



**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE  
SELECTBOARD**

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*Minutes  
Selectboard  
Tuesday, January 25, 2022*

Selectboard members present: Drew Kellner, Eddie Arnold, Brendan Denehy, Dana Ketchen, and Steve Russo along with Town Administrator Tad Putney. Finance Committee members present: Cindy LaCroix, Adam Goff and Brian Rater (by phone). Also attending Peter Webb.

6:55pm - **Drew** reconvened the meeting from Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup> with the Pledge of Allegiance and reviewed the rules for hybrid meetings.

**Timing Conflict: Deliberative Session and Selectboard Bond Hearing**

The Board discussed a resolution to the conflict of the Brookline School District's Deliberative Session and Selectboard's Bond Hearing both being scheduled for February 7<sup>th</sup>. Once the conflict was discovered, the bond hearing was moved to Monday, February 14<sup>th</sup> at 7:00pm. The Selectboard also decided to hold a brief meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup>, and start at 6:00pm, to take care of routine business.

**Sign Warrants for Payment**

***Eddie moved, seconded by Brendan, to approve Public Works Project Warrant #11 in the amount of \$142,619.82; Voted Yes 5-0.***

7:00pm - **Drew** reopened the Budget Hearing from Monday, January 24<sup>th</sup>.

**Executive – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$264,575**

4.5% increase in "Office Salaries" and \$6,000 added as bonuses for two employees impacted by the pending transitions of the town planner and town administrator positions.

**Election & Registration – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$10,785**

Increase due to three elections this year as opposed to one last year. Added \$2,800 for reimbursable COVID-19 PPE and tent, if needed.

**Fire Department – Chief Corey – Proposed 2022 budget: \$525,814**

**Chief Corey** said the budget has decreased about \$63,000 from last year and he provided details on changes in several line items from the prior year.

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**Library – Trustee Ed Cook – Proposed 2022 budget: \$320,568**

**Drew** said the “Library Furniture Equipment” budget line had an appropriation of \$600 for 2021 and the library spent \$50,764. He asked for an explanation. **Ed** said he didn’t have numbers in front of him as he was just asked to come to the hearing today. He said there was a need for some equipment and the 2021 salary money was not being spent, so the Board of Trustees voted at their December meeting to move funds over and do the upgrade of the equipment without going over what was appropriated. **Drew** said he understands the trustees have an amount appropriated which they can spend, but he has an issue when they say they are going to spend \$600 and actually spend \$50,000. He said he feels that is a level of increase that needed to be reviewed. He said this is a significant overspend for that size line item and erodes the trust of fiduciary responsibility. **Drew** asked what equipment was purchased. **Ed** said the vote was not unanimous, but the Trustees voted to replace shelving in a significant portion of the upstairs of the library for safety reasons. **Dana** said that money should have been returned to the town and this erodes the trust of the Board. **Dana** said this budget has been a disaster since the beginning of the budget reviews; we had to come back a second time, and one of the Finance Committee members volunteered to meet with the Trustees to help hammer out some things. She said it is extremely difficult to vote in favor of this budget under these circumstances. **Eddie** said when the town passes the budget, the library’s money is theirs to do what they see fit with, but it’s based off of a budget that the residents and taxpayers see and ultimately vote “yes” or “no” on. He said these actions erode the trust in those elected officials. He said it’s troubling, especially after the discussions we had in October regarding the budget. **Tad** asked if the second full-time library position has been filled. **Ed Cook** said not yet and it could be months before it is. **Eddie** said the Library Board of Trustees should review our comments from this meeting. **Drew** said “Communications” (cable and phone) had an appropriation of \$3,120 for 2021 and, through August, \$2,400 had been spent, but actual spending for the full year was \$7,800 for that line item. **Ed Cook** said he does not have the information in front of him, but believes that was for redesigning the website, so we shifted some funds there. **Drew** said “Office Supplies” had an appropriation of \$3,800 for 2021 and, through August, \$2,570 had been spent, but actual spending for the full year was just under \$6,000 for that line item. **Drew** said between “Office Supplies”, “Communications”, and “Library Furniture Equipment”, it looks like a giant shopping spree took place over the last three months. **Steve** said we should talk to someone from the library who knows why these changes were made before acting on anything. **Dana moved, seconded by Drew, to reduce the proposed 2022 Library budget to \$287,445, an increase of 3% over last year’s appropriation.** **Drew** said the amount of money in the Library Trust Fund at the end of 2020, according to the town report, was \$227,000. **Drew** asked **Ed Cook** what the parameters are for spending the trust fund money. **Ed** said he didn’t know exactly, but he thinks the last \$50,000 donated was for the library building and not the running of the library. **Dana** said we can reduce this budget now and it can be changed at town meeting in March, if the library can give us answers to our questions. **Eddie moved to amend Dana’s motion and add “upon further review of spending records, we may reconsider the Library’s 2022 operating budget at town meeting in March”, Drew approved the amendment; Voted Yes 3-2, Brendan and Steve Voted No.** Town Moderator **Peter**

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**Webb** said the conduct here regarding the spending is a breach of the public's trust. He said this is a process where we get to hear what is going to be spent and we get to decide if it makes sense and this is an end around, which says to him there is a severe cultural problem.

**Health Agencies – Angie Dacey – Proposed 2022 budget: \$25,800**

**Tad** introduced **Angie** to the Board and Finance Committee members. He said the increases are largely due to a rise in the percentage of Brookline residents served by St. Joseph Community Service and the Greater Nashua Mental Health/Community Council.

**Building Inspection – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$62,865**

**Tad** said this budget has increased from the original budget review in the fall. He said Building Inspector **Steve Sacherski** pointed out that the planning board is considering two different “over 55” housing projects - one with 17 units and the other with about 30 units. **Tad** said **Steve** estimates about 325-350 additional hours of inspections if these happen. At his hourly rate, it equates to about \$10,000. **Tad** said the good news is this department also generates revenue and it would more than cover the increased expense, should it be incurred. **Tad** added that **Steve** will be coming to the Board in the first quarter of 2022 to discuss increasing building permit fees. **Tad** said the “Equipment Testing & Tools” line item includes \$5,000 for a large scale printer, which would be used by other departments as well.

**Library (Continued) – Trustee Ed Cook** said he went back and found the minutes from the Library Board of Trustees meeting in which the vote was taken to spend \$50,000 of the 2021 unspent salary funds on shelving and it was actually January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 not December 2021. He said they were under the impression they could vote to encumber the unspent funds within a certain timeframe after the end of the year. **Drew** said the Selectboard will need to look into that.

**Financial Administration – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$219,201**

**Tad** said there is an increase in internet costs as we increased internet speeds. He said within the IT budget we have funds for disaster back up equipment, three new laptops and \$10,000 for unexpected equipment needs/replacements. **Peter Webb** said he is in support of the “preservation of public records” and he has been doing some research and suggested digitizing records.

**Planning & Zoning – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$83,951**

**Tad** said the increase from last year is due to the “Town Planner Salary” line item transitioning from just under \$30,000, as it has been part-time recently, to just under \$70,000 as it returns to full-time status in mid-2022.

**General Government Building – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$266,614**

Increase due to replacement of two boilers, installation of surveillance cameras and microphone in police lobby area and replacement of toilets in police cells.

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**Legal – Tad Putney – Proposed 2022 budget: \$185,000**

**Tad** noted this is our best estimate given the latest guidance from our attorney for the workforce housing suit, plus other general legal matters.

**Estimated Revenue for 2022**

**Tad** noted the estimated revenue, excluding real estate taxes, is **\$3,293,796**.

**Proposed 2022 Warrant Articles**

**Warrant Article #4 - \$1,249,500** conservation bond

Selectboard vote: 2-2-1 Finance Committee: no vote taken

**Warrant Article #5 - \$52,740** to hire a third full-time public works employee

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #6 - \$5,918,805** operating budget

Selectboard vote: Yes 4-1 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #7** – Close and return balance of Cable Access Fund to general fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee: no vote taken

**Warrant Article #8 – \$141,617** Establish Public Works Revolving Fund using Highway Block Grant funds received in 2021

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #9** – \$343,000 in additional funds for sidewalk and pedestrian bridge project (\$274,400 from the Transportation Alternative Program grant and **\$68,600** from general taxation)

Selectboard vote: Yes 3-2 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #10 - \$50,000** deposit to Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #11 - \$16,590** deposit to Reappraisal Capital Reserve Fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #12 - \$10,000** deposit to Town Facilities Capital Reserve Fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #13 - \$4,000** deposit to Ambulance Service Expendable Trust Fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

**Warrant Article #14** – Establish Conservation Trails Revolving Fund for deposit of all future trail races and trail user fees and move **\$50,150**, accumulated through prior trail races, from the Conservation Fund to said fund

Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee vote: Yes 3-0

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**Warrant Article #15** – Town to acquire “open space” lot H-75  
Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee: no vote taken

**Warrant Article #16** – Reclassify Ten Rod Road from Class V road to Class A trail  
Selectboard vote: Yes 5-0 Finance Committee: no vote taken

9:12pm - *Drew moved, seconded by Eddie, to close the budget hearing and go into non-public session per RSA 91-A:3 II (c) reputation and (l) legal; potentially others; Roll Call Vote Yes 5-0.*

10:01pm - *Drew moved, second by Brendan, to come out of non-public session and seal the minutes; Roll Call Vote Yes 5-0.*

10:01pm meeting adjourned.

Minutes submitted by Sharon Sturtevant.

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Drew Kellner

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Eddie Arnold

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Brendan Denehy

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Dana Ketchen

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Steve Russo