

**Village District of Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS  
New Hampshire  
2020 Meeting Minutes**

Polls were opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year two thousand and twenty at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield at seven o'clock a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at seven o'clock p.m. with 447 votes cast. Polls were opened on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year two thousand and twenty at the Winnisquam Regional High School, Main Street, Tilton at eight o'clock a.m. by Moderator Charles Mitchell. The polls were closed at seven o'clock p.m. with 258 votes cast.

**Article 01** To choose a Fire Commissioner for the ensuing three (3) years.

**Paul Auger.....615**

**Article 02** To choose a Moderator for the ensuing two (2) years.

**Kent Finemore .....651**

The 2020 Fire District annual meeting was called to order at 7:06 p.m. on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of July in the year two thousand and twenty at the Winnisquam Regional Middle School, Winter Street, Tilton, by Moderator Kent Finemore to act upon the following subjects.

Moderator Kent Finemore introduced the members of the Budget Committee, Commissioners, Clerks and Assistant Moderators Timothy Sattler and Kaitlin Lounsbury. Read the rules of the meeting.

**Moved by Kevin Cate, seconded by Jerry Davis** to adjourn this meeting until Saturday September 26, 2020 at 7:30 a.m. Mr. Cate stated that the district isn't being represented because a lot of voters are not here due to the current pandemic. Moderator Finemore opened the floor for public comments.

Discussion ensued regarding the lack of voters present, other options for people to vote on the articles, the negative effects of postponing the meeting to include the delay of a fire engine could result in the cost increasing by 2-4%. Other's felt the meeting should continue as the requirements have been met to hold this gathering and there's no end in site for this pandemic.

No further questions or comments.

Moderator Finemore asks for a voice vote on the motion, in doubt asks for a voter card vote, **15 yes, 31 no, motion failed.**

Moderator Finemore read articles 1 and 2 with the results.

**Article 03** To accept the reports of the Treasurer and the Fire Commissioners and pass any vote relating thereto.

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Jerry Davis.**

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

There being none, Moderator Finemore called for a voice vote. **Article Passed.**

**Article 04** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Two Million Four Hundred Four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty-Seven Dollars (\$2,404,257.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, Seconded by Jerry Davis.**

Kevin Waldron presented an amendment to Moderator.

**Amendment 1:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Million Three Hundred Twenty-five Thousand Nine Hundred Seventy-four Dollars (\$2,325,974.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

Mr. Waldron stated that the difference is for two additional fire fighters to be removed from the budget.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

Chief Michael Sitar stated that he is opposed to this amendment as the department needs the additional staffing because they are finding it difficult to get the second ambulance out the door. He added that if they do not have the staff to get the second ambulance out then they will need to rely on Mutual Aid and the response time will be much longer for the caller. Budget Committee, Jason Wright stated that we cannot control the bottom line, so there is a possibility of still hiring and taking the funds away from another line item. He added that the original request was for four staff members, and it was reduced to two.

Budget Committee Member Kevin Waldron added that the idea to have two new staff was back in March. We are now in July and he feels the two new hires are not on staff and the job is still being done. He stated that there is possibly going to be a shortfall in taxes collected due to COVID and in addition adding two new staff member opens the door to collective bargaining agreements.

Members of the public stated that residents cannot afford this anymore and the constant increase is pushing people out of their homes. Discussion about lift services per year, room for additional staffing, hazards of going to calls alone, overall budget decreased from last year by 7.35%.

No further discussion, Moderator Finemore calls for a voice vote, in doubt calls for a voter card vote 21 Yes, 23 No,

**Amendment 1 Fails.**

Chief Michael Sitar presents an Amendment to Moderator Finemore

**Amendment 2:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Two Million Four Hundred Thirty-four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty-seven Dollars (\$2,434,257.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Chief Michael Sitar, seconded by Jerry Davis**

Chief Michael Sitar spoke to his amendment, stating that the article is to increase the repairs to the vehicles line item, this increase is because that line has already been over expended

Kevin Waldron called out Point of Order, because the Amendment is out of order.

Moderator Finemore agreed and moved back to the original article.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion of the original article.

Scott Davis pointed out that the handouts show a difference from what is published in the Town Reports.

Motion made by Lisa Swancott to reconsider the motion to adjourn the meeting.

Moderator Finemore does not accept that motion.

Greg Hill stated that he believes the motion to adjourn can come up at anytime.

Commissioner Jon Cilley called for a Point of Order as there is a motion on the floor.

Greg Hill stated that the motion to adjourn is a higher motion.

Motion by Greg Hill, seconded by Miles Clark to adjourn the meeting to September 21, 2020 at 7:00am

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding the differences in the budget and what was approved at the Public Hearing. Budget Committee member Jason Wright stated that the number in the warrant article is correct.

Clerk Stephanie Giovannucci stated that the MS-737 has the original warrant article as the correct budget total.

Kevin Cate moved to call the question.

Moderator calls for a voice vote to call the questions, not in doubt motion passes.

Moderator calls for a voice vote to adjourn the meeting, in doubt, calls for a voter card vote. 21 Yes, 27 No **Motion Fails.**

Chief Michael Sitar presents an amendment to the Moderator.

**Amendment 3:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Million Four Hundred Thirty-four Thousand Two Hundred Fifty-seven Dollars (\$2,434,257.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Chief Michael Sitar, seconded by Kaitlin Lounsbury**

Chief Sitar stated that this amendment is to replenish the line for vehicle repairs which has already been spent.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued about utilizing other funds to repair vehicles, and the appropriated \$160k from last year has lapsed.

No further discussion, Moderator Finemore asked for a voice vote, not in doubt, Amendment 3 Fails.

Moderator stated that we are now discussing the original article as written.

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Denny French to reconsider Amendment 1.**

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

Richard Olson asked if this article means they will not hire additional personnel. Moderator Finemore replied that this is a bottom line budget and that will be up to the Commissioners.

There being no further questions, Moderator Finemore calls for a voice vote, in doubt calls for a voter card vote, Yes 32, No 17 **Amendment 1 to Article 4 Passes.**

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Richard Olson** to protect the Vote. Moderator Finemore calls for a voice vote, not in doubt **Motion Passes.**

**Article 05** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Four Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand Six Hundred Forty-Three Dollars (\$483,643.00) for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue, EMS Equipment and Ambulance Charges, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Brain Dumka, seconded by Jason Wright.**

Commissioner Eric Pyra speaks to the article.

Moderator opens the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding the money is collected for ambulance charges through Comstar.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Finemore closes the floor for discussion and asks for a voice vote. In doubt, Moderator Finemore asks for a voter card vote. Yes 33, No 10 **Article 5 Passes**

**Article 06** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Hundred Eleven Thousand Four Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$811,450.00) for the purpose of purchasing a new fire engine and equipment with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jerry Davis, seconded by Jon Cilley**

Chief Michael Sitar spoke to the article stating that there are two engines that are in need of some heavy repairs, and because of that they have already expended all of their vehicles repair line in the budget and need to continue to do repairs to keep them on the road. Signing a contract this year will save the district \$25,000 on the first engine and possibly the same on the second if purchased this year.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued about the ongoing preventative maintenance on all of the vehicles, age and miles on the vehicle being replaced being Engine 1-2001 between 80-90 thousand miles, Engine 3-2006 at 114,000 miles, current balance in fund is \$1.3 million. Chief Sitar explained the department's maintenance plan and that Engine 1 does not pass certification and Engine 3 has high mileage and when it was in an accident years ago it should have been totaled.

Discussion continued about the warrant article amount not being high enough for two engines, bids for multiple engines, cost also takes into account to fit the Center St station.

**Moved by Kevin Cate, seconded by Ben Davis** to call the question.

Moderator Finemore asked for a voter card vote to call the question. Yes 23, No 20 **Motion Fails as it needs 2/3<sup>rd</sup>'s vote to pass.**

Chief Michael Sitar presented an amendment to the Moderator.

**Amendment 1:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Hundred Thirty-two Thousand One Hundred Twenty-seven Dollars (\$732,127.00) for the purpose of purchasing a new fire engine and equipment with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Scott Lewandowski, seconded by Jerry Davis.**

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Discussion ensued about purchasing two engines when the article states to purchase "a new fire engine" and the 2005 vote where it was not approved to make payments of equipment out of the fund.

There being no further questions, Moderator calls for a voter card vote, Yes 36, No 9 **Amendment 1 to Article 7 Passes.**

**Moved by Lisa Swancott, seconded by Jason Wright** to protect the vote. **Motion Passes.**

**Article 07** To see if the District will vote to change the purpose of the existing Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund as adopted in Article 11 of the 2005 District Meeting provided by RSA 31:95-C, to add "and payments towards bond(s), loan(s) or promissory note(s) for the construction, renovation or addition to building(s) used by the District to provide for the services of the District". This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (2/3 Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jerry Davis, seconded by Jon Cilley**

Commissioner Paul Auger speaks to the article.

Kevin Waldron presents an amendment to Moderator Finemore.

**Amendment 1:** To see if the District will vote to change the purpose of the existing Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund as adopted in Article 11 of the 2005 District Meeting provided by RSA 31:95-C, to add "and payments towards bond(s), loan(s) or promissory note(s) for the construction, renovation or addition to building(s) used by the District to provide for the services of the District and not-routine repair of wheeled apparatus". (2/3 Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Peter Fogg**

Kevin Waldron speaks to the amendment, stating this will allow non-routine maintenance to come from the fund instead of it all coming from the budget. He added that the money has already been spent out of this fund without the vote from the voters, and feels this is wrong.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for public discussion.

Commissioner Jon Cilley stated that the district meeting was to be held on March 13<sup>th</sup>, but due to COVID-19 the district has had to postpone the meeting several times. Emergency order #23 set by the Governor allowed the district to expend from the fund because the end of the life on the equipment was coming up on May 1<sup>st</sup> and we could not send our staff out to a call with expired equipment.

There being no further questions, Moderator called for a voice vote on Amendment 1, not in doubt **Amendment Fails.**

**Moved by Laurie Hill, seconded by Janice Cate** to call the question.

Moderator asks for a voice vote to call the question, not in doubt, **Motion Passes.**

Moderator calls for a voter card vote on the original Article 7. Moderator not in doubt once cards are raised, no count taken. **Article 7 Fails**

**Moved by James Swancott, seconded by Catherine Dawson** to protect the vote. **Motion Passes.**

**Article 08** Health Insurance Deductible ETF To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Six Hundred Dollars (\$1,600.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing health insurance deductible expendable trust fund with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Paul Blaisdell, seconded by Jason Wright**

Moderator Finemore opens the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding desired amount being \$5500 in the fund and last year they spent \$1600 which this article is to replenish the fund. Chief Sitar explained the process to utilizing the fund for medical deductibles for staff reimbursements.

There being no further questions, Moderator calls for a voice vote, not in doubt **Article Passes.**

**Article 09** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty-Four Dollars (\$8,734.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund

with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jon Cilley, seconded by Jason Wright**

Commissioner Jon Cilley spoke to the article.

Moderator opened the floor for public discussion.

There being none, called for a voice vote, Moderator is not in doubt, **Article Passes.**

**Article 10** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Five Hundred Twenty Dollars (\$7,520.00) for the purpose of purchasing materials, tools, and equipment related to public education, code enforcement, training, etc. with said funds to be withdrawn from the Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jason Wright, seconded by Jerry Davis**

Commissioner Jon Cilley spoke about the article explaining what the district purchases utilizing these funds.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding the use of the fund since schools are closed and trainings are cancelled. Chief Sitar stated that the fund is not only used for schools, they also go to the Senior Center, and put on other training programs, plus service elderly in need, current funds are about \$16,000. Julie Petty stated that the District did go to First Student and trained all of the bus drivers on how to use the equipment on the bus for emergencies.

There being no further question, Moderator called for a voice vote, in doubt called for a voter card vote.

Yes 23, No 16, **Article 10 Passes**

**Article 11** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum One Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$166,150.00) for the purpose of design, engineering, and architectural fees associated with the construction, addition, and/or renovation of a fire station or fire stations. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the building(s) is completed. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jason Wright, seconded by Kaitlin Lounsbury**

Commissioner Jon Cilley spoke to the article.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued regarding how it will be decided to spend from this fund, if this article fails the money will go back into the unassigned fund balance. The funds are to be used towards a new fire station that is looking to be proposed next year.

There being no further questions, moderator asked for a voter card vote. Yes 15, No 20 **Article 11 Fails**

**Article 12** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be added to the Land & Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Eric Pyra, seconded by Jerry Davis**

Commissioner Eric Pyra speaks to the article adding that this is a yearly maintenance item.

Lisa Swancott presented an amendment to the Moderator

**Amendment 1:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be added to the Land & Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Funds will not affect the tax rate.

**Moved by Lisa Swancott, seconded by Kevin Waldron**

Moderator opened the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued about making the amount \$166k to incorporate some of the previous article.

No further questions Moderator calls for a voice vote, not in doubt **Article 12 as Amended Passes**

**Article 13** To see if the District will vote to establish a Communications Tower Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the tower income to be used to offset costs for repairs, maintenance, construction costs and bonds of fire stations and to raise and appropriate One Dollar (\$1.00) to put in the fund, with this amount to come from Unreserved Fund Balance; further to name the Board of Commissioners as agents to expend from said fund. Future funding will come from the Communication Tower income collected. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by James Swancott, seconded by Kevin Waldron to Table the article.**

Moderator calls for a voice vote, in doubt, calls for a voter card vote, Yes 16, No 13, **Motion Fails** as the Moderator stated it needs a 2/3<sup>rd</sup> vote to pass and no one challenged his ruling.

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Jerry Davis**

Commissioner Auger speaks to the article stating that the tower is being proposed to be built behind the Fire Station on Park Street.

Moderator opened the floor for public discussion.

Discussion ensued about creating a fund before the tower is built or approved to be built, Commissioners being able to expend from the fund without being voted on.

No further questions, Moderator calls for a voice vote, in doubt calls for a voter card vote. Yes 12, No 18 **Article 13 Fails.**

**Article 14** To see if the District will vote to establish a contingency fund per RSA 31:98-a and raise and appropriate Twenty-Four Thousand Seven Hundred Ten Dollars (\$24,710.00) to put in the fund. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. Funds appropriated from this fund do not affect the tax rate. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

**Moved by Jason Wright, seconded by Jerry Davis**

Commissioner Eric Pyra spoke to the article, stating that this fund is the put money aside for district short comings, and if not used would go back into the general fund.

Moderator opened the floor for public discussion.

There being none, closed the floor for discussion and called for a voice vote, in doubt called for a voter card vote. Yes 11, No 17 **Article 14 Fails**

**Article 15** To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

Moderator Finemore opened the floor for other discussions.

Lisa Swancott, stated that she feels the Commissioners should utilize the Unassigned Fund Balance more to reduce taxes. Kaitlin Lounsbury, asked the voters to check out the District's website to view the plans for the soon to be proposed fire station.

Paul Blaisdell, thanked all of the volunteers on the committees and encouraged more participation.

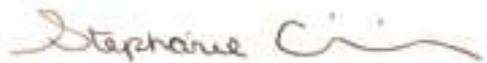
Kent Finemore, thanked the Supervisors of the Checklist for all the work they do for the elections and meetings.

Kevin Waldron, stated that tonight the District decided to purchase a new fire truck but the Commissioners are not obligated to purchase a specific kind, and encourage them to look at all options.

**Moved by Kaitlin Lounsbury, seconded by Brian Dumka to adjourn the meeting. Motion Passed.**

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted;



Stephanie Giovannucci, District Clerk