

**Center Harbor Board of Selectmen
Meeting Minutes and
2021 Budget Hearing Minutes
Saturday, January 23, 2021**

CALL TO ORDER: At 9:00 a.m. Chairman Richard Drenkhahn called the Board of Selectmen's meeting to order. Selectmen Richard Hanson and Harry Viens were present. Town Clerk Mary Richardson, Police Chief Mark Chase, Parks & Recreation Director Sandy Frost, Fire Chief Leon Manville, Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Health Officer Tyler Driscoll, Road Agent Jeff Haines, Library Trustees Sarah Heath and Annette Nichols (also Energy Committee member), Town Moderator and Planning Board Chairman Charley Hanson, Heritage Commissioner, Library Trustee and Zoning Board of Adjustment member Karen Ponton, Trustee of the Trust Funds Diane Drenkhahn, Historical Society President Roland Garland, Kim Haines, Deb Thiboutot, Mark Thiboutot, Jeffrey Hubbell, David Hughes and Selectmen's Administrative Assistant Robin Woodaman were also in attendance.

2021 BUDGET HEARING: At 9:00 a.m. Mr. Drenkhahn opened the 2021 Budget Hearing.

- **Executive:** \$134,543 appropriated in 2020, \$140,000 expended in 2020, \$130,076 proposed for 2021.
 - **Miscellaneous expense:** Mr. Hughes questioned the expenditure of \$5,622 when \$500 was budgeted in 2020. Mr. Drenkhahn reported, due to COVID, the Town had portable restrooms in back of the Municipal Building.
 - **Bank fees & chargebacks:** Mr. Hughes questioned the \$1,505 expense; Mr. Drenkhahn reported that was a returned check – the Town has been reimbursed.
- **Elections/Registrations/Vital Statistics:** \$54,115 appropriated in 2020, \$53,993 expended in 2020, \$49,900 proposed for 2021.
- **Financial Administration:** \$66,287 appropriated in 2020, \$86,934 expended in 2020, \$68,402 proposed for 2021.
- **Revaluation of Property:** \$14,050 appropriated in 2020, \$11,462 expended in 2020, \$13,050 proposed for 2021.
- **Legal Expense:** \$15,000 appropriated in 2020, \$13,909 expended in 2020, \$20,000 proposed for 2021.
- **Personnel Administration:** \$386,047 appropriated in 2020, \$372,627 expended in 2020, \$404,859 proposed for 2021.
 - **Retirement:** Mr. Hanson reported the biggest increase in this section is due to New Hampshire Retirement Funds' increase in the employer's contribution.
- **Planning and Zoning:** \$2,600 appropriated in 2020, \$8,223 expended in 2020, \$2,600 proposed for 2021.
 - **Professional fees:** Mr. Drenkhahn reported the PB's "Professional Fees" line item, which shows expenditures of \$7,684 in 2021 includes engineering services for a Kline Road Planning Board application. Mr. C. Hanson reported these fees are reimbursable to the Town.
- **General Government Buildings:** \$80,984 appropriated in 2020, \$71,452 expended in 2020, \$79,267 proposed for 2021.
- **Cemeteries:** \$101 appropriated in 2020, \$0 expended in 2020, \$2 proposed for 2021.

- **Insurance:** \$44,315 appropriated in 2020, \$44,315 expended in 2020, \$46,070 proposed for 2021. Mr. Viens reported the increase is due to a higher claims record.
- **Police Department:** \$353,072 appropriated in 2020, \$354,515 expended in 2020, \$363,791 proposed for 2021.
 - **Wages:** Mr. Hubel reported there was an extra pay week in 2020 and asked if raises were included in this budget. Chief Chase explained raises are included. He reported the “Overtime” line item decreased significantly; holidays used to be paid at time and a half, now holidays are included in “Wages” and are paid straight time. Ms. Ponton asked if the Town only had full time officers; Chief Chase reported yes, only full time.
- **Ambulance:** \$73,088 appropriated in 2020, \$71,350 expended in 2020, \$75,000 proposed for 2021.
- **Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid:** \$23,579 appropriated in 2020, \$23,579 expended in 2020, \$24,237 proposed for 2021.
- **Fire Department:** \$186,858 appropriated in 2020, \$186,689 expended in 2020, \$192,678 proposed for 2021.
 - **Wages:** Mr. Hubel asked why the Fire Chief and Firefighters wages were not split, as in the past. Chief Manville reported he wanted to make one category. Mr. Drenkhahn requested this be split for the next budget hearing.
- **Code Enforcement:** \$23,350 appropriated in 2020, \$18,431 expended in 2020, \$23,600 proposed for 2021.
- **Emergency Management:** \$2,600 appropriated in 2020, \$0 expended in 2020, \$5,250 proposed for 2021. Mr. C. Hanson stressed the need for an Emergency Management Director due to COVID. Mr. R. Hanson reported wages are being proposed, not all of the wage proposal may be paid.
- **Red Hill Fire Tower:** \$1,050 appropriated in 2020, \$1,050 expended in 2020, \$1,050 proposed for 2021.
- **Public Works:** \$380,140 appropriated in 2020, \$341,586 expended in 2020, \$380,785 proposed for 2021.
 - **Road salt:** Mr. Haines reported \$4,104 was encumbered (a contract was in place by December 31, 2020) to purchase road salt – the payment will be made in 2021.
- **Street Lighting:** \$8,681 appropriated in 2020, \$8,529 expended in 2020, \$8,530 proposed for 2021.
- **Sanitation:** \$201,602 appropriated in 2020, \$198,593 expended in 2020, \$204,365 proposed for 2021.
 - **Transfer Station:** Ms. Ponton asked if the contract for the Transfer Station is renegotiated periodically. She reported some of the staff are not courteous and questioned what input the Town has; Mr. Viens reported periodically enough people complain and employees are replaced. He reported the Town has contracted with Meredith for thirty plus years; the agreement is based on pro-rated services with Center Harbor paying 17 percent of the cost. Mr. Viens reported the cost is low compared to alternative trash removal services. Mr. Drenkhahn reported a couple of years ago, they tried to pass on the purchase of trailers which would have almost doubled Center Harbor’s cost; this was addressed with the Town of Meredith. Ms. Ponton reported Meredith’s population has grown more than Center Harbor’s and asked if Center Harbor’s cost is increasing because Meredith’s use of

the facility has increased. Ms. Richardson reported she feels it is a good deal for the Town; she recently had a question and met with a representative of the Transfer Station who explained the situation to her.

- **Health:** \$26,001 appropriated in 2020, \$26,000 expended in 2020, \$28,500 proposed for 2021.
 - **Health Officer:** Emergency Management Director (EMD) and Health Officer Tyler Driscoll reported he became Health Officer after Ken Ballance stepped down. He reported on the crossover between EMD and Health Officer.
 - **Lakes Region Visiting Nurses (LRVN):** Mr. Hughes expressed his concern about funding LRVN \$20,000 and questioned their services to Center Harbor residents. Mr. Viens reported the Selectmen received a letter of request along with information on services provided. Ms. Richardson reported her husband has received quality care from LRVN for almost a year. Mr. C. Hanson echoed Ms. Richardson's comments; he reported his mother received great care from the visiting nurses.
- **Welfare:** \$29,398 appropriated in 2020, \$33,955 expended in 2020, \$33,398 proposed for 2021.
- **Parks & Recreation:** \$53,162 was appropriated in 2020, \$41,132 expended in 2020, \$53,838 proposed in 2021.
 - **Wages:** Ms. Ponton reported being under the impression that the number of services the Parks & Recreation Department normally had did not happen in 2020 and questioned why the wages did not decrease. Ms. Frost explained that while activities like the July 4th footrace was cancelled, there was a record number of boat launches; approximately \$5,000 more in boat launch revenue was collected in 2020 over 2019. She reported with schools out and people not working, she was busy monitoring the docks and beach, including boat launch parking. Ms. Frost reported the only change at the beach was the cancellation of swimming lessons (tennis lessons were also cancelled). Ms. Richardson reported Ms. Frost had to distribute the beach parking passes this year as the Town Office was closed to the public at the beginning of the summer and then open by appointment only. Mr. Viens reported Ms. Frost did the elderly services survey and is working on a senior section on the Town's website; she also had to monitor State guidelines for COVID. Ms. Frost reported she makes sure it is safe at the beach and boat launch. Chief Chase reported when Ms. Frost is on duty, the police don't have to monitor the beach area; she does the initial monitoring, and if help is needed, she would call the police. Ms. Frost reported having beach parking permits in place has helped. Mr. C. Hanson asked Ms. Frost if she monitors the High Haith Boat Launch; she reported she goes over there when the Winnepesaukee beach slows down.
- **Library:** \$84,552 appropriated in 2020, \$51,692 expended in 2020, \$66,176 proposed for 2021. Library Trustee Annette Nichols reported the Library's hours were cut back and the assistant was furloughed due to COVID.
- **Patriotic Purposes:** \$31,250 appropriated in 2020, \$805 expended in 2020, \$31,250 proposed for 2021.
- **Other Culture:** \$16,175 appropriated in 2020, \$5,501 expended in 2020, \$15,825 proposed for 2021.

- **Historical Society:** \$1,000 appropriated in 2020, \$1,000 expended in 2020, \$1,000 proposed for 2021.
- **Conservation:** \$750 appropriated in 2020, \$527 expended in 2020, \$750 proposed for 2021.
- **Energy:** \$250 appropriated in 2020, \$250 expended in 2020, \$250 proposed for 2021.
- **Heritage Commission:** \$1,000 proposed for 2020, \$616 expended in 2020, \$1,000 proposed for 2021.
- **Debt Service:** \$187,282 appropriated in 2020, \$186,307 expended in 2020, \$186,308 proposed for 2021. Mr. Viens reported the Municipal Building's addition and renovations will be paid off in 2022. Ms. Nichols asked if the Town budgets for new vehicles; this is done through Capital Reserve and Expendable Trust Funds.
- **Warrant Articles:**
 - **Town House rehabilitation:** \$5,000 appropriated in 2020, \$5,000 expended in 2020, \$2,500 proposed for 2021. Ms. Ponton reported "Town House rehabilitation" is misleading; the past couple of years, the Heritage Fund has been used for other Town-owned historical properties. This will be changed to reflect it is funding for the Heritage Fund.
 - **Cemetery Maintenance and Restoration Expendable Trust Fund (ETF):** Ms. Ponton reported it is nice to see the Town paying more attention to the old cemeteries. Mr. Viens reported a number of historical headstones that were damaged in a storm a few years ago were repaired, not replaced. Mr. Haines reported the repairs were done in conjunction with FEMA. Mr. C. Hanson asked if the Memorial Park Cemetery hedge could be evaluated; Turnkey Construction, who performs the Town's landscaping services, has been asked to look at the hedge and make recommendations to the Selectmen.
 - **Lease/purchase of a backhoe:** Mr. Hanson reported there is a warrant article for the lease/purchase of a backhoe.
- **Tax Anticipation Note:** \$1 appropriated in 2020, \$4,488 expended in 2020, \$1 proposed for 2021.
- **Transfer to Capital Reserve Fund (CRF):** \$148,000 appropriated in 2020, \$148,000 expended in 2020, \$145,001 proposed for 2021.
- **Transfer to Expendable Trust Fund (ETF):** \$377,860 appropriated in 2020, \$377,860 expended in 2020, \$364,301 proposed for 2021.
 - **Town Beautification ETF:** Mr. Hughes asked why funding for the Town Beautification ETF went from \$1,500 to \$3,500. Mr. Viens reported on the cost for the purchase, installation and removal of the Christmas lights on the Library tree. Mr. C. Hanson reported on the poor condition of the tree and asked if it was the Selectmen's or Library Trustees decision to take the tree down; it would be the Selectmen's decision. Mr. Viens reported an arborist looked at the tree last year and the Selectmen decided to hold off on making a decision.
- **Trust funds:** Ms. Ponton asked the status of the small trust funds. Trustee of the Trust Funds Diane Drenkhahn reported most of the small trust funds have a specific use, these total approximately \$400. She reported Trustee Joe Hulkow and his wife purchase geraniums with funding from these funds.
- **Budget totals:** \$3,013,749 appropriated in 2020, \$2,890,370 expended in 2020, \$3,044,835 proposed for 2021. Mr. Hubel reported \$120,000 less was spent in 2020 than

was budgeted. Mr. Drenkhahn reported the unexpended funds go into the Town's General Fund. He explained the Towns have to keep a certain amount of money in reserve, but when the tax rate is set, the Selectmen can determine how much of the unreserved funds to use to offset taxations.

- **Property taxes:** Ms. Nichols asked if there were issues with higher-than-normal delinquencies with property tax payments; Ms. Richard reported there have not been issues.
- **Budget process:** Ms. Ponton recognized the Board for their diligence in the budget process.

CONTINUANCE: At 10:01 a.m. Mr. Drenkhahn continued the 2021 Budget Hearing to Wednesday, February 2, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

ADJOURNMENT: At 10:01 a.m. Mr. Drenkhahn motioned to adjourn the Board of Selectmen's meeting. Mr. Viens seconded the motion and the vote was unanimous.

Respectfully submitted,

Robin Woodaman
Selectmen's Administrative Assistant