

Agenda  
Tuesday, December 8, 2020  
Via Zoom  
6:00 PM

6:00 PM – Public Comment

6:10 PM – Covid Update: Jeff Campbell

6:25 PM – Fire Dept. Budget – Jeff Campbell

6:35 PM – EMD Budget – Jeff Campbell

6:45 PM – Constable Budget

6:55 PM – Approval of Minutes from November 24, 2020

6:56 PM – Approval of Accounts Payable and Payroll Warrants

6:57 PM – Other Business

*\$ 839,296.06    \$ 25,994.40    \$ 52,836.00  
Harwood Warrant + \$ 1,519,875.00*

**\*\*Agenda Subject to Change\*\***

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## **Minutes of December 8 2020**

Warren Selectboard

VIA Zoom

6:00 PM

**Members Present:** Andrew Cunningham, Chair, Bob Ackland, Vice Chair, Luke Youmell, Randy Graves & Camilla Behn.

**Others Present:** Tony (TV44/45), Hadley Laskowski, Jeff Campbell, Jerrod Alvord, Dayna Lisaius & Cindi Jones.

**6:00 PM – Public Comment – None**

**6:05 PM –** Mr. Cunningham inquired if anyone had watched the Sugarbush Live Presentation on MRVT or zoom. Mr. Cunningham had trouble getting on. Mr. Ackland and Mr. Graves did watch the presentation. Mr. Ackland commented that both mountains were very upfront and prior to the meeting the Governor had delivered more changes to ski schools 2-3 hours prior to this zoom presentation. It is going to be volatile up and down in the next few months. Mr. Graves commented that it was a good Covid communication Valley wide with participation from the retailers. It was very sobering with hard and real facts.

Mr. Ackland commented that resort taxes are paid on performance and revenue ticket sales and not property which can potentially affect the tax base in the future. The Town and sugarbush usually does an appraisal every 5 years and Sugarbush hires a consultant on the approval of the Town to audit the ski area. There were only two companies that did this type of appraising and one is no longer in business. The listers are looking for someone to do this presently. Mr. Cunningham asked if other ski towns do this way of appraising? Mr. Ackland commented that there are not many that do any more. Most are done with some sort of depreciation schedule. When he was at Sugarbush he started this with The Town of Warren on an income basis for a fair assessment. Sugarbush does have to report annually to the Federal Forest Service on their revenue. Mr. Ackland commented that we could see some repercussions from covid in a few years to come. The lodging and restaurants are taking a hard hit where some may not survive.

**6:20 PM – Other Budget Comments –** Ms. Lisaius commented that the Town received 95% of the 2020 taxes with about 5% delinquent amounting to \$660,00. She commented that the collection was 1% down from last year, however, the delinquent amount this year is lower than last year.

Mr. Cunningham commented do we want to try to do 2 years' worth of paving this coming year? Mr. Ackland commented that he has spoken with Mr. Bombard and he said that there was no need to pave any roads except he wanted to re-do the dump road and put off the Access Road for another year. He said that Mr. Bombard commented that German Flats is the worst and that he would like to do the drainage project/culverts and patch pave and let set over the winter next year. The board would move the remainder of the money in the paving budget to the Capital reserve and not budget for any paving this year. Mr. Ackland also commented that he requested that Mr. Bombard come up with the quantities of gravel he plans on using for projects next year and from this plan, that could result in the gravel budget being decreased.

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Mr. Cunningham also suggested that the Dept. of Works Position be cut from the 2021 budget. The board agreed to cut this position out of the budget as well.

Roxbury Guardrail – Mr. Ackland commented that the guardrail project on Roxbury would not be completed and asked if the money this year could be carried forwarded or could the Town pay the contractor the remainder. Ms. Jones commented that in two other cases, the Town has paid the contractor upfront for the work. The board agreed that they would like to pursue that avenue.

Question on Health Insurance – Mr. Ackland asked about the insurance if the Town had chosen a plan or is continuing with MVP. Ms. Lisaius commented that she had the contract ready for signature and just was waiting for the Town to make a decision. Ms. Lisaius commented that she sent out an email asking input from the employees. Most of the employees about 90% were happy with MVP and 10% were not as Ms. Jones and Ms. Lisaius had on going issues with MVP. Mr. Ackland commented that she should get a quote from Blue Cross and compare to see if it was better than MVP and easier to work with. Ms. Lisaius commented that it would be the Select board's decision on what plan, however, the majority of the employees were happy with the current plan.

**6:10 PM – Covid Update – Jeff Campbell –  
COVID-19 Report for December 8, 2020**

Total Cases: 5,180

Cases statewide in the last 14 days: 1,418

Total Probable Cases: 138

Currently Hospitalized: 28 with 4 in the ICU, 0 on Ventilators

Positive Cases in Washington County in the last 14 days: 182 which is a decrease of nearly 50% from 2 weeks ago

Total Cases in Washington County since the beginning: 792, second highest in the state.

Deaths: 85 with 21 in the last 14 days

Total People Tested: 235,474

Total Tests: 588,633

Tested in the last 14 days: 60,688

**Numbers of concern**

- • NY has 713,000 cases an increase of 111,000
- • MA has 259,000 cases an increase of 51,000
- • NH has 25,800 cases an increase of 7,800
- • Maine has 13,800 cases an increase of 3,000

**Cases**

- • During the past two weeks we have had 6 days with cases over 90
- • Our highest case daily case total was 222, which occurred on 12/2/20
- Current cases count in the area as of 12/2/20
  - o Warren 11
  - o Waitsfield 13
  - o Moretown less than 5
  - o Fayston less than 5
  - o Waterbury 47

**Update on outbreaks and clusters**

- There are currently 36 Active outbreaks and 163 situations in the state, 51 of which are in Washington and

Orange counties.

- The percentage of people testing positive for the virus are as follows:
  - Not Associated with an Outbreak is 41 years old
  - Associated with an outbreak in a health setting is 72 years old
  - Associated with an outbreak in a non-health setting is 33 years old

**6:30 PM – Warren Fire Dept. Budget – Jeff Campbell** – Mr. Campbell commented that the budget is down by 4% over all. They did increase contract services as this year all the fire hose needs to be tested as it was last done in 2018. The department felt that every 3 years hose testing was sufficient as the cost is about \$30,000 if the town tested all the hose. The department tries to stagger the expensive items such as ladder testing and pump testing. They also increased dispatching as Warren is currently through the VSP. The VSP is planning to go up by 25% next year and then 50% the following year. The department is looking going back to Capital West as all the other departments in the Valley use them. It would be more efficient for the department in communications with other valley departments. Also, by switching the Town would save money as currently they have a dedicated phone line from the Sugarbush Station to VSP that is about \$400 a month. The repeater will be up on the mountain in Sugarbush that will provide better service and communication. There will be some initial expense, however, the benefits outweigh the initial expense. The department plans on switching in July once that has been installed. Mr. Campbell commented that during Covid they just used the budget for necessities but did not compromise any public safety. The board thanked Mr. Campbell and the Fire Dept, for sharpening their pencils to reduce the budget efficiently.

**EMD – Budget – Mr. Campbell** – Mr. Ackland asked about the EMD hours that have been put in during Covid and what might be expected in 2021. Mr. Campbell commented that he looked at his hours from June to December and averaged about 250 hours. He explained that the hours spent are not just Covid but also working on Plans such as the COOP, LEOP and other disaster type things. The board had agreed to pay Mr. Campbell for the hours accrued at \$12.00 as they were reimbursed through a grant. Going forward Mr. Cunningham recommended that they put 300 hours at \$12/hr. equaling \$3,600 into the EMD budget for 2021. Mr. Campbell also had added a new line called Public Education cost for \$300. There was not enough sufficient reasoning for this at this time and it was removed from the budget.

**Constable Budget** – Mr. Campbell – A discussion of the per hour rate was discussed that the rate was paid at \$11.00/hr. Mr. Campbell thought that last year it was discussed to raise it to the fire dept rate. of \$12.00/hr. There seemed to be no written indication that the board had changed it to \$12.00 but the board felt that it should be going forward. There will be more research done on this and if anything is found in writing, Ms. Lisaius will adjust the payment amount. Mr. Campbell did add a line for contract services which is for the cell phone charges of \$1,000. Mr. Ackland commented that the board had requested last year quarterly reports on what they did. Mr. Campbell commented that he sends them to Ms. Lisaius but would forward to the board those reports. Mr. Cunningham asked if Mr. Bifano was back from medical leave?

No one seem to know the answer and the Town policy is that if you are out on medical leave, you must have a doctor note to return to work. Ms. Behn commented that it is self-regulating however, the board and town should be clear on leave regarding medical leave and returning to work requirements. Mr. Campbell will check in with Mr. Bifano and see what his status is.

Motion by Mr. Ackland to set the Constable Rate at \$12.00/hr., second by Ms. Behn. All in Favor:  
VOTE: 5-0.

**Other Business:**

Tri-Town Discussion on Housing Fund – Mr. Cunningham asked if the board should think about setting aside some money now for this? His example was the recent Town sale of the Pope Property which the board hasn't abated the taxes or interest yet that could be set aside. Mr. Ackland commented that the House Coalition has to come up with a plan on housing and come up with how to fund going forward. They have started a plan and will be sharing with the towns. Money raised by the towns would go initially go the MRV Housing Coalition. What the housing Coalition needs is money to begin implementation of the housing plan and the structure of a MRV Housing Trust. Mr. Cunningham commented that he thought that an article with some allocation would be placed on the Town Meeting Warning to help the Housing Coalition to do this work.

**7:36 PM – Approval of Minutes for November 24, 2020** – Motion by Mr. Youmell to approve the Minutes of November 24, 2020, second by Mr. Graves. All in Favor: VOTE: 5-0.

**7:37 PM – Approval of Accounts Payable Warrants** -Motion by Ackland to approve the accounts payable warrants as presented for \$839,296.06, second by Mr. Youmell. All in Favor: VOTE: 5-0.

**7:38 PM – Approval of Payroll Warrant for \$25,836.00** – Motion by Mr. Youmell to approve the payroll warrant as presented for \$25,836.00, second by Mr. Graves. All in Favor: VOTE: 5-0.

**7:39 PM – Approval of Payroll Warrant for \$52,837.00** – Motion by Mr. Ackland to approve the payroll warrant as presented for \$52,837.00 second by Mr. Youmell. All in Favor: VOTE: 5-0.

**7:40 PM – Approval of HUHS Education warrant** – motion by Mr. Ackland to approve the HUHS Education Warrant, 2<sup>nd</sup> payment for FY 2021, for 1,519,875.00, second by Mr. Youmell. All in Favor: VOTE: 5-0.

**7:45 PM – Other Business:**

Pike Update: Mr. Ackland commented that Pike is still standing behind their letter that the Town pay the balance minus the penalties. He had an in-depth conversation with Mr. Gardner for going forward in the future and that the Town would like something in writing from Pike. The suggested agreement from Pike would have Pike agree to come and inspect roads prior to paving and present a solution, they would pave at the Town's scheduled time July/August in the heat of the summer, they would assign a crew proficient to the Towns needs for future work. Mr. Gardner would like a conditions letter from the Town stating what the Town's conditions are and also Pike would send a letter in regard to the conditions of the Town. There was no implied condition of Pike be awarded any paving contracts. All future contracts would go through the normal competitive bidding process. The conditions set forth would only apply if Pike was awarded any cointtracts.

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Mr. Ackland commented that the Town does not have this type of skill set and they would provide the expertise and paving plan going forward on all the paved roads. The board felt that this was a little win with all the efforts put in and Mr. Ackland will send back a letter back to Mr. Gardner.

**7:55 PM** – Motion to adjourn by Mr. Cunningham to adjourn, second by Mr. Youmell. All in Favor:  
VOTE: 5-0.

Minutes Respectfully Submitted by,  
Cindi Jones, Warren Town Administrator

The Warren Selectboard

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Andrew Cunningham, Chair

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Bob Ackland, Vice Chair

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Luke Youmell

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Randy Graves

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Camilla Behn

Signature: andrew cunningham  
andrew cunningham (Dec 21, 2020 10:59 EST)  
Email: propertymanagement@gmavt.net

Signature: Robert M Ackland  
Robert M Ackland (Dec 21, 2020 15:28 EST)  
Email: ackland@gmavt.com

Signature: Luke Youmell  
Luke Youmell (Dec 21, 2020 15:31 EST)  
Email: luke@birddogvt.com

Signature: Camilla W Behn  
Camilla W Behn (Dec 28, 2020 11:45 EST)  
Email: ccbehn@gmavt.com

Signature:  
Email: turnradius@gmail.com