

**Town of Sandown
P.O. Box 1756
Sandown, NH 03873**

**Deliberative Town Meeting
Saturday, February 4, 2023**

Town Officials Present: Moderator Kevin Major, Assistant Moderator Kate Winter, Chairman of the Board of Selectmen Jon Goldman, Vice Chairman Tom Tombarello, Selectmen Eric Olsen, Selectman Darren Hudgins, Selectmen Robert Nickerson, Town Counsel Attorney Diane Gorrow, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Dawn Nicolaisen, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Tanya Gaynor, Town Clerk Office Assistant Christine Schnaible, Budget Committee Members: Chairman Benjamin Sharpe, Vice Chairman Leslie Kruithof, Member Stephen Brown, Member Amanda Knight, Member David Solomon; Town Administrator Lynne Blaisdell, Finance Director Gayle Hamel, Supervisors of the Checklist Rosemarie Bruno, Lisa Butler, Heather Zagranis and Recording Secretary Andrea Cairns.

Moderator Kevin Major called the 2023 Town of Sandown Deliberative Session to order at 9:00am on Saturday, February 4, 2023 at the Sandown Town Hall, 320 Main Street, Sandown, New Hampshire. Jon Goldman led the body in the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator read the Rules of Order and pointed out handouts were available to all on the table. He also advised those in attendance they could check-in with the Supervisors of the Checklist to obtain their voting cards.

Warrant Article 1. To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year (to be voted by ballot March 14, 2023).

Voting will take place at the Town Hall and polls will be open from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm.

Warrant Article 2. Shall the Town 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 \$5,417,910. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$5,174,578 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. This operating budget warrant article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other warrant articles.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$7.85 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-1-0)

MOTION by Tom Tombarello to place Warrant Article 2 on the ballot.

45 SECOND by Benjamin Sharpe

46
47 Discussion: Mr. Chris True noted the proposed budget was up \$240,000 from the default budget.
48 He questioned how much of that was for non-contractual pay increases? Ms. Hamel noted the
49 pay increases were approximately \$98,000. Mr. True questioned what the top three wage
50 increases were and for whom they were intended.

51
52 Mr. Tombarello noted the process they went through in determining the wage increases, which
53 included the finalization of a wage matrix. He noted how important that process was in placing
54 town employees at a pay rate that was comparable to other towns.

55
56 Ms. Blaisdell added the top three wage increases would go to the Town Administrator, Finance
57 Director and one police officer.

58
59 Mr. True noted that there is no good time for a payroll increase but the top increase is more than
60 5%. Because there are people in town that can't afford to purchase food or heat their homes, he
61 believes that payroll increases of that size are excessive.

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63 MOTION by Chris True to cut the proposed budget by \$67,000

64 SECOND by David Solomon

65
66 Mr. Tombarello noted that this would throw off the wage matrix. Mr. True added that he realizes
67 the Selectmen's budget is a bottom-line budget but would hope they would acknowledge the
68 people are saying they do not want the raises to occur.

69
70 Mr. Solomon noted that in reference to the wage matrix, the goal going into the year was to try
71 and elevate the lower paid employees. Half-way through the budget process, the wage matrix
72 was presented to the budget committee. It was an all or nothing proposition. The lower paid
73 employees are receiving raises, this year the raises for some are higher but moving forward,
74 according to the wage matrix, the average will be 3%.

75
76 Mr. Goldman added that raises are an issue every year and there have been years when
77 employees went without a raise. The Selectmen did a salary study to see where Sandown
78 employees were compared to other comparable towns. When they updated the matrix, they based
79 the salary levels on 85% of the average. The matrix is a guide to use moving forward. The matrix
80 has been in place for years, but not all employees were placed on it correctly and the matrix
81 hadn't been updated in several years. Now that they are placed correctly, they can move up the
82 steps accordingly. Right now, we are asking our employees to pay 2023 dollars at the grocery
83 store at 2018 income levels. We would appreciate the support.

84
85 Ms. Kruithof added that the matrix is an internal/external equity adjustment. We need to consider
86 the replacement costs if our employees were to leave. We currently have experienced staff. If
87 someone was to leave, we would need to bring in the new employee at the higher salary level.
88 These adjustments would bring our current employees closer to what other towns are paying. We
89 have not always matched salary increases with cost-of-living increases. We've kicked it down
90 the road too long.

Chief Gordan added that the department heads met and spent a long time determining where each of their employees should be placed within the matrix based on their experience. Some employees received higher, necessary, increases because they weren't placed correctly on the matrix based on their experience. The loss of what these employees haven't made over the year is greater than the gain. The lower paid employees were included in these increases and adjustments. Everyone wants to be paid what they should be, otherwise, what is their incentive to stay. Departments heads worked hard to present a frugal budget. He would not support the motion.

Mr. Chuck Vey questioned what they were voting on. The Moderator clarified it was a bottom-line reduction of \$67,000.

Jilletta Jarvis noted that the increase to the budget isn't just a dollar amount that would be going to the employee. It also included the increase in taxes, benefits, and New Hampshire Retirement. It is not the dollar amount they will see in their paycheck.

Mr. Tombarello added that if the Town Administrator left, the town would need to hire a replacement at a much higher salary. There is no good time to do this, but it is important. The lower paid employees at the transfer station are also receiving raises. We don't want to lose our employees.

VOTE on the motion to reduce the proposed budget from \$5,417,910 to \$5,350,910 FAILED.

Warrant Article 2 will be moved to the ballot as written.

MOTION: Mr. Tombarello made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Warrant Article 2.

SECOND: Mr. Sharpe seconded the motion.

VOTE: MOTION PASSED

Warrant Article 3. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Sixty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Twenty Eight Dollars (\$167,428) for the road improvement programs to be recommended by the Sandown Highway Department and approved by the Sandown Board of Selectmen, said sum expected to be supplied by the State of New Hampshire Highway Block Grant.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$0

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Olsen to place Warrant Article 3 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 3 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 4. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Forty Six Thousand Dollars (\$546,000) to be added to the Road Improvement Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.79 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Olsen to place Warrant Article 4 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Sharpe

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 4 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 5. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be added to the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.22 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Tombarello to place Warrant Article 5 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Sharpe

Discussion: Mr. Tombarello stated that he hoped the voters would support this article.

Ms. Diana True questioned which bridge the funding would go towards. Mr. Tombarello noted this would be for Phillips Road Bridge. Mr. Goldman added that the money in the fund could go towards any bridge needing repair.

Mr. Solomon questioned where the grant reimbursement money would go. Mr. Tombarello noted it would go back into the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund.

Warrant Article 5 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 6. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.01 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Hudgins to place Warrant Article 6 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 6 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 7. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Stormwater Management Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.02 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Hudgins to place Warrant Article 7 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 7 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 8. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be added to the Fire Equipment and Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.14 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 5-1-0)

MOTION by Mr. Goldman to place Warrant Article 8 on the ballot.

SECOND: Ms. Kruithof

Discussion:

Mr. True noted it would be helpful to know how much is already in the fund. Ms. Hamel noted the balance is \$223,513.57.

Mr. Goldman added that they would like to replace the tanker and Engine 1. Each truck is approximately \$750,000. To order a truck, it is 24-36 months out. They hope to pay cash for the purchase.

Mr. Solomon asked if equipment for the ambulance could be purchased through that capital reserve fund. Mr. Goldman confirmed it could.

Warrant Article 8 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 9. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twelve Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$12,720) from the unassigned fund balance to be added to the Phillips Pond Expendable Trust Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$0 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

229 MOTION by Mr. Nickerson to place Warrant Article 9 on the ballot.

230 SECOND: Mr. Sharpe

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232 Mr. Scott Bassett questioned if this article were to fail, would that money go towards offsetting
233 taxes. It was confirmed that it would.

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235 Warrant Article 9 will be moved to the ballot as written.

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237 MOTION by Mr. Tombarello to restrict reconsideration for Warrant Articles 3-9.

238 SECOND: Mr. Hudgins

239 VOTE: Motion passed

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241 **Special Warrant Article 10. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One**
242 **Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be added to the Government Building Capital**
243 **Reserve Fund previously established.**

244 **Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.14 per thousand.**

245 **(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 4-0-0)**

246 **(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 3-3-0)**

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248 MOTION by Mr. Olsen to place Warrant Article 10 on the ballot.

249 SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

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251 Discussion:

252 Chief Gordan explained that we are in need of an expansion for the Town Hall and are trying to
253 do that in phases. The town received ARPA funding—part of it was used by the fire department
254 and police departments to purchase new equipment, but there is \$320,000 remaining. There are
255 restrictions on how the money can be used. The town did a feasibility study to explore
256 renovation options which ranged from only reconfiguring and adding office space to the first
257 floor to adding in an elevator and an addition off the side of the building. Mr. Gordan reviewed
258 the slides provided by the feasibility study, going over each option and the estimated costs for
259 each phase.

260

261 Linda Brown questioned if the integrity of the building would be upheld.

262

263 Mr. Gordan noted the upstairs hall would remain the same, but the downstairs would be brought
264 up to today's standards.

265

266 MOTION by Erica Olsen to increase the amount raised and appropriated from \$100,000 to
267 \$150,000

268 SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

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270 Mr. True questioned how much was needed for all of the phases. Mr. Gordan noted the
271 feasibility study was on the website and had all costs.

272

273 Mr. Sharpe noted that the budget committee discussed the warrant article. The budget is going up
274 quite a bit this year. He's not opposed to \$100,000 but adding an additional \$50,000 will stretch

people's budgets. Mr. Gordan noted that if we don't start saving, we lose our opportunity for expansion.

Mike Amaral questioned what ARPA was and how much the town has been given. Was Phase 1 already approved? Will any of the proceeds from the sale of town-owned property be used for this purpose? Has the town considered any other lots for this purpose?

Mr. Goldman noted that the ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) money they received was \$685,000. \$200,000 was used by the fire and police departments. Their work needs to be under contract by 2024 and completed by 2026. Phase 1 hasn't been approved by anyone yet. The Board of Selectmen and the Building Committee has agreed that something needs to be done and have done some preliminary work to determine what they could do within that budget. Proceeds from the sale of town owned property will go into the general fund and the Board of Selectmen can choose by warrant article to raise and appropriate that money into this fund.

Linda Brown questioned if the Board of Selectmen was in control of how the money is spent. Mr. Goldman noted there are specific restrictions around spending ARPA money and it must be nexus to COVID—creating additional space, better ventilation systems, etc. Something related to creating better prevention methods if there were to be another pandemic.

Mr. Solomon questioned if the town's master plan was considered. Colleen Olsen noted the master plan is updated every 10 years and is due to expire in 2023. It is something the Planning Board will work with Rockingham Planning Commission to update this year.

Mr. Gordan asked to call the question.

VOTE on amendment.
MOTION failed.

Mike Amaral proposed an amendment to include an itemized project list with expenses. Moderator Major noted he couldn't change the subject of a warrant article. Attorney Gorrow added that amendment would not be appropriate. The capital reserve fund was established for a purpose. Specifying the projects would be considered a change in the purpose of the fund.

Ms. Hamel added that the current balance of the Government Building Capital Reserve Fund was \$15,000.

MOTION by Mike Amaral to change the appropriation to \$75,000 from \$100,000.
SECOND: Oscar Picarello

No discussion on the amendment.

VOTE: amendment failed

Warrant Article 10 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 11. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Old Home Day Celebration Expendable Trust Fund previously established.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.01 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 3-3-0)

MOTION by Mr. Hudgins to place Warrant Article 11 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Mencis

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 11 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 12. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$4,500) for fireworks with a date and time to be determined by the Board of Selectmen.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.01 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 3-3-0)

MOTION by Mr. Hudgins to place Warrant Article 12 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Mencis

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 12 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 13. Shall the town vote to approve the readoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28, II) to allow for the expansion of the criteria needed to qualify for the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit of \$750 to now include those service members that are currently serving and have not yet been honorably discharged from the armed services. The readoption of the Optional Veteran's Tax Credit, if approved, would continue to offer a \$750 tax credit to all honorably discharged Veterans that qualify under the current requirements but as of April 1, 2023, it would expand the eligibility requirements to now include those individuals that have not yet been discharged from active service.

Note: If this Article does not pass the Optional Tax Credit would revert to the Standard Veteran Tax Credit under RSA 72:28, I, and as of April 1, 2023, the Standard Veteran Tax Credit would be in place and reduce the Veteran Tax Credit from \$750 to \$50 per year.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Goldman to place Warrant Article 13 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

Linda Brown wanted to increase it to \$1,000. Attorney Gorrow noted the maximum by law is \$750.

Diana True noted the benefit is currently for those that have been honorably discharged. They may not receive an honorable discharge.

Mr. Goldman noted the benefit is for active service members to receive the credit. If they do not receive an honorable discharge, then they would no longer qualify.

Kate Winter questioned why it would revert to \$50 if it isn't passed. Ms. Blaisdell clarified that it was the way the law was written.

Representative Chris True noted that he does qualify and does get the credit currently. He didn't sponsor the bill but clarified how bills are created in the house and added that it was an oversight by legal that requires towns to have to revote on the amendment.

Warrant Article 13 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 14. Shall the town vote to approve the readoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b) to allow for the expansion of the criteria needed to qualify for the All Veteran's Tax Credit of \$750 to now include those service members that are currently serving and have not yet been honorably discharged from the armed services. The readoption of the All Veteran's Tax Credit, if approved would continue to offer a \$750 tax credit to all honorably discharged Veterans that qualify under the current requirements of (RSA 72:28-b) but as of April 1, 2023, it would expand the eligibility requirements to now include those individuals that have not yet been discharged from active service.

Note: If this Article does not pass the All Veteran Tax Credit would revert to the Standard Veteran Tax Credit under RSA 72:28, I, and as of April 1, 2023, the Standard Veteran Tax Credit would be in place and reduce the Veteran Tax Credit from \$750 to \$50 per year.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Goldman to place Warrant Article 14 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

Diana True noted as a voter, she would be confused by the two warrant articles and questioned what would happen if only one passed and one failed.

Mr. Goldman noted they are two different credits and would need a majority vote to pass.

Warrant Article 14 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 15. Shall the Town vote, pursuant to RSA 35:9-a., II, to authorize the Trustees of the Trust Funds, without further action of the town meeting, to charge any expenses incurred for professional banking or brokerage assistance to the capital reserve funds involved, such authority to remain in effect until rescinded by a vote of the town meeting, which said vote to rescind such authority shall not occur within 5 years of the adoption of this article.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$0 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Nickerson to place Warrant Article 15 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

Discussion:

Jilletta Jarvis explained the article noting that they are moving funds to a fiduciary account which allows fees to be taken directly out of the interest earned instead of having to go the general fund for those expenses.

Mr. True questioned the timeframe of five years. Attorney Gorrow explained that timeframe is in the statute, and it cannot be changed.

Warrant Article 15 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 16.

Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a lease/purchase agreement not to exceed 5 years in the amount of Forty Thousand Three Hundred Dollars (\$40,300) for the purpose of leasing/purchasing an electronic and hydraulic stretcher loading system for the Fire and Rescue Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of Fourteen Thousand Nine Hundred Dollars (\$14,900) for the first year's payment. This lease/purchase agreement contains an escape clause. This article is designated as a special warrant article by the Board of Selectmen.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.02 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 3-2-1)

MOTION by Mr. Goldman to place Warrant Article 16 on the ballot.

SECOND: Ms. Kruithof

Mr. Goldman noted it is unusual to have a warrant article recommended by one board and not recommended by the other. The night of the budget committee public hearing the fire department had to leave because of a chimney fire. They had hoped to do a full presentation on the equipment, and he believes the budget committee voted the way they did because they didn't have all the information.

Mr. Goldman further explained they received a \$50,000 grant from the state with a 10% match. The grant was to allow departments to purchase equipment that would alleviate the burden put

on departments by personnel cuts and decreased available responders due to COVID. They purchased a battery-operated stretcher that lifts patients. This allows only 1-2 people to aid a patient vs. the typical 3-4 that are needed for a regular stretcher. It also alleviates the physical burden and risk of injury put on personnel; typically, they would be lifting 400-500 pounds.

The equipment they are hoping to lease this time is equipment that helps put that stretcher into the ambulance. It eliminates lifting, reducing injury and the number of personnel required on each call.

Mr. Sharpe requested that the budget committee revote on that warrant article.

VOTE: The budget committee voted to recommend warrant article 16.

Ben Sharpe, Leslie Kruithof, Steve Brown, Amanda Knight voted in favor. Dave Solomon opposed.

The warrant will reflect the budget committee's updated vote of 4-1-0 to recommend warrant article 16.

Mr. Solomon clarified that his "no" vote wasn't because he is against the stretcher but that he would like to see that money come out of the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund that was already established.

Mr. Goldman added that they discussed that, but knowing the replacement costs for the fire trucks that will need to be purchased soon, they wanted to give people the opportunity to choose what they fund. If the warrant article fails, they cannot buy the equipment.

Jilletta Jarvis questioned why the term was five years. Mr. Goldman explained that they wanted the ability to keep the payment low, but their goal is to keep it to a three-year lease.

Warrant Article 16 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Special Warrant Article 17. Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty Nine Dollars (\$27,989) for exterior painting to preserve the Sandown Railroad Depot. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the preservation project is completed or by December 31, 2028, whichever is sooner. Costs may be offset by grant funds received. This article is designated as a special warrant article by the Board of Selectmen.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.04 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 3-2-1)

MOTION by Mr. Nickerson to place Warrant Article 17 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 17 will be moved to the ballot as written.

MOTION by Mr. Tombarello to restrict reconsideration for warrant articles 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, and 17.

SECOND: Mr. Sharpe

VOTE: Motion passed

Warrant Article 18. Shall the Town vote to add the town owned parcel identified as Tax Map 17, Lot 4, to the existing Wells Village Road Town Forest in accordance with NH RSA 31:110. The referenced property is 15.39 acres in size.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.00 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Tombarello to place Warrant Article 18 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 18 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 19. Shall the Town vote to add the town owned parcel identified as Map 13, Lot 4, to the existing Wells Village Road Town Forest in accordance with NH RSA 31:110. The referenced property is 47.42 acres in size.

Estimated tax impact of this article is \$.00 per thousand.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Tombarello to place Warrant Article 19 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

There was no discussion on this article.

Warrant Article 19 will be moved to the ballot as written.

Warrant Article 20. Shall the Town vote pursuant to RSA 72:39-b to make the following changes to the Town of Sandown's elderly exemption:

The elderly exemption based on assessed value of their home for qualified property owners 65 years of age up to 75 shall be \$110,000 (currently \$85,000), from 75 years of age to 80 shall be \$130,000 (currently \$100,000), age 80 and up shall be \$150,000 (currently \$125,000).

To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years prior to April 1, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married to each other for at least 5

consecutive years. In addition, the single tax payer must not have a net income of more than \$50,000 or, if married, a combined net income of \$70,000, and own net assets not in excess of \$200,000, including the value of the person's primary residence or, if married, combined assets shall not be in excess of \$200,000. The combined net asset amount for married persons shall apply to a surviving spouse until the sale or transfer of the property by the surviving spouse or until remarriage of the surviving spouse.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee: 6-0-0)

MOTION by Mr. Nickerson to place Warrant Article 20 on the ballot.

SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

Discussion:

Jilletta Jarvis questioned if the assets for both single and married were the same at \$200,000. Ms. Blaisdell confirmed that is correct.

Ann McCully questioned how many homes in Sandown had values less than \$200,000.

MOTION: Ms. Blaisdell made a motion to amend the language to read "excluding the value of the person's primary residence"

SECOND: Mr. Olsen

Ms. Blaisdell noted that it was in there incorrectly and that the language should be "excludes" the home value.

Chris Edris questioned if they should add that same language for a married person. Ms. Gorrow noted it wasn't necessary.

VOTE: The amendment carried.

Chris Edris offered an additional amendment to read: "or if married, combined assets shall not be in excess of \$200,000 excluding the value of the person's primary residence."

SECOND: Mr. Sharpe

VOTE: Amendment carries

Ann McCully believes there is a "marriage tax" and wanted the combined income to be changed from \$70,000 to \$100,000.

MOTION by Ms. McCully to amend the "combined net income" from \$70,000 to \$100,000

SECOND: Marcia Tapley

Ms. Kruithof questioned how net income was defined. Attorney Gorrow explained it is defined by the statute and includes money received from any source including social security payments, life insurance, business income or proceeds from the sale of assets.

Ms. Nicolaisen questioned how many people currently received the exemption. Ms. Blaisdell noted it was 89 people totaling approximately \$9M.

Ms. Blaisdell added that when it was created, it was created for the poor. The town is currently assessed at 40% lower than market value. When they finish the revaluation, home prices will increase which could result in those receiving the exemption having to absorb an additional \$1,500 in taxes.

Scott Bassett wanted to see the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee revote on their recommendations. Attorney Gorrow noted those are advisory statements and the public body could not require them to change that.

Mr. Goldman noted that they didn't have a full board when they voted on articles 2 and 10 so he would like to see the board revote on those. Attorney Gorrow noted that they should not revote on an article unless it was amended, but it would not make the articles invalid if they did.

Arlene Bassett noted that most of the elderly she knows are better off than the younger people. The younger people have mortgages, car payments, and kids going to college. She feels we go way overboard with the elderly exemptions.

Warrant Article 20 will be moved to the ballot as amended.

Petition Warrant Article 21. Shall the Town vote to ban the use of voting machines in local, state and federal elections.

(Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen: 0-4-0)

(Not Recommended by the Budget Committee: 1-4-0)

MOTION by Mr. Nickerson to place Warrant Article 21 on the ballot

SECOND: Mr. Solomon

Discussion:

Mr. Solomon noted that he was the petitioner for the warrant article, but over 50 people signed the petition. The warrant article has nothing to do with those that run and work the elections but believes it will hand the power back to the people.

Linda Brown reiterated it was not about the election officials. What concerns her most is that the process for the machines that they are supposed to trust cannot be verified. They do not get to look at the chip or the memory card in the machine. There is only one company (LHS) that runs the machines. She wants to be able to trust but also be able to verify. Hand counting will put that trust back to the people.

640 Mike Amarol added that it is in the best interest of our elected officials to see the process move
641 forward instead of taking it as advisory only. He lacks confidence in where things are headed and
642 wants full transparency in our elections. He is not calling into question the Selectmen, but the
643 overall process.

644
645 Keith Kruithof wanted to see an amendment added that would clarify the cost that would be
646 passed on to taxpayers.

647
648 Mr. Solomon didn't believe they should add that, and if they did, they should add what the costs
649 are to maintain the voting machines.

650
651 Mr. Major added that there would be a tremendous amount of labor associated with hand-
652 counting. He further explained the process for testing the machines prior to an election.

653
654 Elaine Auburn believed the chance for error is much greater with hand-counting.

655
656 More discussion ensued about the cost of elections by voting machine vs. hand-counting.

657
658 Amanda Knight noted that she is an election worker and has been working elections for over 6
659 years. She believes hand-counting would not be more accurate. Even today, when there was a
660 vote, she had a different tally than the Moderator.

661
662 Richard Scally added that he had no issue with those running the elections. Technology has
663 changed over the years and President Biden recently issued an executive order to improve
664 cybersecurity. They are just asking for people to look at what we are currently doing and
665 improve it.

666
667 Ann McCully questioned what RSA states that the petition is advisory only. Attorney Gorrow
668 noted they have a court order that states RSA 656:40 grants the Board of Selectmen the authority
669 to decide the manner of tallying votes.

670
671 Ann McCully added that France hand-counted for their presidential election.

672
673 Kate Winter noted she appreciated people speaking to the integrity of the election workers. She
674 considers herself very meticulous yet still trusts the machines to do a better job than she would.

675
676 Mark Sherwood noted that until a few elections ago, no one questioned the integrity of the
677 machines. He asked if people remember the election with the "hanging chads" and believes that a
678 machine would have counted those more accurately. Hand-counting is impractical—he uses an
679 excel spreadsheet, not an abacus.

680
681 Richard McCully added that people aren't understanding the executive order about cyber
682 security. What have we done to improve the process?

684 Moderator Major noted that the machine Sandown uses is the only one that is approved by the
685 ballot commission. They are very close to authorizing two other types of machines and we will
686 soon have a choice. The new machines will scan the ballot and save an image.

687
688 MOTION by Brian Butler to place Warrant Article 21 on the ballot.

689 SECOND: Scott Bassett

690
691 Warrant Article 21 will be moved to the ballot as written.

692
693 The Board of Selectmen wanted to revote on their recommendations for warrant articles 2, 10,
694 20, 21.

695
696 MOTION by Jon Goldman to recommend Warrant Article 2

697 SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

698 Mr. Goldman, Mr. Tombarellow, Mr. Hudgins, Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Olsen voted in favor
699 5-0-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 2

700
701 MOTION by Jon Goldman to recommend Warrant Article 10

702 SECOND: Mr. Olsen

703 Mr. Goldman, Mr. Tombarellow, Mr. Hudgins, Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Olsen voted in favor
704 5-0-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 10

705
706 MOTION by Jon Goldman to recommend Warrant Article 20

707 SECOND: Mr. Tombarello

708 Mr. Goldman, Mr. Hudgins voted against.

709 Mr. Tombarellow, Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Olsen voted in favor
710 3-2-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 20

711
712 MOTION by Jon Goldman to recommend Warrant Article 2

713 SECOND: Mr. Olsen

714 Mr. Goldman, Mr. Tombarellow, Mr. Hudgins, Mr. Nickerson and Mr. Olsen voted against
715 0-5-0 to Not Recommend Warrant Article 21

716
717 The Budget Committee did a roll call to revote on their recommendations for warrant articles 2,
718 10, 20, 21.

719
720 Warrant Article 2

721 Mr. Sharpe, Ms. Kruithof, Mr. Brown, Ms. Knight, Mr. Tombarello voted to recommend.

722 Mr. Solomon voted against.

723 5-1-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 2

724
725 Warrant Article 10

726 Mr. Sharpe, Ms. Kruithof, Ms. Knight, Mr. Tombarello voted to recommend.

727 Mr. Solomon, Mr. Brown voted against.

728 4-2-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 10

729

730 Warrant Article 20
731 Mr. Sharpe, Ms. Kruithof, Mr. Brown, Ms. Knight, Mr. Tombarello voted to recommend.
732 Mr. Solomon voted against.
733 5-1-0 to Recommend Warrant Article 20
734
735 Warrant Article 21
736 Mr. Sharpe, Ms. Kruithof, Mr. Brown, Ms. Knight, Mr. Tombarello voted not to recommend.
737 Mr. Solomon voted to recommend.
738 1-5-0 to Not Recommend Warrant Article 21
739
740 MOTION by Ann McCully to restrict reconsideration for warrant articles 18, 19, 20, 21.
741 SECOND: Mr. Tombarello
742 VOTE: Motion carried
743
744 Moderator Major reminded the audience that voting day will be March 14, 2023 from 8am-8pm
745 at the Town Hall.
746
747 Meeting Adjourned at 12:56pm.
748
749 Respectfully submitted,
750
751
752
753 Andrea Cairns
754 Recording Secretary