

**TOWN OF ENFIELD
ENFIELD BOARD OF SELECTMEN
MEETING MINUTES FEBRUARY 1, 2022**

TIME: 6:00 PM
LOCATION: Public Works Facility & Zoom videoconference
74 Lockehaven Road, Enfield

PRESENT

Board of Selectmen: Meredith Smith, Katherine D.P. Stewart, John W. Kluge

Administrative Staff: Ed Morris, Town Manager; Alisa Bonnette, Assistant Town Manager

Members of the Public: Tracy Young, Jean Patten, Shirley Green, Bridget Labrie, Celie Aufiero, David Beaufait, Kurt Gotthardt; Lindsay Smith, Town Moderator

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:00 pm.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

6:00 pm to discuss a bond or note over \$100,000 for Whitney Hall regarding the town offices and library.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to open the Public Hearing to discuss the bond or note over \$100,000 as it regards to Whitney Hall and the town offices and library. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Ms. Smith read the bond as follows:

In accordance with RSA 33:8-A, regarding bonds or notes of over \$100,000, discuss the expansion and renovation of Whitney Hall, the Enfield Public Town Offices and Enfield Public Library, currently estimated at \$4.7million. This hearing is relative to the proposed article on the 2022 Town Meeting Warrant of the second session business meeting of the 2022 Town Meeting.

Mr. Morris stated that the updated cost from Bread Loaf regarding the Whitney Hall expansion is \$5,802,150. He stated that there were options which could be revised which could potentially lower the cost and those options are included in the proposal.

Ms. Stewart stated that she believed it was important to put the information before the voters and get feedback. She stated that water and energy conservation should be taken into consideration. She added that, as a part of the normal budget cycle, the library has been able to replace furniture and that may be an area to cut back costs in the proposal.

Ms. Smith agreed with Ms. Stewart regarding cutting some of the less necessary items and focusing on the energy efficiency.

Ms. Stewart stated that Library Trustees have indicated that there are additional funds and another match available. She noted that funds for the project could not be acquired until the town commits to the approval of the bond on the warrant.

Ms. Smith inquired if there were any provisions to reduce the size or scope of the project.

Mr. Morris stated that there are opportunities to change it, if necessary, prior to the architectural drawings being finalized.

Ms. Stewart stated that she was cautious about reducing projects to try save money and added that the committee put a lot of time and effort into the proposal brought forward.

Mr. Kluge agreed that the project needed to be put forward to voters and that net zero or as close as possible would be important. He added that he was also cautious to reduce any part of the infrastructure as we do not know what we will need 30 to 40 years from now. He added that cutting things out without damaging the plan may be the best way to go.

Mr. Young, a member of the Municipal Facilities Advisory Committee (MFAC), stated that he had suggestions on how to present to the public. He stated that there are opportunities to have architects bid on the project and noted that a substantial portion of the work will be subcontracted. He that the bond regarding Whitney Hall should clearly state that it is the intention of the town to seek energy efficient engineering to achieve the best possible energy savings on the project. He stated it is difficult to achieve net zero without a large supply of power, such as a solar field. He stated that, regarding the public safety building, the bond should include wording that reflects that the town intends to pursue negotiations to acquire the property required for the project.

Dr. Beaufait inquired if there was a bond for both projects now, or if there was an open-ended discussion and decision.

Ms. Stewart stated that the Public Hearing was with regard specifically to the Whitney Hall project proposal, which is estimated at \$5,802,150.

Ms. Aufiero stated she believes there needs to be more time to look at what has been brought forward and it was not a suitable time as the project will cost a lot of money. She added that the Master Plan was moving forward and focused on the future of the town and how we are going to build it and it may influence how we view the building of a safety building or the historical value of things like Whitney Hall. She stated historic districts can help bring money in, and if we go too many directions, we may lose focus.

Ms. Green inquired if there was ever a 'right' time to do a project like this. She stated that the building has needed updates for 15 to 20 years. She stated that a lot more money will come in to support it.

Mr. Kluge inquired as to what the project cost impact will be on taxes.

Mr. Morris stated that the project would cost about \$50 per \$100,000 valuation for taxpayers.

Ms. Green stated there were benefits to the project such as the preservation of the historic building, opportunities to lower operating costs associated with energy efficiency, and having more room available to do more for the community. She added that a significant amount of time was put into the plan that has been brought forward.

Ms. Labrie stated that the Master Plan is there to provide guidance to the town leadership at the direction of the town and the guidance is specifically based on feedback from residents. She stated that the guidance is not about the buildings specifically, but about what people would like to see.

Mr. Gotthardt inquired about the last time major renovations were done on Whitney Hall and what was involved with those renovations.

Members of the BOS believed that the last work completed on Whitney Hall was in the 1990's, when the police station was located there.

Mr. Gotthardt stated that, in the time he has lived in Enfield, he believes the building was only painted once and the roof has never been touched.

Members of the BOS agreed that it had been quite some time since it was painted and noted that when it was painted there were issues with dry rot which effected the application of the paint.

Mr. Gotthardt stated that when you add all the money that has not been put into the maintenance of the building in the last 20 years, which is what you are paying now to rehabilitate it.

Ms. Young stated she attended the informational meetings and she supported renovating Whitney Hall and the Library, but she was curious as to why the article in discussion was only about Whitney Hall when there were previous discussions about finding funding for both the Public Safety Building and the Whitney Hall project at the same time.

Ms. Bonnette stated that the Board of Selectmen decided to move forward with the Whitney Hall renovations, which is why the Public Hearing was being held. She stated that the BOS can put one project, the other project, or both projects on the warrant. She stated that the hearing and the warrant are not necessarily synchronous.

Ms. Stewart stated that it may be worth discussing the approach that, with the interest rates being low and locking the price into current dollars, which would be a lower number than if it were not passed this year and prices go up before it can be brought forward again. She stated that she would like to see Whitney Hall on the warrant and amend the dollar amount and having a separate warrant article for the public safety building. She stated that the Library Trustees would be an important part of the discussion and inquired if Ms. Green might have input on behalf of the Library Trustees as to if there was a preference to have one warrant article or two.

Ms. Green stated she cannot speak on behalf of the other Library Trustees but speaking for herself she acknowledged that Whitney Hall is in great need for repairs, and it would be less than ideal to have to wait another two or three years for a bond if it is tied to the public safety complex and awaiting the securing of land for that project.

Mr. Kluge stated that he believed if the Whitney Hall project were a separate warrant article it would have a better chance of passing and recommended that is what should be done.

Ms. Smith agreed with Mr. Kluge's statement.

Ms. Bonnette stated that there is wording in the article which indicates the use of the Capital Reserve Fund (CRF) for the library building, which may be complicated as it can only be applied to one building but not the other and makes more sense for Whitney Hall to be a separate warrant.

Mr. Young stated that agreed with the separation of the warrant articles and he recommended having wording that promotes the pursuit and negotiation of property required for building an emergency services building. He added that the bond for Whitney Hall should be lowered by the funds that have been raised by the Library Trustees, which may also make it more attractive to the public.

Ms. Bonnette stated that the current warrant article states ‘to raise and appropriate funds in the amount of \$5.8million, and to bond \$5.5million.

Ms. Patten stated that, as a member of MFAC, she agreed that Whitney Hall needs immediate attention. She stated her concerns are still that the town has already voted for a \$3.8million water and sewer project that has not started yet. She stated that there was an article in the Valley News about the difficulty to secure building materials right now. She added that there has also been no discussion on where the employees will be working out of while the project is going on.

Ms. Stewart stated that there is a full layout included in the proposal which indicates movement and phases of the work which addresses where the employees will be working during the project.

Ms. Green stated she anticipates more funds to come in to help the library project as she has had donors to reach out to them once the project is approved.

Ms. Stewart added that Mr. Morris and Ms. Bonnette could be helpful in the pursuit of grants as well.

Ms. Brown stated that she could help with an application for an LCHIP grant. She added that the roof needs to be fixed or there will not be a building to use at all.

Ms. Green stated that the LCHIP grant is possible, but you need to watch out for stipulations that may be attached to receiving the funding.

Ms. Aufiero stated she agreed that the library needs work and inquired about the previous project where an addition was proposed to be put on for the library.

Ms. Green stated that the project did not pass. She added that there was a group that promoted the use of property at 78 Main Street for the town offices, which then changed the support for the library proposal at the time.

Ms. Stewart stated that the current proposal included a rendering of what it may look like, but there is still an architectural and design phase that will happen if it is approved at Town Meeting.

Ms. Smith requested comments from the public regarding the public hearing. With no comments the public hearing was closed.

Mr. Kluge made a motion to close the Public Hearing. Ms. Stewart seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 3, 2022

Mr. Kluge made a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Ms. Stewart seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

BOARD REPORTS

Members of the BOS gave updates according to their respective Committee assignments.

Ms. Labrie stated that there will be a Mascoma Ice Day celebration on Saturday February 12th, with events happening between 9:30a-2p. She stated that a lot of community groups involved, and RSVPs are requested and anyone with questions is welcome to reach out to recreation@enfield.nh.us.

TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

Mr. Morris stated his thanks to the Town Manager Search Committee and the Selectboard for giving him the opportunity to serve as the Enfield Town Manager. He stated that he has been working in Enfield for the last few weeks and is enjoying getting to know the town and the residents. He stated that there is a lot going on and he is grateful for the assistance of staff members who are dedicated to their community. He added that has been impressed by the involvement and dedication of town volunteers and he looks forward to becoming a part of the community and working to accomplish things together.

Mr. Morris presented the following updates to the BOS:

- An email was received on January 11th from Eversource warning of possible rolling power outages. He stated that if there was a long cold spell it would possible that there would be a power emergency and there would not be enough power to supply to all users. He stated that it is very unlikely that it will happen, but he conferred with the Chief of Police to review the Emergency Management Plan to ensure Enfield would be prepared in the event a warming shelter was necessary.
- He noted that invasive species RFPs have been received and he has reviewed the submissions with Mr. Wozmak. He stated that supplemental information has been requested from the contractors, which is due to be turned in by the end of the week. He stated that he will continue to work with Mr. Wozmak, and they will review the supplemental information and choose the best fit for the project.
- He stated that he has been appointed to the Grafton County Broadband Committee. He is one of five town managers on the committee, and he attended his first meeting last week. He stated that they are waiting to hear the results of a \$26million National Telecommunication and Information Administration Grant. He stated the committee was able to secure grants to work on developing plans to provide fiber to every town and city in Grafton County. He noted that the Committee will be holding three regional meetings in February:
 - February 15th from 5-7p in Haverhill at the Robert E. Clifford Memorial Building
 - February 16th from 5-7p at Plymouth State University, Bradford Room
 - February 17th from 2-4p a Zoom meeting will be offered
- He stated the solar array at the Department of Public Works is working well and we are already seeing returns. He introduced Mr. Charlie Clark to speak to updates on the solar array.

Mr. Clark stated that there have been a few days with no output due to snow covering the solar panels and he is working with Mr. J. Taylor to come up with a plan to mediate the issue. He stated that they are looking at all options but blowing off the snow and ice with compressed air using existing equipment would be the most cost-effective solution.

Ms. Smith requested any further questions or comments. With no further inquiries, she moved on to the next agenda item.

BUSINESS**2022 Budget Update**

Ms. Bonnette presented materials to members of the BOS in relation to the Budget Committee's recommended budget, which included a 5% COLA and merit raise.

Ms. Bonnette requested any questions or comments related to the recommended budget, which will be discussed at the Budget Hearing to be held on Wednesday, February 2nd at 7pm. With no further inquiries, Ms. Smith moved on to the next agenda item.

2021 Annual Report (Selectmen's report, dedication)

Ms. Bonnette presented a list of people to dedicate the Annual Town Report to, as well as options for the cover art.

2022 Town Meeting/ Warrant Update**Warrant Update and Acceptance of Petitioned Warrant Articles**

Ms. Bonnette stated that there are two petitioned warrant articles to accept. She stated that members of the BOS could change the order of the warrant articles except for bonds over \$100,000, which must be listed first. She added that petitioned warrant articles are traditionally at the end of the warrant.

- Articles 1-6 will be on the ballot on March 8th
- **Article 7:** To raise and appropriate \$5.8 million and to issue bonds or notes of \$5.5 million and withdraw \$244,064, plus accumulated interest, from the Library Building Capital Improvement Fund for the renovation and expansion of Whitney Hall town offices and the library. She stated it is an option for the BOS to elect to use Capital Improvement Plan funds, but it is not recommended at this time. She stated that another article could be added to separate the Whitney Hall renovations and the public safety building instead of having one article for both buildings.

Ms. Stewart stated she would like to see a public safety building as a separate article and to move the Whitney Hall repairs to the end of the monied articles, as it is possible it could be tabled.

Ms. Bonnette stated that the warrant would be amended to reflect an additional article to pertain specifically to the public safety building in the sum of \$7,259,066.

Ms. Bonnette stated that articles 8 and 9 are each recommended as non-lapsing articles until the completion of the project or by December 31, 2025.

- **Article 8:** Article 8 was recommended to be moved to Article 13; with reference to \$150,000 repairs to Whitney Hall, such as siding, roofing, etc.
- **Article 9:** To raise and appropriate \$130,000 for the Oak Hill Road Bridge. She stated the previous vote to support borrowing \$150,000 was found to be insufficient and additional funding is needed.

Ms. Bonnette stated that the Budget Committee is supportive of using money from the unassigned fund balance for the additional \$130,000 needed for this project. She noted that, by doing so, the additional funding does not affect the tax rate, it keeps the unassigned fund balance in check, and allows the project to be completed.

- **Article 10:** To purchase a roadside mowing unit for \$120,000.

Mr. Morris stated that they are awaiting a contractor that may have a piece of equipment which can attach to a loader and would cost \$80,000. He and Mr. J. Taylor are awaiting confirmation of the availability of the equipment.

Ms. Bonnette suggested a purchase and sale agreement that is subject to Town Meeting approval. She stated the amount, if not finalized by the time the warrant articles are printed, can be amended at Town Meeting. She noted that it was recommended to use funds from the unassigned fund balance for the purchase.

- **Article 11:** Budget article as currently proposed.
- **Article 12:** Deposit to Capital Improvement Plan Capital Reserve Fund
- **Article 13:** \$30,000 from the unassigned fund balance to be deposited to the Employee and Retirement Expendable Trust

- **Article 14:** To adopt the Enfield Community Power Plan. She stated that it did not require a recommendation by the BOS because it was not a monied article.
- **Article 15: (Petitioned)** To adopt SB2 for official ballot voting
- **Article 16: (Petitioned)** To increase the BOS to five members

The BOS proceeded to vote for their recommendations to the articles presented.

Article 7 – Whitney Hall renovation and expansion

Ms. Bonnette stated that Article 7 for Whitney Hall renovation and expansion would be worded as discussed previously in the meeting, omitting the language relative to using Capital Improvement Program Capital Reserve Funds.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 7. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

New Article 8 (Public Safety Building project)

Ms. Stewart noted that the Article 8 vote will be in reference to the addition of a separate warrant for the Public Safety Building in the amount of \$7,259,066 as discussed previously in the meeting.

[Note: With addition of this article all following articles will be renumbered, but for the purposes of these minutes the Article numbers as presented in this draft version of the warrant will be used.]

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 8. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 8 as presented will be moved to follow the current Article 13.

Ms. Stewart clarified that the Article 8 as printed, regarding the \$150,000 for repairs to Whitney Hall, would be moved to follow Article 13 in the updated warrant.

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 8 (Whitney Hall repairs). Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 9 – Oak Hill Road Bridge

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 9. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 10 – Purchase a Public Works roadside mowing unit

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 10. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 11 – Budget Committee recommended Budget of \$7,567,247

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 11 as printed. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

This article is subject to change following the February 2nd Public Budget Hearing.

Article 12 – Deposit of \$500,768 into the Capital Improvement Program Capital Reserve Fund

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 12 as printed. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 13 – Deposit of \$30,000 into Employee and Retiree Benefits Expendable Trust Fund

Ms. Stewart made a motion to recommend Article 13. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Article 14 – Enfield Community Power Plan

Ms. Bonnette stated that members of the BOS do not vote to recommend non-monied articles, and therefore no vote was necessary for Article 14.

Article 15 & Article 16

Mr. Kluge made a motion to accept the two petitioned warrant articles. Ms. Stewart seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Town Meeting Updates

Ms. Bonnette stated that the original proposal to hold Town Meeting outside on April 30th will result in going over budget due to the dramatic increase in pricing for tent rentals. Additionally, Public Works projects will be delayed with an April 30th meeting date. She stated that there is the option to use the school to hold an indoor meeting on Saturday, March 12th. The auditorium can hold up to 500 people. She stated that the sound equipment was already available, and the only fees associated with using the space would be janitorial fees, and it would be a significant cost savings.

Ms. L. Smith stated that people need to be able to drop a ticket into a bucket or in a ballot box themselves. She stated that Zoom is not an option for Town Meeting. She stated that it can be streamed, but people cannot participate in Town Meeting via Zoom as there is no legal mechanism to vote. She stated that she likes the outside venue and stated we may only need one tent, and people are allowed to stay in their cars, but ultimately it is the Selectboard's decision.

Ms. Smith and Mr. Kluge supported hosting the meeting outside in Huse Park under a tent like last year.

Mr. Kiley stated that he supported having a meeting in the high school auditorium, which can be held in the regular timeframe for the deliberative session instead of being pushed back. He added that four area towns held theirs indoors last year and had no issues.

Ms. Bonnette stated that, if the meeting were held at the Mascoma Valley Regional High School auditorium then transportation would need to be provided. She stated she has conferred with Mr. J. Taylor and confirmed a passenger van could be rented and an employee could assist with transportation. She added that the Town of Orange also rented a bus to provide transportation but noted that no one ended up using it.

Mr. Kluge and Ms. Smith stated their preference to host the meeting outside on the proposed date of April 30th.

With no further discussion regarding Town Meeting, Ms. Smith moved on to the next agenda item.

Enfield/Upper Valley Prosecutor's Association Fund

Mr. Morris stated that he and Ms. Bonnette are doing further research regarding setting up the funding for the Upper Valley Prosecutor's Association through the Town of Enfield. He stated that they will bring forward more information as soon as it is available.

Committee Membership**Old Home Days Committee membership applications (Adjutant, Archambeault, Tuttle, Struckhoff, Rose)**

Ms. Stewart made a motion to appoint new members as presented to the Old Home Days Committee. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee membership application (Beaufait)

Ms. Stewart made a motion to appoint Dr. David Beaufait as a member of the Mascoma Lakeside Park Committee. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Mascoma Lakeside Park Fund – Acceptance of donations in the amount of \$5,200 in aggregate

Ms. Stewart made a motion to accept the donation with thanks. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Property Tax Refund (NARJE)

Ms. Stewart made a motion to grant the tax refund as written. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

Local Board of Health Update (RSA Ch.128)

Mr. Morris stated that having the BOS serve as the Board of Health gives the town health officer a place to present information in a public meeting and to discuss any ongoing issues, as necessary.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS**Ratio Study (state review pending)**

Ms. Bonnette stated that the ratio study is under review by the state and requires a signature by members of the BOS.

Yield Tax Warrant (Reed)

The BOS members signed the Yield Tax Warrant.

Veterans Tax Credit Application (Archambeault)

Ms. Stewart made a motion to authorize the Veterans Tax Credit as presented. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

OTHER BUSINESS TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Ms. Stewart inquired if the town auditor had been consulted regarding the Trustees of Trust Funds and associated financial losses due to the GL Beyond Income Fund legal issues.

Ms. Smith requested any public comments to come before the BOS.

Ms. Stewart stated that there was a question of committee membership and stated that there should be a basic training when onboarding people and setting expectations for participation.

Mr. Morris agreed with Ms. Stewart and stated that he has had experience with providing training through the New Hampshire Municipal Association which might be a useful resource as well.

With no further comments, members of the BOS moved on to adjournment.

INFORMATIONAL ITEMS – NO ACTION REQUIRED

- Tax Collector's Report – December 2021
- Town Clerk's Report – December 2021

- Forestry Statutory Permit-by-Notification – DES File #2022-00108, Map 2 Lot 51 (Bonardi)
- Trustees of Trust Funds Reports – 4th Quarter 2021 and Report of Trust & Capital Reserves
- Trustee of Trust Funds Investment Policy

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Smith made a motion to adjourn at 7:42 pm. Mr. Kluge seconded. Vote unanimous in favor of the motion (3-0).

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42 pm.

Meredith C. Smith, Chair

John W. Kluge

Katherine D. P. Stewart
Enfield Board of Selectmen