



**TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE
MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING
SELECT BOARD MEETING**

**JANUARY 22, 2019 7:30 PM
NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

PUBLIC HEARING ON CITIZENS PETITION WARRANT ARTICLES

BUDGET COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jonathan Pinette, Vice-Chairman/School Board Rep James Sununu, Tamara Le, Laurel Pohl, Little Boar's Head Rep Brian Goode, Select Board Rep Larry Miller

EXCUSED: Frank Ferraro, Rick Stanton, Charles Gallant

SELECT BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Jim Maggiore, Kathleen Kilgore, Larry Miller

AGENDA

Chairman Jonathan Pinette welcomed everyone to the January 22, 2019 North Hampton Budget Committee/Select Board Meeting and Public Hearing and called the meeting to order at 7:32 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Select Board Chairman Jim Maggiore opened the Select Board Meeting at 7:33 pm, and said the meeting was not posted as a Public Hearing and was for the express purpose of voting on the two Citizens Petition Warrant Articles.

OLD BUSINESS – None

NEW BUSINESS

CITIZENS PETITION WARRANT ARTICLES

Chairman Pinette asked Select Board Chairman Maggiore how he would like to proceed. Select Board Chairman Maggiore said he would like the Select Board to take a consideration and vote on the 2 Petition Warrant Articles, leave the Select Board Meeting open in case of questions, and leave the rest of the meeting to the Budget Committee.

SUPPORT CENTENNIAL HALL – by Citizens Petition

Select Board Chairman Maggiore read the first Citizens Petition to ***Support Centennial Hall*** in full. He said the petition was signed by 25 registered voters to raise and appropriate through taxation the sum of \$50,000 for its use as a Community Center for North Hampton.

Chairman Pinette asked if the Select Board would agree to let the audience speak prior to their discussions, and the Select Board agreed. Chairman Pinette opened the floor to Public Comment at 7:38 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Support Centennial Hall – by Citizens Petition

Jen King, a member of the board of Friends of Centennial Hall, asked if board president Marcy McCann, no longer a resident, could join her. She said they had gotten an LCHIP Grant and needed to raise money to maintain the building and restore it, and they were asking for the Town's support. She said Centennial Hall was given to the Town as a school in 1876, owned by the Town until 1952, when it was purchased by the Friends of Centennial Hall and used as a community center for North Hampton.

Marcy McCann said 350 people were in the building weekly, supplemented by private events and other cultural activities they hosted as a volunteer non-profit. She said they saw approximately 20,000 people annually in the limited space available, and their goal was to open up the Ballroom, increase programming, provide public access, and turn Centennial Hall into a community center for the benefit of the Town.

Questions: Ms. Pohl asked if the building was private or public, and Ms. McCann said it was privately owned. Vice-Chair Sununu asked for information on renovation plans, etc. Ms. McCann said it would be a 3-tier restoration plan and LCHIP matching funds would go toward Phase I, an approximate \$650,000 expense. After completing the restoration they would be working to appropriate funds from other sources. Phase III involved building an addition to house an elevator and secondary egress to access the Ballroom on the second floor, and Phase II was for mechanical improvements to bring the building up to code. She further explained that for Phase III they were seeking additional private funds for financing. Vice-Chair Sununu asked when the renovation of the Ballroom would be done, and Ms. McCann said after Phase III was completed. He asked how much money was raised to date, and Ms. McCann said \$60,000 for the Ballroom with total capital on hand close to \$400,000, not including the \$200,000 from LCHIP.

Ms. Pohl asked the benefit the public would receive from use of Town funds from taxation. Ms. McCann said they hosted as many functions as they could, and Ms. King said their whole purpose was to serve the town, but they needed access to the Ballroom to increase capacity. Ms. Pohl said that by raising public funds by taxation, they needed to understand the public benefits, and Ms. McCann said they anticipated increased use by the community. Ms. King said they were recognized on the National Registry for their cultural and educational contributions to North Hampton. Ms. McCann said the Registry asked why they were not supported by the Town and that was why they were here today.

Mr. Miller said the Town had no Recreational Center, and asked if they renovated the second floor some of their programs could be hosted there. Ms. McCann said she had met with Recreation but their current tenant schedule was tight. Ms. King said anyone interested could set up a time to tour the second floor to

see its potential. Ms. McCann said they were trying to get Hampton Rotary to meet there as they wanted to help the organization. She said they had been committed to this project for years and credibility with the State was at its highest level, and it would be criminal not to match this LCHIP Grant.

Mr. Wally Kilgore of 220 Atlantic Avenue said he was involved in the Bandstand Committee and was part of the Recreation Committee who were planning an event tied in with Winterfest to be hosted at Centennial Hall. He said Centennial Hall had been a vital part of both activities for the last few years, and he encouraged everyone to consider this petition.

Chairman Pinette closed Public Comment at 7:54 pm, and turned the meeting back to Chairman Maggiore.

Select Board to Consider Citizens Petition to Support Centennial Hall

Chairman Maggiore reiterated that this was a citizens petition, signed by 25 registered voters, and received in a timely fashion. He said all Petition Articles and all Warrant Articles would be sent in one packet to DRA for approval, and the citizens petition would go on as it is. Mr. Miller said he was a signatory on this petition.

Motion: To approve the Citizens Petition to *Support Centennial Hall* as presented and recommend to the Ballot.

Motioned: Mr. Miller

Seconded: Ms. Kilgore

Vote: 3-0 to recommend

CONTRIBUTION TO THE LIBRARY CAPITAL RESERVE FUND – by Citizens Petition

Chairman Maggiore read the second petition warrant article *Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund* in full. He said the petition was to raise and appropriate \$375,000 to be placed in the Library Capital Reserve Fund for planning and construction of addition/renovation to come from unassigned fund balance.

Chairman Pinette opened the floor to Public Comment at 7:58 pm.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund – by Citizens Petition

Ms. Kilgore of 220 Atlantic Avenue said she was speaking as a citizen, and read in full a letter sent to the Budget Committee in preparation for this Public Hearing and vote tonight. She said the Library was the Town's Community Center and was a resource and social outlet for North Hampton citizens. She said the new plan involved wrapping the building on 3 sides with an addition and adding a new entry with ADA access. This was estimated to cost \$2.5M plus soft costs of \$500,000. She said the Library currently had \$375,177 and \$247,193 in donations, and Library Trustees had spent \$30,000 on plans. She said the Library had a plan for the future and this would give them approximately \$1M to embark on their plan.

Select Board to Consider Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund

Mr. Miller stated that the Town had appropriated 6 warrant articles to benefit the Library, and if the Library was serious about moving forward they would have matching funds, and said he would vote

against this as there were no matching appropriations. Chairman Maggiore said the Town had been trying for many years to move forward with the Library and a lot of good work had been done toward that. He said there was some concern about the intended use of the property across the street, and thought it curious that it was for the exact same amount of money. He said if these 2 warrants were to pass that would take \$750,000 out of Fund Balance which he felt was dangerous. He said he had not known about this warrant until late and there were no matching funds, and he would be voting against this.

Ms. Kilgore said she would be voting for the Petition Warrant Article. She said the Library initially planned to construct a new building and then decided they wanted to stay in the current facility with additions and renovations. She said she was also on the CIP Committee and the issue was continually brought up, the Library had a plan to move forward, and she would be voting in favor of the Petition Warrant Article.

Motion: To approve recommendation of the Citizens Petition for *Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund* to move forward.

Motioned: Ms. Kilgore

Seconded: Chairman Maggiore, for discussion

Vote: 2-1 to not recommend

BUDGET COMMITTEE AGENDA

Approval of the Minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting of January 3, 2019

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting of January 3, 2019.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Ms. Le

Vote: Approved 6-0

Approval of the Minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting of January 7, 2019

Motion: To approve the Minutes of the Budget Committee Meeting of January 7, 2019.

Motioned: Vice-Chair Sununu

Seconded: Ms. Le

Vote: Approved 6-0

CITIZENS PETITION WARRANT ARTICLES

Support Centennial Hall – by Citizens Petition

Discussion: Ms. Pohl asked the Select Board about New Hampshire laws regarding the use of public funds to support/donate/contribute to non-public buildings. Chairman Maggiore said the petition had not yet gone to the DRA and he had no feedback. Ms. Pohl said she believed it was a State Law in New Hampshire that public funds could not be given to a private group without public benefit. Chairman Pinette said that petition warrant articles could not be reworded or changed at this point. Vice-Chair Sununu said they would need to get a legal opinion from DRA and get an opinion on what could and could not be changed at Deliberative Session. Chairman Maggiore agreed they would need a legal opinion and said they could get one from NHMA. He said the law several years ago was that you could not change the intent of the article.

Mr. Goode said they were looking at a total of \$1.7M at some point, felt he did not have enough information, and did not think it was a good use of taxpayer money at this time. Chairman Pinette said he

was in support of this warrant article and felt it was a good step toward having a recreation center, and he would be voting to recommend. Vice-Chair Sununu said he agreed that he did not feel he had enough information given the amount of money required. Ms. Le congratulated the Centennial Hall group on an incredible job raising money and creating enthusiasm. She said it was part of who they were in North Hampton, and they owed it to the Town and the community to continue to invest, and said she would be voting in favor of recommending.

Motion: To approve the Citizens Petition Warrant Article to *Support Centennial Hall* to move forward on the Ballot.

Motioned: Ms. Pohl

Seconded: Ms. Le

Vote: Approved by a vote of 4-2 to recommend

Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund – by Citizens Petition

Discussion: Ms. Pohl said she was a signatory on this petition and she also supported it as a Budget Committee member, saying the Town needed to move the Library forward and this was a good use of undesignated fund balance. Vice-Chair Sununu said if the Library had a clear plan and a clear budget they should have had a Warrant Article for the citizens of to approve the full funds needed for the project. He said between this and the property across the street he saw a significant depletion of the Town's reserve funds, and he thought it was reckless and foolish for this money to be proposed to be appropriated in this way. He said he would like to see a representative of the Library come to the CIP and the Budget Committee with their plan for spending \$375,000 of unreserved fund balance for a \$3M Library expansion. He said it was a foolish way to go about this and he could not be more opposed.

Mr. Miller said the Library had raised no funds since the \$200,000 in 2015, there were no matching funds for this request, and he agreed that this was not the correct way to go this and that Library Trustees had the responsibility of raising money for their Foundation. He said he had not seen any serious fund-raising activity on behalf of the Library and said the Town had put up all the money so far, and he could not support this warrant article.

Mr. Goode said he would not support this and said the correct way was to come up with a plan and a cost for a warrant article and put a bond out for what is not raised through donations to complete the project. Mr. Miller said there was a \$100,000 Warrant Article for the Library already approved by the Select Board and the Budget Committee. Ms. Pohl said she did not support the \$100,000 set aside for the Library because she knew about this Petition Warrant Article and would like to see it move forward. Ms. Le said she was very disappointed and did not know anyone in the community who did not support the Library. She said for whatever reason they were unable to come together to make this happen, and though she would like the voters to decide, she would not support the petition until they were able to make a team effort to find something that worked.

Motion: To recommend that the Petition Warrant Article for *Contribution to the Library Capital Reserve Fund* move forward to be put on the Ballot.

Motioned: Ms. Pohl

Seconded: Ms. Le

Vote: 1-5 to not recommend

Budget Committee Public Hearing
Select Board Meeting
January 22, 2019

OTHER BUSINESS

NEXT MEETING: Town Deliberative Session and Budget Committee Meeting Saturday, February 2, 2019 at 8:30 am at the School.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Pohl made a motion to adjourn the meeting which was seconded by Mr. Miller.

The motion was approved by a vote of 7-0 and the Budget Committee Meeting was adjourned at 8:38 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary

DRAFT