

Town of Farmington
Board of Selectmen Public Meeting Minutes
Monday, February 20, 2023
Selectmen's Chambers
356 Main Street-Farmington, NH 03835

Board Members Present:

Gerry Vachon, Chairman
Charlie King, Vice Chairman
Ann Titus
Doug Staples
Penny Morin

Others Present:

Ken Dickie, Town Administrator
Chuck Tiffany, Water/Sewer Supervisor
Ed Brannon, Highway Dept. Supervisor
Jason Forbes, Water Dept.
James Emery, Emery & Garret
Groundwater Investigations
Keith Pratt, Underwood Engineers
Blanche Tanner, resident
Erica Dickie-Yelle, Admin. Assistant

Call to Order:

Chairman Vachon called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

Non-Public Session A:

Motion: (Morin, second Titus) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) Hiring passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (Vachon, King, Titus, Staples, Morin-aye) at 5:30 p.m.

Motion: (Titus, second Morin) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 5:49 p.m.

Non-Public Session B:

Motion: (Morin, second King) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (c) Reputation passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (Vachon, King, Staples, Titus, Morin-aye) at 5:49 p.m.

Motion: (Morin, second Titus) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 6:01 p.m.

Motion: (King, second Morin) to seal the minutes for one year as disclosure would adversely affect the reputation of a person other than a member of the board passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (Vachon, King, Staples, Titus, Morin-aye).

Reconvene the Public Session:

Chairman Vachon reconvened the public session at 6:03 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance:

All present stood for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Public Input:

Blanche Tanner asked if the board would entertain questions from the public during the

discussion on the bond later in the agenda.

Mr. Dickie said yes and the way that the presentation is set up is at the end of the presentation would be for questions.

Review of Minutes:

February 13, 2023-Non-Public Session A-D- No errors or omissions

Motion: (Titus, second Morin) to accept the Monday, Feb. 13 Non-Public Sessions A, B, C, and D minutes as written passed 5-0.

Old Business:

School Street Lot- Mr. Dickie said he reviewed his e-mail and he found an Oct. 5 e-mail from Drummond/Woodsum Att. HariNarayan Grandy (Huddy) and she asked for a waiver from the Town side of it and he replied to her in Nov. and gave her the exemption from the Town. He said he needed to contact SAU Superintendent Ruth Ellen Vaughn because the school district hasn't submitted the waiver and even though Drummond/Woodsum doesn't represent the school they have in the past and they are looking for the waiver and then they can start the proceedings and give this lot over to the school.

Mr. King asked him to resend that at the same time with that request so Mrs. Vaughn can bring it to the School Board at their next meeting.

Mr. Dickie said he would work with Mrs. Vaughn tomorrow so they can get this moving.

Posted Dirt Roads- Mr. King said the board posted the roads last week for a week and asked Highway Dept. Supervisor Ed Brannon for his thoughts on the matter.

Mr. Brannon said there was a little miscommunication as he intended to post all of the roads which they did. He said he was informed that the board approved the dirt roads only and his thoughts on that were if you have 5-6 inches of mud on your dirt roads chances are you've got mud under the pavement. To post one without the other wasn't what I intended he said.

Mr. King asked how the conditions look now with the weather we've had and the weather we've got coming.

Mr. Brannon said the first few days of this week are still going to be quite warm and it isn't going to cool back off. He said the long term forecast seems to show it staying at normal or below normal so if they want them to pull the road posted signs down they can and typically they go up in mid-March at the latest and sometimes depending on the weather they could go up earlier. The last few years it seems like earlier than later he said.

Mr. King asked about leaving the roads posted for another week so they firm up and then take the postings down and reserve some of that time for when they are going to need it. He said if it opens up again it might stay open for a long time. He said if we leave them posted now and we get 5 weeks of cold and then 6 weeks of mud he didn't consider that reasonable. I'm willing to do another week for everything he said.

Mr. Brannon said he would leave them up and if anybody has any issues and they want to call

and if it is cold enough he would give them a pass.

Mrs. Morin asked if they could exemptions for early morning trucking so the roads stay posted but they don't ruin the roads in the afternoon when it gets warmer and muddier.

Mr. Brannon said they do have over weight permits for that purpose.

Mrs. Titus asked if they would have to contact him for that.

Mr. Brannon said yes. He said usually if it stays cold and gets down around 28 degrees or so for 3 or 4 hours before the morning hours they go early and in the past that's been the norm to let them go. He said once it warms up it usually gets shut down and if it stays warm and doesn't get down to those temperatures they usually don't let them go.

Mr. King said he wasn't for that because people that don't care aren't going to call and are just going to do whatever they want. He said some people will see the sign and say they're going to follow the rules and they aren't going to do anything and the person in the middle says I'm going to call but I've got time so in some ways they're placing an unnecessary burden on the people that follow the rules not the people that break the rules. I'm all for if we need another week open it back up and then when we need another week put it back on he said.

Mr. Brannon asked if they wanted to leave the paved roads posted.

Mr. King said he was okay with Mr. Brannon's argument on that and if they already have them posted he was not opposed to that to make sure everything firms up.

Mr. Brannon asked if anybody calls and wants to go and the temperature is warm...

Mr. King said he didn't have a problem leaving it to his discretion and if somebody calls and make a reasonable argument and the weather is cooperating and we all know the biggest impact is going to be from the heaviest trucks.

Mr. Brannon said the problem with that too is the oil trucks have a free pass by state law, as do heating (with firewood) trucks but not logging trucks but technically if there is a logging truck filled with firewood that's heating.

Mrs. Morin asked if they could request the fuel and trash pickup companies to truck in the morning. She said they probably don't have to do it but maybe they would out of the necessity of keeping our roads up.

Mrs. Titus said Waste Management comes pretty early in the morning.

Mrs. Morin said that may be where she is but they may be up on the dirt roads at 2 p.m. She added there are also other trash companies servicing the town.

Mr. Brannon said 2 of the trash removal companies have contacted him but he hasn't heard from Waste Management. He said there are a lot of dumpsters in the downtown area that they really have to be able to get to and it is kind of hard to say no to them.

Mrs. Morin said she also heard that people who really want to use the roads can post a bond and travel the roads at their discretion.

Mr. King said they may have extended the ability to post a bond on it in the past but he didn't think they typically do that.

Mr. Brannon said if somebody needs to fix their driveway or something like that he didn't have a problem with them doing that and if they need to get dirt on a dirt road they go and fix it. It's kind of hard to say no to a resident that is paying for it that can't get in and out of their driveway. Providing the trucker is conscious of what they're doing I kind of lean towards them a little bit he said.

He said some people have complained about the oil trucks because they basically go wherever they want and if they are going to New Durham they use our roads because it's a shorter way to there or vice versa. He said he hasn't seen any actual laws that say you can restrict them in any way but he didn't know if there might be something out there.

Mrs. Morin said it wasn't so much a restriction but was just a request. She said she knew one local oil company that makes sure they are on the emptier side when they come on the dirt roads.

Mr. Brannon said there are conscientious people out there just not a lot of them.

Motion: (King, second Titus) to extend the postings for one additional week and lift the ban if the weather permits;

Discussion: Mr. Brannon asked if that was extended to the pavement postings.

Mr. King said yes.

Mr. Vachon said looking at the extended forecast after Wed. it looks like it's below freezing most of the next 10 days and a couple of days are 33 degrees but for the most part it looks like it's pretty cold.

Vote: The motion passed 5-0.

Mr. Brannon said he will come back to the board next week.

Reservoir Road- Mr. Vachon asked when Reservoir Rd. would be on the docket to be touched up and that a resident contacted him yesterday about the condition of all of Reservoir Rd.

Mr. Brannon said he could go take a look and they were up on Sheepboro Rd. on Thursday and they fixed Reservoir Rd. last Monday.

Mr. Vachon said the issue could be that it softened up again and he didn't get a chance to get up there. He said the resident asked when the whole road was going to be looked at and asked Mr. Brannon to check that out.

Mr. Brannon said he would take a look at it and see if it's a matter of grading it. He said it gets tough this time of the year to use the grader because the blade will make the road smooth but the heavy part of the machine that is going to run over it after that, defeats the purpose.

He said the serrated edge they had on it was working pretty good but right now if there is a thin layer of frost it's probably not going to work so good because it will bust up that layer of frost and then they'll just have chunks. He said it works better when it's frozen solid and it doesn't make them smooth but this time of the year if it makes it at all better that makes a difference. We'll get back out there tomorrow and check it out and do what we can he said.

Drinking Water Quality Award:

Water Dept. Supervisor Chuck Tiffany introduced Water Dept. staff member Jason Forbes and said he wanted to clarify that this is water from Well #6 and they have always found the water quality is very pure and very good at Well #6. He said they've had this drinking water contest in Sunapee every year and they have never entered it so he decided to enter it this year and we came in second place in NH and Orford came in first and they only have about 800 connections and we have almost 2,000 connections in our town. He said they didn't want to go to Washington, D.C. so they sent us instead and paid for the whole trip.

Mr. Tiffany said Farmington won third place in the nation for Well #6's water and he is very proud of these guys and they work very hard. He said all water isn't the same when it comes out of the ground and Well #6 is pretty acidic and these guys have to monitor the PH and have to chlorinate it due to state law and they keep their eye on it more so than he has ever seen. He said the monitoring system the board allowed them to put on it helps a lot and thanked the administration and everybody as they are all a part of it and they all helped. I think it's a great honor he said.

Mr. King asked where the water was taken from and if was at the plant.

Mr. Tiffany said it was taken right from Well #6.

Mr. King said but they say that water has to be treated.

Mr. Tiffany said it has to be treated and groundwater has a PH of about 5.5 so they have to bring it up close to an 8 so it doesn't corrode all your pipes and stuff and they have to chlorinate to keep it at .5 at all times and that way you can't really smell it that much.

Mr. King asked if this was after the PH was adjusted.

Mr. Tiffany said this was after anything was added to it.

Mr. King asked where the addition was being added in.

Mr. Tiffany said the chlorine and the PH treatment are injected in the line at the pump house and it makes a big loop outside and they test it as it goes down the street so that it is mixed well and then it comes back to us.

Selectmen then congratulated them on receiving the award.

Mr. Vachon asked how many contestants there were.

Mr. Tiffany said there were 44 U.S. states competing and New Mexico came in first and Oklahoma came in second.

Mr. Forbes said if you said we have the best tasting water east of the Mississippi that's a fact.

Mr. Vachon asked how contestants there were just in NH.

Mr. Tiffany said 22 communities competed in NH and Farmington came in 2nd.

Mr. King asked if Rochester had a test.

Mr. Tiffany said Rochester didn't compete.

Mr. King said he was curious because there was some talk about connecting to Rochester for water.

Mr. Tiffany said we could sell water to them because we can pump out of Well #6 as much as we want.

Mr. King said Well #6 is capable of 600 gallons a day but we're only permitted for 450 gallons.

Mr. Tiffany said he was not sure and would have to check on that.

Mr. King said but we only consume about 300 gallons.

Mr. Tiffany said right now Wells #4 and #5 are only pumping about 100,000 gallons.

Mr. Forbes said it's less than that and we are using about 250 gallons a day.

Mr. Tiffany said and about another 100 gallons a day out of Well #4 and in the summer time it goes up a little bit more.

Water Dept. Vehicle- Mr. Tiffany said there are a couple of people interested in buying the Crown Vic (former) cruiser so he didn't want to give it to Lambert's and asked if they could put it out for sealed bids for a couple of weeks and if they needed a motion to do so.

Mr. Vachon said that was going to be brought up and they can do that while Mr. Tiffany is here.

Motion: (King, second Titus) to rescind our previous motion to scrap that vehicle and instead to post it for sealed bid until Friday, March 3 passed 5-0.

Mr. Dickie asked what the minimum bid should be.

Mr. Staples said Lambert's is paying \$600 for scrap vehicles.

Consensus of the board was the minimum bid would be \$600.

Bond for Improved Water Supply and Quality:

James Emery (Emery and Garrett Groundwater Investigations) and Keith Pratt (Underwood Engineers) arrived at the meeting and provided print copies of their slide presentation to everyone present.

Mr. Vachon said this is a presentation for the bond that you will see on the ballot at Town Meeting for a new well, water supply, piping, treatment and everything associated that they have been discussing at the past few meetings.

Mr. Emery said tonight is an intentional meeting to provide additional information on the bond and the water supply analysis they did and what they're looking for to improve the water supply within the town of Farmington. He said the purpose of tonight's meeting is twofold-one is to educate the public and one is to be able to answer any additional questions that the board might have as this is a big step and is something that has been cultivating for the last 10 years. He said it's not something that has just come up, it's been an issue, it's been discussed, there's been work performed and now it's coming to a crescendo partly because the funding that is available from the ARPA funds is out there. This is like a one time opportunity if the town votes this down the funds will be given to another community he said.

Mr. Emery said they would quickly go through the entirety of the project and this is not going to be a long drawn out discussion and he and Mr. Pratt have discussed this in the past and it's to give everybody else an opportunity to catch up. He then gave the following slide presentation:

Slide 1- Title Page- Water Supply Alternatives for the Town of Farmington, NH-Feb. 20, 2023

Slide #2- Existing Water System-Mr. Emery said the existing system serves about 3,300 people; there are 3 active wells and 2 storage tanks: capacity 1.25 million gallons; one well has poor water quality-Well #4 (currently not being used); over the last 40 years the Town has lost Wells #1, #2 and #3 all due to water quality issues; some due to contamination from Davidson Rubber

Slide #3-Summary of Recent Efforts- 1). On-going efforts by EGGI/GZA to find a new source and/or improve water quality of existing source 2). Performed a pilot test to determine if there is a way to treat the Well #4 water in a cost effective manner 3). They were granted a \$50,000 grant from the state to evaluate water supply alternatives within the town of Farmington and that is nearing completion and includes a cost evaluation and recommendations and conclusions.

Slide #4- Goal of Alternatives Evaluation- improve water quality (iron, color, etc.) and there has been a color issue and iron and manganese issues with Well #4, they looked at treating Well #4 and possibly Well #5, they looked at finding a new source to replace Well #4, match the existing supply capacity so if they take a well off they want to be able to develop a source that is at least going to provide sufficient water replacement and most importantly it has to be a cost effective solution

Slide #5-Existing Production and Exploratory Test Wells in Southern Farmington- (aerial photo) a few years ago they were tasked by the Select Board to investigate potential water supply opportunities south of Well #6 and they did some investigation on the Bradsheer property and some others in that area and found a couple of very high yielding opportunities. He said the downside about looking for water in the south is due to the Cocheco River which flows through here and has flow restrictions and any water supply they develop in the south is going to be limited to restrictions in the summer. Rochester currently has flow restrictions that were put on some their wells that were put online several years ago he said.

Slide #6- Exploratory Test Wells Near Production Wells #4 and #5- (map) - Mr. Emery said the more preferred area is to the north and pointed out the locations of Wells #4 and #5 and the sanitary protective radius around them. He said they did some investigation of 2 sites-one is called "I" and one is called "J". He said it is land owned by the cemetery as was the land where Wells #4 and #5 are and it would require a negotiation between the Town and the cemetery group for purchase or to provide a long term easement but that is one of the issues they'd be looking at.

Slide #7- Table 1-Drilling Summary Table-Exploratory Test Wells near Wells #4 and #5- He said they have drilled some test wells in this region and have done some preliminary testing. He said typically they look for a specific capacity of the test wells measured in gallons per minute per foot of draw down and anything over 10 gallons a minute per ft. of drawdown they consider favorable. He pointed out that test well I and test well J which were only 3" test wells and are about 57 ft. deep had specific capacities of 43.5 gpm/ft and 41.8 gpm/ft. Those are very high numbers indicating they are very productive opportunities he said.

Slide #8-Groundwater Chemistry near Wells #4 and #5- Mr. Emery said they looked at the quality after 24 hour pumping test and other testing and found the "I" had the better water quality with dissolved iron as low as 0.1 and manganese around the recommended secondary standard of .05 and the dissolved organic carbon is at 1.4.

He said compare that to Well #4 which has dissolved iron at 3, manganese at 10 times higher than the recommended standard and dissolved organic carbon at 5.6 and those are very high numbers and why you had the color.

Mr. Emery said J was not as favorable as I in terms of water chemistry because iron was 1.6 and manganese was 0.14.

Slide #9-Pumping Tests on I and J- Water Level Response on Well I-He said test well I had high yield and temporarily had best quality so it becomes a stronger candidate for groundwater development. He said when they pumped I here they were pumping it at 40-50 gpm and they didn't see any impact on J or anything with the nearby well.

Slide #10-Water Level Response on Well J- He said conversely, when the pumped J they had no impact on I so again this gives them more information to say they need to take a hard look at I as their best candidate site.

Slide #11- Water Quality -TOC- Mr. Emery said from 1991 to 2002 Underwood put these together and you can see the total organic carbon in Well #4 continued to rise whereas in Well #5 the TOC actually dropped. He said TOC is one of the reasons they struggle with treatment for iron and manganese and it's also one of the reasons for the color issues in Well #4.

Slide #12-Water Quality-Iron- He said if you look at the iron concentrations in Well #4 over the last 30 years the iron has substantially increased in Well #4 but the iron in Well #5 has hardly moved at all and the iron Well #6 hasn't moved at all so you see the very stable iron in #6, the not stable iron in #4 and the reasonably stable iron in #5.

Slide #13-Water Quality- Manganese-He said when you look at manganese Well #4 increased over the 30 years substantially, very slight increase in Well #5 over the 30 years and no increase at all in Well #6 so clearly Well #6 is your best water quality, Well #5 is reasonable and Well #4 is out. And it is one of the reasons you guys won your award he said.

Slide #14-Production and Demand-Mr. Emery said the game plan is how to manage and maximize the use of Well #6, getting water from Well #6 to the north part of town and use the good water quality with the highest yielding well and improve everything else you have here. He then turned the presentation over to Mr. Pratt to talk about the engineering portion of this. Mr. Pratt said they really started focusing on Well #6 and Well #4 is the one they are trying to replace so the goal is to replace 150 gpm (minimum) with whatever solution they have so that is still on the table.

Slide #15-Possible Alternative Water Supply Options- He said the options that they looked at when they first got picked up to get started was to develop alternatives and there were 3 of them: to connect to Rochester, which they understand is the least favorable but they felt they

needed to look at it, treat the existing sources and if it is cheaper to treat the existing sources vs. finding a new one or develop a new well replacing well #4 and assuming it would still need some treatment.

Slide #16- Conclusions-Mr. Pratt said they quickly found that those 3, not only was Rochester not preferred it turned out to be very expensive, treatment is very expensive so between the high O & M and the capital costs these became unaffordable and not feasible. He said they learned from the pilot work that was not successful not in that the technology didn't work but it was going to be expensive to do this and they were trying not to burden the community with that long term cost.

Slide #17-Value Engineering- He said they were looking for other solutions so they went through a value engineering phase for the last couple of months and spent a lot of time to come up with another scenario. He said and this is what is recommended and will be the basis of the warrant article:

Slide #18-Well #6!!-Close-up photo of Drinking Water Quality Award and Participants at the 2023 Rural Water Rally-Mr. Pratt said the focus is on Well #6 and they put up the award because they are trying to take advantage of the high yield and the high water quality and winning third in the nation is quite an achievement and congratulated the town on that.

Slide #19-Take Advantage of Well #6- He said to get Well #6 water to the north there are some challenges and restrictions. He said this is a graphic of the entire system the northern part of town showing green with lower part of town shown in blue and pointed out the locations of 2 water tanks, Wells #4, #5 and #6 on the graphic. He said between the 2 systems there is a control valve that maintains and controls the different pressures and right now you are sending some water up from Well #6 to the northern part of town but the infrastructure limits how much you can do it. But it is done and the operators control the valve there to send some water to the north and that allows you not to use Well #4 and rely less on Well #5 than you otherwise would have to he said.

Slide #20-Alternative 4: Value Engineering Considerations- Mr. Pratt said what they're doing with Alternative 4 is to replace a significant portion of the piping in the Main Street area from the Fire Station up to here and there will be some places they don't need to replace where the larger pipe already exists but that is the hydraulic restriction they are trying to eliminate so they can get water to the north. He said they would be replacing 6" and 8" pipe with 12" pipes, there will be some modifications to the PRV which is the control valve between the 2 systems, Well #6 and Well #5 would remain on-line and Well #4 would be abandoned in favor of installing and permitting a replacement well. He said they are still planning for whatever solution they come up anticipating that someday you may need treatment if those trends that James (Emery) showed you don't hold steady but for right now we don't think you do and there is a pilot that's part of this program to find the technology that will work here.

Slide #21-Lower and Higher Pressure Areas- Mr. Pratt said this graphic shows the system again

and he will talk about the hydraulic improvements because that is a significant part of the work and that's to get the water from the south to the north. He said the reason this works is because there is a higher pressure zone in the south against the lower pressure zone in the north that's actually about 45 ft. difference in height which about 20 lbs. of pressure difference which allows that water to move through. He said by doing this improvement in the future there would be the ability to send water both ways so if there is ever trouble with Well #6 they can work on getting water from the other direction which is also a good thing in the long term.

Slide #22-Existing Undersized Pipe- Mr. Pratt said this some of the hydraulics they looked and this is the south side of the system and pointed out Well #6, the Davidson Rubber water tank, Wells #4 and #5 and the 1 million gallon water tank (North Main St.). He said the 20 lbs. pressure and 45 ft. elevation difference that allows us to send a little water through by gravity without a pump. He said the problem is that pressure difference through that small pipe doesn't work to the extent we need. He said they can really get no more than 300 gpm and in reality it's probably a lot less than that because of that pressure difference.

Slide #23- System Improvements- He said that is shown by this graphic showing the flow and every time they increase the flow the pressure goes up and that's the loss in that section of pipe between Fire Station and the Town Office Building and that's the amount of pressure loss we can afford due to the difference. He said the blue line really shows with the existing system they can only get about 300 gpm maximum and when you replace that pipe that line flattens out and they can get well over 1,000 gpm easily without having too many limitations on moving that water back and forth.

Slide #24-Advantages & Disadvantages of this Alternative- Mr. Pratt said the advantages are: taking advantage of existing sources especially Well #6, replacing Well #4 preferably in the north as the south is not ideal but they are set up to go either way if they need to, better water quality without complex treatment, certain assets will be improved in the distribution system which is consistent with the Master Plan where this section of pipe was identified for replacement, it can move water in both directions and it fits the available funding. He said the disadvantages are there are some land acquisitions needed and Mr. Emery and the Town are working on that so they don't see that as a problem and they noted that any on-site solution potentially would require treatment so they want to plan for it but right now they don't see treatment being needed. This project has been identified and budgeted as a \$7.2 million project as we described it he said.

Slide #25-Funding and Cost Impacts- Mr. Pratt said the first part of the good news is the Town has been offered 44% of this project as a grant.

Slide #26-State Letter- Project Priority List- He said that is shown in a letter from the state in part made up from a 20% ARPA grant for \$1.4 million and then a drinking water loan of \$5.76 million and then they are giving you 30% forgiveness on that.

Slide #27-Funding- Mr. Pratt said so you have 2 programs involved here. He said when you

subtract the \$1.4 million ARPA Grant the loan is reduced is to \$5.76 million, they give you 30% forgiveness on that number which is \$1.728 million which is a net principal amount of \$4.032 million. He said we're looking at a \$4 million loan if this passes and they estimated the first year payment would be \$364,762 at 2.38% interest rate for a 15 year term.

He said they looked at a couple of options previously and the board was potentially targeting 60% of the water budget covering that debt schedule and 40% being covered by the general fund and if they choose to this it would look like this (graphic) in the long run.

Slide #28- Suggested Approach-Cost Impact- Mr. Pratt said 40% on the general fund is about \$145,905 which is a tax rate impact of 26 cents per \$1,000 valuation or \$26 on every \$100,000 valuation and \$91 on \$350,000 valuation.

He said the debt service on the water budget if this allocation is the way you go would be about \$218,857 (first year) with a little O & M added (\$50,000) brings it up to \$268,857 and they estimate the total water budget would increase up to \$659,857 which is a 69% budget increase. He said if that equals a rate increase and that is usually a pretty good estimate of that, if you go on the state's website it says Farmington's typical bill is \$287 and that would add \$200 to that bill annually until the debt service is paid. He said when they get the loan the board can choose the allocations they think are best and they can run different scenarios but this was the one that was being targeted. He said on the 40% from the general fund, it's something the Town has done before with the Wastewater Dept. and it is very common approach to see some general fund cover on the Water Dept.

Slide #29- Questions?-Mr. King asked if this is the presentation they will show at Town Meeting. Mr. Pratt said they can do that.

Mr. King suggested that they change Slide #15 (Possible Alternative Water Supply Options) by flipping items #1 (connect to Rochester) and #3 (develop new well with water quality treatment) because when somebody reads this it looks like that was their #1 choice was when actually it wasn't so flipping that shows what their intent was.

Mr. Emery said this is a lot to digest and this would be the board's time to share with them if there are different things they would like them to share with the people at Town Meeting. He added they would also be open to suggestions between now and then.

Mr. Pratt said he timed this presentation at about 20 minutes and asked if that seemed about right for the meeting.

Mrs. Morin said he got all of the points across.

Mr. King said they couldn't predict where the questions would go and it could be questions about the years of debt service, the loan amount, the cost sharing and the total budget and what was done to get us there.

Mr. Emery said one of the big unknowns would be acquisition of the property and how that is discussed. He said there is a small amount of money in that budget for acquisition and depending on what happens that could need to be adjusted. That's important from the

transparency standpoint about the cost for this he said.

Mr. King said he is hoping the board has a tentative agreement with the Cemetery Association.

Mr. Dickie said he reached out to Don and he hasn't heard back from him yet and he would contact him again tomorrow.

Mr. King said that is something that needs to be resolved because the community is going to want to know and he wanted to make sure they have the basis of a groundwater tentative agreement hammered out before Town Meeting.

Mr. Emery said they are going to look at alternative areas in the north as well and they did look at the property they gave them the last time (Cartwright property). He said they investigated that area before as part of their area of review and it came up with a secondary bedrock type of opportunity but because you own the land that site is part of this. We're not just going to put everything on that one site although that site is likely the best from an infrastructure standpoint. If you get another site up there that is further away from the piping you are going to have additional costs but we have to eliminate everything else and say to the town this is the best option and we have to demonstrate that as part of our discussion with NH DES he said.

Mr. Vachon asked if geology-wise the Cartwright property doesn't look favorable compared to down by Wells #4 and #5.

Mr. Emery said that is correct because it would be a bedrock well and there are no unconsolidated gravel deposits in there so he went right to the office and started pulling those pieces.

Mr. Pratt said on the cost sharing he made the point to say that the board hasn't made a decision and asked if that was a fair statement and how they wanted to proceed.

Mrs. Morin said that is what they voted for.

Mr. King said the only other question that came up on the presentation was what would be the cost or the change in the rate if they went to a 20 year note because somebody might ask that question. He said not wanting to go too far out but looking at the impact to the rate payers because we don't have to finalize that at this moment. We could say these are the 15 year and 20 year options so we know how that could lessen the impact on the rate structure he said.

Mr. Pratt said he has that number at the office so he could be prepared to have it with him.

Mr. Emery asked what is the longest that the state would allow.

Mr. Pratt said they might let it go 30 years if they really chose to. He said he didn't know what their vote was and it was good that they had a target but sometimes the communities make that decision when the final financing comes in.

Mr. King said he didn't think they locked themselves in but they should have the numbers for the 15 and 20 years if somebody asks. He said they want to show what the Town is paying in total principal and interest for those numbers and sometimes when you see that 20 or 25 year number you say you're not willing throw in another 50% in interest just to save myself 12 cents and I'll just pay it now. He said they looked at targeting the 15 year by looking at the total

principal and interest but in the discussion that they may ask what the other options are. Mr. Emery suggested having slide that says this offer from NH DES is time sensitive because they have to get their application in to NH DES by June and if the vote goes south then the grant money goes away and he didn't know if that was something they should put in a slide. Mr. King said they probably should touch upon that.

Mrs. Morin said they could do it during the discussion or in print.

Mr. King suggested adding a slide on financing with the principal and interest payments over 3 payment periods and then it's at least there for people to look at and discuss even though they may not bind themselves at this discussion to set that. He said they would get input from the taxpayers on where they want to be and if they're really concerned about the rate or really concerned about the total cost and then they will make the ultimate decision.

Mrs. Morin suggested they showed what the cost would be on another slide if they didn't have these matching grants and what the difference would be.

Mr. Staples said that's a really good idea so they realize that because it's going to have to be done eventually.

Mrs. Morin said the cost would go up 50% because the 44% is just on the smaller number and they would be using the whole (\$7.2 million) number.

Mr. Pratt said it would be in that range-not double but close to it.

Mr. Emery asked if they wanted them to provide handouts like they did tonight at the Town Meeting.

Mr. King said the Town can provide that so they could print them here and then hand them out.

Mr. Emery asked for the Town Meeting date and time.

Mrs. Titus said Town Meeting is on Wednesday, March 15 at 7 p.m.

Chairman Vachon then opened the meeting to public comments or questions.

Ms. Tanner asked what the letters "O & M" stand for.

Mr. Pratt said that stands for operations and maintenance costs and is part of the budget.

Ms. Tanner said half way down the page of notes that were on Channel 26 it says the first repayment of the loan is due 1 year after completion of the project which could be 3 years depending on how long the project takes. She asked as a rate payer if her rates will go up as soon as this is approved to get money put aside to pay for this or are they really going to go up after the project is completed and if they know that yet or if it will be decided later.

Mr. Vachon said that was only slightly discussed.

Mr. King said that will be decided by this board and they know where the rates need to end up and the Water Dept. may be okay but the Sewer Dept. has been upside down and the rate needs to change there but we may want to start with some. He said he didn't want the first year impact to be 69%, he would like it to be lower so he would want more of a straight line transition to that number that we need to be to service that debt. Nobody wants to see a 69% increase but it's not realistic to say if it's approved we're going to start charging but do we start

moving that rate up on a curve and by the third year we'd be at that 69% increase because I assumed we would be paying interest payments only until it's finalized he said.

Mr. Emery said a State Revolving Fund loan works a little differently than the NH Bond Bank.

Mr. King asked if there would be no money out of pocket until it's capped.

Mr. Emery said that's right and they offer you a credit line so you're using their cash. He said the money from the ARPA grant has to be used first because the state has a federal obligation to spend that money by the end of 2026. He said the free money is going to come first but he is not sure how that impacts the overall rate payments.

Mr. Pratt said the ARPA grant comes right off the top and the Town would not see a payment on this until 1 year after the project is completed. He said they would only accumulate a small percentage for the loan they borrow as they take advances from the state directly and they usually charge about 1% so it is a very desirable program.

Mrs. Morin said he previously mentioned that there are no pre-payment penalties either.

Mr. Pratt said they could sign up for a 20 year loan but pay a 15 year schedule and there are no penalties.

Mr. Vachon said this has been discussed in passing but the board has not made a decision on it.

Ms. Tanner said this issue of the water and who is going to pay for it has come up several times at past Town Meetings and when they were doing the depreciation of the wastewater plant.

She said we all live in the town and we might not have benefit from this but most of us who are rate payers are also taxpayers so not only is she paying her bill but her taxes are going to be paying for this also so basically she is paying 100% of it in a way. She said the people who complain need to understand that when we're in a community we are supposed to be supporting the community and she has said this a million times when she comes to meetings. She said she never had any kids in the schools but for 20 years she has supported the schools with her taxes and this is no different. She said people need to think about what is best for the town and please try to be educated about this and know what is going on because it benefits the town. It bothers me when I hear people say why I should pay when I don't have any use of that. I don't go over the Hornetown Rd. Bridge and I don't even know where that is and if that is passed I'm going to be paying for that and that's fine-people live out there so I don't mind that. People need to realize if you live in a town you support the town she said.

Ms. Tanner then said when no more money was put into the depreciation of the wastewater treatment plant she asked back then what was going to happen to that money because half of that money came from taxes and half of it came from the rate payers and she never really got an answer about that. She said a few months ago she asked about it and no one could seem to find any information about that yet at last week's meeting she heard Mr. Tiffany say there was \$314,000 in that account so obviously that account is somewhere. She said she heard that maybe that money could be used for this project and asked if that is a Capital Reserve Fund if it would have to go back before the voters next year to be used in a different way because it was

put in there for a specific purpose.

Mr. Vachon said he believed Ms. Tanner was right.

Mr. King said the depreciation was on the wastewater side not on the water side and asked if she was suggesting maybe it could be used for this project.

Ms. Tanner said she heard at one of their meetings that maybe it could be. She said maybe she should bring this up again after this discussion but she was glad to hear that the account somehow has been found. She said she looked at the old tax books and found that as of Dec. 2019 there was approx. \$311,000 in the account but when she asked about it nobody could find the account and she was curious how it could be used when the taxpayers voted for it to be a certain thing not for the water.

Mr. Emery said opening up the house so to speak and letting water move through the system is going to improve your fire flow capabilities and that's really a community wide benefit and he didn't want that to be forgotten in the discussion.

Mr. Dickie asked if once the changes to the slides are made if they would send them to him again so that they can be posted on Channel 26, the Face book page and the Town website so they can get the information out to the public.

Mr. Pratt said they would include some of the other questions and financial information from this meeting as well and get the updated version to Mr. Dickie.

New Business:

Sign the 2023 Warrant- Mr. Dickie gave a copy of the 2023 Town Meeting Warrant to the board for their signatures. He said the warrant articles were reviewed and finalized by the NH DRA.

Mr. Vachon said these are all the articles they have already voted on and have been approved by the DRA.

Letter to Selectmen/Budget Committee- Mr. Dickie said he discussed this issue with some of this board earlier last week and at the request of the Bud Com he put together a letter to disclose it to the Bud Com and he wanted to be up front and honest with the Selectmen as well. He said this is his first year using the DRA system and they had him put the budget warrant in first and when he opened up for the appropriations he saw that it pulls all the information from the previous year so he knew where he needed to put the numbers. He said when he got into the revenues again it comes up with all of last year's revenues and he knew what the board voted on and what they were looking so he just populated those numbers with the new numbers not understanding that the DRA system also pulls these numbers from the individual warrant articles so some of them when he came in at 44 cents were double booked.

He said when he learned that he was very disappointed in himself for not picking up on that and apologized for that to the board. He said at that point we were sitting at \$1.37 which was 3 cents away from what he told them when they were going through the budget so he called the Finance Administrator in and she printed out the actual 2022 revenues not just go after the MS-434R which is what the DRA recommended he use. He said they recognized that the School

Resource Officer was not in there so they inputted that and that the Town Clerk/Tax Collector received well north of \$1.5 million for registrations so they increased that by \$200,000 because she is well above \$1.7 million so they felt comfortable with that. He said they also increased the revenues from our internal services but those are the only ones they felt comfortable moving at that point so it reduced it from \$1.37 to 53 cents. I just wanted full disclosure on what happened and that Kelly and I both understand the system he said.

Mr. King said it seems like there are weaknesses or quirks in their system and how it's administered and your first time traversing it you step in all the holes.

Mr. Dickie said he felt bad because he felt confident in his numbers and comfortable with the Bud Com and then to have that thrown in his face was really disappointing. He said after speaking with Mr. King about it he informed Bud Com Chair Angie Cardinal and Bud Com School Board Rep Tim Brown about the matter and he will discuss it with the Bud Com at their next meeting on Wednesday.

Mr. Vachon asked if they would have to reaffirm their vote since the number changed on Article #11.

Mr. Dickie said it is an estimate and that is up to the board.

Mr. King asked if the amount to be raised by taxation changed.

Mr. Vachon said the estimated tax impact changed from 44 cents to 53 cents.

Mr. Dickie said the budget number did not change.

Mr. King said the estimate is advisory so they can vote on it but he didn't think it was required and they put that on there because they want to.

Mrs. Morin said they put that on there because the taxpayers asked them to not just because they want to. She said they didn't have to but it would be beneficial to re-vote on it.

Motion: (Morin, second King) to reaffirm our vote with the tax impact of 53 cents on Article #11 passed 5-0.

Motion: (Morin, second Titus) to sign the warrant passed 5-0.

Selectmen then signed the warrant.

Review the MS-737- Mr. Dickie said the MS-737 budget form was signed by the Bud Com.

Mr. Vachon said all they were doing was reviewing it and they have no vote on the matter.

There no questions from the board on this item.

Additional Board Business:

Request to Post Meetings-Mrs. Morin asked to have the dates for voting day (Tues. March 14) and Town Meeting (Wed., March 15) posted on the sign at the old fire station lot.

Mrs. Titus suggested it also be posted on Channel 26.

Cable TV Coordinator Robert Hall said he would do so.

Message for the Building Inspector-Mrs. Titus said a resident messaged her about trying to get a hold of the Building Inspector when he was out of the office one day about a week and a half ago and he has not responded and she told her to try calling him again but not today due to the

holiday. She said she didn't know what his schedule is and asked if he listens to his messages on a particular day and what his call back time was.

Mr. Dickie said the resident talked to the office Secretary but he didn't know if the message got transferred to Mr. LeMere or not and he would find out tomorrow.

Next Meeting: Monday, February 27, 2023

Non-Public Session C:

Motion: (King, second Titus) to enter non-public session under RSA 91-A: 3 II (b) Hiring passed 5-0 by a roll call vote (Vachon, King, Staples, Titus, Morin-aye) at 7:24 p.m.

Motion: (Morin, second Titus) to come out of non-public session passed 5-0 at 7:29 p.m.

Adjournment:

Motion: (Morin, second Titus) to adjourn the meeting passed 5-0 at 7:29 p.m.

Kathleen Magoon
Recording Secretary

Gerry Vachon, Chairman

Charlie King, Vice Chairman

Ann Titus

Douglas Staples

Penny Morin