

**WARREN BOARD OF
SELECTMEN REGULAR MEETING
Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

CALL TO ORDER:

C. Sackett called the meeting to order at 5:00 and led the audience in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Select Board Members Present: Chuck Sackett and Shirley McCartin. Todd Bixby arrived shortly after the meeting started.

Staff/Officials Present: Town Administrator – Austin Albro, Police Chief – John Semertgakis, Treasurer – Sheila Foote, Fire Chief – Arthur Heath, Road Agent – John Corso, Warren Village Schoolboard Chairman – Don Bagley

Public Present: Tom Babbit, Peter Boncet, Andrew Martel, Margaret Frost, Scott Brown

SELECT BOARD MANIFEST: *S. McCartin moved approval of the manifest, as presented. C. Sackett seconded the motion. Vote: Sackett – yes and McCartin – yes and the motion passed 3-0-0.*

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: A draft of the January 10th minutes is available for review at the Town Office and will be reviewed and approved at the next meeting.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Don Bagley provided the Board an update relative to the school budget ahead of the February 6th joint budget hearing at WVS at 6:00 P.M. There was discussion about voter turn out and it was noted there were 25 new voter registrations. Chairman Sackett noted that Selectman Bixby was chaperoning a ski field trip with the elementary school and recognized him for investing his time with the kids in our community.

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Treasurer, Sheila Foote was present at the meeting and provided a report to the Board for review. She noted that approximately 95% of the first 2023 tax bill and 88% of the second 2023 tax bill had been paid to date.

The Town of Warren Operating Account has a balance of \$802,318.77 after tonight's approved manifest of \$156,241.85.

The Tax Collections Account balance is \$185,633.36.

The Town Clerk Collections Account balance is \$3,500.00.

There was a discussion about the auditor's advice relative to the statement savings account and outstanding WHIP loans.

TAX COLLECTOR'S REPORT: Maria Sanders was present at the meeting and provided the following information for the Board's review. M. Sanders also noted that the State was still accepting applications for the Homeowner's Assistance Program and encouraged eligible residents to apply.

a) Collections Summary for the month of January 2024 (printed 1/24/2024)

- I. \$383,389.65 has been collected in Gross Receipts for the month of January, of which \$380,600.82 in principal; \$695.98 in interest/penalties; and \$2,092.85 in credits to be applied to 2024 P01 bill.

b) Deeding lists for 2015L - 2020L.

- I. Newfound Title Services is conducting Mortgagee searches and will send Mortgagee Notices. Notices will be sent to property owners and mortgagees on February 22, 2024 with a deed execution date of March 22, 2024 (5:00pm). The finalized deeding list will be brought to the March 20th Board meeting for approval prior to deed execution.

BUILDINGS AND GROUNDS: George Russell was not present at the meeting but provided a report for the Board's review. G. Russell reported that he was plowing and sanding, as needed. He completed set up and tear down for election day. G. Russell also reported that he has placed the annual supply order for the Town Office and Town Hall, explaining this included toilet paper, paper towels, and other general supplies.

In regards to the Transfer Station, 1 bale of aluminum cans was produced and 1 bale of plastic is in production. G. Russell reported he was working to complete the annual reporting for D.E.S. and he explained that he was still researching prices for solid waste disposal.

ROAD AGENT:

Road Agent John Corso was present at the meeting and provided a brief report of his recent activity to the Board of Selectmen. He explained that the big truck was still broken and that the cause was either a faulty ground wire or ECM and we were working to diagnose and fix the problem. The Road Agent explained that the orange truck was working but still in need of repairs. He explained that the weather has not allowed him to be without a truck for a couple days at a time while it is being fixed.

FIRE CHIEF:

Chief Heath reported recent activity for the Board's review including a recap of the recent wind storm and trees on power lines. He reported one call for a motor vehicle incident and there was also a discussion about powerline safety.

CHIEF OF POLICE:

Police Chief John Semertgakis was present at the meeting and provided a brief report of his recent activity to the Board of Selectmen. The Chief provided an update on

Kelso, a missing dog, still regularly seen near Route 25 between Warren and Glencliff most recently seen near the junction of Route 118 and Route 25 in Warren.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR:

The Town Administrator report of recent activity to the Board, noting that he was excited to be wrapping up the budget process later tonight. He noted that the website project was progressing at a nice pace and he expressed optimism that the project would be completed ahead of Town Meeting. He explained that he was working on the Town Report, as well as managing 2 ongoing welfare assistance cases. He also highlighted a pre-audit visit from Paul, the Town's former auditor, who indicated that the Town's fund balance had improved compared to the previous year. Finally, the Administrator noted that the UNH Engineering students were back in class and that the second half of their project to scope out and design a highway garage would begin next week.

NEW BUSINESS:

- a) After discussion, the Board reviewed the contract and unanimously agreed to authorize Chairman Sackett to enter into agreement with Newfound Title Service for 2024.
- b) The Board reviewed a number of historic photos presented by Donald Bagley for consideration of the 2024 Town Report.

OLD BUSINESS:

- a) Trust Fund Contributions:
 - I. The Board reviewed the proposals and requests for Trust Fund contributions. The Fire Department requested \$15,000 for the Fire Department/Public Safety Building Fund, \$15,000 for the Fire Truck Fund, and \$10,000 for the Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus Fund. There was discussion about the Fire Department/Public Safety Building Fund contribution but the Board agreed to move forward with the Department's request for presentation at the budget hearing.
 - II. A contribution of \$800 was requested from the Historical Society for the Redstone Missile Fund.
 - III. After discussion, the Board of Selectmen agreed to present the following contributions for consideration at the budget hearing:
 - Police Cruiser - \$5,000
 - Highway Building - \$15,000
 - Highway Equipment - \$5,000
 - Town Hall - \$2,000
 - Bridges - \$2,500
 - Veteran's Memorial - \$200
 - Dam Maintenance - \$1,000
 - Major Road Projects - \$10,000
 - Paving Fund - \$25,000

- b) There was discussion about the non-profit requests. The Board agreed to move forward presenting the fully funded requests for each of the non-profits for consideration and public comment at the February 6th budget hearing. The total proposed contributions for 2024 was \$164,834 compared to \$126,511 in 2023. The Administrator noted that \$35,553 of the \$38,323 was an increase by Warren Wentworth Ambulance Service from \$105,000 to \$138,553.
- c) There was discussion about proposed warrant articles. The Administrator explained that it was typical, but not necessary, to deposit the remainder of the cemetery operating budget, emergency management operating budget, and fire department operating budget into their respected trust funds.
 - I. The Board agreed to move forward presenting individual warrant articles for contributions of \$5,530.98 to the Fire Department Expendable Trust Fund, \$6,095.50 to the Cemetery Expendable Trust Fund and \$3,001 to the Emergency Management Expendable Trust Fund. All 3 articles were supported by the Board by a vote of 3-0.
 - II. The Board agreed to present a warrant article requesting \$1,000 for the next step of the common irrigation project. Chairman Sackett explained that the intention is to use the abandoned well on the school property to provide irrigation to the school yard and town common.
- d) The Board reviewed the General Government budget, excluding Town Buildings which was reviewed and previously approved. The Administrator highlighted a number of line items that had increased or decreased compared to the prior year. As presented, the general government budget increased \$25,506 from 2023. The Administrator highlighted that the largest increases were insurances (\$8,292), property revaluation (\$5,000), and administrator salary (\$8,000). The Board agreed to move forward with the budget as presented.
- e) There was discussion about the current condition of the big truck and the Board agreed to move forward with a warrant article for a lease/purchase agreement for a new big truck for the highway department, not to exceed \$250,000.

NON-PUBLIC:

C. Sackett moved to enter into nonpublic session, in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (a). The motion was seconded by S. McCartin. Vote: Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes, Bixby – yes, and the motion passed 3-0-0. The Board entered into nonpublic session at 6:25 P.M.

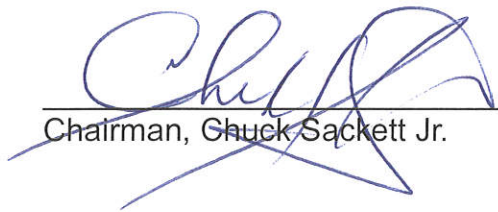
C. Sackett moved to leave nonpublic session and return to public session at 6:55 P.M. T. Bixby seconded the motion. Vote: Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes, Bixby – yes, and the motion passed 3-0-0.

C. Sackett moved to seal the minutes for 40 years because it was determined that divulgence of this information would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person other than a member of the Board. T. Bixby seconded the motion. Vote: Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes, Bixby – yes and the motion passed 3-0-0.

Prior to adjournment, the Administrator explained that he needed approval from the Board to refund a property owner who inadvertently paid their most recent tax bill twice. C. Sackett moved to authorize reimbursement in the amount of \$1,776.39 for overpayment of taxes, referencing receipt number 2024000098 for Map 205 Lot 002. The motion was seconded by T. Bixby. Vote: Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes and Bixby – yes and the motion passed 3-0-0.

ADJOURN:

S. McCartin moved to adjourn the regular meeting of the Select Board. The motion was seconded by T. Bixby. Vote: Sackett – yes, McCartin – yes and Bixby – yes and the motion passed 3-0-0. The Board adjourned at 6:59 PM.



Chairman, Chuck Sackett Jr.



Selectman, Todd Bixby



Selectman, Shirley McCartin