

Minutes of January 16, 2024 Meeting
Warren Select Board
Streamed on MRVTV
6:30 PM

Members Present: Luke Youmell, Chair; Andrew Cunningham, Vice Chair; Camilla Behn, Devin Klein Corrigan

Staff Present: Brent Adams, Town Clerk; Rebecca Campbell, Town Administrator; Dayna Lisaius, Town Treasurer; Ruth Robbins, Zoning Administrator; Marie Schmukal, Library Director

Others Present: Tracy Brannstrom (Valley Reporter), David Ellison (Library Treasurer)

Public Comment

Mr. Cunningham noted the passing of Virginia Roth, a long-time resident of Warren who was active in Town in many capacities.

Agenda Changes

Some items were added to the Other and Ongoing portion of the agenda.

Budget Discussions

- **Library**

David Ellison reviewed the notable changes in the proposed budget, explaining that this is the first year an increase in expenditures is proposed and that the increase has been kept to a minimum through expense adjustments where possible.

Ms. Schmukal explained that the Library budget is actually larger, but that the Friends of the Library supports several aspects of programming and operations.

- **Planning and Zoning**

Initial discussion regarding some specific line items led to agreement that Ms. Robbins will review some numbers, with a goal of providing as accurate as possible representation of anticipated expenses. Other points made during the following discussion included:

- Mileage for all purposes can be consolidated – anticipated this may increase when new LUDRs are adopted
- Increased assistant hours slightly
- Supplies line is up due to planned charette
- MRVPD amount should be kept separate from Planning and Zoning
- CVRPC amount should stay in the Planning and Zoning budget
- Training opportunities will be investigated
- Separate web page was created for LUDRs, the PC would like to repurpose this page and keep it active
- Legal expenses/contingencies - agreed to keep an amount in each line, and make sure that the intended uses are labelled accurately

It was noted that an estimate of the fees which will be received should be included as revenue.

- **Town Clerk**

Mr. Adams indicated that he had consulted with Reta Goss regarding some of the line items in his budget, and used her advice for election costs, training needs, etc. He noted that there are new State-mandated election costs related to tabulating services. It was agreed to keep the training budget as proposed, and that Mr. Adams will indicate if he has additional training needs as the year develops.

- **Treasurer**

Ms. Lisaius explained that the one item that may need further review is the Accounting line item, as it appears that the audit bid of \$21K includes accounting services, but that needs to be verified. She noted that her training is generally through NEMRC at no additional cost. There was some discussion of any need to budget for tax sales; this will be covered further at the next meeting.

- **Administrator**

Ms. Campbell reviewed the Selectboard and Office portions of the budget with the Board, noting that training costs have been increased to provide for her attending upcoming events and that the computer expenses are being reviewed for accuracy now that a contract with North Branch is in place. She also proposed that laptops be purchased for upcoming replacements rather than continuing the use of desktop computers; Board members agreed that laptops and monitors are the more suitable solution. The total Selectboard budget is lower than last year.

No major changes were made to the postage, meter lease, and supplies lines. Copier maintenance is based upon the contracted amount.

The Capital Reserve Fund needs to be warned, so will be reviewed on January 30.

Ms. Campbell will work with Ms. Lisaius to complete the sections of the budget which have not yet been reviewed or which need to be adjusted.

Flat Iron Scoping

Ms. Behn explained that she had received clarification of further work to be undertaken by Stone Environmental through the grant awarded for the work related to stormwater remediation at Flat Iron Road. The scope of the grant calls for Stone to present their analysis to the Town, and take the selected solution to completion of 30% design work. It was agreed to follow through on these steps, and to schedule a presentation from Stone for some time after Town Meeting.

Covered Bridge Update

Ms. Klein Corrigan explained that the \$67K of federal grant money awarded for this project will need to be reimbursed to the grant program if/when either a) the Town decides to formally cancel the project or b) the award is cancelled by the grantor if there is no activity for a certain amount of time (this is decided on a case-by-case basis). She also indicated that if the intent of the work proposed through the grant application is completed, using other funding sources, the \$67 will not need to be repaid. It was not fully clear if it is necessary to periodically put the project out to bid in order to keep it 'active,' but noted that it would cost at least \$25 to get the project outlined and ready for bid again. It was decided to table the project for now, as there are several years left in the grant period, and determine in the coming years what effects future river changes have on the abutments and decide on the full extent of work that may be required.

Other and Ongoing Business

Town Moderator

It was agreed to place a posting in the Valley Reporter and on Front Porch Forum announcing the Town Moderator vacancy, and to clarify with VLCT the process to be followed under various scenarios regarding election/appointment to the position.

LUDRs

The subcommittee formed to work on this project has met and determined an initial set of subjects to discuss with Sharon Murray. Some of the items left to resolve may require further discussion with the entire group of Selectboard/PC members. Ms. Murray has also indicated that she will be reviewing the document again and developing a list of questions/suggestions for the Town. A Letter of Agreement has been drafted and the terms noted as acceptable by Ms. Murray.

Warren School Shed

It was confirmed that the Town does not need the shed for their generator switch, which is located on the outside of the structure, but agreed that the Town will contribute a small percentage of repair costs (not to the level of the 50% requested by the School). The repairs are to be undertaken by Skip Wallace, the School Custodian, this summer. It was agreed that once an estimate of the cost is provided, the Board will determine what amount they will provide for the project.

Solar Ordinance

Some detailed legal information had been provided by VLCT, which Ms. Campbell has forwarded on to the Secretary of State's (SOS) office for clarification. It appears that VLCT cannot offer advice to the Fire Department regarding the language in their proposed Ordinance, as they are not officially a municipal government entity. Board members noted that it is generally the case that they work with the PC to develop ordinances, and some clarification of Ordinances vs Land Use Regulations was provided. Ms. Campbell will continue to follow up with the SOS office to get further clarification.

Administrative Items

MOTION: *A motion to approve a Letter of Agreement with Sharon Murray for LUDR consultation work passed unanimously.*

MOTION: *A motion to approve the payroll warrant in the amount of \$7597.76 passed unanimously.*

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Carol Chamberlin

The Warren Selectboard


Luke Youmell, Chair

Bob Ackland


Devin Klein Corrigan


Andy Cunningham, Vice Chair


Camilla Behn

