

Town Of Wheelock Selectboard Meeting

January 21st, 2025 6pm

At Wheelock Town Hall and on Zoom

Present; Selectboard members Ann Lawless, Mike Richardson and Scott Lange, Town Clerk Erin Swigart, Enid Ellis, Theresa Stimpson, Carol Rossi and recorder Meaghan Rinehart recorder via Zoom.

Call to order: 6pm No Executive session was needed for policy discussion.

OLD BUSINESS

Finalize 2025 Budget Report

In the draft general fund report for town meeting, Enid expressed concern that the 2024 actual number, line "other/unbudgeted/ARPA" \$180,880 may not be correct. She stated the 2023 CPA audit numbers for 2023 year end must agree with the starting 2024 balance, or else we need to go back and ask the auditors to change the numbers, which will cost a fee to be determined. Carol stated that the \$180,880 is not only the former ARPA amount, but is a catch-all sum line including other unbudgeted income, the insurance reimbursement and state budget adjustments. Issues with journal entries and NEMRC were also raised, as well as reserve fund balances. The town auditors are meeting 1/23/2025, the night before the deadline set by our treasurers to receive all documents for printing the town report.

Ann made a motion that we adopt the 2025 budget, and publish in the town report booklet the 2025 budget column, and adopt the 2024 actuals in time to insert this new information into the printed town reports prior to the deadline Sat. Feb 22, 2024 when the reports must be available to the public. Scott seconded. All in favor, so voted.

Discussion continued regarding the 2025 budgets. The needs and requests for the highway department 2025 budget were discussed, listed and compared with last year's costs. A lawn mower was added as a General Fund item, so that road employees could mow Town Hall Green. Increases in annual costs to maintain trucks and loader (\$3500 for chains, \$7000 for tires) were added to the road budget.

The outside audit for 2024 was discussed. It was recommended to have an audit each time we change treasurer. Ann will explore a new auditor's proposal as there is confusion over the cost. Scott questioned if we can justify another audit, and it was decided to include it in the budget.

NEMRC software training: Treasurer estimate is \$11,000 and if we sign on, the hourly rate for assistance would be \$110 an hour from \$145 an hour. As of this time this amount will be put in budget, however more information will be needed to determine if necessary.

At this time the amount for each town's Transfer Station fee is \$39,000. This was discussed and believed to be a mistake and Erin will be reaching out to Sheffield Town Clerk regarding this discrepancy.

Draft Town Meeting Warning Articles

Lyndon Rescue (\$38,181) and Fire Department (\$39,950) requests have been received and will be separate articles.

Property Taxes will be collected by 10\15 with a grace period until 12/15.

Social Service and other community appropriations shall be listed as separate articles, as per statute and discussion of our policy in September 2024. It was determined the most current policy should be provided on the town website. The Selectboard approved petitioned requests with the required signatures from Northeast Kingdom Council on Aging (\$300), Umbrella (\$600), Caledonia Home Health Services (\$300) and Senior Meal Services (\$300). Fairbanks Museum request was also OK'd. Cobleigh Library was not submitted and NEK Human Services petition was short signatures. Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, NEK Youth Services, Northwoods Stewardship Center, Riverside Rescue and Community Restorative Justice did not submit petitions and will not be included.

Selectboard report for Town Report

The Selectboard town report draft prepared by Mike was discussed and he will finalize it.

Another meeting will be scheduled for Monday January 27th to finalize the budget, warning and Selectboard report.

Mike motioned, seconded by Scott, to table the rest of agenda with the exception of adopting minutes and signing warrants. All in favor, so voted.

Scott motions, seconded by Mike, to adopt minutes from 1/7/25. All in favor, so voted.

Scott motions, seconded by Mike, to sign warrants. All in favor, so voted.

Scott motions, seconded by Mike, to adjourn. All in favor, so voted. Meeting adjourned 8:47

Submitted by Meaghan Rinehart

Ann Lawless, chair

Mike Richardson

Scott Lange