

**Town of Auburn
Board of Selectmen
Town Hall
Stritch Meeting Room
December 4, 2023
Draft Minutes
7:00 PM**

Selectmen Present: Keith Leclair, Michael Rolfe and Tom Carroll

Others Present: Town Clerk Kathleen Sylvia, Deputy Clerk Caitlyn Folia, Library Director Daniel Szczesny, Mike DiPietro, Mimi Friolet, Finance and Budget Administrator, Town Administrator Chris Sterndale, Recording Secretary Nancy Hoijer and persons unknown to the minute taker

I. Call to Order

Mr. Leclair called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

II. Public Comments

Mr. Leclair asked if there were any comments from the public, outside of agenda items, at 7:00 PM and there were none.

III. Appointments with the Board

A. Town Clerk – Consideration of Electronic Ballot Counting Device – RSA 656:40

Mr. Rolfe motioned that the Board of Selectmen authorize the purchase and use of Dominion ImageCast Precinct ballot counting machines once the machines have been certified by the State of New Hampshire; and further approves the encumbrance of up to \$28,000 from the 2023 budget year for purchase of the machines from LHS Associates. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

Mr. Leclair asked about the remaining \$18,000 in expenses of the proposed FY 2024 budget which Mrs. Sylvia noted were for election expenses such as the handicapped accessible booth, lamp, and supplies. She noted there would be more ballot clerks.

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 24 of the proposed FY 2024 budget for election expenses in the amount of \$18,000. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

B. Police Department

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve line 153 of the proposed FY 2024 budget for Police Department in the amount of \$48,362. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

C. Library Trustees

Liz Michaud presented a proposal for a 2024 warrant article relative to the proposed library expansion. She noted the library's goals for 2024 were to raise awareness of the proposed library expansion project, apply for grants, do additional fundraising and come with a building that works well to serve the community's needs. She indicated the need to show commitment from the Town for raising a capital campaign. She indicated the library would like to hire a professional to help with fundraising and for marketing.

Nancy Mayland indicated the Trustees would like to not impact property taxes to any degree, get forward motion on the project, and see a show of commitment.

Mr. Leclair questioned whether a new fund needed to be created or if any existing fund could be used with specific wording in the warrant article. Mr. Sterndale noted the governing language is in the warrant article itself but if the purpose of the fund were changed, the purpose is important. He noted with the existing fund the agent named to expend would be the Selectmen. He noted that if the library expansion did not get off the ground, then the funds could go back to the general fund. Mr. Sterndale noted that \$50,000 may be a fair number to hire a capital campaign company although it may be low.

Mr. Leclair questioned whether a stand alone warrant article for the hire of the capital campaign company may show how taxpayers are feeling.

Mr. Leclair questioned how the library planned to move forward cooperatively with the Selectmen and Parks & Recreation. He recommended meeting monthly to come up with something that mimics what is happening at Severance School. Meetings could take place from 6-7 PM once a month.

Mr. Leclair summarized that they would need to decide whether to create a fund, and if so, what to call it, identify the purpose and specific wording of the article, and identify where the funds are coming from. He recommended talking with other Towns such as Goffstown, Hampton and Barrington who have been through the same efforts. Mr. Leclair noted he would run the proposal by the Budget Committee before they meet again on the 14th.

Mr. Sterndale agreed that to raise capital funds without experience and help is difficult. He asked if the Trustees had been in touch with any of these capital campaign companies and if so, had they recommended a feasibility study as the first step.

Mr. Szczesny reported that fundraising is now up to \$85,000 with \$70,000 on hand and \$15,000 in commitments.

IV. Manifests

V. Consent Agenda

Mr. Leclair read out loud, and offered for inspection, the Consent Agenda, dated December 4, 2023 consisting of an Accounts Payable Manifest dated December 4, 2023 in the amount of \$2,800, a Payroll Manifest dated December 4, 2023 in the amount of \$104,195.85, and an appointment of Felix Aguilera as full-time firefighter/EMT at Grade 6, Step 9.

Mr. Leclair motioned to approve the Consent Agenda dated December 4, 2023. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

VI. New Business

A. Warrant Articles

The Board discussed the fund balance and potential warrant articles to add funds to the Building Restoration Fund, Town Property Rehabilitation Fund, Auburn Cemeteries Maintenance Fund, Fleet Maintenance and Replacement Fund, Accrued Benefit Fund, and Revaluation Fund.

The Board discussed potential maintenance and repairs to town buildings and purchasing one highway vehicle this year.

Budget & Finance Administrator Friolet reminded that the Town is still paying 20 hours per month for snow removal whether it snows or not. Mr. Sterndale estimated the cost for 13 trucks at 100 hours is \$26,000/mo.

VII. Old Business

A. Elderly Exemption – Tabled

Mr. Leclair motioned to table discussion of the Elderly Exemption. Mr. Rolfe seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

B. 2023 BOS/TA Goals

VIII. Committee Reports

VIII. Minutes

A. November 27, 2023

Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Leclair recommended edits to Page 2, Paragraph 3 (Highway budget).

Mr. Rolfe motioned to approve the November 27, 2023 meeting minutes, as amended. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0.

B. Consideration of Unsealing Non-Public Meeting Minutes

- i. Apr 5, 1993
- ii. Apr 19, 1993
- iii. June 7, 1993

Mr. Rolfe motioned to unseal the minutes of the non-public minutes as presented. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed 3-0-0

IX. Adjournment

Mr. Rolfe motioned to adjourn the meeting at 8:16 PM. Mr. Carroll seconded the motion. A vote was taken, all were in favor, the motion passed unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Hoijer, Recording Secretary