



**SELECTMEN'S OFFICE  
TOWN OF GILMANTON**

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**APPROVED**

**Board of Selectmen Meeting**

**August 21, 2023 - Academy Building – 5:02 P.M.**

**CALL TO ORDER – ROLL CALL**

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Present:** Chairman Mark Warren, Vice-Chairman Vincent Baiocchetti, Selectmen Evan Collins, Town Administrator Heather Carpenter, Cathy Pounder – Finance, Candace Daigle – Cemetery Trustee, Bre Daigneault – Community Development Director, Police Chief Currier, Alex DeCoste – Transfer Station Foreman, Paul Perkins – Road Agent, Elise Smith – Acting Town Clerk/Tax Collector

**Public:** Patrick Hackley

**MEETING MINUTES APPROVAL**

1. **08-07-2023** – Public minutes – Transcription in progress and will be ready for the next meeting for approval.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

**2. Community Development –**

- Private Road Agreement, 410-049-005

**Motion:** On a motion by Selectman Collins and seconded by Chairman Warren it was voted to approve the private road agreement between Brandon and Dalina Patterson M/L 410-049-005 that the Planning Board approved on August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023. (3-0)

**NEW BUSINESS**

**3. Preliminary Budget Presentations (Smaller budget presentations presented first)**

- **4195 – Cemetery General Expenses** – In addition to a wage adjustment, they are asking for an \$845 raise to create two new line items and slightly raise a third. The purpose is to start budgeting for supplies that they buy for the cemeteries. They have always bought the supplies themselves out of pocket and part of their succession planning is to try to position the budget and Trustee Board for new Trustees coming in. There is a slight increase in the office supplies and to create a maintenance cost and supplies. This would be for articles such as D-2 for stone cleaning. This year they had a workshop for gravestone cleaning, and they have a small group of dedicated volunteers who have been out cleaning grave stones. The Dues and Training line for NHMA training is once a year and Cemetery Association training which is twice a year.
- **4152 – Assessing** – Some of the items are still estimates and they don't get their expenses until October. So those are listed at a 3 or 5 percent increase.
- **4191 – Planning Board** – No significant changes. This has about a \$1,000 decrease overall. Software estimates will not be in until October. Warrant Articles for Planning Board are typically Zoning Amendments. The Board has not started working on those yet, but they have no monetary effect.
- **4192 – Zoning** – There are no significant changes here and it decreased about \$500 and software estimates will not be in until October.
- **4193 – Historic District Commission** – There are very few changes here. This is roughly the same as last year with about a \$10 difference.
- **4240 – Building Inspection** – There were no significant changes here. Software support estimates will be received in October. There was not a lot spent on Books and Periodicals and there is not anticipation of spending additional, but she would like to keep this at the \$1,000 in case updates are needed. TA Carpenter stated that the only update to the wages portion is that

she would like the Selectboard to consider changing this position or add to it a Facility Coordinator Position, either adding it under the Building Inspector or adding it through the Highway Department.

- **4311 – Conservation Commission** – Members from the Conservation Commission will be coming in to discuss the warrant article. The operating budget decreased slightly and there were no significant changes from last year.
- **4210 – Police** – He has a date for retirement for the Executive Assistant. The hope is to hire her replacement while she is still employed so she can train that position. The next change is Health and Dental Insurance. The current Executive Assistant takes the buy-back. He is figuring the replacement as a family plan in case they opt to do that and he is also doing this for the open office position. One of the officers is retiring from the military and will be taking the Town insurance once that takes place. The Prosecutors line is increasing due to all their cases going to the County Attorney. Telephone is increasing, he would like to add the Verizon air cards to the computers and cruisers that will allow them to have additional no radio communication. Dispatch is working on a grant for about \$600,000 which includes data sharing. Equipment line will include the body cameras and not be a separate line and depending on the grant it will be about \$15,000 if they do not get the grant or about \$7,500 if they do get the grant. Cathy Pounder stated this would be under their equipment line, not on its own separate line item. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti asked what the percentage was for the storage for the contract. Selectman Collins asked about the increase from \$68,000 to \$87,000, and if this was to hire someone and have them train with the current Executive Assistant until she retires and if this would drop back down the following year. Chief Currier stated yes, the new hire would fill the role of the current position, but he is unable to train that role. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti asked if they intended to hire the new employee at the same rate that the current Executive Secretary's salary. He stated most likely, because he is not sure who he will be able to have fill the role. He is looking at a 5-month training period. Chairman Warren asked about line 4210-210, Health Insurance. They budgeted for \$64,000, but only \$19,000 has been expensed, and wondered if that is because of when insurance is due. TA Carpenter stated that the actual budget will differ, because the Fund Account Balancing is slower. Cathy Pounder stated that the department is down one officer as well, so that will make a difference. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti asked if the new hire for the Executive Assistant role was going to be starting at \$70,325, because this is the amount that will be left after the current employee retires. \$68,600 was budgeted the previous year. Chief Currier clarified that they thought she was retiring this year in 2023, so they budgeted for that. Selectman Collins stated that the \$68,600 included the transition time. Chief Currier stated that they have been actively recruiting for the part time officer position. The annual salary range for the Executive Assistant position is \$55,800 to \$73,900 for a 40-hour position. He is requesting a Warrant Article for purchase of a new cruiser. \$75,000 has been requested to fully equip a new one. He does believe the cost will decrease but was told to add a 5-8% increase for the purchase so this is a rough number. Currently there was 6 cruisers and the department has 4 full-time officers. They keep the oldest cruiser as a spare/detail vehicle with the average mileage being about 120,000.
- **4220 – Fire** – The biggest change he is requesting is to tie up the project they began last year they began a 24-hour rotation with their current staff and per diem employees. This year, they are proposing an additional employee so that it will allow for two employees to be on for a 24-hour rotation at night. Currently, there is only one and it is supplemented with the call personnel with stipend or a per diem person. He feels that the community is at the point where two certified trained responders at all times. Currently, the schedule is all over the place because they are down two employees. He would like to provide an equitable rotational

95 schedule which is more favorable for retention of the employees. There was an addition of a  
96 salary line, 4220-119 with a starting salary of \$21.60 which equate to about \$54,000 per year.  
97 This does not include benefits. The proposed hire date would be after town meeting. He noted  
98 that the hiring climate is still difficult and they still have an opening they are trying to fill. If the  
99 Selectboard decides to forego and not support the additional employee they would increase the  
100 4220-120 line so they could add additional per diem coverage. They have found it difficult to  
101 get per diem employees as well but week to week the staff is working to fill the open shifts. He  
102 stated that in order to make a 24-hour rotation work there really needs to be 8 employees. He  
103 would like to have a team with Advanced certifications. Their biggest activity is emergency  
104 medical response. For the Warrant Article request he would like to start adding to the Capital  
105 Reserve Fund and try to raise an appropriate \$10,000 for a breathing apparatus. The units are  
106 due for replacement in 2033, and although its years away, it's a large project with a large cost.  
107 He is also looking at depositing \$10,000 into their reserve account for the fire radio  
108 replacement. This would allow them to have funds set aside to do radio repair or radio  
109 purchase. He would also like to raise and appropriate approximately \$125,000 to \$130,000 for a  
110 replacement of Forestry 1 with a pick up and fire pump skid steer. This would replace the  
111 current unit. This would allow them to buy on State bid a pick-up truck, chassis, and replace it  
112 with a fire pump skid unit. The pick-up truck for the unit does a lot of work and the mileage is  
113 around 70,000 to 80,000 currently. Chairman Warren commended Chief Hempel on the  
114 Developmental program and getting some of the younger generation in for the experience.  
115 Chief stated that they began their student intern program today, spending a week in  
116 orientation, and begin schooling next week, and they will be here for two years. They all come  
117 with various levels of certification and will be able to continue to build on those. They are not  
118 utilized as staff; they are too new and that kind of responsibility is not placed on them and they  
119 are solely there to learn.

- 120 • **4324 – Transfer Station** – He is looking to hire a full-time employee to assist with the workload  
121 once the facility is fully operational. This will be at \$45,760 which would be \$22/hour and this  
122 rate does not include benefits. They are working on getting a third compactor set up for recycle  
123 and the additional increases are to accommodate the costs of that. There is a \$1,500 electrical  
124 increase expected. There is an expected \$30,000 increase for recycling expenses for hauling.  
125 Line 4324-690, \$1,500 was requested under miscellaneous is to cover items that are not listed.  
126 Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated that this needs to be adjusted, because there are no  
127 miscellaneous items. TA Carpenter stated that this was a conversation during last budget  
128 season. Previously Transfer Station has neglected lines and in Highway's budget, it is explained  
129 in detail where items can go, but in Transfer Station it does not. TA Carpenter stated that a  
130 storage shed was purchased to store items as they are brought in, there was no line initially for  
131 the purchase of this shed. And this was a line that the Transfer Station did not have previously  
132 and because they are unsure where all the supplies are going or what they should fall under, the  
133 line they currently have is being utilized. Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated that another line  
134 should be chosen and the miscellaneous line should be eliminated and items placed under tools  
135 and supplies. TA Carpenter stated that the Transfer Station budget has historically been  
136 underbudgeted for so they utilized the line that was there. Vice Chairman Baiocchi asked if  
137 the Transfer Station intended to get uniforms. The Transfer Station foreman stated that they do  
138 intend to have uniforms. Boots range between \$200 to \$300 a year. He has looked into a  
139 company from Alton to provide three Class II shirts, three pairs of pants so that the employees  
140 are not in civilian clothing. Further discussed was a service to clean the clothing and return  
141 clean ones to the employees. This would fall under the uniforms line 4324-680. They are  
142 adding \$10,000 to facility maintenance to bring it up to code and for the necessary repairs, line

4324-430. Currently, there is a roof leak and that has been put through Primex. TA Carpenter stated that depending on the issues, this may not be covered. She does not believe that it is in the budget this year to cover any large-scale project. Currently, the bills from Clean Harbors are being dealt with and very different from the estimate. There are some structural issues with the building and support beams needing replacement. They are requesting an increase of \$1,000 for the diesel fuel fund due to inflation. Discussed was current usage and future usage which fluctuates based on market pricing. Vice Chairman Baiocchi questioned the mileage line increase and TA Carpenter stated this is because there will need to be additional trainings taken and previous employees did not take additional trainings and use the mileage. If employees are taking their own vehicles to pick up supplies, do trainings, or traveling for work with your own vehicle they should be using the mileage line. There is an increase of \$1,500 for compactor maintenance and this is due to the third compactor addition. To install the new compactor was approximately \$10,000. The expense for the lean to is going to be taken out of the building fund for this year. There is an increase of \$2,000 to the skid steer maintenance to keep up with the aging machinery. The baler is not currently being used and the intention is hold off on this to keep the building clean and they still need to get a storage for the bales before they start making any new bales. TA Carpenter stated that she wanted to make sure that the Selectboard was on the same page where they didn't want to use the baler right now and wanted to get the facility up to standards first. Eventually they would like to at least take and bale cardboard if they are going to continue with single stream. There is value in baling cardboard, and it's the cleanest item you can bale, mixed paper is not. \$1,000 was added to tire recycling, because the concern is right now, residents are stock piling tires and there will be an influx when the Transfer Station is opened to recycling them again. The Transfer Station Foreman will be looking into and creating a new price list. TA Carpenter stated for clarification that all fees get approved by the Selectboard and as a Public Hearing. He intends to add to building repairs and the building funds. Vice Chairman Baiocchi asked if the Foreman was at the Transfer Station fulltime, he replied that he was not, due to assisting with inclement weather and has been at the Highway Department on days that the Transfer Station is not open and working on some of the problems they've been having. TA Carpenter stated that the inclement weather was unexpected and the number of roads that had to be fixed was unexpected. The recommendation was that the Foreman would be with the Highway in inclement weather. The Transfer Station Foreman received his new computer at the facility with within two days he created his budget and has prioritized the Transfer Station. He is requesting \$75,000 to \$150,000 in a warrant article for a used roll off dumpster container truck. It is what most other towns use to move their containers around. He believes this would minimize some of the early closures. Currently, there is no way to move their filled containers and replace with an empty container. This should also lower the disposal hauling fee by using the Town's own equipment. Eventually he would like to move towards transporting the containers. Currently the Town is under contract with Waste Management for hauling and it's something that can be reviewed in the future. He feels that making these purchases over time will be in the best interest of the facility and help it to run properly and this includes the maintenance of the truck as well. Selectman Collins discussed putting money away in CIP yearly for these large purchases. Vice Chairman Baiocchi asked what the Foreman's position was if they put a halt on commercial hauling. The Foreman stated that there have been issues with scheduling with Waste Management and they request that hauls are scheduled by a certain timeframe and our facility is open for several hours after that, then residents come in last minute and unload a trailer. This may have been a container that was not scheduled because at the time it was reported, it was not filled yet. He believes that putting a halt on commercial hauling would be a good idea.

- 191 • **4311 – Highway Administrative** – There is an increase on the overtime line because the wages  
192 have increased. And also fuel prices have increased. The Road Agent was unsure about the  
193 insurance increases at this time.
- 194 • **4312 – Highway and Streets** – Sand and salt are increasing. He also increased the paving  
195 materials so they can get more paving completed. Chairman Warren addressed information he  
196 received from the residents regarding the plan to pave Meetinghouse Rd. The Road Agent  
197 stated they have stages and they need to get gravel down on the side of the road. He stated  
198 that he needed to get the estimate together. Chairman Warren asked if this was going to be  
199 part of CIP or if it was going to be a one-time cost for the budget. The Road Agent stated that it  
200 would come out of the Road Betterment Grant so he isn't putting a burden on the Town.  
201 Chairman Warren asked about the stages, now that there is better drainage, the next stage is  
202 putting gravel down, and then potentially paving and whether this would be done in yearly  
203 stages. The Road Agent confirmed, yes, gravel one year, and paving the next.
- 204 • **4319 – Road Betterment** – The Road Agent marked the grant down with the previous years'  
205 rates because he does not have the new numbers yet, but he does believe this is increasing. The  
206 Town portion of Road Betterment was increased from \$120,000 to \$220,000 to be able to get  
207 more projects completed. Chairman Warren asked if a budget was being created to complete  
208 specific projects like North Rd., graveling Sargent Rd., etc. The Road Agent stated that he had to  
209 do his measurements for the graveling. The Selectboard asked about the ditching and with all  
210 the heavy rains inquired about how well it was kept up with. The Road Agent stated that  
211 everything held up well, but there is one area they are going to be working on where excessive  
212 water had come from a field. Chairman Warren stated that he was notified about an excessive  
213 amount of silt that is running into Flax Meetinghouse Pond and because it's a historic site there  
214 are some concerns. The Selectboard asked about budgeting for culverts and whether the  
215 budget request for culverts is enough. The Road Agent stated that he has more coming and he  
216 has more to do on Stage Rd. These are going to be contracted out but he has had Travis  
217 Mitchell and Alex DeCoste get certified in culverts this week. TA Carpenter asked the  
218 Selectboard if it was their consideration if they know where the unassigned fund balance is to  
219 possibly use road projects through the unassigned fund balance instead of hitting the budget.  
220 This would make planning important because if the intention is not to bond and the unassigned  
221 fund balance is at a healthy amount and it is in range with the policy then the consideration  
222 should be using that for a large-scale road project that could potentially cover more roads.
- 223 • **4611 – Conservation and Development** – Patrick Hackley from the Gilmanton Conservation  
224 Commission had submitted their budget. They were able to decrease this slightly because of all  
225 the work that the Trails Sub-committee has been doing. They provided a Warrant Article for the  
226 Forest Maintenance Fund. The funds that would come from a timber harvest on town land  
227 would be encumbered and go into a Town Forest Maintenance Fund. These funds would be  
228 rolled over year to year, and accumulate in that account for general maintenance of the Town's  
229 town forests. He is researching if the fund can be used for any other town Conservation  
230 properties, but he is unsure if it could be utilized for that yet. If they are able to use it for any  
231 land that is designated Town Forest, the funds can be used for boundary line maintenance,  
232 surveying, trails, hiring a forestry consultant for a timber inventory, which can cost  
233 approximately \$25 an acre for a forest management plan, and about \$30 to \$40 an acre for a  
234 timber inventory. This requires skilled foresters to measure the trees, volume, and value. They  
235 received a grant for the Elizabeth Smithers Town Forest and the Walsh Town Forest between  
236 Howard Road and Middle Route. That is over 300 acres so they will have a management plan on  
237 that. They do realize that it does not go to the general fund and this is a discussion they will  
238 need to have, because it will not be available to reduce the Town tax base. They were recently

called about a dry well on the Thompson Town Forest, a resident found it, but has not been able to relocate it. But this may be a historic stone line well and if they need to pay a contractor to go in and cap it this fund could assist with paying for that. The Forest Maintenance Fund is a self-maintained fund. When a forester goes in with a representative from the Conservation Commission, they discuss what options are available to harvest. If there are any forest health issues they identify them and marked to cut. The Conservation Commission would ensure that it was not a heavy cut and be managed. Chairman Warren stated that last year they discussed a cap, and anything above the cap but where could the funds go if there was a cap. The Selectboard could modify the cap and say all town forest timber harvests would go the Forest Maintenance Fund up to \$20,000 for example, and the remainder could go into the general fund. Patrick Hackley stated they would have to check the RSA, but it would be similar to how they split the bill on the Land Use Change Tax. He stated that he can bring that suggestion to the Conservation Commission. Patrick Hackley presented the Selectboard with a sample warrant article from the template provided to him from the Community Development Director. He also stated that he would be willing to work with the Town Administrator to put something together for the Voter's Guide to give the residents more information. Chairman Warren asked who are the agents to expend for the Forest Maintenance Fund, is the legislative body, the Selectboard, the voter, or is it the Department itself. TA Carpenter stated that for example, the Ambulance Fund and the Cruiser Fund can be spent out annually without going to warrant. The reason that it is done through warrant is because there is not enough to buy it as a whole. She does believe it would be the Selectboard, but she will check into this, and she does believe that it is written in the RSA. Patrick Hackley stated that they could put that into the warrant article and that if the Selectboard wanted to suggest a cap through the Town Administrator, he would relay it back to the Conservation Commission. He is willing to be conservative and put the cap at \$25,000, he feels this is very reasonable. He also believes there should be some checks and balance and that they can present their request to the Selectboard and Vice Chairman Baiocchetti suggested that anything over \$5,000 can come before the Selectboard. Anything more than \$2,000, but less than \$5,000 can go to the Town Administrator.

□ **Action Item** – TA Carpenter will look into who the agents to expend would be for the Conservation Commission Forest Maintenance Fund. She will look at the RSA to see if there is anything specific to the Conservation Commission being agents, versus the Selectboard.

- **4140 – Town Clerk/Tax Collector** – There is an increase in training to include the second year Municipal Clerk Institute and joint certification for the most recent laws and rules. The training line is 4140-270. TA Carpenter asked for Elise Smith to explain her goal and level of certification. Elise Smith stated her goal is to be a Certified Municipal Clerk by 2025 and a NH Joint Certified Town Clerk/Tax Collector by 2027. This will make her Regionally Certified and State Certified. The only other increases to the budget were anticipated increases, contracts, software support, the scanning will remain the same at \$15,000, and postage will be increasing. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti asked if she had posted for the Deputy position yet and she stated she has not, because she is not the Clerk.

**Elections – Town Clerk/Tax Collector** – Elections are incurring a little more this year. There are four elections anticipated for next year. The majority of the increases is paying for the ballot clerks, supervisors of the checklist, which that open position has been posted. TA Carpenter asked if there was a budget for a special election, Elise stated no. She will get more election information as the information is presented from the Secretary of State.

Chairman Warren asked an off-topic question from a resident in regards to giving a Transfer Station sticker with a car registration. Elise stated she currently is asking anyone coming to the window for a car registration if they

287 would like to renew their dump sticker as well. The policy has been two stickers per household, but some  
288 residents have more vehicles registered to their name so she could potentially end up giving out more stickers  
289 than a household is allowed. Any additional stickers over two, costs \$1 per sticker. TA Carpenter there have  
290 been requests to do things through tax bills. She asked what is the law between adding things through a tax bill  
291 and what they're suggesting. Elise Smith stated she was not sure, and TA Carpenter had received conflicting  
292 information from the previous Town Clerk/Tax Collector. Chairman Warren stated that it can be a point of  
293 conversation at a later date. TA Carpenter stated that previously the dump stickers were held at the Transfer  
294 Station and were supposed to be handed out and tracked, but that information never came back to the Town  
295 Hall. So, this was brought back to the Town Clerk/Tax Collector for tracking.  
296 TA Carpenter asked the Selectboard if they wanted to hold the discussion regarding the Town Clerk/Tax  
297 Collector appointment and the other candidates who had applied. She is concerned that they were not invited  
298 for an interview, or let them know that the position would be interviewed publicly. Discussed was whether the  
299 position should be interviewed publicly and the law supporting it. TA Carpenter stated that when the ad was  
300 put out, it was not stated that the interviews would be done publicly. Chairman Warren asked if the Selectboard  
301 preferred to have a special meeting for the appointment, and Vice Chairman Baiocchi and Selectman Collins  
302 agreed they should. The Selectboard discussed and decided on 8/31 at 4:00 p.m. to hold the interviews for the  
303 Town Clerk/Tax Collector position and all candidates who have applied will be invited.  
304 Elise Smith stated that if she was not being appointed this evening, she needed clarification on how she is  
305 proceeding moving forward. She has plans to have coverage while she is away at training and on vacation, as  
306 well as assist in training the Allenstown Deputy Clerk in the coming weeks. She is looking to have those  
307 decisions supported and whether she is all set to move forward with the plan for the rest of the year. The  
308 Allenstown Deputy Clerk would not be paid through Gilmanton, she would be paid through Allenstown.  
309 Discussed was the proposed training schedule. Vice Chairman Baiocchi does not feel comfortable with  
310 someone training the Allenstown Deputy Clerk while Elise is not present. TA Carpenter asked what the required  
311 coverage was for the State. Elise stated that there is not, but this is her trying to make sure that the office is not  
312 closed another week through the rest of the year. Both Elise and Bonnie Haubrich from Grafton would be  
313 training Brittany from Allenstown. The Selectboard is concerned that they are paying for Bonnie to cover for  
314 Elise while she is gone, but also paying her to train someone from another town. Selectman Collins asked if  
315 there is a way for Bonnie to cover for her, but not train. Elise stated yes, but it's a missed opportunity and they  
316 are doing her a favor by having the additional coverage for the office. TA Carpenter stated that the Town  
317 Clerk/Tax Collector community tends to be a mutual aid in itself and assist between towns. Elise stated that by  
318 October she would plant to have a Deputy and be fully functioning. Brittany would be hands on shadowing and  
319 completed her training. Further discussed was the training and coverage for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector's  
320 Office. Elise stated that the Deputy position will be posted before October 16<sup>th</sup>. Vice Chairman Baiocchi  
321 stated that if she gets the Town Clerk/Tax Collector position, she will post the deputy position the next day.  
322 Elise stated that yes, she could do that, but has not been given a lot of direction from the Selectboard on what  
323 they expected. She is still trying to continue the education that is required to be an asset to the community.  
324 Further discussed was the coverage and training while Elise is on vacation and hiring for the Deputy position.  
325 **Motion:** On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to agree that while  
326 Elise Smith is gone and Bonnie Haubrich is assisting from Grafton as the Town Clerk/Tax Collector that there is a  
327 trainee from Allenstown, Brittany being trained by Bonnie and the Town of Gilmanton is in agreement with this.  
328 (2-0)

329  
330 Recess – Meeting restarted at 8:08 p.m.

331  
332 **NEW BUSINESS – Preliminary Budgets Cont.**

- 333 3. **4130 – Executive Office –** The Executive Office does not have a lot of increases. Wages have not been  
334 adjusted this year. Part of the discussion for the overall increase was to address the insurance and



potentially cover 100 percent for all full-time employees. This makes Gilmanton more of a destination employer and not a stepping stone. Along with that is updating the Personnel Policy and increasing the buy-outs to a three-tiered system, single, 2-person, and family. This would affect every single department which is why there were no discussions of wage increases. The Town is not asking for COLA or merit if the Selectboard wanted to move forward with insurance. \$105,406.30 would be added to what is already paid for insurance. TA Carpenter noted, that there was a difference with the addition of PD insurance family plans requested, but the numbers will need to be adjusted to be accurate. The 4 percent COLA presented for discussion purposes which includes all Town employees. There is a large jump in the COLA number because the Police Department had raises this year, Fire Department had an additional employee, and Highway hired at a higher rate than was originally budgeted for. The default budget last year was \$1,994,046. With the 4 percent COLA, it would be \$2,238,307. Chairman Warren noted that the full-time employees are the hardest ones to replace. TA Carpenter stated that in two years, there has been a 10 percent increase to help deal with inflation. The Town is working on a wage scale this year, but if the Selectboard moves forward with covering 100 percent of the insurance it will be very difficult to ever change it, but this is something that can be considered with employment offers. The only other increases noted are for the Administrative Assistant and the Community Development Assistant, which will not be in the default budget. These increases are offset by the Clerk's position that has not been filled. BlueLion is also covered out of this. TA Carpenter asked if the Selectboard was still interested in hiring for the Facility Coordinator Position. Chairman Warren's position is to not move forward with this position this year due to all the changes that have occurred. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated that the DPW salary and the Town Administrator's salary needs to be addressed.

- **4153 – Legal** - Budget is the same.
- **4196 – Insurance** – This is not received until October/November

Vice Chairman Baiocchetti questioned the increase for the Executive Office Budget and if it was really only increasing \$10,000. TA Carpenter clarified that between the Administrative Assistant and the Community Development Assistant the increases this year were less than \$5,000, and this came out of the Clerk's line. Professional Services was increased to \$7,000. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti asked what the Town Administrator's grade and step were on the wage scale. TA Carpenter stated she is on Grade 22 and Step 3 at \$42.82. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated that the wage scale should be listed at hourly and annual. Chairman Warren recommended changing the TA's salary. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti recommended \$44.12 hourly, annually \$91,728. TA Carpenter asked what the purpose of the increase was. Chairman Warren stated that they are leveling out all the Department Heads. TA Carpenter asked what the threshold the Selectboard is looking for the DPW Director. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated that he is not sure they can give the TA a raise yet, because they need to look at what the range is going to be for the DPW Director. TA Carpenter stated using the current wage scale, she wants to make sure that they are on track for the DPW and increasing the TA and would like the numbers to be accurate. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated that they are not giving the TA a raise just to increase the salary, that she has earned it. The market rate presented shows that TA Carpenter is one of the lower paid Town Administrators in the State. Her role has taken on significantly more assuming the Transfer Station issues. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated that the DPW Director should relieve that extra work from her and allow her to be in the Executive office and not having to deal with other departments and having to do their work for them. TA Carpenter stated that at any given time something could happen and the assumption is the TA will handle it. She noted that the Highway Department didn't ask for more employees, so who will be dealing with all the additional and there isn't a budget for the DPW Director. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated they are going to fix the budget and add stuff to it.

TA Carpenter asked what she can present for the next budget that affects this conversation. Vice Chairman Baiocchetti stated he will look at what the Departments have sent him. He asked if they Selectboard was going to entertain the Warrant Article for elected officials that states they will receive



no increases or benefits unless it's approved by the legislative body. Chairman Warren stated that he thought they were going to go with something if they chose to opt in and follow policy then they could receive full benefits. Vice Chairman Baiocchi does not believe they can do this and that you cannot override State law and other than offering insurance and retirement, elected officials do not receive vacation or holiday pay, and they do not get sick time. Elected officials are Selectmen, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Road Agent, Treasurer, Moderator, and Supervisors of the Checklist. The only two that are at a full-time capacity are the Road Agent, which that position is transitioning to a DPW, and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector. TA Carpenter stated that the Town Clerk requirement is only 2 hours a month, but the Tax Collector portion does not have to be elected. The separation of the two positions would have to be in a warrant article to make the change in March of 2024. TA Carpenter asked for clarification from the Selectboard on whether they wanted no benefits offered to elected officials unless the elected official is willing to follow Town policy. The amount that the Town has for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector in the operation budget is because the expectation was for 40 hours. The warrant article will need to detail the number of hours to be worked. Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated that if the Town Clerk/ Tax Collector works 40 hours or more, then they can be eligible for insurance and retirement and would need to be logged on the time card.

The only other real increase was Household Hazardous Waste which has increased by 40 percent, was Government Buildings. At this time, heating oil has not been locked in. Propane has been set at \$1.90, which is good. Maintenance there is a regular increase that happens every year. This was put in at \$4,000 compared to last years \$3,600. She is asking for a significant amount for painting through a warrant article. This includes interior and exterior, neither has been done in a long time. With the water damage All-Brite took the rubberized molding on the bottom level which will also need to be replaced. It will be approximately \$150,000 for the painting. Discussed was the need for a building fund. The other was a warrant article request was for air conditioning in the amount of \$75,000 for the Academy Building auditorium. This year they were able to finalize the Emergency Operating Plan which lists the Academy Building as a secondary cooling station. In order to be able to put in for grants the Academy Building needed to be added to the Emergency Operating Plan. Chairman Warren would like to hold off on adding the air conditioning to the budget if there is funding available through a grant first. Selectman Collins agrees. TA Carpenter also created some language for the ETF for the water bodies in Gilmanton. She was unsure if all bodies of water needed to be listed. Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated that they should be listed. Chairman Warren asked if the bodies of water should be listed or whether they wanted a vetting body such as the Conservation Commission. TA Carpenter stated that at the last meeting, the Selectboard discussed where they wanted the information coming from. They had stated they wanted it coming from the Selectmen's Office and her concern was the lack of staffing, and even if Conservation takes it on, it will still come from the Selectmen's Office. Chairman Warren stated that the Conservation Commission can present to the Board and TA Carpenter agreed that is how the process should go. Chairman Warren stated that he doesn't think they should be taking on the task of managing everyone's invasive species.

Chairman Warren discussed capital items and was concerned that the Police Department driveway is going to deteriorate without a topcoat on it. TA Carpenter stated that the whole driveway has to be redone due to drainage issues and the quote then was just under \$200,000 and that was from 2 years ago. TA Carpenter referenced the Facility Coordinator position and the need for building funds, and staffing funds. The roofs have been underfunded and getting back on track with CIP is important to look at everything and see what needs to be funded. The Police Chief is not putting anything into his driveway and the Town has known about this for two years. TA Carpenter would like them to consider the current CIP that they do not discuss regarding roofs, driveways, septic, infrastructure. Chairman Warren asked if the Planning Board will be making a recommendation to them. TA Carpenter station

that the Community Development Director stated that they are working on Zoning but that has no monetary effect.

Vice Chairman Baiocchi asked if the Public Hearing could be changed to the day that they do the Town Clerk/Tax Collector interviews.

**Board Consensus:** Change Public Hearing from September 6<sup>th</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup>.

- ☐ **Action Item:** TA Carpenter to add all Town of Gilmanton water bodies to the warrant article for ETF for invasive species/milfoil funding. TA Carpenter will do more research and rework the warrant article.

TA Carpenter stated there were not a lot of changes and the increases will really only be wages and insurance. They will get the numbers based on the changes that were presented. Chairman Warren addressed the Board and asked if they are all on board with looking at 100 percent Town paid insurance. The Selectboard agreed.

Vice Chairman Baiocchi asked if they Selectboard wanted to discuss the DPW Director position. Chairman Warren stated that he believes this is the right direction they need to move, but he had concerns around the timing. There is an individual in the position that is very close to 30 years of service and he would like to see them finish out their time and then make a transition. Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated they have an extra position and he's a public official and he could help to transition the Road Agent to DPW Director if he doesn't get the position. Selectman Collins stated he would like to be able to have that discussion with him. Chairman Warren stated they will have to start looking to fill that position by January or February, but they should start looking before the holidays. They will have a professional board of DPW Directors to make the final recommendations to the Selectboard. They can interview the recommended individuals. TA Carpenter stated that when transitions occur they need to consider what this will look like for all the departments that currently would fall under DPW. Vice Chairman Baiocchi suggested doing a meeting with the employees for Highway, Park, Transfer Station, and get an idea of what they need, because the Selectboard doesn't know. Chairman Warren agreed that it was important to hear from the employees, the residents, and finding out what the services they are feeling they need. Further discussed was hiring for the DPW Director and how to navigate the process of doing that. Vice Chairman Baiocchi stated that they should do this before Veteran's Day.

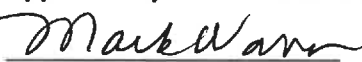
**Motion:** On a motion by Chairman Warren and seconded by Selectman Collins it was voted to adjourn.

**Adjourned 9:20 p.m.**

Respectfully Submitted,

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Amanda Davis, Administrative Assistant

**Approved by the Board of Selectmen**







Chairman Mark E. Warren

Vice-Chair Vincent A. Baiocchi

Selectmen Evan Collins