

December 16, 2021

**North Yarmouth Budget Committee
Meeting Minutes**

The meeting was called to order at 6PM in the Community Room at Wescustogo Hall by Chair Andy Walsh. Also present were committee members Jim Knight, Bill Young, Steve Palmer, Sandra Falsey, and Linc Merrill. Select Board member Paul Hodgetts was in attendance. Amy Page was absent. Chair Walsh indicated that this is the third consecutive meeting that Amy has been absent. He called her from the Community Room and left a voice message that the Committee was meeting.

A motion was made by Steve Palmer and seconded by Jim Knight to elect Andy Walsh as the Committee Chair. The vote was unanimous. Linc Merrill volunteered to be Secretary. Jim Knight moved, and Sandy Falsey seconded the motion to elect Linc Merrill to the Secretary position. The vote was unanimous.

Andy Walsh suggested two changes be made to the upcoming budget process from the one used in the past. There are normally 6 to 7 meetings a year lasting 2 to 3 hours each. Andy said it would be different this year as we have an interim town manager and we have new committee members. He suggested one additional meeting.

Andy also said that we should have a meeting dedicated to discussing the Undesignated Fund account. There were a lot of questions and comments on the subject. The key points mentioned were understanding how much money should be held in the account, how much money goes into the account or is removed each year to know how well the Town meets the budget, and what impact does it have on the budget.

Andy said we need a meeting where the TIF is discussed and we understand it and have input into how the TIF money is used. He said it is a large amount of money and indicated it needs a thorough review.

Paul Hodgetts said that the new Town Manager might be hired by February 1st. Interim Town Manager Chris Bolduc will be helping put the next fiscal year budget together due to the timing of our April Town Meeting and the lack of time and knowledge the new manager will have to prepare it. Andy and Chris met a month ago to discuss the budget.

Andy stated that the town department heads were preparing their budgets already. We hope to receive a budget book shortly. Andy will find out when that will happen. Once the budget details are available, the committee will review them in detail. We will discuss them with the Select Board. The Select Board makes the final decision on what appears on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.

The Committee agreed to meet Thursday nights at 6 PM beginning later in January. The Committee will also schedule a Public Hearing to adopt a remote access policy for our future meetings as each committee is doing. It was also brought up that we may want to broadcast our meetings so the public can observe the process.

We discussed how to handle public questions during our meetings. Questions provided in advance would help us do research to provide a better answer. We could do an open portion of our meetings so the public can comment and then go into a workshop where the public would not make remarks or ask questions.

Andy said he was not comfortable with the spending we approved at Town Meeting because we did not know about the \$145,000 that also needed to be raised for the Wescustego Hall account. Linc said he was not happy that the Select Board has voted twice this year to spend money above what was approved at the Town meeting for the Mill Road paving and the fuel depot at Public Works. He explained that the additional money is being taken from other accounts.

Andy will suggest a schedule for the future meetings.

The meeting adjourned at 7:12 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Lincoln J. Merrill, Jr.
Secretary