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2 **TOWN OF NORTH HAMPTON, NEW HAMPSHIRE**
3 **MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE MEETING**
4 **PUBLIC HEARINGS**

5 **JANUARY 12, 2023 6:30 PM**

6 **NORTH HAMPTON TOWN HALL**

7 ***DRAFT MINUTES***

8
9 MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Rick Stanton, Vice-Chairman/Select Board Rep James Sununu, Sean
10 Dionne, Andrew Raucci, Frank Ferraro, George Chauncey, School Board Rep Lisa Gagalis; Little Boar's Head
11 Rep Brian Goode(Zoom), Lisa Gallagher (Zoom)

12
13 ALSO PRESENT: School Business Administrator (SAU21) Matt Ferreira, Town Administrator Michael Tully,
14 Finance Director Ryan Cornwell

15
16
17 Chairman Rick Stanton welcomed everyone to the January 12, 2023 North Hampton Municipal Budget
18 Committee Public Hearings for Town and School Budgets and Warrants and called the meeting to order
19 at 6:30 pm, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

20
21 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu made a motion To allow Lisa Gallagher and Brian Goode to participate in the
22 meeting electronically; **Seconded:** Mr. Chauncey; **Vote:** Motion approved 7-0.

23
24 Chairman Stanton said from now on votes will be taken by roll call vote. He said the sequence of events
25 is North Hampton School FY2024 Operating Budget and Warrant Articles, followed by Public Comment;
26 Town FY2024 Operating Budget and Warrants followed by Public Comment.

27
28 **OLD BUSINESS**

29 Approve Draft Meeting Minutes of December 5, 2022 (postponed)

30
31 **NEW BUSINESS**

32
33 **PUBLIC HEARING - SCHOOL**

34 **Public Hearing North Hampton School FY2024 Operating Budget and Warrant Articles**

35 SAU21 Business Administrator Matt Ferreira said there are 6 Warrant Articles being brought to ballot by
36 the School; power point presentation of School FY2024 Operating Budget is on record. He said with this

January 12, 2023

37 Budget we tried to align how resources are allocated to our stated goals and mission: to School
38 Improvements Plan, continuing MTSS model, increasing communication efforts, and commitment to high
39 quality Special Education.

40

41 Warrant Article 1: School FY2024 Operating Budget is \$9,773,661, an increase of 0.8% or \$83,020 over
42 prior year and 0.87% increase compared to Default Budget of \$9,689,510. Budget Drivers: cost escalations
43 across the board due to inflation; significant cost increases in electricity and heating fuel anticipated;
44 replacement of gym divider and addition of ceiling fans to cafeteria; SAU-wide COLA adjustments for non-
45 union staff; increase in Special Education costs for out-of-district placement. Health Insurance was
46 underbudgeted and there will be a reduction in retirement contribution for one year. Select Board and
47 Budget Committee voted unanimously to recommend.

48

49 *Chairman Stanton opened the meeting to Public Hearing for the School District.*

50

51 Warrant Article 2: Seacoast Educational Association CBA Agreement for North Hampton Teacher Contract.
52 Business Administrator Ferreira said this is the highest priority Warrant on the ballot; important to
53 continue to maintain competitive compensation for teachers in the Seacoast area; needs to pass on all
54 district ballots or it fails across the board for SAU21 District and there are no steps or COLA increases.

55

56 Warrant Article 3: School Resource Officer (SRO). Proposal to add fulltime School Resource Officer;
57 Budget Committee has not yet voted on this warrant. The Officer will be a fulltime Police Department
58 employee assigned to the School during the school year to assist with security and provide a conduit
59 between students and police; initiated by the School Board with community support; salary of \$115,000;
60 recommended by School Board 4-0.

61

62 Mr. Raucci said the School Resource Officer will be in the School 9 months out of the year and in the
63 summer will be tasked with different responsibilities. Business Administrator Ferreira said the position is
64 12 months full salary and benefits which will change with actual hire; the Police Department will create a
65 job description and define responsibilities during the school year and the summer.

66

67 Mr. Ferraro asked if the School would transfer the cost to the Town to pay for that officer. Business
68 Administrator Ferreira said year one this warrant would pay the full cost of the officer; following years, if
69 warrant passes, will put together an MOU between the School and the Town of North Hampton with a
70 cost-share split; funds are only for the express purpose of an SRO. Ms. Gallagher asked if salary would be
71 in the budget in following years and if it was a union contract subject to yearly raises. Business
72 Administrator Ferreira said it would be in respective school/town budgets and was subject to the Police
73 CBA Contract.

74

75 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu made a motion to recommend Warrant Article 3 for a School Resource Officer
76 as presented; **Seconded:** Mr. Chauncey; **Roll Call Vote:** Brian Goode-nay, Lisa Gallagher-nay, Lisa Gagalis-
77 aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucci-aye, Rick Stanton-aye,
78 James Sununu-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 7-2.

79

80 Warrant Article 4: Long-Term Maintenance. Annual Warrant to address maintenance; for this year: repair
81 and replacement of rubber Playground surface and Gym exterior doors. Part of CIP plan; School Board
82 and Budget Committee voted unanimously to recommend.

83

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84 Warrant Article 5: Building & Maintenance Expendable Trust. Calls for contribution of \$50,000 to that fund
85 using unreserved Fund Balance; School Board and Budget Committee voted unanimously to recommend.

86
87 Warrant Article 6: Discontinuation of Technology Expendable Trust. School Technology Plan initiated with
88 replacement cycle and embedded in Budget; fund no longer needed.

89
90 *Chairman Stanton asked the public for any questions or comments.*

91
92 **Motion:** Mr. Ferraro made a motion to close the School District Public Hearing; **Seconded:** Vice-Chair
93 Sununu; **Roll Call Vote:** Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye, Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean
94 Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucci-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye;
95 Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

96
97 **PUBLIC HEARING - TOWN**

98 **Public Hearing Town of North Hampton FY2024 Operating Budget and Warrant Articles**

99 Town Administrator Tully said the Town FY2024 Operating Budget is \$8,980,101 for a difference of
100 \$654,473 or 7.86%; Default Budget is a difference of \$354,758 or 4.26%. Major increases in personnel
101 costs and increases across the Seacoast and across the State.

102
103 *Chairman Stanton opened the meeting to Public Session for the Town Budget and Warrant Articles.*

104
105 Warrant Article 1: Town FY2024 Operating Budget of \$8,980,101 and Default Budget of \$8,683,086.
106 General increase of 7.86% with 3.56% due to debt service, Town realistically at 4% increase; Default 4.26%.

107
108 Warrant Article 2: Replace Fire & Rescue Command Vehicle, \$75,000; to replace 2013 Police Cruiser. Fire
109 Department Ambulance Fees back into an account to pay for equipment; have seen cost increases and
110 ambulance orders are 3 years out. Funds stay in account with no effect on tax rate; currently \$383,000 in
111 account.

112
113 Warrant Article 3: Police Cruiser \$55,000. Police Department runs 7 cruisers, 2 administrative, 1 detail, 3
114 patrol vehicles, and 1 supervisor car; this warrant replaces a 2017 Cruiser with 82,000 miles; cruiser orders
115 up to 15 months out.

116
117 Warrant Article 4: Refurbish Rescue Engine 1, \$250,000. Pump needs complete overhaul, electrical issues,
118 paint; any monies leftover will stay in account.

119
120 Warrant Article 5: Public Works Medium Duty Dump Truck, \$107,000. Replacing 2012 F650 originally put
121 in as lease/purchase; currently looking at rate of 6.9% and decided to purchase outright.

122
123 Warrant Article 6: Road Resurfacing, \$285,000 Cost of asphalt going up; looking at approximately 3 miles
124 in town; Highway Department monitors for water damaged roads. Withdrawal of \$30,000 from Municipal
125 Transportation Improvement Capital Reserve Fund and raising \$250,000 through taxation.

126
127 Chairman Stanton said people can look at the CIP plan available online with schedule of roads in town.
128 Because streets are named, if warrant fails could not work on that street; less visibility on names because
129 of that based on need. Town Administrator Tully said Director Hubbard looks at top coating versus tearing
130 up and reclaiming. He said the next two Warrants are more or less place holders.

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Warrant Article 7: Philbrick Pond Marsh Restoration, \$20,000. Grants were received for first portion, Cobble Weir and second portion to investigate fixing health of the marsh. First project more expensive than anticipated and DES transferred funds into first to complete Cobble Weir; Conservation looking into going forward with secondary projects and grant opportunities. Town Administrator Tully said he wanted to be able to cover an 80:20 grant.

Warrant Article 8: Rail Trail Equipment and Capital Improvements, \$10,000. Expense not known at this time but Rail Trail has widespread support North Hampton residents; put forward as a place holder to have money available. Project has an opportunity for Economic Development in community; small investment for any initial improvements. May purchase equipment with other towns and work together; Select Board rejected setting up a Capital Reserve Account for this purpose.

Town Administrator Tully said either the money would get spent, returned to Fund Balance, or get encumbered with a contract for a certain service or product by end of 2024 for the Rail Trail. Mr. Raucci asked if it was anticipated money would be allocated to this purpose in the next fiscal year and Town Administrator Tully said he did. Mr. Raucci asked if \$10,000 is enough.

Vice-Chair Sununu said they do not actually know; the State is building the trail and towns the trail passes through are responsible for its maintenance. He said Rockingham Planning Commission is spearheading coordination between towns and establishing a not-for-profit organization with towns as members sharing maintenance costs. Chairman Stanton asked what the Select Board argument was against a Capital Reserve fund. Vice-Chair Sununu said it will probably end up in the budget as a line item for Rail Trail Maintenance. Town Administrator Tully said if a non-profit develops, donations could be made.

Ms. Gallagher asked who actually constructs the trail. Town Administrator Tully said the State of New Hampshire owns the land and will construct the Rail Trail then look to cross towns to maintain their portion. He said the Town has an MOU with the State of New Hampshire that once turned trails are turned over to towns as completed, towns are responsible for maintenance; also looking at trash removal; North Hampton is in the first phase of the project. Chairman Stanton asked if the warrant failed would there be any funds available. Vice-Chair Sununu said the trail will not be ready for use until 2024; will come back in a year with more information and a better target.

Warrant Article 9: Contribution to Coakley Landfill Capital Reserve, \$75,000. Town Administrator Tully said the average contribution of \$50,000/yr was increased by \$25,000 to cover the \$1/4 Mil payment due in 2030.

Warrant Article 10: Earned Time Settlement Capital Reserve Fund, \$75,000. Allows the Town to purchase time from employees both during and at end of careers; less expensive to purchase in today's dollars. Town is in a situation where \$143,000 may be payable before July 1, 2024 due to possible retirements; \$63,383 currently in fund.

Warrant Article 11: Contribution to Town Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, \$14,000. Balance in fund is \$56,612. Paying revaluation now; started saving for it 5 years ago.

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176 Warrant Article 12: Rent or Lease Municipal Property. Allows Select Board to rent or lease municipal
177 property not in public use for up to 5 years without further vote of Town; looking at Cell Tower and solar
178 power for buildings that require longer-term contracts.

179

180 Chairman Stanton asked about RSA 41:11-a that talks about leasing public land which Select Board can do
181 for 1 year without voter approval; Vice-Chair Sununu said the statute says the Select Board needs to get
182 permission and this is that permission from the voters; a way to do a project without waiting for Town
183 Meeting. Chairman Stanton said voters have no idea what the projects will be and said he did not agree.

184

185 Warrant Article 13: Readopt All Veterans Tax Credit. State Legislature changed wording in Veterans Tax
186 Credit that allows current active-duty military to receive the credit; need to readopt to cover everyone;
187 spoke with Assessor on language.

188

189 Town Administrator Tully said the last two warrant articles are not Town warrants but Petition Warrant
190 Articles. Chairman Stanton read the articles in full.

191

192 Warrant Article 14: Taxpayer Funds Towards Eminent Domain (by Citizens Petition)

193 On behalf of at least 25 registered voters, pursuant to RSA 39:3 to see if Town will vote to raise and
194 appropriate through taxation the sum of Zero Dollard (\$0) for obtaining an eminent domain easement in
195 connection with a Cell Town in North Hampton. Not recommended by the Select Board 0-3. Chairman
196 Stanton said it has a monetary unit and the Budget Committee will need to vote on the warrant.

197

198 Warrant Article 15: Consideration for Cell Phone Tower (by Citizens Petition)

199 On behalf of at least 25 registered voters, pursuant to RSA 39:3 to see if Town will vote to require the
200 Select Board to review the placement of the proposed Cell Town on the Town-owned property known as
201 Map 7, Lot 161; placement on the specified 85.3 acre lot, Parcel ID 7-161 would not require the Town to
202 obtain land use rights through Eminent Domain. Budget Committee does not have a say on this warrant.

203

204 Consideration and Recommendation of Town Warrant Articles

205

206 **Motion:** Mr. Ferraro moved to recommend Warrant Article 2 Fire & Rescue Command Vehicle
207 Replacement for \$75,000; **Seconded:** Vice-Chair Sununu; **Roll Call Vote:** Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-
208 aye, Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucci-aye, Rick
209 Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

210

211 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 3 Purchase of Police Cruiser \$55,000;
212 **Seconded:** Mr. Raucci; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George
213 Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucci-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-
214 aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

215

216 **Motion:** Ms. Gagalis moved to recommend Warrant Article 4 Refurbish Rescue Engine 1, \$250,000;
217 **Seconded:** Mr. Dionne; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George
218 Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucci-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-
219 aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

220

221 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 5 Purchase of Public Works Medium
222 Duty Dump Truck \$107,000; **Seconded:** Mr. Ferraro; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye,

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223 Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian
224 Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

225
226 **Motion:** Mr. Ferraro moved to recommend Warrant Article 6 Road Resurfacing **Seconded:** Ms. Gagalis;
227 **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew
228 Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by
229 the Budget Committee 9-0.

230
231 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 7 Philbrick Pond Marsh Restoration
232 \$20,000; **Seconded:** Mr. Raucchi; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye,
233 George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian Goode-aye, Lisa
234 Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

235
236 **Motion:** Ms. Gagalis moved to recommend Warrant Article 8 Rail Trail Equipment and Capital
237 Improvements \$10,000; **Seconded:** Vice-Chair Sununu; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye,
238 Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian
239 Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 8-1.

240
241 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 9 Contribution to the Coakley Landfill
242 Capital Reserve Fund \$75,000; **Seconded:** Mr. Raucchi; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye,
243 Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian
244 Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

245
246 **Motion:** Mr. Ferraro moved to recommend Warrant Article 10 Contribution to Earned Time Settlement
247 Capital Reserve Fund \$75,000; **Seconded:** Mr. Raucchi; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye,
248 Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian
249 Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

250
251 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 11 Contribution to Town Revaluation
252 Capital Reserve Fund \$14,000; **Seconded:** Ms. Gagalis; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye,
253 Sean Dionne-aye, Andrew Raucchi-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian
254 Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by the Budget Committee 9-0.

255
256 Warrant Article 12 is not a Budget item.

257
258 **Motion:** Vice-Chair Sununu moved to recommend Warrant Article 13 Readopt All Veterans Tax Credit;
259 **Seconded:** Mr. Ferraro;

260
261 Discussion: Chairman Stanton asked Finance Director Cornwell if he had any idea how much this would
262 cost taxpayers; Finance Director Cornwell said they were unable to identify how many people this would
263 actually affect going forward. Vice-Chair Sununu said they do not know out of the 4,000 in Town how
264 many are active duty and who might apply for the credit.

265
266 **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-aye, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-aye, George Chauncey-aye, Andrew
267 Raucchi-aye, Rick Stanton-aye, James Sununu-aye, Brian Goode-aye, Lisa Gallagher-aye; Recommended by
268 the Budget Committee 9-0.

269

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270 Warrant Article 14: Town Administrator Tully clarified that this is not taking land but taking rights to an
271 easement that already exists on a property. Mr. Chauncey said this is something that should be explained;
272 Vice-Chair Sununu said there is a Public Hearing at the January 23rd Select Board Meeting about this issue.
273 Mr. Ferraro said there will also be a 25-ft wide construction easement. Town Administrator Tully said this
274 is Town property.

275
276 Ms. Gallaher asked why the Select Board voted against this warrant. Vice-Chair Sununu said because this
277 is a Citizens' Petition the Select Board did not put forward and the purpose of this article is to gum up the
278 works and prevent the Select Board from moving forward with proposed eminent domain to access an
279 easement. Mr. Ferraro said at Deliberative voters could add money in.

280
281 Mr. Goode asked if the easement was the exact same easement. Vice-Chair Sununu explained there is a
282 property that exists on another back lot to access through this property and install a pipeline with and
283 access road to property above ground. Mr. Goode asked the width of the easement; Vice-Chair Sununu
284 said it is 15 ft, needs to be at least 25 ft, and will be a single-lane road.

285
286 **Motion:** Mr. Ferraro moved Warrant Article 14 Taxpayer Funds Towards Eminent Domain (by Citizens
287 Petition); **Seconded:** Mr. Chauncey; **Roll Call Vote:** Lisa Gagalis-nay, Frank Ferraro-aye, Sean Dionne-nay,
288 Andrew Raucci-nay, George Chauncey-abstain, Rick Stanton-abstain, James Sununu-nay, Brian Goode-
289 aye, Lisa Gallagher-nay; Not recommended by the Budget Committee 2-5 with 2 abstentions.

290
291 Chairman Stanton asked if there were any comments from the public; none were forthcoming.

292
293 Mr. Ferraro said the total amount raised and appropriated through these Warrants would be \$611,000
294 and would add 7% to the current Budget.

295
296 *Chairman Stanton closed the Public Session for the Town Budget and Warrant Articles.*

297
298 **ANY OTHER ITEM THAT MAY LEGALLY COME BEFORE THE COMMITTEE**

299 Mr. Ferraro thanked Town Administrator Tully, Finance Director Cornwell, and Department Heads for
300 answering all his questions, and thanked the School and SAU21. He said his tenure expires in March and
301 he does not intend to run for reelection.

302
303 **Next Budget Committee Meeting:** Select Board Meeting Public Hearing January 23, 2023; Town
304 Deliberative Session February 4, 2023

305
306 **ADJOURNMENT**

307
308 **Motion:** Chairman Stanton made a motion to adjourn the meeting, **seconded** by Mr. Dionne, all in favor.

309
310 Chairman Stanton adjourned the Municipal Budget Committee Meeting at 7:54 pm.

311 Respectfully submitted,

312 Patricia Denmark, Recording Secretary