

**Town of Epsom  
Board of Selectmen Meeting Minutes  
January 9, 2023 at 6:00pm**

Virginia Drew, Chair  
Cheryl Gilpatrick  
Meadow Wysocki

Approved: **Gilpatrick / Wysocki**  
Vote: **In favor, 3-0.**

**Call to Order**

Ms. Drew called the meeting to order at 6:00pm.

Staff present: Megan Rheame, Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary; Jerrica Vansylyvong, Finance Administrator.

Others present: Deborah Sargent, Tony Soltani, virtual attendees.

Ms. Vansylyvong led the pledge of allegiance.

**Review and Accept or Amend Agenda:**

Ms. Wysocki added the Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant to the discussion section. Ms. Drew tabled the policy review from the discussion section, and added alarm services for the new town office to the discussion section, and the CLEO Act exemption letter for the Police Chief, as well as two sessions of non-public minutes from 12/27/2022 to review.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the agenda as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Finance Administrator Report:** Ms. Vansylyvong presented a \$200 donation to the Welfare Department for 2023 Christmas presents for approval.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the \$200 donation for Christmas presents for the Epsom Welfare Department for 2023. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Ms. Vansylyvong noted the DRA approved all the Warrant Articles with the exception of Warrant Article 1 for the operating budget, which has not yet been finalized. She discussed Article 11, which involves funds being withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund balance and placed in the Fire and Rescue Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund. The DRA has recommended adding another Warrant Article for the discontinuation of the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund first, so the funds can be placed into the Unassigned Fund balance before being placed into the Fire and Rescue Apparatus Fund. This will bring the number of Warrant Articles from fifteen to sixteen.

Ms. Vansylyvong discussed the budget that contains updated actuals. She noted that she is waiting for a few invoices, in addition to the encumbrances, that total \$4,968.19. She noted the

invoices are for items purchased in 2022 with the Town's credit card, and will be paid when she receives the credit card statement.

**Administrative Assistant Report:** In Ms. Johnson's absence, Mrs. Rheaume noted she received a call from Toshiba. The Fire Department's new printer is ready and waiting for the go ahead from the Fire Chief to schedule the installation. Ms. Johnson will contact him and schedule a time for the installation.

Ms. Wysocki asked if Ms. Johnson had obtained the third quote from a moving company for the upcoming office move so the funds can be encumbered. Ms. Gilpatrick noted Ms. Johnson was still waiting to hear back.

Ms. Drew noted the deadline is approaching for submissions from the Department Heads for the Town Report. Ms. Drew will follow up with Ms. Johnson.

**Signature/Approval Items:**

Library Letter of Agreement for 2023:

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to sign the agreement between the Epsom Public Library Trustees and the Board of Selectmen for 2023. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

OMRC Charter Renewal:

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to sign the Charter of the Old Meetinghouse Revitalization Committee for 2023. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Discussion:**

Default Budget: Ms. Vanslyvong presented the default budget and discussed its components. She noted the increase for the healthcare insurance should not be included unless the town has a collective bargaining agreement. The Board noted it's stated in the Employee Handbook that the Town is required to provide the option of healthcare insurance to its full-time employee, which means it should be included in the default budget. They would like this to be confirmed with the DRA. Ms. Vanslyvong will follow up on it. She reported the default budget is \$3,744,148.00.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the default budget for 2023 in the amount of \$3,744,148.00. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Anticipated Revenue Budget for 2023: The Board reviewed the revenue budget submitted from all Boards and Departments. Ms. Wysocki questioned the returned funds from the Library. It was determined that they will be unanticipated revenue. The Board reviewed the actuals from 2021, 2022 and the projections for 2023. They noted the amount for the Rooms and Meals Tax revenue for 2022 is \$426,000. The State recommended the town stay with \$375,000 for the proposed 2023 Rooms & Meals tax revenue. The revenue from cemetery lot sales was adjusted from \$500 to \$750

Ms. Gilpatrick inquired about certain Funds that were supposed to be frozen after realizing they were losing money. Ms. Drew noted the Funds were put in a different status. The Board was concerned over losses in the Town's Trust Funds due to Stock Market fluctuations. Ms. Drew will draft a letter to the Trustees of the Trust Funds to inquire. Ms. Vansylyvong detailed the Funds that lost money.

Ms. Vansylyvong noted the interest income is projected to be \$10,000, and the Welfare revenue was increased to \$1000.

The adjusted revenue budget for 2023 is \$2,270,650.00

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to accept the Town of Epsom revenue budget in the amount of \$2,270,650.00. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Warrant Article Recommendations: The Board reviewed the Warrant Articles and made the required recommendations as follows, except for Article 1, which has not been finalized.

**ARTICLE 1:** Shall the Town of Epsom raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts 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 \$ 3,843,547. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$ 3,744,148 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Epsom 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.

*The operating budget is estimated to have a tax rate of \$3.90, which is 19 cents more than the 2022 Tax rate. The default budget is estimated to have a tax rate of \$3.71, which is the same as the 2022 Tax rate.*

*Recommended by the Selectmen*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee*

**ARTICLE 2:** Shall the Town vote to establish a contingency fund for the 2023 year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) from the Unassigned Fund Balance to go into the fund? Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. Majority vote required. This Article and its appropriation are in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact.*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 2 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 3:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the previously established Expendable Trust Fund for the Maintenance of Historic Town-Owned Buildings with said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee \_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 3 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 4:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the previously established Government Buildings Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee \_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 4 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 5:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one thousand eight hundred dollars (\$1,800) to be added to the previously established Cemetery Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund, with said funds to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, which is equivalent to the total amount of cemetery plot sales for 2022? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact.*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee \_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 5 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 6:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000) to pay for six (6) months' salary, benefits and equipment for one (1) additional full-time police officer? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.09 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee \_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 6 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 7:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate a sum of four hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$420,000) for the purpose of purchasing a new ambulance with major equipment for the Fire Department, and further authorize the withdrawal of the same amount of four hundred and twenty thousand dollars (\$420,000) from the Fire and Rescue Apparatus Fund for that purpose? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and is in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 -0*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 7 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 8:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand six hundred dollars (\$15,600) for the purpose of purchasing five sets of firefighter turn out gear for the Fire Department, and further authorize the withdrawal of the same amount of fifteen thousand six hundred dollars (\$15,600) from the Fire and Rescue Apparatus Fund for that purpose? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and is in addition to the operating budget.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 8 as corrected. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 9:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-nine thousand dollars (\$49,000) to pay for six (6) months' salary and benefits for one (1) additional full-time firefighter/ paramedic? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.09 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 9 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 10:** Shall the Town vote to discontinue the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund created in 1997. Said funds, with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal to be placed in the general fund. Majority vote required.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*      *Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 10 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 11:** Shall the town vote to raise and appropriate three hundred fifty-six dollars and forty-two cents (\$356.42) to be placed in the Fire and Rescue Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund, with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance. (This represents the funds from the discontinuation of the Fire Apparatus CRF). This Article is contingent on the passage of Article 10.

*No tax impact*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 11 as corrected. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 12:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars (\$150,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of reconstruction and improvements to town roads? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.29 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 12 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 13:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of purchasing motorized vehicles and equipment for the Highway Department? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.02 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 13 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 14:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-five thousand dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of bridge replacement and repair? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.05 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 14 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 15:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be deposited into the Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the potential future expansion of the public water system? Majority vote required. This is a Special Warrant Article and its appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.04 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 15 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki.  
**Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**ARTICLE 16:** Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four thousand dollars (\$4,000) to be used by the Northwood Lake Watershed Association to control Milfoil in Northwood Lake? Majority vote required. This appropriation is in addition to the operating budget.

*Estimated tax impact is \$.01 per thousand*

*Recommended by the Selectmen 3 - 0*

*Recommended by the Budget Committee\_\_\_\_\_*

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to recommend Article 16 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. Ms. Gilpatrick questioned if the Northwood Lake Association's report has been received by the town office. Ms. Vanslyvong confirmed the report has been received. The Board reviewed it and agreed with its contents. **Motioned passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Encumbrance Approval: The Board reviewed and discussed the items to be encumbered from 2022 to 2023. The total amount to be encumbered is \$15,091.70.

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the encumbrances for 2022 in the amount of \$15,091.70.  
**Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Progressive Alarm Services: The Board discussed the option of having an alarm system installed in the new town office spaces. They indicated in the past they would like to have it. Ms. Drew reviewed a quote received from Progressive Alarm Services. The Board would like Ms. Johnson to look into the quote and compare it to the current company the town uses.

Informational Session Planning: The first informational session for the Warrant Articles is scheduled for January 24<sup>th</sup> at the Town Office meeting room. The Board discussed possible dates for the second informational session, and decided on Saturday, March 11 at the Library. Ms. Gilpatrick will order the mailers to be sent out to the residents with the dates of the informational sessions, the deliberative session, and the election. She will also look into getting a quote from the Post Office to send them. She will work with Ms. Johnson on this.

April Meeting Locations: Ms. Drew would like to schedule alternate locations for meetings for the month of April. The Planning Board and the Board of Selectmen have the option of meeting in the Library meeting room with their permission. Ms. Drew noted the School is willing to accommodate meetings as well. She noted the smaller meeting room in the new office space can accommodate small BOS meetings, but will need to find a larger space if a larger meeting is anticipated. Ms. Gilpatrick noted the records retention area in the lower level of the Meetinghouse is another option for larger meetings. Discussion ensued regarding the logistics of virtual attendance options for meetings.

Food Pantry Relocation: The Board reviewed and made edits to the Food Pantry Agreement. Ms. Drew would like the Food Pantry's lease to be on a yearly basis. She also discussed the number of refrigerators and freezers the Food Pantry currently owns, and how they will be spaced in the new Pantry in the lower level of the Meetinghouse. Ms. Drew would like to confirm the Pantry's hours of operation with the Director. She will ask the Food Pantry to attend the next BOS meeting to sign the agreement.

CLEO Act Exemption Letter: The CLEO (Chief Law Enforcement Officer) Act allows the Police Chief to participate in details at the predetermined hourly rate. The exemption letter presented by Chief Michael will need Board approval in order to proceed. The Board reviewed the letter and would like to make edits before they sign it.

Hazard Mitigation Plan Grant: Ms. Wysocki noted the Town is receiving grant funds to pay for the cost of preparing the Hazard Mitigation Plan for the Town. The Board had previously authorized the Central NH Regional Planning Commission to receive the grant funds, but the Department of Homeland Security sent the paperwork to the Town. The EMD will contact Homeland Security to try to correct the issue. If the funds do wind up coming to the Town, there will need to be a public hearing to accept the funds. Discussion ensued regarding when the public hearing could be held. Ms. Gilpatrick suggested Ms. Wysocki reach out to Mike Tardiff with Central NH Regional Planning Commission to discuss.

#### **Assessing Signature/Approval:**

General Assessing Contract 2023-2025:

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve and sign the General Assessing contract for 2023-2025.

**Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

#### **Selectmen's Reports:**

Ms. Wysocki:

Conservation Commission: Ms. Wysocki noted the Conservation Commission is meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Town Office meeting room. They will be electing a new Chair and Vice Chair, and would like to establish an ordinance and by-laws. Ms. Wysocki will check with the office to confirm appointment expirations for the members.

Fire Department: Ms. Wysocki confirmed the ambulance with the blown engine is almost four years old, which falls in line with the five-year plan for the purchase of a new one. Ms. Wysocki



suggested the Board reach out to the Town Counsel and Ford Motor Company to put some pressure on them to get the new engine sent out to the dealership. The Board gave permission to do this.

The call volume is still high, with a large amount of the calls being drug related.

Ms. Wysocki is waiting for an update from the Safety Inspector regarding the Black Hall Road property.

Ms. Gilpatrick:

Town Clerk: Ms. Scarbo started processing 2023 dog licenses and boats last Tuesday. She will be putting a notice online reminding residents she is able to do boat registrations. She noted that residents can now register their dogs in person or online.

She has posted the open positions for the Town election. The filing period is from January 25<sup>th</sup> to February 3<sup>rd</sup>. She will be in the office on Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup> from 9am-11am, and Friday the 3<sup>rd</sup> until 5pm.

Tax Collector: Ms. Scarbo noted they have collected 94% of the 2022 second issue taxes. Delinquent notices will be going out at the end of January. The lien date for 2023 will be May 4, 2023 for 2022 delinquent taxes. The deed date for 2023 will be June 16, 2023 for 2020 liens.

As time allows, she will be starting to organize and pack to get ready for the move to the new offices.

Highway Department: The Highway Department has been dealing with the rain and some slick conditions here and there. Mr. Elliott is keeping a close eye on the dirt roads, which have become quite soft due to the unseasonably warm temperatures during the day and freezing at night. He has posted online letting residents know the status of those roads.

Parks and Recreation Commission: The Commission is still waiting for some longer lasting freezing temperatures before they can put down the tarp for the ice rink.

Planning Board: The Planning Board is having their second hearing for the Zoning Amendments Wednesday, January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. They will have a third hearing to accept any changes.

Ms. Drew:

OMRC: Ms. Drew noted the OMRC is meeting on January 19<sup>th</sup> at the Town Offices. She suggested they start taking an inventory of the items stored currently in the main hall. Ms. Drew discussed the damage to the steeple during the recent rain and wind storm, which damaged the flashing and caused water to infiltrate the building. The project manager was able to get someone to fix it temporarily. Ms. Johnson has looked into filing a claim with the Town's insurance company to pay for the damages. The project manager also suggested capping the chimney of the Old Town Hall to prevent any leakage.

The water is hooked up in the lower level of the Meetinghouse, and the bathroom should be in working order soon. Milestone has met with the Fire Department a few times to ensure the ceilings in the lower level have the proper fire rating. The OMRC has also received their lit exit signs.

Zoning Compliance Officer: There have been some concerns from the Zoning Board of Adjustment regarding the ZCO not levying fines for compliance violations. The Board would like clarification on the process of issuing fines. Ms. Drew received a complaint from a resident regarding water being diverted onto her property from her neighbor's property. The ZCO took care of it.

BCEP: Ms. Drew noted BCEP has a meeting on the last Thursday of the month. She expressed concern with their practices, and would like to see more disclosure on how things are being done, as well as a more clear agreement.

Police Department: The new Chief would like to initiate a written report of calls with a description and nature of the calls. He provided an initial report to Ms. Drew with the nature of the recent calls. He noted they have a candidate for an officer, and they're in the process of doing a background check.

The Department has completed their mandatory eight hours of Firearms training in December. They have completed updating their inventory. Chief Michael noted the Toy Drive was a success, and all the toys were distributed by the Epsom Central School.

**Approval of Minutes:** Public 12/27/2022  
Non-public 12/27/2022 sessions 1 & 2

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the public minutes of 12/27/2022 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the non-public minutes of 12/27/2022 session 1 as written. **Second by:** Ms. Drew. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to approve the non-public minutes of 12/27/2022 session 2 as amended. **Second by:** Ms. Drew. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to unseal the non-public minutes of 12/27/2022 session 2. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

**Correspondence – FYI:**

**Other Business:** None.

**5 Minutes for Public Discussion:** Ms. Sargent asked for clarification regarding the departments' budgets with the salary increases. Ms. Drew explained the salary increases and the

increases in the utilities. Mr. Soltani expressed concern regarding the tax rate and the effects of the pandemic.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the Board at this time, **Motion by:** Ms. Gilpatrick to adjourn at 9:01pm. **Second by:** Ms. Wysocki. **Motion passed unanimously: 3-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Megan Rheume

Board of Selectmen Recording Secretary

FINAL