

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
Monday November 27, 2023**



ATTENDANCE

Chairman Joe Trombley, Vice-Chairman Tom Gauthier; Selectmen Bob Jordan, John Cody and Pamela Tibbetts. Town Administrator Jake T. Roger; Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard.

ENTER INTO NON-PUBLIC SESSION, RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation

Motion by Chairman Trombley to enter into a non-public session in accordance with RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Bob Jordan, Pam Tibbetts, John Cody, Tom Gauthier, and Joe Trombley all voting aye.

RECONVENE

Chairman Trombley reconvened the public session at 7:00 PM.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

SEAL NON-PUBLIC MINUTES

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to seal the non-public minutes RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation of November 27, 2023. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

CONSENT CALENDAR

Minutes from the Selectmen November 13, 2023 meeting were submitted for approval.

The payroll manifest for the pay period ending November 23, 2023 in the amount of \$171,526.10 was submitted for approval.

Accounts Payable manifest for the period ending November 21, 2023 in the amount of \$1,094,430.26 (\$858,914.00 is for the Rockingham County Taxes and \$235,516.26 to the Town) was submitted for approval.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve the consent calendar as submitted. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

W/S BUDGET

Chairman of the Water and Sewer Department Tom Dwyer, Vice Chairman Marc Nickerson and Water and Sewer Commissioner Scott Pim came before the Board to review the 2024 Budget. Mr. Nickerson updated the Board on the trains at the sewer. They are completed and working well with an emergency set being stored. The sewer lagoons are still being pumped down for the winter. The West Water Extension project is completed. When the booster pump station is completed there will be 4-5 houses to connect. The budget was reviewed and explained with few questions.

Chairman Trombley would like the Organizational Chart reviewed by the Water and Sewer Commissioners.

TOWN REPORT

Prices from Kase Printing for the 2023 Annual Report were discussed. To purchase 500 copies the cost would be \$2,125.00 and to purchase 800 copies the cost would be the same as last year at \$3,498.00.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to approve ordering 500 copies of the 2023 Annual Report at \$2,125.00. Seconded by Selectman Tibbetts. Motion carried 5-0.

ADMINISTRATION

Purchase Order to Andron Awning to install new awnings over the Planning and Zoning Office door and the fire escape door in the amount of \$3,850.00 was submitted for approval.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to approve the purchase order to Andron Awning to install new awnings over the Planning and Zoning Office door and the fire escape door in the amount of \$3,850.00. Seconded by Selectman Gauthier. Motion carried 5-0.

REVENUE BUDGET

Finance Director Lisa Fogg reviewed the estimated 2024 Revenue Budget. The estimates are based on a combination of 2023 estimated and revised estimates. The estimates for 2024 include increases for the PILOT agreements, interest on late taxes, motor vehicle registrations, building permits and interest on investments. Included is the increase of rooms and meals taxes as that

will increase in 2024. The decrease in solid waste reflects in the amount that was originally added to the 2023 estimates and will be transferred to the new trust fund. The total estimated increase from 2023 is \$483,760.00 for the General Fund. Changes can be made before the tax rate in October 2024 as these numbers are estimates. The total General Fund Proposed Estimated Revenue Budget is \$3,466,730.00.

WARRANT ARTICLES

Chairman Trombley would like a Warrant Article description sheet created for the voters. Town Administrator Jake Roger will investigate what was passed out in the past and the legality of the informational sheet.

Selectmen Jordan and Cody informed the Board that a Warrant Article will be created to lease a Fire Truck. Selectman Cody would like a grant writer to fund two full time employees.

ARTICLE : 2024 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling _____ Dollars (\$ _____.00). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be _____ Dollars (\$ _____.00), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

ARTICLE : POLICE UNION CONTRACT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Epping and the New England Police Benevolent Association – Local #28, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year	Estimated Increases
2024	\$
2025	\$
2026	\$

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of _____ Dollars (\$ _____.00) for the current budget year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increases in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels under the prior agreement. The total estimated aggregate cost for the three (3) years is Dollars (\$ _____.00). Note: This agreement has an automatic renewal or “evergreen” clause. If approved, the terms of this agreement shall continue from year to year.

Chairman Trombley commented the committee will have the numbers for the Police Union Contract very soon.

ARTICLE : ACCRUED BENEFITS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Accrued Benefits Expendable Trust Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to approve the ACCRUED BENEFITS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND as suggested. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to continue the HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Trombley said this to be used to purchase the sidewalk plow.

ARTICLE : WATSON ACADEMY REPAIRS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Watson Academy Repairs Expendable Trust Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to approve the WATSON ACADEMY REPAIRS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Gauthier. Motion carried 5-0.

Chairman Trombley said this is needed for roof repairs.

ARTICLE : RECREATION FACILITIES EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Recreation Facilities Expendable Trust Fund.

Motion by Selectman Gauthier to fund the RECREATION FACILITIES EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : LANDFILL CLOSURE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to fund the LANDFILL CLOSURE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND with \$25,000.00 to be raised by taxation. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Government Buildings Expendable Trust Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to fund the GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND with \$40,000.00. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Gauthier. Motion carried 4-0. (Selectman Tibbetts momentarily left the meeting).

ARTICLE : CONSERVATION COMMISSION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Conservation Commission Expendable Trust Fund.

This article was not acted on. Chairman Trombley will confirm with the Chairman of the Conservation Commission if this is article is needed.

Article : TRANSFER STATION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Transfer Station Expendable Trust Fund.

Motion by Chairman Trombley to fund the TRANSFER STATION EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND with \$60,000.00. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. Seconded by Selectman Jordan. Motion carried 5-0.

Article : AMEND EPPING TELEVISION REVOLVING FUND

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Epping Television Revolving Fund, established pursuant to RSA 31:95-h by Article 16 of the 2008 Town Meeting, to require all revenues received from cable franchise fees to be deposited into said fund up to a maximum of \$50,000.00 per year, where no such maximum currently exists.

ETV Representative Glen Fredericks joined the conversation regarding this warrant article and the following article. He is against using ETV monies for a "Technology Fund" as that was not the original intent of the cable franchise fees. He is concerned the BOS will spend all the ETV money.

No action was taken at this time and will be revisited.

ARTICLE : TECHNOLOGY REVOLVING FUND

To see if the Town will vote to establish a revolving fund called the "Technology Fund" pursuant to RSA 31:95-h, IV, for the purposes of purchasing, operating, maintaining, and replacing infrastructure, technology, and equipment related to Town operations and properties. All revenues received from cable franchise fees in excess of \$50,000 will be deposited into the

fund. Money in the fund shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year and shall not be considered part of the Town's general fund or unreserved fund balance. The Town Treasurer shall have custody of all monies in the fund and shall pay out the same only upon order of the Board of Selectman, and no further approval is required by the legislative body to expend such funds. Such funds may be expended only for the purpose for which the fund was created.

This article is contingent upon the passage of Article X. If the Town Meeting votes "no" to Article X, this Article Y shall be null and void.

No action was taken and this article was deferred to a later time.

ARTICLE : TOWN HALL FIRE ALARM SYSTEM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) for the purchase and installation of a fire alarm system at the Town Hall.

This article was deferred as a formal quote is needed.

ARTICLE : TOWN HALL DIGITAL SIGN

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) for the purchase of a digital sign to be located at the Town Hall.

No action was taken and this article was deferred to a later time.

ARTICLE : PAVE SAFETY FACILITY PARKING LOT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) for the purpose of paving the safety facility parking lot.

No action was taken and this article was deferred to a later time.

ARTICLE : LEASE NEW HIGHWAY TRUCK

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a Seven (7) Year Lease/Purchase Agreement for _____ Dollars (\$.00) for the purpose of a New Highway Truck and to raise and appropriate the sum of _____ Dollars (\$.00) for the first year's lease payment. This lease agreement contains a non-appropriation clause.

No action was taken, this article was deferred to gather further information.

ARTICLE : ADDITIONAL FULL TIME FIREFIGHTER/EMT

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty-Two Thousand, Five Hundred, Seventy-Five Dollars (\$82,575.00) for the hiring of an additional Full-Time Firefighter2/EMT Employee including benefits for seven months and the required gear. Approval would call for an estimated cost for a full year of One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand, Four Hundred Seventy-Five Dollars (\$125,475.00) in fiscal year 2025.

No action was taken and this article was deferred to a later time.

Article : CONTINGENCY FUND

To see if the Town will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) to go into the fund. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse into the general fund.

No action was taken and this article was deferred to find the appropriate RSA.

Article : DISCONTINUE A PORTION OF CHURCH STREET

Working with DTC to develop.

ARTICLE : CHANGE RACETRACK BYLAWS

Meeting with the Dragway is scheduled soon.

Town Administrator Jake Roger

Town Administrator Jake Roger stated Star Speedway held a race on Saturday November 25th. This in in violation of Epping's Race Ordinance. Their race schedule ended October 31, 2023.

Motion by Selectman Jordan to fine Star Speedway \$100.00 per the town ordinance for holding a race on Saturday November 25th. Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 4-1-0. Selectman Gauthier voted nay.

Town Administrator Jake Roger announced the Primary will be held Tuesday, January 23, 2024. The school is in session and the O'Day Gym would be used instead of the Allen Gym for voting. Staff and students will use the Elementary School parking lot. Mr. Roger, Town Clerk Erika

Robinson and Moderator Adam Munguia will tour the voting space Wednesday. The majority of the Board would like to keep the voting space in the Allen Gym with no school in session.

Town Administrator Jake Roger asked the Board if they would like to have a Selectmen's meeting the day after Christmas on December 26th or come in Thursday December 21nd to sign for payroll.

INDIVIDUAL SELECTMEN REPORTS

Selectman Tom Gauthier

Selectman Gauthier mentioned the Transfer Station was opened last year December 31st (New Year's Eve). Selectman Cody has spoken to two of the employees who don't mind working on December 31st.

**Motion by Selectman Gauthier to have the Transfer Station stay open on December 31st.
Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.**

Selectman Pam Tibbetts

Selectman Tibbett's discussed Eversource shutting off power on Main Street tomorrow with no notice. This will hurt the small businesses downtown. They should have had more notice for scheduling purposes.

Selectman John Cody

No Report

Selectman Bob Jordan

Selectman Jordan explained the Town of Raymond needed a gurney for their ambulance. Epping has a spare gurney that is in storage and not being used. He would like to donate the gurney to the Town of Raymond.

**Motion by Selectman Jordan donating Epping's extra gurney to the Town of Raymond.
Seconded by Selectman Cody. Motion carried 5-0.**

Chairman Joe Trombley

Chairman Trombley would like to request a review of the organizational chart for the new engineer with the Water and Sewer Commission.

Chairman Trombley helped John Clark set 3 bricks at the library.

**Motion by Chairman Gauthier to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Selectman Jordan.
Motion carried 5-0.**

Meeting adjourned at 10:25 PM.

Respectfully Submitted:



Joyce Blanchard
Executive Secretary

Joe Trombley, Chairman

Tom Gauthier, Vice-Chairman

Bob Jordan, Selectman

John Cody, Selectmen

Pam Tibbetts, Selectman

Dated: December 11, 2023