the Town Manager to sign a statement regarding the same. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to request a tax waiver for 95/64/68 pursuant to RSA 80:2-a in the amount of \$1,509.60. Mr. Papakonstantis seconded. All were in favor and the motion passed 4-0.

- b. Permits & Approvals
 - i. There were no permits or approvals considered at this meeting.
 - c. Town Manager's Report
 - i. Friday morning, there's a meeting led by Kate Miller at the EHS Auditorium to discuss Deliberative Session. Attorney Miller is also invited to the Jan 31st meeting to discuss the setup of Deliberative Session. The plan is to have a smaller gym in use for unmasked people, and an outdoor venue as well. Mr. Papakonstantis asked how there can be people unmasked in an SAU-16 building. Mr. Dean said there's a right to participate in the process if you're a legal voter.
 - d. Select Board Committee Reports
 - i. Ms. Gilman said she had two site walks: a building off of 1 Gilman Lane that the Academy wants to demolish to build new faculty housing, and the partial demolition of the roof of the Baptist Church on Front Street.
 - ii. Ms. Cowan had a Planning Board meeting, where we unanimously recommended the zoning amendment put forward by the Word Barn.
 - iii. Ms. Oliff had a Housing Committee meeting, where we discussed postponing a conference. We also talked about the Word Barn's approval for classification as a bed & breakfast and how that may affect affordable workforce housing.
 - iv. Mr. Papakonstantis said the Sustainability Committee postponed their meeting.
 - e. Correspondence
 - i. A memo from NHMA about important dates for budget season, Deliberative Session, and voting.
10. Review Board Calendar
- a. The next meetings are Jan 31, Feb 7, and Tues Feb 22.
11. Non-Public Session
- a. There was no non-public session at this time.
12. Adjournment

MOTION: Ms. Gilman moved to adjourn. Ms. Cowan seconded. All were in favor and the meeting adjourned at 9:52 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joanna Bartell
Recording Secretary