



# TOWN OF CONWAY

23 MAIN STREET • P.O. BOX 2680 • CONWAY, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03818

(603) 447-3811  
WWW.CONWAYNH.ORG

**Conway Municipal Budget Committee Agenda**  
**Professional Development Center at Kennett Middle School**  
**Conway, NH**  
**May 6, 2026 at 6:30 PM**

1. Call to order
2. Pledge of allegiance
3. Acceptance of resignation- David Smolen
4. Swearing in of new members
  - a. Three year terms:
    - i. Curt Burke Jr.
    - ii. Harrison Kenzler
    - iii. David Jensen
    - iv. Michael J. Lacy
  - b. One year term
    - i. Michael J. Misiaszek III
5. Approval of Minutes
  - a. 1/28/2026
  - b. 2/2/2026
  - c. 2/4/2026
  - d. 2/11/2026
  - e. 2/12/2026
  - f. 3/2/2026
  - g. 3/4 /2026
  - h. 3/25/2026
6. Second reading of Budget Committee bylaw changes
7. Review and approve 2026/2027 schedule
8. Old business
9. New business
10. Other New business
11. Public/Media questions and comments
12. Adjournment – next meeting

CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

KENNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

CONWAY, NH

January 28, 2026, 6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Quentin Lewis, Bob Drinkhall, Dave Jensen, Mike Lacey, William Marvel, Steve Angers, Frank Jost, Vice-Chair, Ryan Shepard, Select Board Representative, David Smolen, Chair Alex Loth, and Michael DiGregorio School Board Representative.

**Public Present:** Phil Ette, Executive Director, North Conway Community Center; Cheryl Ick, Past President

**Absent:**

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by F. Jost, acting Chair

Approval of Minutes

The Board did not review any minutes at this meeting.

North Conway Community Center

**Presenters:** Phil Ette, Executive Director, North Conway Community Center; Cheryl Ick, Past President

**Annual Operating Budget Request**

The North Conway Community Center requests **\$65,000** in annual funding, maintaining a consistent level of request for the past nine years. Despite operating on a tight budget with **2.5 full-time equivalent staff**, the Center continues to provide a broad range of programs and services to the community.

- **Revenue sources:**
  - Program fees contribute approximately **17% (\$45,000)** of annual revenue.
  - Rentals of rooms and facilities contribute another **11% (nearly \$30,000)**.
- **Funding opportunities:** The Center seeks additional funding from external sources where possible, including casino contributions, grants, and private donations. Last year, the Center received **\$19,741.92** from casino funding, which is anticipated to continue.

**Key priorities:**

- Maintain current programming and staffing.
- Continue providing diverse activities for youth and adults, especially following changes such as the closing of John Fuller School.

**Participation Trends:**

- Youth participation remains steady due to proactive program planning.
- The Center partners with regional organizations like Kids Advantage (Guilford) to expand offerings.
- Programs aim to engage not just athletes but children of all interests, including arts, crafts, and talent activities.

## 2. Playground Replacement Project

The Center proposes a **\$50,000 funding request from the town**, which represents **12.5% of the total \$400,000 playground campaign budget**.

### Project Goals:

- Replace the existing playground, which has reached the end of its 20+ year lifespan.
- Improve accessibility and ADA compliance, including paved access paths and wheelchair-accessible equipment.
- Provide enhanced play features, including:
  - Zip lines with bucket seats for core support and side-by-side riding options.
  - Ground-level accessible components for seniors, grandparents, and children with mobility challenges.
  - A standalone music station for interactive play.

### Project Timeline:

- **Spring groundbreaking** is targeted.
- **Demolition** of the existing playground will take approximately one week.
- **Construction completion** is expected within four weeks, in time for summer use.
- **The spray ground will remain operational.**

### Funding Strategy:

- The Center plans to raise **\$69,000** through private donations, corporate contributions, and grants (e.g., AARP, TD Bank, Gibson, Woodbury, King Foundation).
- Town funding, if approved, will supplement these efforts.
- The design of the playground will remain intact; delays in installing components could occur if fundraising falls short, but redesign is not planned.

### Community Use & Stakeholder Engagement:

- The playground is heavily used by both local residents and visitors, especially during festivals and events.
- While local usage is significant, visitors make up the majority of users.
- The Center plans to engage the **North Conway Village Association** to involve stakeholders who benefit from tourist use.
- This playground is effectively the **only traditional public playground** in the community outside of school grounds accessible during non-school hours.

### Other Notes:

- A detailed itemized breakdown of playground components and costs can be provided electronically.

- The playground is designed in two sections: one for younger children (approx. ages 2+) and one for older children, with the zip line positioned away from younger children for safety.

### **Key Takeaways**

- The Center maintains consistent, level-funded operating requests.
- Programming is responsive to community needs, including accessibility considerations and diverse offerings for youth and adults.
- The playground project emphasizes accessibility, safety, and long-term community benefit, while leveraging multiple fundraising avenues to minimize the burden on town resources.

### **Playground Discussion – Conway Rec / Community Playground**

Mike addressed questions regarding the participation trends at the John Fuller School programs, noting that while there are challenges with local vs. non-resident participation, Conway Rec has been able to hold numbers steady by collaborating with nearby programs like Kids Advantage in Guilford. He emphasized the goal of keeping the community active through creative programming and supplementing offerings already available in the area.

On the playground project, Mike detailed that the request for \$50,000 represents about 12.5% of a \$400,000 campaign budget to replace the existing 20+ year-old playground. Maintenance has been ongoing, but the playground has reached the end of its lifespan. The plan includes ADA-compliant features, such as paved access for wheelchairs, and new equipment like zip lines with bucket seats to support children needing core support. Fundraising efforts are underway to secure an additional \$69,000 through personal and business donations, with the goal of a spring groundbreaking and installation in time for summer. The spray ground will remain.

Discussion included the North Conway Village Association’s potential involvement, recognizing that visitors frequently benefit from the playground as much as local residents. Mike noted that while they have not yet engaged the Association, they plan to. Historical context was provided: the playground was built in 1940 by Harvey Gibson before the North Conway Community Center opened in 1948, and there was no special article required for its construction.

A school board member noted that the proposed budget aligns with what they are seeing for similar playground replacements, highlighting the high cost of individual pieces (e.g., slides at \$15–\$20,000). Attendees confirmed that the project would maintain swings, including popular double-seater swings and the potential addition of a tire swing.

### **Conway Area Humane Society**

Lauren Fullerton, Executive Director, noted that while the shelter would like to focus on transports and puppies, their priority is serving the immediate needs of the community. Conway alone recorded 30 owner surrenders in 2025, not including strays or rabies cases. The shelter also assists with animals captured by the police department or reported by community members.

### **Town Contract and Legal Requirements – Humane Society**

Lauren clarified that under New Hampshire law, the town is legally responsible for stray animals for the first seven days, or a ten-day quarantine for rabies. During this hold period, the town assumes ownership and covers costs. Afterward, the Humane Society takes over ownership and care expenses. Flat fees for the seven- and ten-

day holds are applied uniformly across all towns served. Accurate record-keeping ensures that the town only pays for services provided, aligning with state statutes.

### **Gibson Center Presentation – David Smolen**

**D. Smolen**, Executive Director of the Gibson Center, presented the center’s petition for a warrant article requesting \$40,000, consistent with the previous year’s funding. In FY25, the center served approximately 58,000 meals, exceeding its state contract of 46,000 meals. Midway through FY26, meal service is projected at 60,000, reflecting a 14% increase in program participation from the prior year. Given Carroll County’s median age of 54.2—the oldest in the state—the need for services such as meal delivery is growing.

The Gibson Center raises over \$300,000 annually through donor support and operates a thrift store on Grove Street, which contributes to sustainability. When asked about revenue from gambling-related sources, David noted that the center has not received such funds. He emphasized that gaming proceeds, when available, function more as an impact fee to offset community harms rather than a charitable donation. The center primarily serves individuals on fixed incomes, a mission it continues to prioritize.

The shelter serves a broad area, including Conway, Bartlett, Jackson, Madison, Tamworth, Freedom, Albany, Berlin, Gorham, and Chatham. Larger towns like Conway and Berlin make up the majority of owner surrenders, while smaller towns contribute a smaller portion.

Lauren explained that their warrant request for \$10,000 from Conway aligns with past years and represents a reasonable portion of the actual costs, which she audited at approximately \$15,000 for 2025. The audit leveraged medical tracking from the Valley Animal Hospital, now under the Humane Society umbrella, allowing detailed tracking of costs per animal and length of stay. The shelter does not anticipate a change in owner surrender numbers for 2026.

When asked about the new veterinary clinic opened this past year, Lauren explained that while it has generated some revenue, most clients are lower-income and require payment plans. As a result, the clinic’s income does not yet cover its expenses, though the plan is for it to grow into a sustainable resource that benefits the shelter in the coming years.

**D. Smolen** noted that while congregate dining has not yet returned to pre-COVID levels, Meals on Wheels delivery has steadily increased, currently serving approximately 115 meals per day. The Gibson Center maintains early-morning operations to support meal preparation and distribution. Although some satellite congregate meal sites are no longer active, overall participation has grown, reflecting increased demand for the center’s services.

**D. Smolen** emphasized the organization’s commitment to serving individuals on fixed incomes and maintaining a strong, personal relationship with the community, ensuring that programming decisions reflect the needs and well-being of those served.

### **Tri-County Community Action Program – Jeannie Robard**

Jeannie Robard, CEO of Tri-County CAP, presented a request for \$22,100 in funding for the town of Conway, correcting a previously submitted warrant article that incorrectly listed \$7,500. Tri-County CAP provides a wide range of services to local residents, including fuel and energy assistance, with 613 households receiving fuel support and 497 households receiving electric assistance last year.

Weatherization was the organization’s largest program, serving 144 individuals with over \$323,000 in home insulation and energy-efficiency improvements, prioritizing elderly residents and families with children under

five. Tri-County CAP also offers guardianship services for eight clients, managing healthcare and financial decisions on their behalf.

Early childhood programs include Head Start, serving five Conway families, and the Tamworth Dental Center, which provided care to 189 individuals last year. The dental center is temporarily closed due to staffing challenges, but efforts are underway to find a partner to continue providing reduced-fee dental services.

Additional programs include coordinated entry for homeless services, 2-1-1 emergency assistance, and USDA food distribution to five local pantries, totaling \$80,000 in food assistance. A free diaper distribution program supports households with young children, providing up to 180 diapers per child per month through the Community Action Resource Coordinator in Tamworth.

Overall, Tri-County CAP served 752 individuals in 469 households in Conway last year, delivering 4,065 services with a total calculated value of \$1,000,517. This value is determined by allocating program expenses across the number of clients served to calculate the unit cost per person.

Tri-County CAP provides both referral and direct housing assistance for individuals experiencing homelessness in Conway. Some clients are connected with emergency housing through coordinated entry, which places participants on a statewide housing waitlist. While this system ensures equitable access across New Hampshire, it can be slow to respond to urgent local needs. Tri-County CAP continues to explore alternative housing solutions to better serve the community.

Regarding funding, Tri-County CAP's board historically avoided charitable contributions tied to gambling, but due to uncertainties with federal funding—approximately 76% of the organization's revenue—the board opted to participate in a state casino partnership, receiving \$22,000 last year. This funding was specifically allocated to Conway, and it is uncertain whether Tri-County CAP will be selected again for future partnerships.

Tri-County CAP confirmed that fuel and electricity assistance applications are accepted until April 30th, even though the program officially opens on December 1st. Applications submitted in November are considered early and would not be denied solely for timing. In the 2025 season, over \$3 million in assistance was distributed within six weeks of the program opening.

Funding for fuel and electricity is managed regionally—there is no separate allocation per county, though Tri-County CAP offices track projected needs for each area and coordinate monthly with the state. Eligibility for fuel assistance is set at 200% of the federal poverty level, with consideration for household expenses; this ensures that income-eligible families receive support even if the nominal poverty threshold differs from state median income guidelines.

Tri-County CAP emphasized that their goal is to screen in and qualify people for assistance, not deny them, encouraging anyone in need to reach out. Contact information includes [tca.org](http://tca.org), the Carroll County office at 323-7400, or the statewide number 1-888-NHT-CAP.

They also highlighted the Guardian program, which provides court-ordered guardianship or representative payee services. Referrals can come through the state for Social Security benefits or via family members petitioning the court.

Tri-County CAP provides informational guides and companion guides for Energy Assistance to answer common questions and help residents access services.

### **Community Support Services in Conway**

**Tri-County Community Action Programs (CAP) and Way Station** continue to provide essential services supporting Conway residents, addressing energy needs, basic necessities, and housing insecurity.

**Tri-County Community Action Programs (CAP)** provides fuel and electric assistance to qualified households. Applications are accepted from **December 1 through April 30**, with income eligibility generally set at **200% of the federal poverty level**. CAP prioritizes qualifying residents rather than denying assistance, and residents can access **fuel, electricity, and heating support**, along with referral services through programs like **Guardian**, which manages benefits for those unable to do so themselves. Residents can reach CAP at [tca.org](http://tca.org), the Carroll County office at (603) 323-7400, or the toll-free line 1-888-648-2777 (NHTCAP).

### **The Way Station**

Representatives from the Way Station appeared before the Budget Committee to present their funding request and provide an overview of services provided to homeless and housing-insecure individuals in Conway and Carroll County.

The Way Station reported serving **364 individuals from Conway in 2025**, including **94 children, 206 adults aged 20–64, and 25 individuals over age 65**. Approximately **66% of all individuals served are Conway residents**, with the remainder coming from surrounding communities. The organization clarified that a labeling error in submitted pie charts identified “people” rather than “services”; however, the underlying data was accurate.

Way Station provides year-round services including mail access, showers, clothing, food, gas cards, laundry cards, phones, and case coordination. Phones were emphasized as critical for safety and employment. A new **mobile outreach van** was introduced in 2025 to improve access to services in outlying towns and to provide a safe, private space for client meetings.

### **Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Program**

Way Station administers the **Cold Weather Emergency Shelter Program** for Carroll County using funds from the New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services. Carroll County is the **only county in New Hampshire without a permanent homeless shelter**, requiring the program to rely on hotel placements.

Shelter activation thresholds are more restrictive than many counties and are based on **single-digit temperatures, negative wind chills, or significant winter storms**. During the 2025 season, shelter was activated beginning November 30. The program provided **nearly 1,000 bed nights**, an increase from approximately 700 the prior year, due in part to negotiated hotel rates.

At peak operation, the program cost approximately **\$2,500 per night**, later reduced to **\$2,000 per night** by limiting placements. Funds were exhausted by mid-January. Emergency private fundraising subsequently raised approximately **\$30,000**, allowing limited continuation of services at a reduced level of approximately **\$1,000 per night**, dependent on weather conditions.

Way Station emphasized that without this program, many costs would shift directly to municipal welfare budgets. Committee members noted that Conway’s welfare line item was currently over budget and experiencing significant demand.

### **Funding and Budget Questions**

Way Station requested **\$20,000 from Conway, \$10,000 from Ossipee**, and approximately **\$3,000 from other surrounding towns**. The organization stated it intentionally increases requests gradually and remains primarily **privately funded**, seeking to minimize reliance on public funds. Public funding may be used to demonstrate sustainability when applying for grants, but grants cannot be relied upon annually.

Committee members questioned whether additional funding should have been requested given demonstrated need. Way Station responded that requests are made conservatively and incrementally, reflecting growth while attempting to avoid overburdening municipalities.

**Committee discussion addressed:**

- The impact of homelessness on municipal welfare costs
- The lack of shelter infrastructure in Carroll County
- The complexity of operating a centralized shelter given safety, staffing, and population needs
- Coordination with other agencies, including the Welfare Office and Peer Support Center, to improve wraparound services

It was noted that individuals served are predominantly residents with ties to employment, families, healthcare, and schools. Seasonal individuals are occasionally assisted but discouraged from remaining in the area during winter due to safety risks.

Information was shared regarding specialized housing assistance available for veterans through private resources.

The Committee acknowledged the emotional and financial strain associated with emergency sheltering and discussed the broader need for coordinated regional solutions.

Way Station representatives noted that due to **extreme weather conditions**, the current cold weather shelter model did not stretch funding as anticipated. Funds that were expected to last approximately three months were exhausted significantly earlier. As a result, Way Station indicated it would **review shelter models used by other counties** and consider substantial changes to its approach for the following year. It was emphasized that the current program is **not a long-term solution to homelessness**, but an **emergency response to immediate life-safety concerns**, particularly during severe cold events.

Committee members discussed the availability of **heated public buildings**, including unused school facilities, as a possible short-term emergency option. It was clarified that this discussion related only to immediate emergency needs and not a permanent shelter solution. Members suggested that the issue may warrant **further discussion with the School Board**, given safety, staffing, and logistical considerations.

Way Station confirmed that the **cold weather shelter program was currently activated**, with an extension approved for at least one additional night based on weather conditions and recently raised private donations. Shelter activation decisions are made daily and are weather-driven. When activated, **notifications are sent to emergency responders, police departments, and partner agencies**, identifying the activation period and reason.

Committee members acknowledged the collaborative network of nonprofit organizations serving the region and emphasized that these services help prevent additional strain on municipal welfare resources by assisting residents before they reach crisis conditions.

Members of the public and the committee expressed appreciation for the work of local nonprofit organizations and encouraged continued municipal and community support.

The Select Board was thanked for attending and participating in the joint discussion. The combined meeting portion was formally concluded.

### **Post-Presentation Discussion and Scheduling**

Following the joint session, brief discussion occurred regarding upcoming meetings related to school facilities and governance:

- The **School Board** meets on the **second and fourth Mondays of each month**, with the next meeting scheduled for **Monday, February 9, at 6:30 PM**.
- The **John Fuller Committee** meeting was scheduled for **Wednesday, February 18, at 6:00 PM**, pending confirmation of its revised scope following School Board direction.

Concern was expressed that the timing of upcoming meetings may limit the ability to address **immediate cold-weather shelter needs**, given current conditions.

Further discussion occurred regarding the potential use of public buildings, including school facilities, for **temporary daytime warming or emergency shelter** during extreme cold. It was noted that while compassion exists for individuals experiencing homelessness, any such use would require **significant oversight, staffing, and policy compliance**. School Board representatives emphasized that authorization for use of school facilities is **not within the purview of individual board members** and would require careful consideration of safety, supervision, liability, and funding for oversight.

Members acknowledged that the issue is complex and that any emergency use of school buildings would require coordinated planning and resources.

### **Budget Committee Membership – Appointment Consideration**

**Chair A. Loth** noted that the Budget Committee consists of twelve members and currently has **two vacancies**. It was reported that **Curt Burke** had formally expressed interest in joining the committee, and his letter of interest had been circulated to members in advance of the meeting.

Mr. Burke addressed the committee and summarized his background and qualifications, including:

- Attendance at School Board meetings for approximately eight months, with a focus on budget review;
- Attendance at School Board committee meetings and recent Budget Committee meetings;
- Familiarity with both the School District and Town budgets;
- Professional experience as an office manager for a local excavation company, with responsibilities including budgeting, job costing, financial analysis, and recommendations.

Mr. Burke acknowledged that the budget process is already underway, but stated he has been closely following developments and would be prepared to contribute.

**Motion:** **S. Angers** motioned to appoint Curt Burke to a vacant position on the Budget Committee.

**Second:** **B. Drinkhall**

**Abstention:** **R. Shepard and M. DiGregorio**

**Vote:** 11-0-2 – Motion passes

It was noted that appointments are typically avoided late in the budget cycle; however, it was acknowledged that Mr. Burke has been consistently attending meetings and is well-informed on both School and Town budget matters.

A question was raised regarding Mr. Burke's activity on social media related to town and school issues, asking whether such activity could affect his impartiality as a Budget Committee member. It was stated that while personal social media use is an individual matter, committee decisions carry significant responsibility and impact.

Further discussion was held regarding concerns raised about Mr. Burke's prior public commentary on social media related to Town and School matters. Committee members emphasized the importance of impartiality, recognizing that Budget Committee decisions directly affect residents and municipal operations.

Mr. Burke responded that he did not view himself as overly critical and stated that any prior comments reflected personal opinions expressed during prior budget seasons. He cited a specific instance related to the prior year's School budget, where he supported the default budget rather than a proposed reduction. Mr. Burke stated that his motivation for serving on the committee is not to oppose budgets reflexively but to provide informed oversight.

Committee members clarified that the appointment would be **temporary**, serving through the remainder of the current budget cycle, including deliberative session and town vote. Any continued service beyond that period would require election or reappointment.

It was further noted that committee members are expected to approach budget review objectively and with consideration of the impact on the community.

The Chair called for a vote on the motion to appoint **Curt Burke** to the Municipal Budget Committee.

- **Votes in favor:** Majority
- **Votes opposed:** None
- **Abstentions:** Two (Ryan and Mike)

**Motion carried.**

Mr. Burke was **appointed** to the Municipal Budget Committee for the remainder of the current budget cycle.

The Chair congratulated Mr. Burke and advised him to coordinate with Town staff regarding the swearing-in process.

**New Business**

Following the appointment of the new committee member, administrative items were addressed.

The Chair reviewed the **upcoming Budget Committee meeting schedule**, noting that meetings are generally held on **Mondays and Wednesdays at 6:30 PM**, leading up to the deliberative session. It was clarified that:

- The **next meetings** would be held on **Monday and Wednesday at 6:30 PM**, both at Conway Town Hall.
- Due to a previously canceled meeting, an **additional meeting was scheduled for Wednesday, February 4**, at Conway Town Hall.
- One committee member noted they would be unable to attend that specific meeting due to a scheduling conflict.

The committee recommended that newly appointed members coordinate with Town staff to:

- Complete the **swearing-in process**;
- Obtain access to a **Town-issued email address** for Budget Committee business, noting that while optional, it is recommended to maintain separation between personal correspondence and public business, particularly in relation to Right-to-Know requests.

It was discussed that while meeting videos are available for public viewing, members expressed interest in ensuring that **prior agendas and approved minutes** are also easily accessible on the Town website. The Chair stated that this issue would be raised again with staff.

A brief discussion occurred regarding the posting of canceled School Board meetings. School Board members clarified that cancellations are posted through official channels and that weather-related decisions are made based on safety considerations.

**Public/Media Comments**

There was none

**Adjournment**

With no further business, **R. Shepard** moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **D. Smolen** and approved unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 8:41 PM.**  
**The meeting ran 2 hours and 11 minutes long.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jade Hartsgrove  
*Minutes Recorder*

CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING

KENNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL

CONWAY, NH

February 2, 2026, 6:30 PM

The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Quentin Lewis, Bob Drinkhall, Dave Jensen, Mike Lacey, William Marvel, Steve Angers, Frank Jost, Vice-Chair, Ryan Shepard, Select Board Representative, David Smolen, Chair Alex Loth, and Michael DiGregorio School Board Representative.

**Public Present:**

**Absent:** Kevin Lebel

**Pledge of Allegiance:** Led by F. Jost, acting Chair

**Motion:** D. Jensen motioned to skip the capital reserves discussion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Second:** F. Jost

**Abstention:** None

**Vote:** 13-0-0 – Motion passes

**Warrant Articles**

**Repeal of Public Art Ordinance**

Ryan O'Connor, Town Planner, presented a warrant article proposing the repeal of the Public Art Ordinance, which was adopted by the Planning Board in 2024. He explained that the repeal is part of a settlement agreement related to the Leavitts case and that the Select Board agreed to place the repeal on the 2026 ballot.

Mr. O'Connor noted that the Planning Board is in the process of revising the sign code and zoning ordinance more broadly and expects updated language to return in a future year.

It was further explained that if the repeal does not pass, the Select Board has already indicated the ordinance will not be enforced.

Committee members discussed whether the Budget Committee would vote on non-monetary warrant articles. It was noted that in recent years, the Committee has voted on all warrant articles under the rationale that they may have fiscal impacts.

**Police Station Bond Warrant Article**

Lieutenant Kelly Scott of the Conway Police Department presented the proposed Police Station Bond warrant article, accompanied by Police Commissioners Roddy King and Andy Pepin. Lieutenant Scott presented in the absence of Chief Mattei.

The Committee was informed that this is the third year the proposal has been brought before voters. The project includes renovation of the existing police station and construction of an addition.

Key details presented included:

- Original police station construction date: 1988–1989
- Existing building size: approximately 7,850 square feet
- Proposed addition: approximately 6,800 square feet
- Total project cost: **\$9,372,828**, excluding bond interest
- Increase from prior year estimate: approximately **\$254,256**

Further bond-related financial information was introduced for review.

Lieutenant Scott advised the Committee that while overall project costs are expected to continue increasing due to construction inflation, updated bond interest rates have decreased since the prior year. Previously presented bond rates from July 2025 were 4.3% for a 20-year bond and 4.54% for a 25-year bond. Updated rates are now approximately 3.43% for a 20-year bond and 3.5% for a 25-year bond.

Using a \$400,000 assessed home as a mid-range example, Lieutenant Scott explained that under the prior rate, the estimated annual tax impact for a 20-year bond was approximately \$112 in the first year. Under the updated rates, the estimated annual impact would be approximately \$104 in the first year, decreasing to approximately \$92 in the second year. Committee members noted that while project costs have increased, lower interest rates may result in overall savings over the life of the bond.

Lieutenant Scott emphasized that the purpose of the presentation was to ensure the Committee and voters are informed of the updated financial impacts. He reiterated that the need for the project remains and is expected to continue.

Additional building concerns were reviewed, including findings from the feasibility study addressing space limitations, aging heating and cooling systems, and other infrastructure deficiencies. Lieutenant Scott noted that the Police Department recently replaced windows at an approximate cost of \$100,000 using specifications consistent with the proposed project to ensure compatibility if the project proceeds.

Operational limitations of the existing facility were discussed, including staffing levels of approximately 35 employees and limited restroom and shower facilities, which present challenges during overlapping shifts.

Lieutenant Scott further described ongoing maintenance and safety concerns within the existing police facility. He noted that aging mechanical systems require frequent manual adjustments and that failure to proceed with the project would result in continued costly repairs. He cited a recent pipe burst in the rear vestibule area, which required immediate response from Public Works staff.

Lieutenant Scott emphasized significant safety concerns related to the current cell block and booking layout. He explained that detainees are transported from the garage through booking and into the cell block without a secured separation from the remainder of the building. As a result, individuals in custody could potentially access unsecured areas where civilian and sworn personnel are working. He stated that while staff take extensive precautions, the lack of secured access represents a serious safety risk that would not be acceptable in a modern police facility.

Lieutenant Scott noted that this is the third consecutive year the warrant article has been presented and expressed hope that voters would approve the project.

## **Committee Discussion**

Committee members discussed prior voting results on the warrant article, noting that approval requires a 60% affirmative vote. It was noted that the article received approximately 51% approval in the prior year and a lower percentage the year before, with a significant number of blank ballots cast on the article.

Members encouraged public participation and emphasized the importance of voting. The Police Department reiterated its willingness to provide tours of the existing facility to members of the public.

Committee members inquired about the anticipated annual debt service associated with the bond if approved. Lieutenant Scott explained that the debt service would appear as a line item within the Town's budget under debt service payments and offered to provide updated payment estimates based on current interest rates and assessed valuation.

Several committee members shared firsthand observations from recent tours of the police station, expressing concern regarding the condition of the facility, including water intrusion and overall building deterioration.

Committee members expressed concern that all Town employees should have safe and acceptable working conditions. Lieutenant Scott confirmed that existing issues, including persistent roof leaks in the dispatch area, have been ongoing for an extended period and are not isolated incidents. He noted that staff have taken temporary measures, including roof maintenance, to mitigate these issues.

Committee members reiterated that the proposed police station project represents a necessity rather than a discretionary improvement and encouraged additional Board members and the public to tour the facility to better understand the conditions and safety concerns.

Further discussion reflected on the original construction of the existing police station, with members noting that cost-cutting measures during its design and construction have contributed to current deficiencies and long-term maintenance challenges. A committee member questioned whether the department was holding firm on the current scope of the project to ensure public and officer safety and to avoid repeating past mistakes.

Lieutenant Scott responded that the project scope was developed with assistance from the H.L. Turner Group through a formal feasibility study, which evaluated current and long-term departmental needs. He explained that revisions were made to reduce costs, including removal of a previously proposed basement addition, while still maintaining adequate square footage to meet operational requirements and future growth. Considerations included ADA compliance, stairways, and elevator access.

Lieutenant Scott provided examples of current space limitations, including an evidence room that is significantly undersized. He explained that the proposed design would relocate the evidence room into a substantially larger area, allowing for proper storage and long-term functionality. He added that the department also toured newer police facilities in other municipalities and incorporated best practices and design elements into the proposed plan.

Lieutenant Scott concluded that extensive planning efforts were made to ensure the proposed facility would meet the Town's needs for many years and avoid recurring space and safety issues.

Committee members asked for clarification regarding the size and location of the proposed evidence room in the new police station. Lieutenant Scott explained that the new evidence room would occupy approximately the same square footage as the existing garage, significantly increasing available space compared to the current, undersized

facility. Committee members confirmed that the existing evidence room and utility areas are extremely limited, and the proposed design would alleviate those constraints.

Comparisons were made to other municipalities' facilities. Lieutenant Scott and other department representatives visited police stations in Lincoln and Belmont, noting that Lincoln's new station was larger, though some design elements, such as a sleep room for officers, were deemed unnecessary for the Town's needs. Best practices and ideas from these tours were incorporated into the proposed plan to ensure functionality and efficiency.

Committee members thanked the department representatives for their presentation and participation.

### **Settlers Green Drive Betterment Bond Discussion**

The discussion shifted to the Settlers Green Drive road betterment project. Committee members reviewed the history of the project, noting that the Town had conditionally accepted the road in the prior year, but the original article did not authorize borrowing funds. The current bond article seeks approval to raise and appropriate funds for the betterment project.

It was clarified that the bond requires a three-fifths (60%) vote to pass. The project would assess \$1.683 million to the abutters benefiting from the improvements, and these costs would be reflected in their taxes. Non-abutting taxpayers would not bear any of the expense. Committee members emphasized the importance of understanding that all funds would be recovered through these assessments.

In the event the bond fails, conditional acceptance of the road would remain in place, and the project would likely appear as an article on the next year's warrant.

Committee members sought clarification regarding the mechanics of the road betterment project. It was confirmed that the Town would not assume maintenance of the roads until the improvement work is completed to meet the conditional acceptance requirements. If the bond does not pass, the roads would remain privately maintained, and the project would likely appear on a future warrant.

The discussion addressed how the assessment would be divided among abutters. Settlers Green properties would bear the largest portion of the cost, with other abutters, including Market Basket, a local hotel, and several apartment complexes, also contributing based on frontage. Smaller contributors, such as owners on Wiley Court, would have minimal assessments (approximately \$80 per year over ten years). Committee members emphasized that the allocation of costs relative to benefit is still under discussion by the Select Board.

Committee members also inquired about annual maintenance costs once the Town assumes the roads. It was explained that initial maintenance costs would be minimal because the roads, drainage, and curbing would be new. Ongoing responsibilities would include plowing, crosswalk and pavement markings, and occasional catch basin cleaning, with the additional maintenance impact expected to be minor.

Long-term maintenance and oversight of the roads once the Town assumes responsibility. It was clarified that the roads would be added to the Town's pavement maintenance schedule and expected to follow a typical 15-year overlay cycle. Initial costs would be minimal due to the new condition of the roads, with ongoing maintenance primarily consisting of plowing, striping, and occasional catch basin cleaning. Exact overlay costs were not available at the meeting.

Members sought clarification for the public on the specific sections involved: the private portion of Common Court (from Market Basket around the Settlers Green frontage back to the former Common Court connector) and Settlers Green Drive (from Route 16 into Common Court). Concerns were raised about the potential for future

abatements by Settlers Green property owners, noting that any abatements could reduce their share of costs and shift the financial burden onto other taxpayers.

It was noted that the roads had already been conditionally accepted by the Town. While the bond vote would provide funding for the betterment project, conditional acceptance remains in effect, and the only way to remove the condition would be through a separate vote specifically to rescind acceptance. Committee members confirmed that the conditional acceptance did not include any restrictions preventing owners from seeking future abatements.

Committee members addressed the involvement of other abutters in the original and current articles. It was clarified that the initial article was a petition requiring 25 signatures. Subsequent betterment procedures included public hearings and notifications to all affected property owners, allowing them the opportunity to appeal or voice concerns. Specific details regarding which abutters signed the petition were not known, but it was confirmed that all affected parties received official notice and could participate in the process. Settlers Green was noted to hold the largest portion of frontage, approximately 42% of one section (R2), contributing the largest share of the betterment assessment, with additional frontage in other sections bringing their total contribution above 50%.

Questions were raised regarding the total bond amount of \$1,683,502. It was confirmed that this amount includes principal, interest, bond issuance costs, and contingencies. Estimates provided by Settlers Green contractors were reviewed by the Town engineer to verify quantities and pricing. The committee discussed that the funds allocated should fully cover the project costs, with the potential for slight excess to ensure completion.

It was clarified that the **\$1,683,502** bond amount was intended to cover principal, interest, issuance costs, and contingencies, with final numbers to be confirmed at the Board of Selectmen meeting. The goal is for the betterment charges to cover all project-related costs, ensuring sufficient funding.

Questions were raised regarding the scope of the road work. It was explained that Settlers Green Drive will undergo a full rebuild due to drainage issues, poor road profile, narrow sidewalks, and curbing that needs adjustment. Other sections, such as the portion toward Market Basket, will receive an overlay as those areas are in better condition. Drainage improvements include reshaping the road to direct water to existing ponds, resetting curbing, and ensuring basins are operational, while most existing drainage features remain functional. Particular trouble spots, such as the section behind Applebee's, require reconstruction to address chronic issues.

Clarification was also provided on the betterment assessment. While no funds are drawn from the general tax base, affected property owners will see charges on their tax bills. This is a special assessment (repayable over time) applied only to properties benefiting from the improvements, rather than the general population. Comparisons to a condo association were noted to be imprecise, as the road serves multiple property owners.

### **Road Frontage and Property Assessment Discussion**

It was noted that Settlers Green Drive serves multiple property owners and connects from one roadway to another, meaning it functions as a public-use road, not just private access. While some properties pay higher taxes, the road's use by the general public adds complexity in apportioning costs. The betterment assessment was based primarily on road frontage, reflecting which properties receive the largest benefit—particularly Settlers Green properties, which constitute the majority.

Some discussions suggested that a traffic-based assessment might better reflect actual road usage, accounting for heavy truck traffic, Market Basket customers, and residents using the road for general access. However, the frontage-based method was seen as the most practical way to allocate costs among affected property owners.

Regarding Wiley Court, only a very small portion will be reconstructed as part of this project, specifically for driveway aprons and merging of rights-of-way. Property owners on Wiley Court will contribute to costs proportional to their frontage involved in the project. Other owners, such as those associated with Green Granite, will receive notifications, but they are not directly part of the betterment assessment as they do not have driveways connected to the project roadways.

Further discussion clarified that while Settlers Green Drive functions as a connector road used by the general public, the betterment assessment was structured around frontage to reflect proportional benefit rather than traffic volume. Members acknowledged that although alternative methods, such as traffic studies, could theoretically be used, frontage-based assessment was considered the most practical and defensible approach.

Questions were raised regarding Wiley Court and adjacent properties. It was clarified that the project does **not** extend into Wiley Court, but that a small portion of frontage associated with driveway aprons and right-of-way transitions would be affected. Property owners on Wiley Court would therefore be assessed only for the limited frontage directly impacted by the improvements.

Discussion addressed Green Granite and other property owners in the area. It was explained that while some owners have frontage along Wiley Court, they do not have driveways accessing the project roadways and therefore are not part of the primary betterment area. Notices were sent to all potentially affected owners to ensure transparency and opportunity for comment.

Committee members confirmed that all abutters received formal notice and that assessment allocations would ultimately be finalized through the Select Board process to ensure clarity and fairness.

### **Operating Budget and Default Budget Discussion**

The Committee moved on to discussion of the Town's operating budget. It was noted that a notation in the packet indicating the operating budget was "not recommended" by the Budget Committee was a clerical error, and members clarified that recommendations shown in the packet may not yet reflect final votes by the Select Board.

The Committee was informed that all warrant articles, including operating budget and capital reserve articles, would undergo legal review prior to finalization. Draft language was provided at this stage to allow for discussion.

### **Default Budget Clarification**

It was clarified that some default budget figures included in the packet were incorrect or incomplete, as they reflected last year's numbers or draft placeholders. The correct figures were reviewed verbally:

- **Proposed Operating Budget:** \$15,959,325
- **Default Budget (adjusted):** \$15,674,179

The difference between the proposed and default budgets was clarified after adding a required adjustment for Animal Control within the Police Department due to union contract obligations.

### **Definition of Default Budget**

For the benefit of newer members, the statutory definition of the default budget was read into the record. The default budget reflects the prior year's authorized operating budget, adjusted for:

- Contractual obligations (including union contracts),
- Mandated expenses required by law,
- Changes in debt service,
- Elimination of one-time expenditures, and
- Removal of salaries and benefits for eliminated positions.

### **Key Differences Between Proposed and Default Budgets**

At the request of Committee members, staff provided highlights of the primary differences between the default and proposed budgets. It was noted that:

- There were few one-time expenditures in the prior year's budget.
- The Town Clerk's budget removed one-time costs related to credit card processing but increased due to three legally mandated elections in the current year.
- Union contract wage and benefit increases, including health insurance, are required to be included in the default budget.
- All contractual wage and benefit obligations mandated by law must be reflected in the default budget, including those related to Town and School union agreements.

Committee members confirmed their understanding that increases required by union contracts, including health insurance costs, are included in the default budget by statute.

### **Assessing Department**

- The Assessing Department represented one of the largest budget increases compared to last year.
- Despite reverting to a default budget, leadership emphasized that this does not mean services or staffing would actually be reduced in practice.
- Strong recommendation not to remove staff from the Assessing Department.
- The department is considered critical, particularly as the town enters a revaluation year.

### **Revaluation and Compliance Requirements**

- The town has received strict instructions requiring:
  - Re-listing and re-measuring all commercial properties
- Partial completion is not acceptable; failure to complete the work could result in penalties from the BTLA.
- Due to time constraints, the town plans to:
  - Use remaining contract funds
  - Hire external firms to work evenings and weekends to complete the work on schedule

### **Potential Budget Cuts**

- If reductions are required under the default budget, they may impact:
  - Paving
  - Other services, rather than staffing in critical departments
- Department heads would be consulted before final decisions are made.

### **Largest Budget Areas**

- The Police Department and

### **Highway Department and Staffing**

- The Highway Department is already short-staffed.
- Members praised the department's recent snow removal performance, noting it exceeded state road conditions.
- Consensus that no further staffing cuts can be made in:
  - Highway Department
  - Police Department
- Any future reductions would focus on services or line items, not personnel.

### **Paving Budget Discussion**

- Paving was identified as a potential area of reduction, though reluctantly.
- Town officials emphasized:
  - It took 18 years to restore the town's 10-year paving plan
  - The town is now on schedule, and leadership wants to maintain it
- Cutting paving again was described as a philosophical decision, not a reflection of mismanagement.
- Repeated deferral of paving in past years led to long-term infrastructure challenges.

### **Default Budget Approach**

- If the town moves to a default budget:
  - Department heads will meet to identify reductions with the least impact on residents
  - A recommendation will be made to the Selectboard
- Acknowledgment that the explanation of impacts remains somewhat vague until final numbers are calculated.
- Default budget would primarily reduce the bottom line, requiring adjustment of multiple "puzzle pieces."

### **Tax Impact Questions**

- A question was raised regarding:
  - Cost per \$1,000 of assessed value
  - Impact on a \$400,000 home
- Town staff indicated:
  - Exact figures were not yet available
  - These numbers will be included in the Town Report
  - Preliminary indication is that the impact would be relatively small
- Staff committed to calculating and sharing the figures once available.

### **Fire Department**

Phil Richardson presented on behalf of the Fire Chief, who was on vacation.

### **Budget Overview**

- The Conway Fire Department operating budget for Conway Village is \$1,214,442, compared to a default budget of \$1,113,941.

- The difference is funded via a special assessment on non-precinct areas (outside Conway Village).

### **Geographic Coverage**

- The budget covers Conway Village but does not include:
  - Redstone
  - East Conway
  - South Conway
- The assistant chief is responsible for understanding exact boundaries.
- While only the service area is directly affected, all town voters must legally vote on the warrant article due to statutory requirements.

### **Service Standards and Concerns**

- Conway historically provides high-level service, often paramedic-level care, higher than many surrounding areas.
- North Conway and other areas had limited service (basic or advanced EMT level), requiring paramedic intercepts from Conway.
- Example: 145 paramedic intercepts in one year were needed in North Conway because local services were insufficient.

### **Paramedic Intercepts and Fee Structure**

- Paramedic intercepts can cost \$500–\$1,000 per call, covering medical supplies and medications.
- Historically, some areas (e.g., North Conway) relied on mutual aid and avoided paying for these services.
- Commissioners instituted a fee structure for intercepts to prevent supplementing private businesses.
- F Fryberg worked well with Conway, paying only for services actually requested.
- Other areas (e.g., Brewster) were previously taking advantage of Conway's generosity, prompting the structured fee.

### **Key Points on Town-Wide Voting**

- Town-wide voting ensures broader awareness and equitable cost distribution, even if the service only directly affects a subset of residents.
- Mike (former commissioner) highlighted that having the entire town vote helps prevent underpayment by areas outside the precinct.
- The discussion acknowledged a transition from individual village control to town-wide management to standardize service and taxes.
- Residents outside Conway Village are encouraged to leave the vote blank if the service does not affect them.

### **Future Considerations**

- Potential consolidation of the three fire departments into a single town-run department was discussed.
- Leadership changes in North Conway may prompt a review of coverage and potential integration.
- Maintaining Conway's historically high service standard town-wide is a priority.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Corrected typo in budget figure: \$1,214,442 (thousands previously omitted).
- Historical context: Only 51 people voted on the North Conway fire station construction (approx. \$7 million).
- The discussion emphasized that town-wide oversight and consolidated budgeting provide transparency and equitable service for all residents.

### **Water Department Operating Budget**

- Operating Budget: \$868,914 (default \$866,521).
- Paid only by water users, not via property taxes.

#### **Trust Funds:**

- \$50,000 allocated to two expendable trust funds (capital reserves).
- Sewer trust funds apply to a smaller user group than fire; includes equipment and STAR-mandated funds tied to grant requirements.
- Sewer Operating Budget: \$1,597,570 (default \$1,684,874).

#### **Meter Replacement Program:**

- Increased funding due to faster-than-expected meter failure.
- Halfway through replacements, new meters have advanced monitoring technology.
- Staff can detect leaks and spikes in usage in real-time, enabling proactive customer notifications.
- Original meters were intended for an 8–10 year lifespan; many lasted 20+ years.

### **Police Commercial Duty Revolving Fund**

- **Established:** April 11, 2006.
- **Purpose:** to collect and manage funds from commercial duty officers, keeping revenues separate from the town's general fund.
- **Fees:** \$10/hour administrative fee; an additional \$15/hour if a police cruiser is used.

#### **Key Updates and Proposed Change:**

- Original language restricted use to “police commercial duty purposes” only.
- Current fund balance: ~\$64,604 cannot currently be accessed for repairs or replacements.
- Proposed language change would allow the fund to cover:
  - Salaries and benefits for commercial duty officers
  - Supplies
  - Equipment
  - Vehicle repairs and replacements

#### **Use Cases / Examples:**

- End of 2023, a cruiser transmission failed; repair was ~\$3,800. Without access to the fund, repair had to wait until the next year.
- Fund could be used to offset vehicle repair costs, or for the purchase of new cruisers if costs rise.
- Typically, the department requests two cruisers per year.

### **Other Notes:**

- Cruiser assignments are coordinated by a sergeant.
- Officers may not always use their assigned patrol cruiser for a detail if it is shared across shifts.
- There is flexibility in managing which vehicles are used for commercial details, balancing availability and fund usage.
- Requires a two-thirds vote to amend the fund's purpose.

### **Town Clerk/Tax Collector**

#### **Background:**

- The Town Clerk/Tax Collector is an elected official, and therefore, their salary is determined by a warrant article rather than internal administrative decisions.
- Previous raises were automatic (3% per year), but the new system ties adjustments to CPI plus 1%, with CPI limits of 2%–4%, resulting in annual increases between 3% and 5%.
- The system aims to align the elected position with non-union staff without overextending the budget.

#### **Survey Benchmarking:**

- Base salaries are guided by a 30-town survey of comparable municipalities.
- New hires start at 87.5–100% of the regional average, with flexibility depending on experience and qualifications.
- This ensures competitiveness while controlling costs. For instance, Laconia pays significantly higher combined salaries (\$162,000) for the same dual role, but the town maintains a more moderate structure.

#### **Policy Considerations:**

- The warrant article effectively absolves the elected Town Clerk/Tax Collector from default budget constraints applied to non-union employees, ensuring guaranteed raises once passed.
- While future hires will be benchmarked against survey averages, they will not automatically receive the previous incumbent's salary, and there is flexibility to start new hires below the maximum.
- Raises for the incumbent are guaranteed at 1% of salary, with the amount considered small enough to absorb Social Security, Medicare, and retirement contributions without impacting the overall budget significantly.

#### **Rationale and Goals:**

- The approach balances fairness to the employee with fiscal responsibility to the public.
- It provides continuity and retention for current staff while establishing a transparent, data-driven system for future hires.
- It acknowledges the unique nature of elected positions, which differ from department heads or unionized staff in terms of salary negotiations.

#### **Implementation:**

- The current Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Louise, is performing well, and her salary reflects the new structure.

- If the position becomes vacant, the Board will review survey data to determine a fair starting salary for the new hire.
- Annual raises will continue under the CPI + 1% formula, capped between 3%–5%.
- Social Security, Medicare, and retirement contributions are minor and included in the budget without additional adjustments.

## **Airport Funding Discussion**

### **Economic and Community Benefits**

- The airport contributes to the local economy by attracting visitors who stay in hotels, shop, and dine in town.
- Collaborates with local schools (Kennett High, Fryeburg) on educational programs and aviation training.
- Provides emergency services support, including search and rescue coordination and medical transport. One member had contacted the airport to track medical flights for Conway residents.
- For every dollar the town contributes, the airport reportedly receives nearly 90–95% in federal reimbursements for capital projects.

### **Governance & Oversight**

- Unlike other nonprofits, the airport is funded through a Selectmen’s warrant article, not the standard budget committee process.
- The town’s Selectmen have a representative on the airport board, currently Ryan, providing a line of accountability and information for the committee.
- Transparency: although the airport is not required to appear before the budget committee, past practice shows they would likely provide information if asked.

### **Financials & Historical Context**

- Public filings (Form 990) indicate:
  - **2024:** Revenue \$1.12M, Expenses \$519k → Profit ~\$600k
  - **2022:** Revenue \$1.34M, Expenses \$506k → Profit ~\$800k
- Historically, over the past 28 years, **airport funding requests were rejected 11 times**, and after consecutive rejections, they paused requests for about six years.
- The \$10,000 request is modest relative to their total budget and historically lower when voters were more vigilant.

### **Contractual Obligations**

- There is likely a contractual agreement between Conway and the regional airport (Fryeburg) that obligates Conway to participate financially.
- If such a contract exists, funding might be considered mandatory rather than discretionary, possibly making it more appropriate for the annual budget rather than a separate warrant article.

### **Committee Discussion & Questions**

- Members expressed concern over the lack of information available during the meeting and requested additional financial details through the Selectmen’s representative.

- Questions focused on the total airport budget, the proportion represented by the \$10,000, and potential taxpayer impact.
- Some members noted the slippery slope argument, questioning whether similar funding should be extended to other organizations that bring economic benefit (e.g., Concord Trailways), while distinguishing between nonprofit and for-profit entities.
- Emphasis was placed on ensuring public transparency for voters and understanding the airport's financial and operational context.

### Summary Conclusion

- Support for the airport is generally viewed as worthwhile, given the economic, educational, and emergency service benefits.
- The committee requested additional information from the airport via the Selectmen before making a recommendation or vote.
- Recognition that a potential contractual obligation could alter how funding is handled, possibly incorporating it into the annual budget rather than a warrant article.

### Tax Credit & Disabled Veteran / Income-Based Exemption Discussion

#### 1. Service-Connected Total and Permanent Disability Tax Credit

- Proposal: Increase tax credit to \$5,000 for service-connected total and permanent disability.
- Reason: New state law prohibits combining the previous \$4,000 credit with the additional \$750 veteran credit.
  - Before: Veterans could receive  $\$4,000 + \$750 = \$4,750$ .
  - Now: Consolidated into \$5,000 for eligible individuals.
- Goal: Ensure veterans who are totally disabled and service-connected receive full benefit under new law.

### Elderly and Disabled Property Owner Exemptions

#### Adjustments to Elderly Exemption

- Proposed changes:
  - Single filers: **\$30,000** → **\$32,000**
  - Married combined: **\$40,000** → **\$44,000**
- These changes account for inflation and asset growth, ensuring the exemption remains meaningful.

#### Asset Considerations

- Exemption does not include the primary residence.
- Includes IRAs, cars, jewelry, and other assets.
- Example: If a home's assessed value rises significantly (e.g., \$250,000 → \$400,000), the exemption in dollar terms remains the same (e.g., \$85,000), which proportionally covers a smaller percentage of total property value, meaning the owner may pay a higher effective tax rate.

#### Eligibility Criteria

- Set by RSA 72:39-a and b (state law).
- Requirements include:

- Resident of NH for three consecutive years
- Owns the property individually or jointly (spouse ownership allowed after 5 years of marriage)
- Property must be the primary residence

### Questions Raised

- Committee asked whether:
  - The town sets the exemption numbers or if they are mandated by state law.
  - The dollar amount should scale with inflation or assessed property value rather than remain fixed.
- Response:
  - Exemption numbers are set by statute, not by town's discretion.
  - Fixed amounts are required in the warrant article; percentages or open-ended calculations are not legally allowed.

### Action Items

- Committee requested clarification on when the exemption numbers (e.g., \$85,000) were last adjusted.
- The town official agreed to research the last update and provide an answer promptly via email.
- Staff to provide:
  - Last update date for exemption amounts.
  - Current number of recipients per exemption category.
  - Total dollar amount spent on exemptions.
- Consideration of whether exemptions should be increased as a percentage of property value or a fixed dollar increase.
- Provide report to committee prior to next public hearing.

### Capital Improvement Committee Discussion- Credits & Exemptions Impact

- **Committee Structure Discussion:**
  - Committee members discussed potential committee size adjustments post-establishment.
  - Draft plan currently proposes:
    - One member from the Board of Selectmen
    - One member from the Budget Committee
    - One member from the Planning Board
    - Two at-large residents
  - **Note:** Warrant article establishes committee but does not specify members; operating procedures will outline specifics.
- **Questions & Clarifications:**
  - Quentin noted the warrant does not explicitly include a Budget Committee member.
  - Staff confirmed there is no direct cost for the committee; time commitment covered by existing staff and committee members.
  - The committee is intended to streamline project planning rather than create additional bureaucracy.
  - Purpose: Provide structured oversight and prioritization of large projects, including highway infrastructure and intersection improvements, ensuring alignment with grant cycles and budget planning.
- **Committee Goals & Expectations:**
  - Serve as a tool for reviewing projects in one concise framework.
  - Promote alignment among boards and committees with the town's Master Plan.
  - Maintain efficient processes while avoiding unnecessary delays.

- Provide an additional set of eyes on major projects without adding expense or slowing operations.
- **Consensus:**
  - Members expressed support for the committee as a necessary structure to manage priorities, track funding, and ensure projects move forward efficiently.
  - Agreement that the initiative is favorable and will aid the town in prioritizing projects while staying within current staffing and operational capacity.
- **Staff Time & Cost Considerations:**
  - David clarified that while there is no direct monetary cost, staff time is an expense, as time spent on committee work may reduce availability for other duties.
  - Members agreed any cost of staff time should be factored if calculating the overall committee expense.
  - Mike noted potential concerns regarding unnecessary layers of bureaucracy, citing that department heads could submit capital improvement plans directly to the Town Manager and Selectmen without additional committee review.
- **Committee Efficiency & Process:**
  - Quentin raised questions about the number of meetings required annually and the structure of the process.
  - Consensus that the value lies in compiling all capital improvement plans into a single document for transparency and long-term planning.
  - Importance of avoiding over-complicating the process while ensuring tax expenditures are planned and transparent.
- **Scope Regarding Water & Sewer Projects:**
  - Kurt inquired about potential involvement of the North Conway Water Precinct in capital improvements.
  - Staff clarified:
    - The town is developing a water and sewer master plan.
    - Any projects affecting North Conway Water Precinct would be coordinated but would not expand precinct boundaries.
    - Funding mechanisms and involvement would be clearly defined in advance through the committee process.
  - Consideration given to potential water/sewer priorities from the master plan as a driver for inclusion in the capital improvement plan.
- **General Observations:**
  - Committee's role is primarily structural and planning-focused, intended to consolidate oversight without slowing project execution.
  - Members reiterated caution against creating a large committee with excessive elected officials to avoid slowing processes.

## **Keno Discussion**

- **Statutory Change:**
  - Amendment to state statute requires towns to vote to prohibit Keno rather than vote to allow it.
  - Select Board chose to bring forward a warrant article to opt out of Keno games.
  - Past votes to approve Keno have been rejected; approval is not currently supported by voters.
- **Impact of Vote:**
  - Voting to prohibit Keno would remove the need to vote annually on allowing Keno.
  - If the article fails, Keno remains permitted under state law.
  - Members acknowledged there is no guarantee future legislation won't require additional votes; statute could change in Concord.

- **Discussion Points:**
  - Members agreed that past votes consistently rejected Keno.
  - Some concern raised about recurring bills from state level despite local opposition.
  - General consensus: proceeding with the prohibition vote is proactive and clarifying.

### **Additional Games of Chance**

- **Statutory Change:**
  - Town now has authority to vote to prohibit additional games of chance (e.g., VO casino-type uses) where previously they had to allow them.
- **Impact of Vote:**
  - If the article fails, additional games of chance remain permitted under current law.

### **Capital Reserve Funds**

A question was raised regarding the specific language used in several capital reserve warrant articles. Members agreed that discussion could be limited to items of concern rather than reviewing each article individually.

The Committee discussed wording in certain articles stating that there would be “no money to come from taxation.” It was noted that the proposed funding source is the unassigned fund balance, which itself consists of previously raised tax revenues. Concern was expressed that the existing language could be misleading.

#### **Clarification:**

The Committee agreed that the language should read “**no money from new taxation**” to more accurately reflect the intent and avoid confusion for voters.

**Motion: D. Jensen** motioned to postpone detailed discussion of the capital reserve fund articles for further review.

**Second: Vice-Chair F. Jost**

**Abstention:** none

**Vote:** 13-0-0 – Motion passes

### **Explanation of Reserve Funds**

A suggestion was made to allow members of the public or department representatives the opportunity to explain the purpose of individual reserve funds, despite the postponement of formal discussion.

The Committee agreed that such explanations could be accommodated under **New Business** at a future meeting.

### **Police Department Capital Reserve Fund – Software**

The Committee reviewed a proposal to establish a capital reserve fund for the Police Department to acquire and implement new records management software. The department currently uses IMC by Central Square for daily operations, including call taking, reporting, evidence tracking, payroll, training, and records management. IMC is being phased out within the next 2–3 years, requiring transition to a new platform, Pro Suite.

#### **Updated Cost Summary (County Collaboration):**

- Year One Software: \$18,509

- Implementation Services: \$28,033
- **Total Year One Cost:** \$46,542.97
- Collaboration with Carroll County results in approximately **\$32,523 in savings** compared to independent implementation.
- Proposed Warrant Article: **\$60,000**, which includes required employee training (8–10 hours per employee prior to go-live).

The software is cloud-based, eliminating the need for major hardware upgrades. Training is included for sworn and non-sworn personnel. A build team of Police and Fire representatives would assist in configuring the system, and all existing records would be migrated to allow county-wide integration.

#### **Five-Year Comparison:**

- Current IMC subscription: approximately \$19,000 annually with ~6.5% yearly increases.
- Pro Suite subscription begins at \$18,509 and increases to \$26,083 by Year Five, with anticipated 5% annual increases thereafter.
- Over five years, Pro Suite represents an approximate \$6,096 increase over remaining with IMC.

The Committee discussed enhanced functionality, including improved mapping, address-based data, dispatch integration, and inter-agency information sharing across Carroll County. Questions were raised regarding long-term subscription increases; it was noted that annual increases include upgrades and support and are consistent with industry standards.

Although alternative software was briefly explored, no comparable cost data was available. Based on presentations and operational needs, the transition to Pro Suite was viewed as necessary to maintain compliance, efficiency, and officer safety. Continuing with IMC was not considered a viable long-term option.

#### **Other Budget and Capital Reserve Items**

The Committee briefly reviewed additional capital reserve articles, noting that several involve significant funding and will require further discussion at future meetings.

Franchise fee revenues related to Valley Vision and Spectrum were also discussed. Revenues have remained relatively flat and are approaching expenditure levels. It was noted that declining cable subscriptions and increased streaming may reduce future franchise fee revenue. The Town has historically negotiated agreements that secured both revenue and capital equipment contributions for Valley Vision. The current industry landscape may continue to evolve due to legislative changes and shifting subscription trends.

#### **Valley Vision / Cable Franchise Fees**

- **Importance to the Community:**
  - Valley Vision is considered a vital resource for town residents; there is concern about potential revenue shortfalls affecting programming.
  - Declining cable subscriptions may reduce franchise fees, potentially shifting funding responsibility to taxpayers.
- **Revenue & Contracts:**
  - Conway has historically passed franchise fee revenue directly to Valley Vision.
  - Other towns may only allocate a portion of franchise fees to Valley Vision.

- Current franchise fee rate is 3%; under law, this could be increased to 5% to generate additional revenue.
- Town representatives plan to review and potentially adjust fees from **sending towns** (e.g., Jackson) in spring to support Valley Vision.
- Adjustments are considered a **pass-through** and are not budgeted as general revenue.
- **Capital Reserves & Other Items:**
  - Remaining capital reserve items are largely from department heads; discussion will continue at future meetings.
  - Efforts will be made to provide **answers to questions in advance** of the upcoming budget hearing.
- **MS-1 / Assessing Update:**
  - Last update to assessing-related numbers occurred in 2023.
  - Minor income changes led to small adjustments in related figures.
  - MS-1 data can be used to track recipient demographics if needed.

### **Administrative Cost Allocation Discussion (Fire, Water, and Sewer)**

- Further discussion occurred regarding whether additional administrative and finance staff time devoted to fire, water, and sewer operations should be formally allocated to those budgets.
- It was noted that the Finance Department processes 100% of fire department payroll, payments, and general ledger entries, and that some administrative support is already being provided centrally. Clarification was provided that a portion of the Public Works Director's salary is currently allocated within the water and sewer budgets. It was acknowledged that, during the original transition of oversight responsibilities, the intent was to revisit workload distribution and determine whether further cost allocations were appropriate once responsibilities were fully established.
- Several members emphasized that any future review should focus on proportional time estimates rather than granular tracking, and that it may be appropriate to re-evaluate overall administrative workload across departments, including finance.
- Broader governance considerations were discussed, including the efficiency of having unified town-wide fire and water departments versus the current precinct structure. It was noted that, historically, precinct voters strongly opposed consolidation, and that such a change is unlikely in the near term.
- Concerns were raised regarding the appropriateness of allocating additional administrative costs given the substantial assets transferred to the Town by the Conway Village Fire District, including significant fire, water, and sewer infrastructure. It was argued that day-to-day operations are largely handled at the precinct level, and that Town-level oversight is consistent with general managerial responsibilities.
- Several members expressed the view that reallocating administrative costs would largely shift expenses between funds without creating meaningful fiscal benefit, and that existing salary allocations already account for shared responsibilities.

No consensus was reached on pursuing additional cost allocation at this time, and no action was taken.

### **Approval of Minutes**

During review, it was noted that an attendee was omitted from the January 5 and January 7 minutes, and a correction was requested. A date correction was also made, revising a reference from 2025 to 2027. Approval of January 7 Meeting Minutes (Continued)

Members agreed that the reference to a \$40 million roof estimate was misleading and should reflect that the figure applied to multiple district buildings, not solely Kennett High School. The sentence will be revised or the dollar amount removed for clarity.

**Approval of January 12 Meeting Minutes**

Corrections included updating attendance, adding a missing first name, and correcting the meeting year from 2025 to 2026.

**Approval of January 14 Meeting Minutes**

Corrections included updating the meeting year and revising a reference, incorrectly identifying a committee member as a member of the public.

**Motion: B. Marvel** motioned to approve the minutes from 1/5/2026.

**Second: R. Shepard**

**Abstention: C. Burke and W. Smith**

**Vote: 11-0-2 – Motion passes**

**Motion: B. Drinkhall** motioned to approve the minutes from 1/7/2026.

**Second: D. Jensen**

**Abstention: C. Burke, Q. Lewis, and W. Smith**

**Vote: 10-0-3 – Motion passes**

**Motion: B. Marvel** motioned to approve the minutes from 1/12/2026.

**Second: D. Jensen**

**Abstention: Chair A. Loth, C. Burke, B. Drinkhall, and M. DiGregorio.**

**Vote: 9-0-4 – Motion passes**

**Motion: B. Marvel** motioned to approve the minutes from 1/14/2026.

**Second: D. Jensen**

**Abstention: C. Burke and B. Drinkhall.**

**Vote: 11-0-2 – Motion passes**

It was noted that a member was listed as voting but was not reflected in the attendance record. A correction was requested to add the member to the attendance list.

Additional corrections were identified, including:

- A correction to the meeting date.
- A spelling correction to “Kennett Middle School” under the Special Education budget highlights (page 21).
- Clarification regarding the title of the Intermediate School Principal.

**New Business**

A question was raised regarding the Center Conway Fire District’s upcoming annual meeting in March. It was noted that while the Committee has focused extensively on town and school budgets, the Fire District also has statutory requirements and warrant articles that will require review.

Discussion centered on when the Committee would formally review, endorse, or vote on the Fire District's budget and related warrant articles in advance of its annual meeting. Further scheduling and coordination will be required to ensure compliance with statutory timelines.

No action was taken at this time.

### **Center County Fire District Budget Discussion**

Members discussed the timing and requirements for the Fire District's annual budget, noting it must be endorsed by the board and align with statutory public hearing and voting dates. The school's public hearing is February 11, and the town's is February 12, with deliberative sessions following. Members confirmed no vote had yet occurred and emphasized the need to review relevant budget and warrant article details before the next meeting.

It was clarified that emails sent to a quorum must be included in the public meeting record. Members were reminded to forward any relevant correspondence to be attached to the minutes.

#### **Public/Media Comments**

There was none

#### **Adjournment**

With no further business, **D. Jensen** moved to adjourn. The motion was seconded by **B. Marvel** and approved unanimously.

**Meeting adjourned at 9:41 PM.**  
**The meeting ran 3 hours and 10 minutes long.**

Respectfully Submitted,

Jade Hartsgrove  
*Minutes Recorder*

1 **CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

2 **MINUTES**

3 **Conway Town Hall**

4 **23 Main Street, Conway, NH 03818**

5 **February 4, 2026, AT 6:30 PM**

6  
7 **Call to Order**

8 The meeting was called to order at 6:30 PM. The following Budget Committee members  
9 were present: Steve Angers, Michael Lacey, Dave Jensen, Bob Drinkhall, Frank Jost, Chair  
10 Alex Loth, Quentin Lewis, Kevin Lebel, William Marvel, David Smolen, Mike DiGregorio  
11 Conway School Board Rep, Ryan Shepard Selectboard Rep. Superintendent Dr. Aimee  
12 Frechette and Business Administrator for SAU9 Mike Wade were also present.

13 **Pledge of Allegiance**

14 Chairman Loth led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

15 It was decided that they would revise the order of tonight's meeting and hear from the folks  
16 from the White Mt. Regional Airport first, the school, and then the Town.

17 **White Mt. Regional Airport**

18 Barry Kallander, Gene Bergoffen and Carl Thibodeau appeared before the committee on  
19 behalf of the White Mt. Regional Airport.

20 Mr. Kallander explained that they had complete their \$5.5 million runway extension and  
21 taxiway improvement.

22 He noted that this project had been funded by FAA, the State of Maine, and some from the  
23 State of New Hampshire.

24 They also had to match those funds out of their operating income.

25 Mr. Kallander explained that this project will allow a slightly larger aircraft to utilize the  
26 airport.

27 He noted that there are only three airports in Oxford County.

28 He stated that he believed the airport aids in bringing tourism to the area.

29 He also highlighted that the airport is a benefit for emergency services such as life light.

30 Mr. Kallander stated that they also had an aviation academy that partners with Fryeburg  
31 Academy and Kennett High School.

32 He also added that they are very involved in Angel Flights which involves pilots to volunteer  
33 their time, aircraft, gas, etc., to fly people as far as Pennsylvania for medical needs.

34 Mr. Kallander explained that they have a capital improvements plan which allows them to  
35 apply for Federal and State grants.

36 He noted they sell jet fuel and AVGAS and lease hangar space.

37 He stated that they are currently getting funding from Denmark and Jackson and that they  
38 have also asked for funding from Bridgeton and Fryeburg.

39 He explained that the funding from the Town's is essential to the operations at the airport as  
40 they do not generate enough operating funds from fuel sales and leases to cover all of our  
41 costs.

42 He added that they use the community funding to help towards the match needed for many  
43 grants.

44 There was discussion regarding the fact that the airport does not have a landing fee.

45 Quentin Lewis explained that essentially the community here who gives the airport \$10,000  
46 is subsidizing the cost of the airport for those who use the airport.

47 It was clarified that many pay a lot of tie down fees.

48 The economic value of the people who use the airport was emphasized.

49 Mr. Marvel stated that over the last three decades, the airport has either been refused or  
50 has neglected to request funds from surrounding towns.

51 He questioned how these funds could be so important if they have managed to stay afloat  
52 for all of these years.

53 It was answered that the Board has some new members and they are now tracking the  
54 necessary dates for requesting funds for the towns so that neglect does not happen.

55 As a Board they are also doing their best to reach out to local communities to highlight the  
56 benefits of the airport.

57 David Smolen asked about how the \$10,000 is applied to the 5% match for the federal or  
58 state grants.

59 It was explained that the funds received from all of the local communities goes into the  
60 operating account and that is whether the matching funds would be taken from.

61 David Jensen explained that it was very hard for them as a budget committee to support  
62 giving money to the airport when there are so many non-profits that are in need of funding  
63 for things like Meals on Wheels and help against domestic violence.

64 He suggested they focus on the benefits of Life Flight instead of economic development in  
65 the Valley.

66 He noted that their request for funds comes off as tone deaf.

67 Carl Thibodeau explained that the airport does not make a profit.

68 He noted that it is a non-profit, but not in the same category as things such as Starting  
69 Point.

70 He stated that the airport was transportation infrastructure.

71 Mr. Thibodeau said he believed that this should be in the public works budget.

72 Mr. Drinkhall asked whether they would have seen a deficit if they had not received the  
73 town funding this past year.

74 It was stated that they would have seen a \$50,000 deficit and have needed to fundraise the  
75 rest.

76 Mr. Kallander stated that they only have one full time employee so they are unable to cut  
77 back in that way.

78 It was noted that they would have tried to seek additional funds from the Mulford Fund.

79 Mike DiGregorio questioned if they rely on the town funding to maintain the equipment  
80 needed for life flights to access the hospital.

81 It was emphasized that all of the funding from towns, fuel sales and additional  
82 governmental funding is used to maintain equipment.

83 It was stated that without that equipment, the life flights would have a much larger  
84 challenge.

### 85 **School Budget Review**

86 Dr. Aimee Frechette and Mike Wade appeared before the Board.

87 Dr. Frechette noted that they had included some additional information in the binders  
88 including the warrant articles, default budget, special education summary, additional

89 information on the estimated revenue, tax rate overview document, tax rate history  
90 document, capital improvements plan, Department of Education report and some new  
91 information regarding the negotiated CEA contract.

92 It was decided that they would go through the warrant articles one by one.

93 Chairman Loth explained that article 1 was for the election of officers.

94 Article 2 was for the Expendable Trust Fund for Kennett High School that was established  
95 when the High School was built.

96 Dr. Frechette stated that article 2,3 &4 were the contributions from sending towns per  
97 contract.

98 Chairman Loth asked if those were contractually required amounts.

99 Mr. Wade noted that the annual amount that is deposited is determined by the contracts  
100 and has been the same for 20 years.

101 He added that how it is apportioned between districts varies each year based on equalized  
102 value or percentage of equalized value during the given year.

103 It was stated that Conway raises and appropriates the funds and the sending districts are  
104 billed back.

105 Chairman Loth let the group know that for Article 5, because his wife was covered under  
106 that contract, he would be recusing himself for any discussion and vote on that particular  
107 warrant article.

108 Mr. Angers asked if this was just salaries.

109 It was stated that it was salaries and associated benefits like health insurance.

110 Dr. Frechette noted that they set out to increase salaries to become more in line with the  
111 median.

112 She stated that with the increases occurring every three years with the new contract  
113 negotiations, Conway still remains (as of this year), \$2,000 below the median for  
114 comparison group one and \$4,000 below the median group for comparison group two.

115 She noted that if they continue with what they have been doing, they would not begin to  
116 reach the median teacher salary in both comparison groups until after 2028.

117 She explained that there is variance dependent on the track (bachelors plus 30 credits,  
118 Master's Degree, etc.) and also on a step scale which looks at years of service.

119 They will be moving from a 47-step track to a 25-step track.  
120 After 25 years, they receive a percentage increase from there.  
121 It was clarified that the comparison groups were based upon other towns who were similar  
122 in size and demographic.  
123 Dr. Frechette highlighted that they have continued to have difficulty recruiting experienced  
124 educators.  
125 Dr. Frechette highlighted the changes to the negotiated contract.  
126 She explained that it was again a 3-year contract.  
127 Other than the salary adjustments, she explained that when people coming from  
128 industry/career tech backgrounds have a lot of experience in the field, but there has never  
129 been any language specifying where they fall on the salary schedule.  
130 She noted that this was now included in the new contract.  
131 She noted that the health insurance base plan remains the same but they were able to  
132 negotiate additional language to be able to add plans to the base.  
133 Dr. Frechette explained that there is now stronger language included about health  
134 insurance reimbursements if someone leaves the district after they have signed their  
135 contract.  
136 They added clarity to when and how sick time and personal time can be used.  
137 They made some adjustments regarding professional development and course  
138 reimbursement.  
139 Lastly, she explained that they had made some adjustments to co-curricular stipends as  
140 coaches are hard to find.  
141 David Smolen asked for a copy of the contract.  
142 Dr. Frechette explained that typically they do not give that out until it has been approved by  
143 the School Board and the voters.  
144 Mr. Smolen said he would have a hard time voting on something before he was able to look  
145 at it.  
146 Mr. DiGregorio stated that he would look into that.  
147 Curt Burke Jr. expressed that he felt they should be able to see the draft document.

148 Mr. Angers asked if teachers are monitored or rated when they are not progressing up the  
149 step ladder.

150 Dr. Frechette stated that they cannot force someone to take course work, but they are  
151 provided other professional development opportunities.

152 In regards to teacher evaluation, new teachers are evaluated twice a year every year for the  
153 first five years.

154 There is also language in the contract that allows the building principals to decide moving  
155 forward after that whether a teacher would continue to be evaluated annually or every  
156 other year.

157 She noted that there is a very clear process for goal setting.

158 Mr. Angers wondered if they had considered just offering a one-year contract due to all of  
159 the uncertainty with health insurance in the country.

160 Dr. Frechette stated that it would be tricky to recruit people with a one-year contract.

161 However, she believes that they had made some strides with adding new language into the  
162 contract to help address issues that we are seeing with healthcare.

163 Dr. Frechette also added that they had changed the amounts that the district contributes to  
164 deductibles.

165 Dr. Frechette stated that they also are still obligated to provide healthcare options for 192  
166 retired employees.

167 Mr. Angers stated that while pay is a reason that people leave their jobs, it is not the biggest  
168 reason statistically.

169 Therefore, while increasing of salaries may help, it will do more for recruiting teachers than  
170 retaining teachers.

171 It was also noted that there is such an issue with finding a place to live here in the area.

172 Mr. Marvel stated that they had not always had a 3-year contract and that it seems more  
173 convenient for the School Board and the Union.

174 After a question from Mr. Smolen regarding retiree health insurance, Dr. Frechette added  
175 that there are still some employees who will eligible for paid health insurance based upon  
176 their hire date.

177 Regarding Article 6, it was stated that the operating budget was lower than the default  
178 budget by approximately \$10,000.

179 There was discussion regarding the way this article was written as the total request for  
180 \$42,555,376 was on the ballot, but that included the total SAU 9 School Budget with the  
181 costs included for the sending towns.

182 It was emphasized that the budget the Conway taxpayers were responsible for was only a  
183 portion of that total operating budget.

184 The same was said about the Town budget as there was also revenues that do not come  
185 from taxation.

186 Mr. Loth stated that he was unsure if they can do it legally, but would like to have the  
187 warrant articles specify the amount paid by Conway taxpayers.

188 Mr. DiGregorio stated that it would make sense to be clear in the warrant articles.

189 Mr. Wade stated that he would be happy to reach out to DRA.

190 Mr. Jost stated that it strikes him that they are coming up with a specific number that's truly  
191 based upon estimates.

192 He wondered if they could add language to the warrant article stating what the estimated  
193 total of this operating budget paid by the Conway taxpayers.

194 Mr. Lewis did not think that doing that would make a difference as he believed most voters  
195 looked at the budget request from the previous year to compare it to before making their  
196 vote.

197 Mr. DiGregorio stated that he did not think it would be inappropriate to estimate the  
198 revenues coming from other towns as they already knew the number of students who those  
199 towns would be sensing.

200 Mr. Loth stated that if you look at the budgets overall quickly, it looks like the school budget  
201 is three times the amount as the Town's, but that is not accurate as the schools operating  
202 budget includes the cost to the sending towns as well.

203 Mr. Marvel stated that they had been told at a previous meeting that there were 11  
204 administrators but that they were dropping one.

205 However, he noted that at the last school board meeting, two new ones had been  
206 proposed.

207 Dr. Frechette explained that they were reduced positions due to restructuring.

208 Mr. Marvel asked if the aviation mechanics program was scrapped.

209 Dr. Frechette stated that the FAA funding ran out., but the aviation program, minus the  
210 mechanics piece was very much still alive.

211 It was noted that they would be reducing the staff positions from 300 to 289 next year.

212 Mr. Drinkhall asked if any of the staff in the positions that were being cut were qualified to  
213 fill any of the vacant positions.

214 Dr. Frechette noted that she did not believe so in this case.

215 Mr. Drinkhall asked how only having one custodian at the high school would affect the  
216 cleanliness of the school.

217 Dr. Frechette said they would work with overlapping schedules as well as perhaps adding  
218 more responsibilities to the buildings and grounds coordinator at the high school.

219 Mr. Burke Jr. asked if the Pine Tree Lighting project had been complete.

220 It was stated that it was just about complete.

221 It was stated that they were waiting for the utility bill to come in for Pine Tree so make a  
222 decision on whether to apply the same lighting to the other three schools.

223 The estimated savings per year will be \$250,000.

224 After a question regarding the potential of closing another school in the future, it was  
225 stayed that they School did not believe there was anything in the agreement that would  
226 require a school to stay open for so many years or the funds would have to be paid back.

227 The school noted that they would double check on that.

228 In regards to article seven, it was requesting \$88,000 for Pine Tree and Conway  
229 Intermediate Project SUCCEED programs.

230 It was stated that this would cover the site coordinator salaries while the majority of the  
231 other staff members are funded from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Grant.

232 It was noted that the six graders are also eligible for the Project SUCCEED program.

233 Article 8 was \$250,000 for the Capital Reserve Fund for Equipment and was scheduled to  
234 be used for the purchasing of two school buses.

235 It was stated that last year they used this fund to purchase a tractor and a wind mower for  
236 the high school.

237 It was stated that currently there was about \$830,000 in this CRF.

238 Dr. Frechette added that they were hoping to outfit those new buses with external cameras  
239 It was stated that the plan would be to add cameras to the busses as they are rotated in  
240 year after year.

241 There would be an annual fee for the cloud storage of the data from these bus cameras but  
242 that it was not very expensive.

243 Mr. Smolen asked where they buy their buses from.

244 Dr. Frechette noted that they have an RFP process.

245 Mr. Marvel asked how many buses they own and how long they usually last.

246 Dr. Frechette noted that there were 8 regular bus routes and extras for trips and spares  
247 when they breakdown.

248 She stated she could get an exact number.

249 Depending on mileage, they do expect at least 10 years per bus.

250 Mr. Marvel asked for clarification on what they planned to use the remaining funds for in the  
251 CRF as they would have at least \$500,000 remaining.

252 Mr. Wade noted that this fund was used to purchase all equipment like tractors and  
253 mowers.

254 Mr. Marvel asked where the rest of those funds were going to go.

255 Dr. Frechette explained that the initial set up for the cameras was \$7,800.

256 The annual fee for the cloud services was \$1,400 up front and then \$800 annually.

257 The access points for Wi-Fi capability were an additional \$2,400.

258 The combination of cameras was \$4,000.

259 These costs were per bus.

260 Chairman Loth asked if having that much of a 'cushion' in the fund was necessary.

261 Dr. Frechette stated that they want to make sure their equipment is up to par and that they  
262 have a lot of field work at the high school and middle school.

263 Chairman Loth noted that it would be helpful to have a charge of planned expenditures to  
264 understand the need for these funds.

265 Mr. Lewis asked fi this fund has ever gotten too low or much higher than \$800,000.

266 Mr. Wade noted that this was a relatively newer fund, only being established in 2019.

267 Mr. Lewis asked if there was a limit to what they would like to see in that fund.

268 Mr. Wade noted that they do not know what future costs are or what future budgets look  
269 like.

270 Mr. Angers wondered if they had spoken, or should speak, with DES to see if they qualify for  
271 a bus out of their diesel lawsuit settlement.

272 In regards to article 9, this was for the \$1,000,000 for the Expendable Trust Fund for School  
273 Building Maintenance.

274 Mr. Smolen asked if that was a new amount this year.

275 Mr. DiGregorio stated that in previous years they had requested \$1,800,000.

276 It was explained that the roof repair numbers were coming in better this year and that  
277 contributed to their decision to lower the request.

278 It was stated that there currently was about \$2.2 million in that account.

279 Dr. Frechette stated that essentially this fund is for capital projects.

280 Mr. Wade stated that the sending Town's also help pay for this too when it gets calculated  
281 into the tuition costs depending on what it is used for.

282 Mr. Burke Jr. noted that John Fuller was due for an air handler unit, a new roof, and window  
283 replacements.

284 He wanted to hear confirmation that they were not going to be spending Monday on a  
285 closed school.

286 Mr. DiGregorio stated that they are not spending it right now, but the future depends on  
287 what happens with that building.

288 He noted that if someone wanted to lease the school, there may be some renovations  
289 done, however, those expenditures would be worked into the lease so that there was no  
290 further tax payer burden.

291 Mr. Burke Jr. asked what they are currently spending at John Fuller right now.

292 It was stated at approximately \$160,000.

293 It was noted that article 10 was \$100,000 for the Special Ed Capital Reserve Fund.

294 Dr. Frechette stated that this was for unbudgeted special education costs.

295 It was noted that they preferred to carry about \$500,000 in that fund.

296 Dr. Frechette explained that what they see in the special education budget was based on  
297 actual students and actual services that the district currently has.

298 However, if those services change or they have students that require special education  
299 services move to the district, they need to have the funds to cover that.

300 This fund can also cover out of district placements that are necessary, as well as the  
301 transportation to those placements.

302 It was emphasized that special education services are non-negotiable.

303 Mr. Angers noted that the State put together a government efficiency group and one of the  
304 things in the report was about reimbursement for some services such as occupational  
305 therapy, speech therapy, language support and counseling.

306 He explained that these services are covered by Medicaid.

307 He noted that the school should look into billing for these services.

308 It was stated that the school does bill for these services as well as billing back sending  
309 districts.

310 In regards to Article 11, Chairman Loth noted that this was for \$150,000 for the expendable  
311 trust fund for safety and security as established in 2025.

312 It was stated that they had expended about half of what they had put in the fund during the  
313 past year.

314 Article 12 was for \$50,000 for band instruments at the middle school.

315 It was noted that the School Board had suggested that if there was fund balance left, they  
316 would utilize that for this purpose.

317 There was discussion regarding instruments and comparing those who cannot afford  
318 sports equipment and how they are able to obtain such equipment.

319 Dr. Frechette stated that they decided to do it this way instead of adding the funds to the  
320 budget so that they had time to do a detailed inventory of what they had and what they  
321 needed before adding it to the budget in future years.

322 Mr. DiGregorio stated that this seemed like an avenue to try and start to fix something that  
323 they should have absolutely been more aware of in the operating budget.

324 It was stated that perhaps these costs should be looked at as more of a capital expense  
325 because it is not every year occurrence.

326 Mr. Marvel highlighted the necessity of maintenance for these instruments.

327 Mr. Burke Jr. asked if they thought it was likely that they would have enough surplus this  
328 year to cover this \$50,000 for middle school instruments.

329 It was stated that it was likely.

330 Chairman Loth asked if Dr. Frechette could explain the last warrant article for the school.

331 Dr. Frechette explained that if the voters adopt the provisions of open enrollment under  
332 current state statute, and admit 20 additional students in grades K-2, 20 students in 3-5, 20  
333 in 6-8 and up to 50 in 9-12, district can accept children from other districts at 80% of the  
334 resident district's cost per pupil.

335 It was also stated that you can limit the percentage of students who are able to leave the  
336 district to attend another school outside of Conway.

337 In conclusion, they will accept students across all grades at the numbers she mentioned  
338 before, and limit the number of students that can leave to 0% of the total enrollment.

339 She emphasized that this was not an attempt to limit parental choice, but an attempt to  
340 maintain some level of local control with a landscape that changing every day.

341 There are three bills currently in process right now regarding this.

342 It was stated that at this moment in time, if the article fails, all Conway students could  
343 leave the district and attend another school anywhere in the State and Conway would be  
344 responsible for paying 80% of Conway's cost per pupil for that student attend.

345 This would increase the special education budget and most likely decrease the total  
346 enrollment which in turn increases Conway's cost per pupil.

347 Mr. Jensen stated that he would assume that other school districts are putting the same  
348 article on the ballot.

349 Dr. Frechette agreed.

350 Mr. Jensen asked if this has any bearing on their contract negotiations with the sending  
351 Towns.

352 Dr. Frechette said now because those Towns do not have schools so they don't have a cost  
353 built into their system.

354 Mr. DiGregorio reiterated that the legislation is changing daily and it is very difficult to know  
355 what is going to happen.

356 The issues that come along with open enrollment were discussed.

357 It was stated that the school is trying to rally behind one bill that would establish a  
358 commission to look at the issue so that it can be well thought out and the impacts  
359 predicted.

360 Mr. Angers stated that if this would be a non-issue if the district's proficiency scores were  
361 off the charge but they are not.

362 He was concerned that not once during this entire discussion had they talked about giving  
363 the kids a better education.

364 He stated he will be voting no on this.

365 Mr. DiGregorio noted that they are absolutely working on proficiency.

366 He stated that while he disagrees, he can see Mr. Anger's point.

367 Chairman Loth asked Mr. Wade about this year's tax rate and whether that included all of  
368 the warrant articles.

369 If all of the warrant articles pass, it would be a 6% increase in the tax rate over last year.

370 Mr. DiGregorio explained that the tax rate doesn't take into account the revenue that comes  
371 in.

372 Mr. Drinkhall asked how many students have been held back in any grade level since Dr.  
373 Frechette had taken over as Superintendent as well as how many students did not graduate  
374 due to lack of credits.

375 Dr. Frechette noted that while she did not have those numbers off the top of her head, they  
376 put interventions in place before it gets to that point.

377 She stated that they have credit recovery programs and are working with students in the  
378 summer and after school.

379 She also noted that Kennett requires 5 additional credits than the State does to graduate.

380 She said they do the same thing in reverse in order to not have to retain children.

381 **Mr. Smolen made a motion that they adjourn, Mr. Loth second for discussion.**

382 **The motion failed.**

383 **Mr. Smolen moved, seconded by Mr. Loth, to table the conversation regarding the**  
384 **information that had been presented this evening as well as the discussion on town**  
385 **items until after their respective public hearings. The motion carried.**

386 **Adjournment**

387 ***The Meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm by the power of the Chair.***

388 **The motion carried unanimously.**

389

390 **Respectfully Submitted,**

391 **Krista Day**

392 **Recording Secretary**

393

**CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES**

**KENNETT HIGH SCHOOL**

**409 Eagles Way**

**North Conway, NH 03860**

**February 11, 2026, AT 6:00 PM**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Steve Angers, Michael Lacey, Dave Jensen, Bob Drinkhall, Frank Jost, Chair Alex Loth, Quentin Lewis, Curt Burke Jr., Kevin Lebel, Wes Smith, William Marvel, David Smolen, Mike DiGregorio Conway School Board Rep, Ryan Shepard Selectboard Rep. Superintendent Dr. Aimee Frechette, Business Administrator for SAU9 Mike Wade, School Board Member Matt Stearns, School Board Member Brittany Hodge, School Board Member Randy Davison and School Board Chair Joe Mosca were also present.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Loth led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Representatives from the Budget Committee and School Board/Department introduced themselves.

Chairman Loth explained that the agenda for tonight was to go over each warrant article. Take questions and comments from the public, and then after the close of the public hearing, the Budget Committee would discuss and make their recommendation on the warrant articles.

He added that they would be having the public hearing for the precinct and the Town the next evening at 6:00 pm.

It was noted that Deliberative for the School would be held on March 2, 2026 at 7:00 pm with voting day on April 14, 2026.

**Public Hearing on the School Warrant**

Chairman Loth noted that article one was the election of officers.

He stated that article 2 was as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$54,443 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (New Kennett High School Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$35,158 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required).

Amy Snow suggested putting the number that people are going to actually be paying in taxes in the written warrant article would be helpful.

Chairman Loth read article 3 as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$17,086 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (A. Crosby Kennett Middle School Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$7,287 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required).

Ms. Snow noted that she had the same comment for this article as the previous article in terms of the actual funds raised by taxes.

Chairman Loth read article 4 as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,900 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (Elementary Schools Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$1,048 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required).

There were no comments or questions.

Chairman Loth recused himself for this article as his wife was a member of the CEA.

Vice Chair Jost read article 5 as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Conway School Board and the Conway Educational Association (CEA) which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year Fiscal Year Estimated Increase

2026-27 \$ 736,640

2027-28 \$ 608,450

2028-29 \$ 452,479

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$736,640 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. The total compounded cost of the three-year agreement is \$3,879,299 (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).

School Board Member Randy Davison spoke regarding this article as he was part of the negotiating process.

He explained that the community needed to do something first and foremost about the pay for the teachers' union.

He explained that faculty members can leave and go to a neighboring district like Moultonborough or Laconia and make roughly \$10,000 to \$15,000 more per year.

He explained that the current CEA contract has 46 steps, which is one of the longest in the State of New Hampshire and that surrounding towns have about 10 to 14 steps.

He noted that this was one of the major items they worked on during negotiations so that they could retain their teachers.

He stated that they had also made some concessions in regards to health benefits and lowering contributions from the district towards the members deductible cards.

Steve Angers asked if there was a possibility based on what is going on with healthcare that this will actually be more than \$3.8 million.

Dr. Frechette explained that what was budgeted for was all the salaries and benefits, including the reduction of the HRA district contribution to the deductible card and the not to exceed rate of the first year.

Mr. Angers stated that they had talked about a 12% target increase for the coming budget year, but how did they know it was going to be 12% for the next two years as well.

Dr. Frechette stated that they are just voting on this year.

Mr. Angers noted that he was interested in the compound number.

Mr. Angers requested the premium for a single, 2-person and family plan.

Mr. Wade clarified that health insurance was budgeted in the regular part of the budget and that the warrant article for CEA was the salaries, FICA, incremental increases to NHRS contributions, workers' comp and unemployment.

Dr. Frechette stated that for the premiums annually paid by the district for a single person was \$13,008.32; 2 person was \$27,644; and a family was \$36,751.

Dr. Frechette also explained that this information was available on the website.

Kurt Burke clarified that those premiums were just the district's contribution to premiums and the employee was responsible for the remaining 20%.

Mr. Burke also noted that the dates needed to be updated on the draft contract.

Mr. Marvel asked if they could review the deductibles for the various plans.

It was noted that this article did not include the insurance costs, but it was stated that for a single person, the deductible was \$1,500; 2 person and a family was \$3,000.

As this was the end of the discussion for this article, Chairman Loth took back over as moderator for the meeting.

Chairman Loth read article 6 as follows:

The average cost-per-pupil for the preceding year as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:75, I(a) is \$26,469. ELA Proficiency: 51%; Math Proficiency: 32%; Science Proficiency: 30%. To see if the School District will vote to 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 \$42,555,376 with \$1,590,000 to offset this amount from various grants. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$42,565,234 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Conway School District 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. (\$42,555,376 is recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).

There were no questions or comments.

Chairman Loth read article 7 as follows:

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$88,000 to

supplement the funding of the Pine Tree Primary School and Conway Intermediate School's Project SUCCEED Programs. (Designated as a Special

Article) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.

There were no questions or comments.

Chairman Loth read article 8 as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund (Equipment and/or School Buses) established for this purpose in 2019. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.

After a requesting from Mr. Marvel regarding the balance of this account, it was stated that after the purchase of two buses this year the balance was \$344,000.

It was also stated that there are still some purchases from year 2025 that are being submitted currently.

The current available balance was \$344,000.

Anticipated purchases this year include two more buses, two more buses next year, a truck and a sander.

Chairman Loth asked what was the balance that they wanted to carry in that account.

Dr. Frechette stated that typically they would want at least enough to purchase a bus in the event that one broke down.

While they have spares, many of those are scheduled for sports trips and field trips.

After this year's planned expenditures, there would be about \$50,000.

It was stated that this account is also used to purchase other equipment.

The rough life span of a bus is about 10 years.

It was also stated that the return revenue of the sale of used buses was not significant.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that for some reason, municipal vehicles do not bring in much revenue.

He commended the service garage for the upkeep of the vehicles.

There was no further discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 9 as follows:

To see if the Conway School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000,000 to be placed in the Expendable Trust Fund (School Buildings

Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 1995. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.

Amy Snow asked if this was paid 100% by the Conway Voters.

Dr. Frechette stated that expenditures are billed out through the tuition contract bills depending on the projects as the money is spent.

The amount is dependent on the project and the specific tuition agreement.

It was stated that for the middle school and high school projects, the amount billed to sending towns was about 49%.

The expenditures for next year included the middle school roof and some HVAC projects.

It was also added that with the tuition contracts, they are working on a more extensive CIP as well to project out further.

The tanks at the middle school also need to have some work done.

Steve Angers asked how they knew they would need \$1 million if they don't really know what they are going to spend it on.

There was no further discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 10 as follows:

To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund (Special Education), established for that purpose in 2008 (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 4-1-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.

Ms. Snow asked what the cap was before they stopped asking the voters to add funds to this CRF.

Dr. Frechette noted that there was no established cap.

She explained further that they aim to shoot for a number that would be sufficient should there be an unexpected out of district placement or a student who moves into the district that requires services.

She added that last year they had reduced \$200,000 from the current operating budget from special education, therefore, they do expect to have to tap into this fund.

Bill Marvel stated that they had never used this fund before and it has been around for a while.

He reminded the group that in the past when there were special education needs, there would be a special meeting called to raise the budget.

He wondered if that was a better practice than just letting the money sit in an untouched account.

Mike DiGregorio noted that he wouldn't comment on the special meeting because there was a lot of effort, legally, that goes in to that.

He did say that he wanted to remind people of close to 20 years ago when 11 special education students moved into the district by October.

He explained further that they had to go into a spending freeze.

It was also noted that special education costs would only lower if students come off of their IEP's which require lots of things to happen, or they move out of district.

Mr. Angers asked if they get the information during the budget planning process about how many children were coming off of their IEPs.

Dr. Frechette noted that they get percentages of changes year to year, but that the School Board does not receive the confidential student information.

Chairman Loth noted that this fund makes sense to cover the costs of unknown changes and out of district placements.

For example, a student could go require an out of district placement that could cost the town a lot of money, and this way you do not end up taking funds from regular education.

Dr. Frechette also commended that if you look at the budget summary, unit 2, district wide special education is at a deficit of \$300,000.

She emphasized that this speaks to the \$200,000 reduction that they are currently operating under within this budget.

Bill Marvel wanted to note that even though the number of students in the district is lower this year compared to 2005, they have the same number (42) of special education teachers.

Pam Stimson noted that she did not believe that even in 2005 they had 42 special educations, and clarified that this year there are only 25.3 special education positions.

After some discussion, it was noted that there were only 25.3 special education positions in the district.

Mr. Marvel had been looking at the ratios of students per teacher.

Mr. Angers asked if they could tell him what the percentage of the special ed force was contractors vs. employees.

The School Staff stated they could get him that information.

There was no further discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 11 as follows:

To see if the Conway School District will raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 to be placed in the Expendable Trust Fund (Safety and Security Trust Fund) established for this purpose in 2025. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0). This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.

There was no discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 12 as follows:

To see if the Conway School District will raise and appropriate up to \$50,000 to be used for the repair, replacement, and procurement of band equipment and/or instruments for the Conway School District music programs. This sum is to come from June 30, 2025 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. No amount to be raised from new taxation. (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).

Joe Mosca noted that the dates should in fact be 2026.

There was no further discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 13 as follows:

To see if the Conway School District shall vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA Chapter 194-D and become an open enrollment school district under the terms of the RSA, to admit 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades K-2, 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 3-5, 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 6-8, and 50 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 9-12, all subject to the provisions of School Board policy regarding criteria for admission and class size guidelines. Further, to limit the percentage of resident students attending open enrollment schools located outside of the District to 0% of the District's total enrollment of resident students in grades K-12. (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0)

Dr. Frechette explained that the topic of open enrollment is ever changing and there is legislation currently being looked at.

She explained that if a school district adopts the provisions of open enrollment, students from other districts can attend that school at 80% of the sending districts cost per pupil.

It also notes that any student can leave a resident district to attend another open enrollment school regardless of whether or not their resident district is also open enrollment.

She noted that they felt it was right to adopt these provisions with the certain caps of students to restrict the number of students leaving the district to 0% of the total enrollment.

She added that this was not because they are against parental choice, but because there is still a tremendous number of questions that need to be vetted.

She added that they are advocating at the State level that there be a commission to student open enrollment with stakeholders to make sure that questions are answered.

It was asked how the district would decide which 20 students would be allowed to attend the middle school if 30 students applied.

It was stated that the process would all be developed through policy.

Mr. Angers asked if those policies had been thought out yet because he had heard that some school districts were going to use this as a tool to stack their sports teams and he did not feel comfortable voting for this if that was the case.

Dr. Frechette wanted to assure them that this was not the case.

She noted that they planned to make what is a seemingly unequitable piece of legislation as equitable as possible.

Mr. Loth noted that while that may be true, Mr. Angers is not wrong in the sense that the district decides who they accept into which programs.

Mr. Davison stated that on behalf of the Conway School Board, it would be fiscally sound for the Conway citizens to vote yes on this.

David Smolen stated that a lottery would make the most sense.

Amy Snow asked if someone lives in Berlin and they work in the Valley and want their kids to come here, would their school have to be an open enrollment school for their kids to come here.

Dr. Frechette noted that was in fact the original interpretation, but now, unless they adopt the provisions of the proposed warrant article, our students can go anywhere at 80% of the cost per pupil, potentially up to 100%.

This would further decrease enrollment which increases the cost per pupil in future years.

Mr. Angers noted that this warrant article would not restrict students from leaving the school, but only the funds that go with it.

He added that if they continue with the poor proficiency scores that they have, people are going to have to do what is best for their child.

Mr. Marvel asked if they could restrict the number of students who come here as well.

Dr. Frechette stated that it would be somewhat foolish as there would be revenue that would come with a student who wished to attend one of our schools.

Mr. Marvel also asked if they planned to only accept as many students as they could enroll without adding staff.

Dr. Frechette noted that this was correct.

Chairman Loth clarified that the numbers they are putting in the warrant article are so that they would not need to add staff.

Dr. Frechette stated that was correct and that any special education costs by would be responsibility of the sending district.

Amy Snow asked what the process would be to change the numbers of students per grade level.

Dr. Frechette stated that it would have to go before the voters again.

Dr. Frechette also noted that it could be by the time they vote on this in April, that the statute noted in the warrant article is not the statute they are currently working under.

Mr. Lewis asked how long those numbers were projected to be appropriate.

Dr. Frechette stated that the current numbers are projected from those enrolled in currently preschool and that they are conservative numbers.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that he felt this program would actually hurt some surrounding towns as students may choose to come to the district for more sports and club opportunities for instance.

He stated that he is not against open enrollment, but is against the way the State is doing it.

There was no further discussion.

Chairman Loth read article 14 as follows:

Petitioned Warrant Article: This is a special petitioned warrant article submitted by a Conway voter (supported with requisite signatures). New Hampshire communities value strong public schools and responsible use of public funds for education. Therefore, the voters of Conway, NH are asked: Shall we call on our legislators to protect property taxpayers by requiring the Education Freedom Account program to provide fiscal and educational performance reports equal to those required of public schools and by limiting eligibility to families with demonstrated financial need? Be it further resolved that the School Board shall send the results of this vote within 30 days to the Governor, Majority and Minority Legislative Leaders, and all members of the General Court representing Conway. (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0)

Linda Burns just wanted to thank the Budget Committee, School Board, and the few people who attended the public hearing tonight.

Mr. Angers stated that this warrant article has no understanding of who the legislative process works in New Hampshire.

Chairman Loth noted he did not know who submitted this article, but that reporting requirements for the public schools, homeschool students, and charter schools are quite different.

He stated that the way he read the article, it is from a desire that EFA students who are participating in those programs would have similar reporting requirements as public schools.

Ms. Snow stated that in order for a petitioned warrant article to get her vote, they need to be at these meetings to explain it.

David Smolen noted that articles like this one worry him in terms of negatively impacting the ballot and only make these meetings longer.

Ryan Shepard noted that he was the Select Board Rep so he would be abstaining on all of these articles as the Select Board had not taken a stance on them.

The public hearing closed at 7:29 pm.

The Board took a brief recess to reconfigure the room.

Ryan Shepard excused himself from the rest of the meeting.

### **Vote on Recommendations for Warrant Articles**

Chairman Loth explained that he and the Vice Chair had discussed, and unless Mr. Shepard was present to actually abstain from the warrant article votes, they did not feel it appropriate count his vote in the final recommendations.

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Smolen, to recommend article 2 as written below:**

**To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$54,443 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (New Kennett High School Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$35,158 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required)**

**The motion carried (12-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend article 3 as written below:**

**To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$17,086 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (A. Crosby Kennett Middle School Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$7,287 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required).**

**The motion carried (12-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Smolen moved, seconded by Mr. Marvel, to recommend article 4 as written below:**

**To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,900 to be added to the Expendable Trust Fund (Elementary Schools Facilities Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 2007, with \$1,048 to offset this amount from the sending towns and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget. (Majority vote required).**

Mr. DiGregorio asked Mr. Angers if he would explain why he would vote against contractually obligated warrant articles.

Mr. Angers stated that he wanted to let everyone know that he was totally unhappy with the way the school district went through their budget process, goes through their budget process and executes their budget process.

**The motion carried (12-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

Mr. Loth asked Mr. Jost to take over for article 5.

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend article 5 as written below:**

**To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Conway School Board and the Conway Educational Association (CEA) which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:**

**Fiscal Year Fiscal Year Estimated Increase**

**2026-27 \$ 736,640**

**2027-28 \$ 608,450**

**2028-29 \$ 452,479**

**and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$736,640 for the upcoming fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. The total compounded cost of the three-year agreement is \$3,879,299 (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).**

Mr. Angers noted that he was voting against this article for two reasons.

The first reason being he was against providing the insurance companies with a premium up to \$36,800 when that teacher could go to the ACA account and get an equivalent insurance for less than that.

He stated he would want to give those insurance premiums to the teachers in their salary and let them decide what plan to get.

He emphasized that teachers should have the choice.

The second reason that he was voting against it was because if a teacher chooses to not take the health insurance plan, all they receive is about a \$5,000 stipend.

He stated that we can pay our teachers enough if we stop paying insurance companies ridiculous rates.

He hoped everyone would vote against it because he believed it needed to be renegotiated and put more money in the teachers' pockets.

Mr. Burke wanted to remind Mr. Angers that the funds for health insurance were not in this particular article.

Mr. Lebel noted that he would be abstaining as he was a coach at the high school and part of this warrant article included stipend increases for coaches.

Mr. Marvel explained that even though the funds for the health insurance are not included in this particular article, the obligation to pay is relevant.

He explained that having a spouse who just had to give up her health insurance as it was too expensive, he was not receptive to the idea that individuals can have a \$1,500 deductible at his expense.

He also noted that they had only just received the copy of the draft contract today so they had not had a chance to read it.

He added that he did not support another 3-year contract and that was why he would be voting against this article.

Mr. Smolen explained that he was going to vote for this because he was concerned about more teachers leaving the district.

He added that he believed there was a hidden cost with all of the turnover.

He stated that he felt they needed to support their teachers.

Mr. Smolen added that health insurance does suppress wages and he would rather see a national health insurance.

Mr. DiGregorio thanked Mr. Burke for noting where the funds for the insurance sit.

He noted that Mr. Angers has stated multiple times that he wants to pay teachers more, but noted that he has never voted in a way to support the staff in their salaries.

He added that if this article fails, the insurance is still there, but it will erase the flexibilities that this new contract has to help and reduce some of the cost of insurance.

**The motion carried (8-3-2) with Mr. Marvel, Mr. Drinkhall and Mr. Angers in opposition and Mr. Lebel and Mr. Loth in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Smolen, to recommend article 6 as written below:**

**The average cost-per-pupil for the preceding year as calculated in accordance with RSA 189:75, I(a) is \$26,469. ELA Proficiency: 51%; Math**

**Proficiency: 32%; Science Proficiency: 30%. To see if the School District will vote to 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 \$42,555,376 with \$1,590,000 to offset this amount from various grants. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$42,565,234 which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Conway School District 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. (\$42,555,376 is recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).**

In regards to Article 6, **Mr. Marvel stated that he would like to see this article acceptable to him by making a motion to reduce the proposed operating budget by \$305,168 for a final proposed operating budget of \$40,660,207.**

**Mr. Angers seconded the motion to amend.**

Mr. Marvel explained that people probably expect him to vote against the budget, but he would rather not because he said that he was relatively satisfied with the direction that they are going in.

He stated that Dr. Frechette had reduced 33.3 positions in the last three years while the numbers he has was more like 39 positions and believed this was a good

He noted that this proposed reduction represents that increase just this year in Conway's portion of the SAU 9 budget that is only voted on by the School Board Members.

He also noted that this would give the voters a significant different between the proposed budget and the default budget.

**After some discussion, Mr. Marvel moved, seconded by Mr. Angers, to amend the proposed amended motion to reduce the proposed operating budget by \$305,168 for a final proposed operating budget of \$42,250,208.**

**The motion carried.**

Mr. DiGregorio explained that as Mr. Marvel had said, the SAU 9 budget had increased.

He stated that Mr. Marvel insinuates that it goes up because none of the people putting the budgets together actually look at the numbers.

However, Mr. DiGregorio explained that the reason it goes up has a lot to do with Mr. Marvel.

He elaborated to say that Mr. Marvel keeps saying that they need to fix the education in the SAU.

He said that the SAU 9 Board made a very strong, conscious decision last year to add a curriculum coordinator to make sure everyone is on the same page.

This year, the increase had to do with technology, moving the Technology Director and some support staff to the Sau 9 Budget.

He noted that Conway reduced their staff by two because of this decision.

Mr. Loth added that the move of the Technology Director to the SAU 9 budget allowed for Conway to now only be responsible for 20% of that person's salary now.

Mr. Marvel explained that he believes that the changes in education in the last few decreases have been someone responsible for the academic decline they are facing.

He noted that they have abandoned the tried-and-true methods in favor of experimental methods.

Mr. Marvel stated that he did not believe that they needed a Curriculum Coordinator to tell them that they need to go back to the original methods.

Mr. Loth explained that he took a look at the school budgets since 2019 and they have cumulatively increased by 10.3%.

He also noted that inflation numbers from the same time period are 28.7%.

Therefore, they are running far below inflation.

He noted that he sees the school working very hard to keep the budget down and he believed the original proposed operating budget was a responsible budget.

For those reasons, he noted that he would be voting against the amendment.

Mr. Smith asked if reducing the budget would put any of the grants in jeopardy.

It was stated that it would not necessarily put them in jeopardy.

Mr. Angers stated that he attends some of the the SAU 9 meetings, and it was his understanding that the hiring of the Curriculum Coordinator would be done under the guise that they were not going to hire an Assistant Superintendent.

However, it now seems like that position is back on the table.

He said that he believed this was the type of thing Mr. Marvel was talking about.

Few citizens show up and voice their opinions.

Mr. Angers added that the reason that he believes we have not received rooms and meals tax from Concord is because they view Conway as irresponsible spenders.

He stated that he believed there were a lot of ways in which the district could make this more effective by pushing the work down the line.

He emphasized that they need to think outside the box.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that he did not believe they had ever decided to take the Assistant Superintendent position away.

They did delay hiring the assistant in order to get the Curriculum Coordinator into the position sooner.

He added that the Curriculum Coordinator has only been on the job a year and a half and so far, increases have been seen in reading proficiency from 58% to 61%.

Pine Tree itself when from 48% to 56%., Math in particular from 55% to 57%.

Conway Intermediate Math went from 47% to 51%.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that numbers are trending in the right direction.

Mr. Smolen stated that while the Budget Committee cares about test scores, the parents need to care and take some accountability as well.

Mr. Marvel asked Mr. DiGregorio where he got those data figures.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that the curriculum coordinator had given them to him today.

Dr. Frechette noted that this was the winter assessment data as reported on the SWEA assessment.

**The amendment to Article 6 failed.**

**Mr. Angers moved, seconded by Mr. Marvel, to reduce the budget by \$168,211 for a new operating budget of \$42,387,165.**

Mr. Angers explained that he believed they should drain the pipes and not fix the roof at John Fuller, pay off the bond in October and get rid of the school.

Chairman Loth noted, that as a member of the JFS Committee, not a CMBC member, there are some complications to making the school completely empty and vacant.

He stated that the building is currently being used by the school district, but once it is not, there are provisions for it to be offered up to be used by other schools.

Mr. Marvel asked whether the bond holders would allow for what Mr. Angers was proposing.

Dr. Frechette stated that they cannot pay off the bond until the end of the bond term. She noted that they could sell it or demolish, but they would be required to continue paying the bond payments.

She reiterated that if the school district stopped using it, this would give the Charter schools first right of refusal.

Chairman Loth noted that one of the reasons he will vote against this amendment was because he believed John Fuller to be an incredibly important property for the Town and the Village of North Conway.

He stated that taking the time to do it right and come up with the right plan for the property is in the best interest of Conway.

Mr. Burke stated that he agreed with Mr. Angers.

He did not feel that the school should be a landlord.

He noted that they have continuously said they had a plan to rent it and it may urge the Board to do this if they do not have the funding to continue to keep it in the condition it is now.

Mr. Angers expressed frustration that if the school comes back to the budget committee at some point to request funds to reoutfit the school with furniture and fixtures, he would be very upset because those things had ended up in the dumpster.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that they cannot drain pipes because it would be against fire code.

He noted that initial discussions about property use included potential housing projects.

Currently, he believed the Planning Board had already move forward without almost a thousand units in the Valley.

He also noted that the appraisal had come in far lower than they had expected.

He stated that the subcommittee continued to work hard on finding the best possible use for that property.

Mr. DiGregorio expressed his concerns regarding an idea proposed by Mr. Angers previously to make the building a homeless shelter.

Mr. Angers clarified that his idea had been a warming center.

He added that he had offered that they pay the resource officer overtime for any supervision duties of that center.

Mr. Marvel asked how much of the \$337,000 in debt was the bond payments.

It was stated that it was \$118,652.

**The amendment failed.**

**The motion carried (12-1-0) with Mr. Marvel in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend Article 7 as follows:**

**To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$88,000 to supplement the funding of the Pine Tree Primary School and Conway Intermediate School's Project SUCCEED Programs. (Designated as a Special Article) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.**

**The motion carried (11-0-2) with Mr. Drinkhall and Mr. Angers in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend Article 8 as follows:**

**To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund (Equipment and/or School Buses) established for this purpose in 2019. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.**

**The motion carried (8-5-0) with Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Angers, Mr. Marvel, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Burke in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to recommend Article 9 as follows:**

**To see if the Conway School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000,000 to be placed in the Expendable Trust Fund (School Buildings Maintenance Fund) established for that purpose in 1995. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.**

Mr. Marvel stated that he feels this article is a way to over budget because the more money they have left over, the more money they can put into this fund.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that this was not true.

He explained that the sending Towns had asked the school to not send back unexpended funds each year, but instead, place them into this account.

He noted that they are going to try and have the sending towns put money into a maintenance account so the Town of Conway is not paying for everything upfront.

**The motion carried (11-2-0) with Mr. Angers and Mr. Lewis in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Smolen, to recommend Article 10 as follows:**

**To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$100,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund (Special Education), established for that purpose in 2008 (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 4-1-0) This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.**

Mr. Angers asked if they can adjust this article.

Mr. Loth noted that he believed they could.

Dr. Frechette stated that she believed they could only amend the operating budget and not a special article.

Mr. Loth stated that this could be modified at the Deliberative.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that if things continue to go in the direction that they expect, they may only have approximately \$100,000 in that account at the end of the year and that is why this article should be recommended.

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend Article 11 as follows:**

**To see if the Conway School District will raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 to be placed in the Expendable Trust Fund (Safety and Security Trust Fund) established for this purpose in 2025. (Special Article by definition) (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0). This appropriation is in addition to Warrant Article 6, the operating budget.**

**Mr. Loth moved, seconded by Mr. Angers, to amend Article 11 to remove the words "up to" in the first sentence.**

**The amendment carried unanimously.**

**The motion carried (10-3-0) with Mr. Angers, Mr. Marvel and Mr. Lewis in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Smolen, to recommend Article 12 as follows:**

**To see if the Conway School District will raise and appropriate up to \$50,000 to be used for the repair, replacement, and procurement of band equipment and/or instruments for the Conway School District music programs. This sum is to come from June 30, 2025 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2025. No amount to be raised from new taxation. (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0).**

**Mr. Loth moved, seconded by Mr. Jensen, to amend Article 12 to correct the year from 2025 to 2026 in both places.**

**The amendment carried unanimously.**

Mr. Smolen encouraged everyone to vote for this article as it was in direct support of the kids and there is a real need.

He also noted that he was encouraged that Dr. Frechette had stated that there would most likely be money available this year for this purpose.

Mr. Marvel stated his objection to this just in terms of process and he preferred that it would have been part of the budget.

He stated he thought there should be equal treatment between sports teams, career tech programs and music.

Mr. Angers asked if the school know how much they expected in unexpended fund balance this year.

It was stated that it was still too early to tell.

Mr. DiGregorio agreed with Mr. Marvel and said that the School Board failed this program.

Mr. Marvel explained that he also had a problem with the way the Budget Committee handled this procedurally.

**The motion carried (11-2-0) with Mr. Angers and Mr. Marvel in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend Article 13 as follows:**

**To see if the Conway School District shall vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA Chapter 194-D and become an open enrollment school district under the terms of the RSA, to admit 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades K-2, 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 3-5, 20 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 6-8, and 50 students from outside the Conway School District to grades 9-12, all subject to the provisions of School Board policy regarding criteria for admission and class size guidelines. Further, to limit the percentage of resident students attending open enrollment schools located outside of the District to 0% of the District's total enrollment of resident students in grades K-12. (Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0)**

Mr. Marvel stated that he very much does not like the idea that this article would refuse any student from leaving the district to receive an education anywhere else.

However, he said the economic argument is persuasive.

Mr. Jost wanted to clarify that this did not prohibit a student from leaving the district to attend another district, but prohibits the district from being financially responsible for that.

Mr. Smolen noted that there were two charter schools in town that anyone can go to.

He agreed that our public schools have deficiencies and they need to be improved, and not everyone is perfectly served by them.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that the School Board is continuing to do things to make the district better.

He stated that the role of the Budget Committee is quite different.

He noted that they should be looking at it from a financial standpoint, not necessarily the educational standpoint.

He explained that from a budgetary standpoint, it does not make any sense not to support this article because of the impact of 13 students leaving from 12 grades.

He noted that it would have a significant impact on education.

He reiterated that the role of the budget committee has to look at it strictly from a budget standpoint and not their personal ethical reasonings.

**The motion carried (10-3-0) with Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Angers and Mr. Lewis in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend Article 14 as follows:**

**Petitioned Warrant Article: This is a special petitioned warrant article submitted by a Conway voter (supported with requisite signatures). New Hampshire communities value strong public schools and responsible use of public funds for education. Therefore, the voters of Conway, NH are asked: Shall we call on our legislators to protect property taxpayers by requiring the Education Freedom Account program to provide fiscal and educational performance reports equal to those required of public schools and by limiting eligibility to families with demonstrated financial need? Be it further resolved that the School Board shall send the results of this vote within 30 days to the Governor, Majority and Minority Legislative Leaders, and all members of the General Court representing Conway.  
(Recommended by the School Board 5-0-0)**

Mr. Angers asked if this article had any expenditure of funds because it did not, he did not know why they would vote on it.

Dr. Frechette stated that they had set precedent last year when they voted on the recommendations for school name that had no financial impact.

Mr. Angers disagreed because the changing of names involved purchasing of signs.

Chairman Loth stated that in the past the Budget Committee had voted on all sorts of things with or without direct financial impact.

School Board Chair Joe Mosca noted that when he was Chair of the Budget Committee it had been decided that they were going to vote on every article regarding of financial impact.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that at the School Board level, they support this article.

He stated that they want all entities to follow the same standards and report the same way the school district has to.

Mr. Lewis asked how this would affect those who homeschool.

It was noted that there is not formal reporting requirement for homeschool families to the State in years past.

It was noted that they used to report to the building principal of their resident district, but that is no longer the case.

Chairman Loth stated that the State is already not doing a great job sending funding back to the Towns.

Instead, they are spending a lot of money towards people with these freedom accounts.

He emphasized that these accounts are a way to chip away at public education.

Mr. Smolen noted that he agreed with Chairman Loth.

He stated that this was money that could be used towards the Conway School District.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that it goes a bit deeper than Mr. Lewis' question.

He noted they have a lot of trouble keeping kids in school for a lot of reasons.

They do put pressure on parents to keep their kids in school.

He noted that while there are a lot of great homeschool programs, there are people who get paid having their kid sit at home.

He stated that this article is not binding, but allows them to send a letter to the State for accountability.

Mr. Marvel asked what it actually mattered what Conway thinks what the legislature does.

He stated that he felt that public schools have needed competition for a long time.

Mr. Stearns stated that if Mr. Marvel believes that public schools had needed some competition and now, they have it, the proper thing to do is introduce a yard stick.

Mr. Angers stated that if the reporting comes out that these charter schools and homeschools comes out and they are outperforming public schools, that could be the death of public schools.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he thinks they would be fine.

He added there cannot be competition if both sides are not being scored.

**The motion carried (8-5-0) with Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Angers, Mr. Marvel, Mr. Lewis and Mr. Burke in opposition.**

**Adjournment**

***The Meeting adjourned at 9:19 pm by the power of the Chair.***

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Krista Day**

**Recording Secretary**

**CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES  
KENNETT HIGH SCHOOL  
409 Eagles Way  
North Conway, NH 03860  
February 12, 2026, AT 6:00 PM**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 6:03 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Steve Angers, Michael Lacey, Dave Jensen, Bob Drinkhall, Frank Jost, Chair Alex Loth, Curt Burke Jr., Kevin Lebel, Wes Smith, William Marvel, David Smolen, Ryan Shepard Selectboard Rep.

**Pledge of Allegiance**

Chairman Loth led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Representatives from the Budget Committee introduced themselves.

Chairman Loth explained that the agenda for tonight was to go over each warrant article, take questions and comments from the public, and then after the close of the public hearing, the Budget Committee would discuss and make their recommendation on the warrant articles.

It was noted that Deliberative for the Town would be held on March 4, 2026 at 7:00 pm with voting day on April 14, 2026.

**Public Hearing on the Center Conway Fire Precinct Budget**

Chief Merrill appeared before the group at 6:04 pm.

He explained that they were looking to appropriate \$573,530 and have \$175,000 in warrant articles for Capital Reserve Funds for a total appropriate of \$748,530.

He noted that they do receive \$24,000 from the Town of Eaton because they cover half of Eaton.

There were no questions or comments.

The public hearing closed at 6:05 pm.

Mr. Loth explained that they oversee the budget of the Center Conway Fire Precinct due to how they are set up and that it is fully contained within the Town of Conway.

He added that their budget is only paid for by those in their precinct.

## Public Hearing on the Town Warrant

The public hearing opened at 6:06 pm.

Chairman Loth noted that Article 1 was for the election of officers.

**ARTICLE 2:** To see if the Town will vote to **repeal, in its entirety, Chapter 98 of Municipal Code, Public Art**. The ordinance was originally adopted April 9, 2024 for the purpose of regulating public art. The repeal is submitted by the Board of Selectmen pursuant to the Settlement Agreement in the matter of Young, et al. v. Town of Conway, New Hampshire, Case No. 1:23-cv-00070-JL.

Article 2 pertained to the repeal of the public art ordinance as was part of the settlement agreement with the Town and Leavitts Bakery as explained by Town Manager John Eastman.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 3:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Nine Million Three Hundred Seventy-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$9,372,828)** (gross budget) for the design, permitting, construction, and equipping of an **ADDITION AND REMODEL TO THE POLICE STATION** (the "Project"); to authorize Nine Million Three Hundred Seventy-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$9,372,828.00) of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502)** (gross budget) for the design, permitting, and construction required to bring **Settlers Green Drive and the private portions of Common Court** up to the standards and requirements currently in effect in the Town ("the Project"); to authorize **One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502)** of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be

bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and further to amend the betterment assessment the abutters to the roads shall be required to pay pursuant to RSA 231:29 associated with the Project and previously approved by Article 44 at the 2025 Town Meeting by increasing the amount of the betterment assessment to One Million Nine Hundred Thirty Thousand Five Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$1,930,513) to match the revised cost estimate for the Project as well as the expected interest incurred by the Town to bond the above gross budget amount to finance the Project, said assessment to be prorated over a period not to exceed 10 years and shall, pursuant to RSA 231:30, create a lien upon the lands so assessed which shall continue until fully discharged and shall be subject to interest and any other charges applicable to the collection of delinquent taxes. **No money to come from taxation on all town property owners; debt service payments to come from payment of the betterment assessment levied on PID 235-89, 235-92, 235-98, 246-25.1, 235-99, and 235-101.**

David Smolen asked if there was a representative from Settlers Green present.

There was not.

Mr. Smolen asked if this was solely initiated by Settlers Green.

Andrew Smith, Public Works Director explained that last year Settlers Green had petitioned for road acceptance.

It was noted that there were about 6 property owners who would be responsible as abutters for paying the cost of the road reconstruction.

Mr. Smolen questioned why anyone else would have to pay for this if it was initiated by Settlers Green.

Mr. Smith stated that it was because those properties would have the benefit of having the road upgraded.

Mr. Smolen wondered if the residents of Wylie Court would have to pay.

Mr. Smith stated that he believed that the Settlers Green folks were going to cover the cost of the Wylie Court frontage.

Mr. Smolen also asked why Settlers Green could not just borrow the funds for the project themselves.

Mr. Smith stated that they could, but they have chosen not to.

He added that at any time they could chose to bring the road up to Town standards and based on last years vote, the road would then become a Town road.

Mr. Smolen asked if the Town Staff's labor was included in this bond.

The answer was no.

Mr. Smolen believed that it should include staff time.

Mr. Smith corrected himself to say that if the road was built, there was some inspection time factored in the cost.

Mr. Smolen asked what the impact of this bond would be to any potential future bond requests that the town needed.

Finance Director Kathleen Golding stated there would be no impact.

Mark Hounsell asked if the public was going to get a chance to speak and not just Budget Committee members.

Chairman Loth noted that at previous public hearings it had been a mix of both the public and the Budget Committee asking questions.

Mr. Drinkhall stated that he agreed that staff time should be accounted for during the bonding process.

He then asked what would happen if the article failed.

It was answered that the road has been conditionally accepted and will only be taken over by the town once it is brought up to town standards.

Because of this, the Town would expect Settlers Green to want this on next years warrant if it did not pass this year.

Mr. Drinkhall stated that he just did not understand why the Town would want to take this over and pay for yearly maintenance costs as it would now be a town road.

Mr. Hounsell stated that this would take a 60% vote and believed the meeting should move forward instead of continuing discussion.

Wesley Smith noted that in his experience, staff time would be billed for at a later date if it was not included in this bond figure.

There were no further comments.

**ARTICLE 5:** (Operating Budget). Shall the Town vote to 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 for the purposes set forth therein, **Fifteen Million Nine Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$15,997,325)**. Should this

Article be defeated the Default Budget shall be Fifteen Million Six Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Nine Dollars (\$15,674,179) which is the same as the last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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. NOTE: This Operating Budget Warrant Article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other Warrant Article.

David Smolen asked if there was an update on welfare spending to this point in the year.

Mr. Eastman stated that he did not have that at this time, but could get the information for Mr. Smolen.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Million Two Hundred Fourteen Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$1,214,442)** for the **OPERATION OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT**. Ninety-Eight Thousand Five Hundred One Dollars (\$98,501) of said funds is to come from the Fire Revenue. The balance of One Million One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-One Dollars (\$1,115,941) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire Area (NPFA). Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be One Million One Hundred Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty-Six Dollars (\$1,150,926) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway or by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting in accordance with RSA 40:13X and XVI to take up the issue of a Revised Operating Budget only. Mark Hounsell requested clarification as he was confused about the last sentence which stated "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.

Mr. Smith noted that this wording has been in the articles every year and is vetted by counsel.

Mr. Eastman stated that he would try and get clarification on this for Mr. Hounsell tomorrow.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **Eight Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Fourteen Dollars (\$868,914)** for the **OPERATION OF THE WATER DEPARTMENT**: Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be Eight Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand Five Hundred Twenty One Dollars (\$866,521) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of

Conway 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 amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000)** to be placed in the following **Capital Reserve Funds:**

**\$30,000–Water System Improvement CRF**  
**\$20,000–Water/Sewer Equipment CRF**

to be used according to the purposes for which the funds were established. This amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate **One Million Five Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Dollars (\$1,597,570)** for the **OPERATION OF THE SEWER DEPARTMENT**. Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be One Million Six Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand Two Hundred Seven Dollars (\$1,663,207) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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 amount to be funded by 2026 sewer revenues and grants.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000)** to be placed in the following **Capital/Expendable Trust Funds:**

**\$25,000–Sewer Projects ETF**  
**\$20,000–Water/Sewer Equipment CRF**  
**\$25,000–Short Term Asset Replacement (STAR) ETF**

to be used according to the purposes for which the funds were established. This amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.'

There were no questions or comments

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will vote to expand the purpose of the previously established **POLICE COMMERCIAL DUTY REVOLVING FUND**. The purpose of the fund is to provide public safety services by municipal employees or volunteers outside of the ordinary detail of such persons, including but not limited to public safety services

in connection with special events, highway construction, and other construction projects as allowed pursuant to RSA 31:95-h. All revenues received for police commercial duty will be deposited into the fund, and will be allowed to accumulate from year to year, will not be part of the Town's General Fund surplus, and may only be expended for police commercial duty purposes, **including salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment and vehicle repairs/replacement**. The Board of Selectmen shall be authorized to withdraw and disburse funds in accordance with the purpose of the Fund.

Chief Mattei explained that this fund was established back in 2006 and is very limited in terms of what they can use the money for.

By expanding the purpose of this fund, the Police will be able to use it for salaries, cruiser maintenance and cruiser repairs that are related to commercial duty.

Mark Hounsell asked what the current balance of the fund was.

Chief Mattei stated that there was currently \$65,000 in the fund.

Mr. Hounsell stated that it makes sense to expand the purpose so these funds could be utilized.

There was discussion regarding hourly rates and how the officers pay into the retirement system.

Alex Loth suggested that the Police Department and the Board of Selectmen keep an eye on the commercial duty fees to ensure that they do not remain static and keep up with the true costs of running the department.

Mr. Hounsell asked why this needs 2/3 vote instead of 3/5.

Kathleen Golding stated that there was a specific RSA for this type of fund.

Mr. Hounsell stated that he believes this is the correct interpretation of that RSA.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 12:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the **TERMS OF COMPENSATION FOR THE ELECTED TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR** as follows:

The Town Clerk/Tax Collector shall begin service with all of the benefits provided by the Town of Conway's Non-Union personnel manual which includes a salary level equal to the average salary for Town Clerk/Tax Collectors as determined by survey of the thirty (30) towns used for pay comparison in the Town of Conway's Non-Union personnel manual. After the completion of each year of service, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector shall receive an increased salary equal to the CPI 12-month average for the preceding year plus 1%. The CPI average for a year may not fall below 2% nor rise above 4%. And,

furthermore to raise and appropriate **Eight Hundred Seventeen Dollars (\$817)** as the cost associated with this warrant article for 2026.

Amy Snow questioned how she was being paid currently.

Mr. Eastman explained that the only think being amended was the 1% being added as she was currently receiving the % CPI increase per year.

This amendment brings her more in line with the way the rest of the personnel receive their pay increases.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 13:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000)** for the support of **WHITE MOUNTAIN REGIONAL AIRPORT**.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the Town shall, pursuant to RSA 72:27-a, vote to **modify the provisions of RSA 72:35**, previously adopted, for an optional tax credit of **\$5,000** for a Service-Connected Total and Permanent Disability.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 15: MODIFICATION OF EXISTING DISABLED EXEMPTION CRITERIA -** Shall the Town, pursuant to RSA 72:37-b, vote to modify the disabled exemption from property tax based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to increase the limits for eligibility as follows:

**Single income limit from \$24,000 to \$27,000.**

**Married combined income limit from \$30,000 to \$33,000.**

The following will remain the same:

For persons who meet all qualifications \$85,000 reduction of assessed value;

The maximum asset limit for both individual and married persons is \$50,000 (excluding the value of the person(s) residence)

To qualify, the person must satisfy all of the conditions of RSA 72:37-b that pertain to eligibility for this exemption as well as those contained in any other applicable statute including without limitation, that they demonstrate that they have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 consecutive years, that they own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such persons spouse, eligible under Title II or Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act, and that they reside at the property as their primary residence.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 16: MODIFICATION OF EXISTING ELDERLY EXEMPTION CRITERIA** - To see if the Town shall, pursuant to RSA 72:39-a, vote to modify the elderly exemption from property tax based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to increase the limits for eligibility as follows:

**Single income limit from \$30,000 to \$32,000.**

**Married combined income limit from \$40,000 to \$44,000.**

The following will remain the same:

For persons 65 years of age up to 75 years (if eligible) \$85,000 reduction of assessed value;

For persons 75 years of age up to 80 years (if eligible) \$100,000 reduction of assessed value

For persons over 80 years of age (if eligible) \$115,000 reduction of assessed value

The maximum asset limit for both individual and married persons is \$85,000 (excluding the value of the person's residence). To qualify, the person must satisfy all of the conditions of RSA 72:39-a&b that pertain to eligibility for this exemption as well as those contained in any other applicable statute including without limitation, that they demonstrate that they have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, that they own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, that they must have been married to each other for at least 5 years, and that they reside at the property as their primary residence.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 17:** To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a **Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee**, pursuant to RSA 674:5, to prepare and amend each budget cycle, a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects projected over a period of at least six years. The sole purpose and effect of the Capital Improvements Program Committee shall be to assist the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee in the consideration of the annual budget.

Mr. Hounsell explained that a lot of work went into the Master Plan.

He noted that if you support the Master Plan, then you need to support this article as it will give the community the ability to work together to make a Capital Improvements Plan.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 18:** To see if the Town will vote to **prohibit the operation of Keno games** within its boundaries. RSA 284:51 Keno; Local Option, has been amended to require a vote of the Town to prohibit the use; the operation of Keno games would otherwise be permitted

Relating to both Article 18 and 19, Mr. Hounsell asked if this vote was a “one and done” or would it have to be voted on each year.

Mr. Eastman explained that it was the plan for it to just be this one vote this year, but they cannot control the State in they make changes to the law in the future. There were no additional questions or comments on Articles 18 and 19.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 19:** To see if the Town would vote to **prohibit additional games of chance operations** with a physical facility within the municipal boundaries; as specified by RSA 287-D:32 Local Option; Games of Chance; this Article would not apply to lottery games retailers.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 20:** To see if the Town will vote to **petition the New Hampshire General Court** to enact statewide enabling legislation authorizing cities and towns, at local option by vote of the legislative body, to adopt an additional **Local Meals and Rooms tax** (up to 1%), to be collected and administered in conjunction with the state Meals and Rooms tax, with revenues returned to the adopting municipality; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to communicate this petition and advocate in support of such enabling legislation.

Mr. Eastman asked Mr. Donohoe, the Selectmen’s Legislative Liaison to speak to this article.

Selectman Donohoe explained that there was recently a vote in the Senate to kill what many were calling the “Pillow Tax” or the hotel fee to help with local revenues.

He stated that this was an attempt to create a mechanism to help reimburse the Town of Conway and any other Town who voted to opt in, to help offset the tourism related impacts.

Chairman Loth thanked Mr. Donohoe for his efforts.

Mark Hounsell stated that he believed they were asking for too much.

He suggested starting at .25%.

Mr. Jost thanked Mr. Donohoe.

He explained that there are numerous alliances against this as people say that Conway already gets a portion of rooms and meals tax.

Mr. Eastman stated that many believe that, however, the Town of Conway receives a much smaller percentage of rooms and meals tax than what it sends to the State because it is based on Conway's full time resident population.

Mr. Eastman stated that a few years ago, Carl Thibodeau had contacted the State to find out just how much money was coming from the Town of Conway for rooms and meals tax, and was told that they have no way of tellings.

Mr. Angers asked for clarification about whether these funds, if obtained, would go into the Town side and not the school side of Conway's revenue.

It was stated that this was in fact the case.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 21:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$475,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RECONSTRUCTION** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 22:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 23:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR SOLID WASTE EQUIPMENT** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 24:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR LANDFILL EXPANSION** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 25:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE**

**FUND FOR MAINTENANCE OF TOWN BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 26:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$120,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES LEASED BY THE TOWN** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

Mark Hounsell asked what the balance was one this fund.

Mr. Smith stated the balance was \$140,228.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 27:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR PARKS DEPARTMENT VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 28:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ninety-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$98,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE VEHICLES** to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 29:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$130,000)** from the annual cable television franchise fees received to add to the **PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL / GOVERNMENT CABLE TELEVISION (PEG) TRUST FUND**, to support the operations and equipment needs of Public Education and Government broadcasting services. No funds shall be raised by local property taxes to support this Warrant Article.

Amy Snow stated that as less people are using Spectrum, the less money the Town gets for franchise fees.

This statement was corroborated by Town Staff.

She then asked what would happen when the amount of franchise fees was not enough to sustain Valley Vision.

Bill Edmunds stated that they have been discussing this for a while now.

He noted that they are going to be having the Board of Selectmen for Conway look into potentially increasing the fees that towns who receive Channel 3 services pay per year.

Mary Carey Seavey, Selectmen's Rep for Valley Vision, explained that they are going to be looking into finding other income sources from things such as advertising.

**ARTICLE 30:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$230,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR AMBULANCE**. One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) of said funds to come from former Conway Village Fire District Unassigned Fund Balance.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 31:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$320,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FIRE & RESCUE EQUIPMENT** to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established. One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) of said funds are to come from the former Conway Village Fire District Unassigned Fund Balance. One Hundred Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$170,000) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire Area (NPFA).

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 32:** To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$115,881)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FIRE STATION BUILDING MAINTENANCE**. One Hundred Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$100,881) of said funds to come from the Fire Unassigned Fund Balance from the former Conway Village Fire District. Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire Area (NPFA). Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) is to be funded by general taxation.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 33:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$175,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FOR THE HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENT (HRA)** to be used according to the purposes for which the Fund was established. Said funds are to be withdrawn from the Town's Unassigned Fund Balance.

Curt Burke asked if the HRAs were so the Town could offer higher deductible plans.

It was stated that this was correct.

Mr. Burke than asked what the cost for a single plan, 2-person plan, and a family plan.

Chief Mattei stated that a single plan was \$12,967, a two-person plan was \$25,934, and a family plan was \$35,011.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 34:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR ASSESSING SOFTWARE CONVERSION AND REVALUATION** to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 35:** To see if the Town will vote to establish a **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE ACQUISITION and IMPLEMENTATION** under the provisions of RSA 35:1 and authorize the Board of Selectmen to be the agents to expend in accordance with the purpose of the Fund. And further to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000)** to be placed in the **CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE ACQUISITION and IMPLEMENTATION** to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 36:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000) said sum to be allocated to the **NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER** for programs of the North Conway Community Center. Submitted by Petition.

Mark Hounsell asked if the Budget Committee had taken into account any revenues that any of the non-profits asking for money on the warrant have received from the casino.

Chairman Loth noted that at the non-profit presentations that question was asked of each organization and some had taken advantage of that and some had not.

He added that some of the organizations had stated that those funds from the casino are not guaranteed year to year.

Mr. Hounsell disagreed and said the money is guaranteed.

Mr. Shepard stated that his own opinion was that if non-profits were hurting and they could benefit from the casino funding, then why not.

He noted that if they didn't get the funds from the casino, they would probably be relying more on the town for funding.

Mr. Hounsell was note disputing the value of each of the non-profits.

Mr. Angers noted that he would be happy to share the information gathered at the non-profit presentations regarding which organizations and how much they received from the casino.

Ellin Leonard stated that if the non-profits did not exist, the Town would be spending a lot more money.

She stated that they should support these organizations.

Mr. Smolen stated that for the record, the Gibson Center did not receive any funds from the casino.

He added that the legislation is constantly changing and he wished there was a better way to support non-profit organizations in the State.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 37:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) said sum to be allocated towards construction of a **NEW PLAYGROUND AT THE NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER** facility located in North Conway Village. Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 38:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Two Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$22,100) for the operation of **TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC.** service programs in Conway: Fuel and Energy Assistance, Housing Stability Services, Transportation Services, Guardianship Services, Community Action Resource Coordinators, Free Diaper Distribution Program, USDA TEFAP Food Distribution to pantries, 211 Homeless Call Response, Tamworth Dental Center. Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 39:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to support Conway home delivered meals (Meals on Wheels), congregate meals, transportation and program services provided by the **GIBSON CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES, INC.** Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 40:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for **VAUGHAN COMMUNITY SERVICE, INC.** Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 41:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Seven Hundred Eight Dollars (\$17,708) for the support of **STARTING POINT.** Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 42:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the support of **THE WAY STATION** for the purpose of continuing to provide safe, welcoming, non-judgmental space and supportive services for the homeless and housing insecure of the Mount Washington Valley. Submitted by Petition.

Mr. Smolen wanted to commend the Way Station for the work they had done this year.

Ellin Leonard stated that many do not know that Carroll County is the only county in New Hampshire that does not have an emergency shelter.

She noted that they should do everything in their power to support the Way Station.

There were no further questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 43:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the **CONWAY AREA HUMANE SOCIETY** for the purpose of supporting continuing services for stray, abandoned and neglected animals brought to the shelter by Animal Control or private citizens no longer able to care for them. Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 44:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Nine Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$49,480) for the support of **WHITE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER** to help meet the healthcare needs of the uninsured and underinsured residents of the Town of Conway. Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 45:** To see if the Town will call on the New Hampshire Legislature to protect local taxpayers while avoiding/repealing policies that shift state costs onto local property taxpayers and further to see if the Select Board shall send the results of this vote within

30 days to the Governor, Majority and Minority Legislative Leaders, and all members of the General Court representing Conway. Submitted by Petition.

There were no questions or comments.

**ARTICLE 46:** To see if the Town will vote to direct the Board of Selectmen to **construct Phase 2 of the North Conway Alternative Transportation and Recreational Path (commonly known as the Rec Path)** to extend the paved path to Intervale, as substantially shown and generally in the location on the Design Plans created by HEB Engineers dated July 19, 2024. The design and/or construction may be completed in segments as grant funding and land permissions are obtained.

And further to see if the Town will vote to accept a transfer of land rights to complete Phase 2, including without limitation easement, fee, or license agreements over any parcels required for the construction of the Rec Path, including without limitation Tax Parcels, 214-84.1, 214-86, 214-87.5, 214-87.3, 214-87.2, 214-87.1, 214-94, 214-95, 214-27.1, 202-150, and 202-37, or any portion thereof.

And further to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, exclusively from grant and donation sources and not from property taxation or otherwise from Town general or highway funds, all sums necessary for the design, construction and land acquisition costs related to Phase 2 of the Rec Path. Submitted by Petition.

Mr. Hounsell noted that he was flabbergasted that the Board of Selectmen had supported this article and at the same time had support Article 17, the Capital Improvements Plan, which he said was contradictory.

He explained that the Town had voted for the Master Plan which gives directions on how these projects need to be dealt with.

He stated that this project was cutting in front of the line.

He noted that this was putting the needs of the few in front of the needs of the many.

Mr. Hounsell stated that it was just a short time ago that the Trails Associations, and one member of the Town, did not tell the Town Manager that DOT had denied the use of the rail corridor for this project.

He stated that there seemed to be a lack of transparency.

Mr. Hounsell added that the Association had now created a segmented plan that has not been approved by the Board of Selectmen.

He said that if the people vote for this, they are tying the hands of the Planning Board, Conservation Commission and Board of Selectmen.

Mr. Hounsell added that even if this does not pass, it does not mean that a rec path will not be built eventually.

He stated that the Town of Conway was very capable of developing a rec path for its people following the correct process.

Mr. Hounsell stated that they also have not talked about the protection of the water and the morality of the deed restrictions.

Mr. Hounsell emphasized that this was not right and he would be on the war path for the next two months to ensure this did not pass.

He added that if this path is not built, the taxpayers will be on the hook for the \$400,000 that was spent for engineering.

Ms. Leonard stated that she does not believe this path is for alternative transportation; just a rec path.

She also was concerned about the pavement.

Mr. Hounsell asked Mr. Eastman for a copy of the signed petition.

He added that the only reason there was going to be pavement was because it was a stipulation for funding from the Connie Watson Fund.

Mr. Hounsell noted that there can be a path, but it does not have to be there.

He added that if they continue on this path, it will have to go under Route 16, and right through a protected watershed.

He emphasized the need to protect the water.

Amy Snow also agreed that they pavement was problematic.

She stated that the more impermeable surfaces they put in this town, the less places the water has to go.

She added that they can complete this path without using pavement and for it to still allow for ADA accessibility.

Ryan Shepard stated that last year he had stated that they should put this before the voters again to get a clearer idea of support.

He also added that he was unsure where Mr. Hounsell was getting his data on the fact that more people were opposed to this project than in favor.

He stated that they need to have more compromise.

He added that this article was non-binding.

Selectman Shepard stated that he was tired of talking about this.

He added that they could alter the grant and find an alternative surface.

He had hoped they could put a pause on this project in order to reassess.

Selectman Shepard hoped that the voters would come out and weigh in on this.

Mr. Hounsell stated that if Mr. Shepard was tired about hearing about this path, maybe he was tired of being a Selectman.

Mr. Hounsell stated that Selectman Shepard was unable to find the pulse in the Town.

He added that Selectman Donohoe had been elected over Mr. Thibodeau, strictly over his stance on the Rec Path.

Mr. Hounsell stated that people want the path, but only if it follows the correct process.

Selectman Shepard stated that he was not tired of being a Selectman, but when they go in circles on the same topic, it means they are not getting anything accomplished.

He added he did not believe the only difference between Mr. Donohoe and Mr. Thibodeau was their view on the recreation path.

Selectman Shepard stated that he has been working hard to be a good selectman for this Town and took offense to Mr. Hounsell's comments.

Mr. Hounsell stated that he did not mean to offend Selectman Shepard.

Selectman Shepard stated that he did offend him.

Mr. Hounsell said, "too bad".

Selectman Donohoe wanted to share why he had voted against this petition warrant article.

I want to be clear that I support recreation in Conway and I supported the concept of a rec path from the beginning.

My concern tonight is not about whether Conway wants a rec path, it's about whether this specific phase two proposal is ready to proceed.

Although the article says funding would come exclusively from grants and private donations, there are still fiscal and governance implications.

Design work, permitting, land control and administrative coordination all involve town oversight and exposure.

If fundamental constraints prevent construction, those sunk costs do not disappear.

A warrant article cannot cure unresolved land or legal constraints before directing construction.

The town needs clarity on whether it has the authority and land control necessary to build the project as designed.

I believe voters should be asked to decide on a project that is ready, not one that still has threshold questions outstanding.

My position is about sequencing and fiscal responsibility, not about opposing recreation.

There were no further questions or comments.

Chairman Loth closed this public hearing at 8:00 pm.

#### **Vote on Recommendations for Warrant Articles**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to have Mr. Jensen move, and Mr. Jost, second every motion tonight to recommend each warrant article. The motion carried.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to repeal, in its entirety, Chapter 98 of Municipal Code, Public Art. The ordinance was originally adopted April 9, 2024 for the purpose of regulating public art. The repeal is submitted by the Board of Selectmen pursuant to the Settlement Agreement in the matter of Young, et al. v. Town of Conway, New Hampshire, Case No. 1:23-cv-00070-JL.**

**The motion carried (11-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Million Three Hundred Seventy-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$9,372,828) (gross budget) for the design, permitting, construction, and equipping of an ADDITION AND REMODEL TO THE POLICE STATION (the "Project"); to authorize Nine Million Three Hundred**

**Seventy-Two Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$9,372,828.00) of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes.**

The motion carried (11-1-0) with Mr. Marvel in opposition.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502) (gross budget) for the design, permitting, and construction required to bring Settlers Green Drive and the private portions of Common Court up to the standards and requirements currently in effect in the Town ("the Project"); to authorize One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502) of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and further to amend the betterment assessment the abutters to the roads shall be required to pay pursuant to RSA 231:29 associated with the Project and previously approved by Article 44 at the 2025 Town Meeting by increasing the amount of the betterment assessment to One Million Nine Hundred Thirty Thousand Five Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$1,930,513) to match the revised cost estimate for the Project as well as the expected interest incurred by the Town to bond the above gross budget amount to finance the Project, said assessment to be prorated over a period not to exceed 10 years and shall, pursuant to RSA 231:30, create a lien upon the lands so assessed which shall continue until fully discharged and shall be subject to interest and any other charges applicable to the collection of delinquent taxes. No money to come from taxation on all town property owners; debt service payments to come from payment of the betterment assessment levied on PID 235-89, 235-92, 235-98, 246-25.1, 235-99, and 235-101.**

Mr. Smolen stated that he would be voting against this because he did not believe the Town had borrowed the correct amount of money and believed it to be much more.

He added that he did not like that the Town was taking on this liability and felt that Settlers Green needed to pay the bill themselves.

Mr. Jost stated that he did not necessarily disagree with Mr. Smolen, but that they were already halfway down the road as the warrant article last year had already conditionally accepted the road.

Mr. Marvel stated that he did not believe that the only way for this issue to go away was to pass this article.

He noted that he believed that Settlers Green would eventually give up on this process if it continued to fail on the warrant.

**The motion failed (4-7-1) with Mr. Jensen, Mr. Jost, Mr. Shepard and Mr. Loth in the affirmative, and Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 5: (Operating Budget). Shall the Town vote to 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 for the purposes set forth therein, Fifteen Million Nine Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$15,997,325). Should this Article be defeated the Default Budget shall be Fifteen Million Six Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Nine Dollars (\$15,674,179) which is the same as the last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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.**

**NOTE: This Operating Budget Warrant Article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other Warrant Article.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Two Hundred Fourteen Thousand Four Hundred Forty-Two Dollars (\$1,214,442) for the OPERATION OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT. Ninety-Eight Thousand Five Hundred One Dollars (\$98,501) of said funds is to come from the Fire Revenue. The balance of One Million One Hundred**

**Fifteen Thousand Nine Hundred Forty-One Dollars (\$1,115,941) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire Area (NPFA). Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be One Million One Hundred Fifty Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty-Six Dollars (\$1,150,926) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway or by law, or the governing body may hold one special meeting in accordance with RSA 40:13X and XVI to take up the issue of a Revised Operating Budget only.**

Mr. Burke stated that he was going to abstain for the articles that affect only those in certain precincts because he felt it was up to those taxpayers.

Chairman Loth stated that there was some value in the Budget Committee making recommendations.

Dave Jensen stated that the Budget Committee had the obligation to review and vote on the budget of the precincts and the town.

**The motion carried 11-0-1 with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Eight Hundred Sixty-Eight Thousand Nine Hundred Fourteen Dollars (\$868,914) for the OPERATION OF THE WATER DEPARTMENT: Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be Eight Hundred Sixty-Six Thousand Five Hundred Twenty One Dollars (\$866,521) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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 amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.**

**The motion carried 11-0-1 with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in the following Capital Reserve Funds:**

**\$30,000–Water System Improvement CRF  
\$20,000–Water/Sewer Equipment CRF**

**to be used according to the purposes for which the funds were established.**

**This amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.**

**The motion carried 11-0-1 with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Million Five Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Dollars (\$1,597,570) for the OPERATION OF THE SEWER DEPARTMENT. Should this Article fail the Default Budget shall be One Million Six Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand Two Hundred Seven Dollars (\$1,663,207) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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 amount to be funded by 2026 sewer revenues and grants.**

**The motion carried 11-0-1 with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000) to be placed in the following Capital/Expendable Trust Funds:**

**\$25,000–Sewer Projects ETF  
\$20,000–Water/Sewer Equipment CRF  
\$25,000–Short Term Asset Replacement (STAR) ETF**

**to be used according to the purposes for which the funds were established. This amount to be funded by 2026 water revenues and grants.**

**The motion carried 11-0-1 with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to expand the purpose of the previously established POLICE COMMERCIAL DUTY REVOLVING FUND. The purpose of the fund is to provide public safety services by municipal employees or volunteers outside of the ordinary detail of such persons, including but not limited to public safety services in connection with special events, highway construction, and other construction projects as allowed pursuant to RSA 31:95-h. All revenues received for police**

**commercial duty will be deposited into the fund, and will be allowed to accumulate from year to year, will not be part of the Town's General Fund surplus, and may only be expended for police commercial duty purposes, including salaries, benefits, supplies, equipment and vehicle repairs/replacement. The Board of Selectmen shall be authorized to withdraw and disburse funds in accordance with the purpose of the Fund.**

Mr. Smith asked if the Board of Selectmen votes were accurate.

This was confirmed by Mr. Eastman.

Mr. Angers also added that even though the Police would make recommendations, the Board of Selectmen would have the final say.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to amend the TERMS OF COMPENSATION FOR THE ELECTED TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR as follows:**

**The Town Clerk/Tax Collector shall begin service with all of the benefits provided by the Town of Conway's Non-Union personnel manual which includes a salary level equal to the average salary for Town Clerk/Tax Collectors as determined by survey of the thirty (30) towns used for pay comparison in the Town of Conway's Non-Union personnel manual. After the completion of each year of service, the Town Clerk/Tax Collector shall receive an increased salary equal to the CPI 12-month average for the preceding year plus 1%. The CPI average for a year may not fall below 2% nor rise above 4%. And, furthermore to raise and appropriate Eight Hundred Seventeen Dollars (\$817) as the cost associated with this warrant article for 2026.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the support of WHITE MOUNTAIN REGIONAL AIRPORT.**

**The motion carried (8-4-0) with Mr. Jensen, Mr. Marvel, Mr. Jost and Mr. Angers in opposition.**

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the Town shall, pursuant to RSA 72:27-a, vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:35, previously adopted, for an optional tax credit of \$5,000 for a Service-Connected Total and Permanent Disability.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 15: MODIFICATION OF EXISTING DISABLED EXEMPTION CRITERIA** - Shall the Town, pursuant to RSA 72:37-b, vote to modify the disabled exemption from property tax based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to increase the limits for eligibility as follows:  
Single income limit from \$24,000 to \$27,000.

Married combined income limit from \$30,000 to \$33,000.

The following will remain the same:

For persons who meet all qualifications \$85,000 reduction of assessed value;

The maximum asset limit for both individual and married persons is \$50,000 (excluding the value of the person(s) residence)

To qualify, the person must satisfy all of the conditions of RSA 72:37-b that pertain to eligibility for this exemption as well as those contained in any other applicable statute including without limitation, that they demonstrate that they have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 consecutive years, that they own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such persons spouse, eligible under Title II or Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act, and that they reside at the property as their primary residence.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 16: MODIFICATION OF EXISTING ELDERLY EXEMPTION CRITERIA** - To see if the Town shall, pursuant to RSA 72:39-a, vote to modify the elderly exemption from property tax based on assessed value for qualified taxpayers to increase the limits for eligibility as follows:

Single income limit from \$30,000 to \$32,000.

Married combined income limit from \$40,000 to \$44,000.

The following will remain the same:

For persons 65 years of age up to 75 years (if eligible) \$85,000 reduction of assessed value;

**For persons 75 years of age up to 80 years (if eligible) \$100,000 reduction of assessed value**

**For persons over 80 years of age (if eligible) \$115,000 reduction of assessed value**

**The maximum asset limit for both individual and married persons is \$85,000 (excluding the value of the person's residence). To qualify, the person must satisfy all of the conditions of RSA 72:39-a&b that pertain to eligibility for this exemption as well as those contained in any other applicable statute including without limitation, that they demonstrate that they have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, that they own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, that they must have been married to each other for at least 5 years, and that they reside at the property as their primary residence.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Committee, pursuant to RSA 674:5, to prepare and amend each budget cycle, a recommended program of municipal capital improvement projects projected over a period of at least six years. The sole purpose and effect of the Capital Improvements Program Committee shall be to assist the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee in the consideration of the annual budget.**

**The motion carried (11-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 18: To see if the Town will vote to prohibit the operation of Keno games within its boundaries. RSA 284:51 Keno; Local Option, has been amended to require a vote of the Town to prohibit the use; the operation of Keno games would otherwise be permitted.**

**Mr. Angers stated that voting for this would prohibit keno in town.**

**Chairman Loth agreed, but added that the legislation could change in the future.**

**Mr. Smith stated that there seemed to be a lot of negative opinions on gambling in general, but asked if there was any proof that there had been any increase in issues for the police force since the casino opened.**

Mr. Eastman stated that in his conversations with Chief Mattei, there did not seem to be any issues.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 19: To see if the Town would vote to prohibit additional games of chance operations with a physical facility within the municipal boundaries; as specified by RSA 287-D:32 Local Option; Games of Chance; this Article would not apply to lottery games retailers.**

Mr. Smith wondered if it would need a vote of the legislative body in the future to allow for additional games of chance operations.

Mr. Eastman stated that this would be the case, but reminded everyone that the State sets this legislation.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 20: To see if the Town will vote to petition the New Hampshire General Court to enact statewide enabling legislation authorizing cities and towns, at local option by vote of the legislative body, to adopt an additional Local Meals and Rooms tax (up to 1%), to be collected and administered in conjunction with the state Meals and Rooms tax, with revenues returned to the adopting municipality; and further to authorize the Board of Selectmen to communicate this petition and advocate in support of such enabling legislation.**

**The motion carried (11-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$475,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR INFRASTRUCTURE RECONSTRUCTION to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 22:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 23:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR SOLID WASTE EQUIPMENT to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 24:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR LANDFILL EXPANSION to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 25:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$250,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR MAINTENANCE OF TOWN BUILDINGS AND FACILITIES to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 26:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$120,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR MAINTENANCE OF BUILDINGS AND

**FACILITIES LEASED BY THE TOWN to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.**

Wes Smith asked what buildings were leased.

It was stated that both the Town Hall and the Conway Recreation Department were in leased buildings.

Mr. Smith asked what maintenance was required.

Andrew Smith noted that one of the biggest needs was the boiler replacement at Town Hall.

Mr. Burke asked if the utilities were included in the Conway Recreation Center lease for \$1.

Mr. Eastman stated that they pay for the utilities.

**The motion carried (11-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 27: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$45,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR PARKS DEPARTMENT VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 28: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$98,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE VEHICLES to be used according to the purposes for which the fund was established.**

Mr. Angers wanted to thank Chief Mattei for picking economical vehicles.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 29:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$130,000) from the annual cable television franchise fees received to add to the PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL / GOVERNMENT CABLE TELEVISION (PEG) TRUST FUND, to support the operations and equipment needs of Public Education and Government broadcasting services. No funds shall be raised by local property taxes to support this Warrant Article.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 30:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$230,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR AMBULANCE. One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) of said funds to come from former Conway Village Fire District Unassigned Fund Balance.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 31:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$320,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FIRE & RESCUE EQUIPMENT to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established. One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) of said funds are to come from the former Conway Village Fire District Unassigned Fund Balance. One Hundred Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$170,000) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire Area (NPFA).

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 32:** To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$115,881) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR FIRE STATION BUILDING MAINTENANCE. One Hundred Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$100,881) of said funds to come from the Fire Unassigned Fund Balance from the former Conway Village Fire District. Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) is to be funded by a special assessment of the Non-Precinct Fire

**Area (NPFA). Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) is to be funded by general taxation.**

**The motion carried (11-0-1) with Mr. Burke in abstention.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 33: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$175,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FOR THE HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT ARRANGEMENT (HRA) to be used according to the purposes for which the Fund was established. Said funds are to be withdrawn from the Town's Unassigned Fund Balance.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 34: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR ASSESSING SOFTWARE CONVERSION AND REVALUATION to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 35: To see if the Town will vote to establish a CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE ACQUISITION and IMPLEMENTATION under the provisions of RSA 35:1 and authorize the Board of Selectmen to be the agents to expend in accordance with the purpose of the Fund. And further to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) to be placed in the CAPITAL RESERVE FUND FOR POLICE DEPARTMENT SOFTWARE ACQUISITION and IMPLEMENTATION to be used in accordance to the purposes for which the Fund was established.**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:**

**ARTICLE 36:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$65,000) said sum to be allocated to the NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER for programs of the North Conway Community Center. Submitted by Petition.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 37:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) said sum to be allocated towards construction of a NEW PLAYGROUND AT THE NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER facility located in North Conway Village. Submitted by Petition.

The motion carried (9-3-0) with Mr. Angers, Mr. Smith and Mr. Marvel in opposition.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 38:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Two Thousand One Hundred Dollars (\$22,100) for the operation of TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM, INC. service programs in Conway: Fuel and Energy Assistance, Housing Stability Services, Transportation Services, Guardianship Services, Community Action Resource Coordinators, Free Diaper Distribution Program, USDA TEFAP Food Distribution to pantries, 211 Homeless Call Response, Tamworth Dental Center. Submitted by Petition.

Mr. Smolen stated that he was going to abstain as TCCAP runs the fuel assistance program as well as the Lake Senior Housing Corporation which is an affiliate with the Gibson Center.

The motion carried (8-2-2) with Mr. Smolen and Mr. Angers in abstention and Mr. Marvel and Mr. Drinkhall in opposition.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 39:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to support Conway home delivered meals (Meals on Wheels), congregate meals, transportation and program services provided by the GIBSON CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES, INC. Submitted by Petition.

The motion carried (11-0-1) with Mr. Smolen in abstention.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 40: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for VAUGHAN COMMUNITY SERVICE, INC. Submitted by Petition.**

The motion carried (11-0-1) with Mr. Drinkhall in abstention.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 41: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventeen Thousand Seven Hundred Eight Dollars (\$17,708) for the support of STARTING POINT. Submitted by Petition.**

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 42: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the support of THE WAY STATION for the purpose of continuing to provide safe, welcoming, non-judgmental space and supportive services for the homeless and housing insecure of the Mount Washington Valley. Submitted by Petition.**

Mr. Angers stated that he did not believe that they had asked for enough and noted that he may try to make a motion to increase this at deliberative.

The motion carried (11-0-1) with Mr. Drinkhall in abstention.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 43: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the CONWAY AREA HUMANE SOCIETY for the purpose of supporting continuing services for stray, abandoned and neglected animals brought to the shelter by Animal Control or private citizens no longer able to care for them. Submitted by Petition.**

Mr. Shepard stated that he was abstaining as he was on the Board of Directors for the Humane Society.

The motion carried (10-0-2) with Mr. Shepard and Mr. Angers in abstention.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 44:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Nine Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$49,480) for the support of WHITE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER to help meet the healthcare needs of the uninsured and underinsured residents of the Town of Conway. Submitted by Petition.

The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 45:** To see if the Town will call on the New Hampshire Legislature to protect local taxpayers while avoiding/repealing policies that shift state costs onto local property taxpayers and further to see if the Select Board shall send the results of this vote within 30 days to the Governor, Majority and Minority Legislative Leaders, and all members of the General Court representing Conway. Submitted by Petition.

Mr. Marvel stated that this article was very vague and he was not in support.

The motion carried (7-5-0) with Mr. Smoleri, Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Marvel, Mr. Burke and Mr. Angers in opposition.

Mr. Jensen moved, seconded by Mr. Jost, to recommend the warrant article as follows:

**ARTICLE 46:** To see if the Town will vote to direct the Board of Selectmen to construct Phase 2 of the North Conway Alternative Transportation and Recreational Path (commonly known as the Rec Path) to extend the paved path to Intervale, as substantially shown and generally in the location on the Design Plans created by HEB Engineers dated July 19, 2024. The design and/or construction may be completed in segments as grant funding and land permissions are obtained.

And further to see if the Town will vote to accept a transfer of land rights to complete Phase 2, including without limitation easement, fee, or license agreements over any parcels required for the construction of the Rec Path, including without limitation Tax Parcels, 214-84.1, 214-86, 214-87.5, 214-87.3, 214-87.2, 214-87.1, 214-94, 214-95, 214-27.1, 202-150, and 202-37, or any portion thereof.

**And further to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, exclusively from grant and donation sources and not from property taxation or otherwise from Town general or highway funds, all sums necessary for the design, construction and land acquisition costs related to Phase 2 of the Rec Path. Submitted by Petition.**

Mr. Marvel asked if this article was to extend the rec path or pave the rec path.

It was determined that it could be for both.

Mr. Marvel noted that the vote from the Selectmen implies that they are in favor of it.

Mr. Burke stated that he was concerned about where the rec path was going to cross the railroad tracks.

Mr. Angers stated that he had attended the Board of Selectmen meeting at which this was discussed.

He noted that they still do not have an easement from a private land owner which essentially blocks the path from being completed.

He added that based on early estimates, this portion of the path would cost \$12,000 per year to maintain.

Mr. Angers stated that it was scary to him to see the town take on projects like this without any kind of economic impact statement being filed.

Chairman Loth stated that he felt the article being put out to the people would allow them to see if the legislative body still wants this path and if they would like it to be paved.

He noted that it would allow them to take the temperature of the town.

Chairman Loth also stated that he interpreted the (3-2-0) vote from the Selectmen to mean that three of them were in favor of moving forward with the project as designed.

He explained that he is in favor of recreation paths.

He noted that the long-term costs of using material other than pavement could be costly.

Mr. Smith stated that he was in favor of rec paths, but felt that this plan had a lot of challenges and believed that they should think about it move before proceeding.

Selectman Donohoe was recognized to speak.

He wanted to clarify that the Selectmen's vote was only to support putting the petitioned

warrant article forward, not that those three members were in favor of the path as presented.

Chairman Loth noted that he still believed the vote would insinuate to the voters that three of the Selectmen were in favor of the path as designed.

**The motion failed (3-8-1) with Mr. Jensen, Mr. Loth and Mr. Lebel in the affirmative and Mr. Shepard in abstention.**

**Adjournment**

***The Meeting adjourned at 8:44 pm by the power of the Chair.***

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,  
Krista Day  
Recording Secretary**

1

**Conway School District**

2

**Annual Meeting Minutes**

3

Kennett High School, Loynd Auditorium, North Conway, NH

4

**Monday, March 2, 2026**

5 The 2026 Annual Deliberative Session of the Conway School District was called to order at 7:01  
6 p.m.

7 **School Board Members present:** Joe Mosca, Mike DiGregorio Matt Stearns, Brittany Hodge,  
8 Meghan Beckwith, Randy Davison

9 Absent: Ryan Wallace

10 **SAU 9 Staff present:** Superintendent: Dr. Amiee Frechette, Director of Budget and Finance:  
11 Mike Wade; Director of Student Services: Pam Stimpson; Principal KHS: Kevin Carpenter; CIS  
12 Principal: Danielle Nutting; Director Project SUCCEED: Tim Neugebauer; Assistant  
13 Superintendent: Nicole Bell; Director of Curriculum and Instruction: Christa Biche; Technology  
14 Coordinator: Dale Anderson; Interim Career Tech Director: Christine Thompson

15 Absent: KMS Principal: Katy Bedley; PTS Principal: Sara Lewis

16 **Budget Committee Members present:** Chair: Alex Loth; Vice-Chair: Frank Jost; Steve  
17 Angers; Bob Drinkall; Kevin Lebel; Dave Jensen; Michael Lacey; Quentin Lewis; Center  
18 Conway Fire Rep: Bill Marvel; Selectmen Rep: Ryan Shepard; David Smolen; Wesley Smith

19 Absent: Kurt Burke

20 **Moderator:** Chris Meier

21 **Assisting:** Mike King, School Clerk and Louise Inkell, Town Clerk.

22 Presentation of colors by Conway Police Department and Salute to the Flag.

23 Moderator Meier: Reviewed ground rules for the deliberative session.

24 **7:07 pm ARTICLE 1.** To elect all necessary officers.

25 No discussion on the Article:

26 This Article, the officers, will be voted on at our ballot voting on April 14, 2026.

28 **7:07 pm ARTICLE 2.** Expendable Trust Fund (New Kennett High School Facilities  
29 Maintenance Fund).

30 There was no discussion.

31 Article 2 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

32 **7:08 pm ARTICLE 3.** Expendable Trust Fund (A. Crosby Kennett Middle School Facilities  
33 Maintenance Fund).

34 There was no discussion.

35 Article 3 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

36 **7:08 pm ARTICLE 4.** Expendable Trust Fund (Elementary Schools Facilities Maintenance  
37 Fund).

38 There was no discussion.

39 Article 4 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

40 **7:09 pm ARTICLE 5.** Conway School Board and the Conway Educational Association (CEA),  
41 which calls for increases in salaries and benefits over the current staffing levels.

42 Karen Umberger asked if the CEA contract was on the website. Aimee Frechette stated that it  
43 wasn't but that it could be added. Chris Meier stated that there was a request from the floor for  
44 the draft CEA contract to be added to the website.

45 No further discussion. Chris Meier stated that Article 5 will be placed on the ballot as written..

46 **7:09 pm ARTICLE 6.** Operating Budget

47 No discussion on the Article. Chris Meier announced that Article 6 will be placed on the ballot as  
48 written.

49 **7:09 pm ARTICLE 7.** To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of  
50 \$88,000 to supplement the funding of the Pine Tree Primary School and Conway Intermediate  
51 School's Project SUCCEED Programs.

52 There was no discussion.

53 Article 7 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

54 **7:09 pm ARTICLE 8.** Capital Reserve Fund (Equipment and/or School Buses).

55 There was no discussion.

56 Article 8 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

57 **7:10 pm ARTICLE 9:** Expendable Trust Fund (School Buildings Maintenance Fund).

58 There was no discussion on the Article.

59 Article 9 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

60 **7:10 pm ARTICLE 10.** Capital Reserve Fund (Special Education).

61 There was no discussion.

62 Article 10 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

63 **7:10 pm ARTICLE 11.** Safety and Security Trust Fund.

64 There was no further discussion.

65 Article 11 was declared to be placed on the ballot as written.

66 **7:11 pm ARTICLE 12.** \$50,000 for repair, replacement, and procurement of band  
67 equipment and/or instruments for the Conway School District Music Programs.

68 Aimee Frechette stated that the funds will be from the unexpended fund balance. Chris Meier  
69 stated that no funds will be raised from new taxation.

70

71 No discussion. Chris Meier declared that Article 12 will be placed on the ballot as written.

72

73 **7:12 pm ARTICLE 13.** Open Enrollment

74 Discussion on the Article: Karen Umberger, resident, asked if Open Enrollment applies to  
75 anyone currently in SAU 9 under contractual agreements? Aimee Frechette responded that  
76 assuming contracts are in place, students from Albany or Eaton, say, are considered Conway  
77 students. This warrant limits Conway students leaving Conway to attend school elsewhere and  
78 other students leaving schools within SAU9, as they are adopting open enrollment and placing  
79 zero as the number of students who can attend elsewhere. Karen Umberger asked if a student  
80 from Berlin wanted to attend Conway they could? Aimee Frechette stated yes if their district has  
81 not adopted open enrollment at all or if they have adopted open enrollment but did not limit the  
82 number of students who could attend elsewhere.

83 No further discussion; Chris Meier declared Article 13 to be placed on the ballot as written.

84 **7:14 pm ARTICLE 14.** Petitioned Warrant Article.

85 There was no discussion at this time. Article 14 will be placed on the ballot as written.

86 **7:15 PM ARTICLE 15.** To act upon any other business that may legally come before said  
87 meeting.

88 The School Deliberative Session was adjourned at 7:15 PM until the voting on April 14, 2026, at  
89 the Town Garage.

90 Respectfully Submitted,

91 Michael King

92

93



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94

Michael S. King

95

Conway School District Clerk

96

3/13/24

97

Date

98

**CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES**

**LOYND AUDITORIUM**

**KENNETT HIGH SCHOOL, NORTH CONWAY, NH**

**March 4, 2026, AT 8:35 PM**

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Bill Marvel, Michael Lacey, Dave Jensen, Bob Drinkhall, Curt Burke Jr., Frank Jost, Chair Alex Loth, Quentin Lewis, Kevin Lebel, Ryan Shepard Selectboard Rep.

**REVOTE ON AMENDED WARRANT ARTICLES FROM DELIBERATIVE TOWN MEETING**

**Dave Jensen moved, seconded by Frank Jost, to recommend the following article:**

**To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502) (gross budget) for the design, permitting, and construction required to bring Settlers Green Drive and the private portions of Common Court up to the standards and requirements currently in effect in the Town (“the Project”); to authorize One Million Six Hundred Eighty-Three Thousand, Five Hundred Two Dollars (\$1,683,502) of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for, accept, and expend any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes; and further to amend the betterment assessment the abutters to the roads shall be required to pay pursuant to RSA 231:29 associated with the Project and previously approved by Article 44 at the 2025 Town Meeting by increasing the amount of the betterment assessment to One Million Nine Hundred Thirty Thousand Five Hundred Thirteen Dollars (\$1,930,513) to match the revised cost estimate for the Project as well as the expected interest incurred by the Town to bond the above gross budget amount to finance the Project, said assessment to be prorated over a period not to exceed 10 years and shall, pursuant to RSA 231:30, create a lien upon the lands so assessed which shall continue until fully discharged and shall be subject to interest and any other charges applicable to**

**the collection of delinquent taxes. No money to come from taxation on all town property owners; debt service payments to come from payment of the betterment assessment levied on PID 235-89, 235-92, 235-98, 246-25.1, 235-99, and 235-101.**

**The motion failed (4-5-1).**

**Dave Jensen moved, seconded by Frank Jost, to recommend the following article:**

**(Operating Budget). Shall the Town vote to 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 for the purposes set forth therein, Fifteen Million Nine Hundred Ninety-Seven Thousand Three Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$15,997,325). Should this Article be defeated the Default Budget shall be Fifteen Million Six Hundred Seventy-Four Thousand One Hundred Seventy-Nine Dollars (\$15,674,179) which is the same as the last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town of Conway 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.**

**NOTE: This Operating Budget Warrant Article does not include appropriations contained in ANY other Warrant Article.**

**The motion carried (8-2-0) with Mr. Lewis and Mr. Drinkhall in the opposition.**

**Dave Jensen moved, seconded by Frank Jost, to revote on recommendations to the amended warrant article below:**

**To see if the Town will vote to direct the Board of Selectmen to construct Phase 2 of the North Conway Alternative Transportation and Recreational Path (commonly known as the Rec Path) to extend the paved path to Intervale, as substantially shown and generally in the location on the Design Plans created by HEB Engineers dated July 19, 2024. The design and/or construction may be completed in segments as grant funding and land permissions are obtained.**

**And further to see if the Town will vote to accept a transfer of land rights to complete Phase 2, including without limitation easement, fee, or license agreements over any parcels required for the construction of the Rec Path, including without limitation Tax Parcels, 214-84.1, 214-86, 214-87.5, 214-87.3, 214-87.2, 214-87.1, 214-94, 214-95, 214-27.1, 202-150, and 202-37, or any portion thereof.**

**And further to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate, exclusively from grant and donation sources and not from property taxation or otherwise from Town general or highway funds, all sums necessary for the design, construction and land acquisition costs related to Phase 2 of the Rec Path. Submitted by Petition.**

**The motion failed (0-10-0).**

**Adjournment**

***Dave Jensen moved, seconded by Frank Jost, to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm. The motion carried.***

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Krista Day**

**Recording Secretary**

# CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE

## MINUTES

Professional Development Center

KENNETT MIDDLE SCHOOL, NORTH CONWAY, NH

March 25, 2026, AT 6:00 PM

### Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:01 PM. The following Budget Committee members were present: Steve Angers, Michael Lacey, Wes Smith, Bob Drinkhall, Curt Burke Jr., Frank Jost (6:16 pm). Chair Alex Loth, Kevin Lebel, Mike DiGregorio Conway School Board Rep, Ryan Shepard Selectboard Rep.

Chairman Loth noted that a few members maybe under the impression that the meeting begins at 6:30 pm.

### Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Loth led the group in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### Review and Approval of Minutes

Chairman Loth explained that they were having a hard time getting minute takers.

He noted that their previous recording secretary had to resign due to other commitments.

She however will complete the minutes from the last few meetings.

Chairman Loth noted that the only minutes they had currently in draft form were those from January 28, 2026 and February 2, 2026.

He noted that the School Department was responsible for the Deliberative Minutes for the School Budget, but the rest of the outstanding minutes would be done by the previous recording secretary when she could get to them.

Chairman Loth noted that because the election was coming up, the members of the Budget Committee would be changing for the upcoming budget year.

Because of this, when they receive the outstanding minutes for adoption, it would make the most sense to only have those who were present on the Board during those meetings to vote on them.

There was discussion regarding whether minutes could be adopted if there were more abstentions than positive votes.

The consensus was that as long as the affirmative votes outweighed the negative votes, the motion to adopt would pass.

It was noted that the number of open seats on the CMBC was equal to the number of people who were running for election.

The only new person running was Harrison Kanzler and that it would make sense for him to not vote on the minutes for adoption.

The same would go for a new Selectmen's Representative to the CMBC if it was not Ryan Shepard.

There was discussion about the process in which the School Board and Select Board appoint their representatives.

It was determined that each respective Board votes for their representatives to necessary committees.

There was discussion regarding the need to meet 91-A requirements of having draft minutes available within 5 days of a meeting.

Chairman Loth noted that they are out of compliance with that, but they are working to get it fixed.

He noted that there has been a lot of effort put into finding a solution, but it has not been found yet.

Chairman Loth noted that he had just handed out the minutes and wondered if they should make a motion to approve them tonight, or wait so that they could be reviewed.

Mr. Drinkhall noted that he would prefer to review them first.

Mike DiGregorio also noted that when quickly reviewing the minutes from February 2, 2026, there may be some edits needed to be made such as the location of the meeting and the discussion of the precinct budget.

Kevin Lebel agreed that he believed they had discussed the precinct budget that night.

Chairman Loth stated that he would review the video to check.

### **Bylaw Review**

Chairman Loth noted that it is a good thing to look at the bylaws from time to time and that it had been 5 years since they had been adopted.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that in Section 2, item B, it states that there shall be 17 members on this committee.

Due to the fact that East Conway and Redstone Precincts had dissolved, they needed to review that.

Mr. DiGregorio would like to remove that paragraph all together and insert the following:

“There shall be 12 members at large elected by the voters of Conway, one appointed member from the Conway School Board, one appointed member of the Board of Selectmen, and one appointed member from the Center Conway Fire District for a total of 15 members”.

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to replace Section 2, Item B in the Budget Committee Bylaws and insert the following: “There shall be 12 members at large elected by the voters of Conway, one appointed member from the Conway School Board, one appointed member of the Board of Selectmen, and one appointed member from the Center Conway Fire Precinct for a total of 15 members”.**

Mr. DiGregorio clarified that ‘at large’ means that they were elected by the voters of Conway.

After discussion on the motion and process, Mr. DiGregorio rescinded the prior motion.

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to replace Section 2, Item B in the Budget Committee Bylaws and insert the following: “There shall be 12 members at large elected by the voters of Conway (“Elected Member”), one appointed member from the Conway School Board, one appointed member of the Board of Selectmen, and one appointed member from the Center Conway Fire Precinct (“Appointed Member”) for a total of 15 members”.**

Frank Jost arrived at 6:16 pm.

Chairman Loth reviewed what had occurred up until this point in the meeting.

**The motion carried (9-0-1) with Mr. Angers abstaining.**

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to add the following paragraph under 2C:**

**At the first reorganizational meeting held after the April vote, all newly elected or reelected members at large shall show proof of oath taken to the Chair or Acting Chair. Proof shall be recorded in the minutes.**

After discussion about past procedure, **the motion carried (9-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Lacey, to add a paragraph under 2D that reads as follows:**

**All appointed members from the School Board, Board of Selectmen, or Board of Commissioners, shall show documentation minutes from each of their respective Board's of their appointment. Proof of appointment shall be recorded in their minutes and presented to the Chair of the Budget Committee.**

Mr. DiGregorio explained that one of the members of this committee has not been appointed for some time.

He noted that when Chairman Loth had requested information for the appointed members (Mr. Shepard, Mr. DiGregorio, and William Marvel from Center Conway Fire Precinct), there was no show of action from the Center Conway Commissioners.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that the Commissioners had just had a conversation about it, but no formal action.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he did not feel that anyone should be sitting on the committee if they had not been elected or appointed formally.

Mr. Jost stated that while he felt this was a reasonable thing to add to the bylaws, he did not agree that they have an unappointed member.

He noted that Mr. Marvel has been appointed, but the paper trail was not there.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that Mr. Marvel himself in the past had said he had not been appointed in six years.

Mr. Loth noted that he had reached out to the Commissioners and had received an email from the Treasurer or Secretary that they wished for Mr. Marvel to continue as their representative.

Mr. Loth stated that he thought this addition to the bylaws would be good so there is a paper trail moving forward.

**The motion carried (9-1-0) with Mr. Angers in opposition.**

Mr. DiGregorio explained that this next addition was something that the Committee already does, but to ensure it was in writing, he would like to add to the section on vacancies.

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to insert 13B to note that "no persons appointed to fill an at-large position may do so until the oath of office is taken and recorded in the minutes."**

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. DiGregorio moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to add a paragraph as follows under a new section 15: In general, all questions from the Budget Committee to the Town, School or Precinct shall be the wishes of the full board, submitted through the chair or to the representative Board member, or both.**

Mr. DiGregorio explained that he felt that last year there were a lot of conversations about the number of questions that came from this committee and that they had agreed that those questions to be moved forward to the Town and School would be voted on to move forward.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that when individuals continually ask questions of staff, there are sometimes hours and hours' worth of labor and cost sometimes associated with those questions that don't even make it to this committee.

He stated that he did not feel it was the staff's responsibility to research and find the information for individual members when most of the information was available to the public via the Town, State and/or Federal Websites.

He added that under the Freedom of Information Act, the public is required to come in and get that information themselves and it was not a requirement for the staff to get it for them.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that questions should go through the Chair.

Chairman Loth asked if every question needed to be approved by the committee at a meeting, or if they just need to go through the Chair.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he did not feel that the Town, School or Precinct would have a problem with questions that took little time to answer, but if you are asking for something requiring hours' worth of labor, he believed it should go through the whole committee and ultimately through the Chair.

He noted that he wanted the window to be there for the Town, School or Precinct to say that a question is going to take for instance, 20 hours worth of labor.

Chairman Loth stated that he believed he as Chair could have done better and will do a better job going forward because the practice and the proper practice is that any question from a committee member goes through the Chair.

He added that whatever information that is found gets back to the entire committee and is reported in the minutes.

He stated that he understood what Mr. DiGregorio was trying to do in terms of limiting staff work but he also did not want to limit the ability to request information between meetings as that can be valuable.

Mr. Jost stated that he felt this was reasonable to not want to add undue friction into the system or create something that is just making work for works sake.

However, Mr. Jost agreed that if something emergent came up between meetings, he would leave that up to the Chair.

Mr. Drinkhall stated that he believe that the Committee often puts too much of a burden on staff.

He did not however want to be unable to ask a question at a meeting of individuals or about something that does not take a lot of research.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that he did not feel this would pertain to questions asked during in-person meetings.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that this was more about those questions that are being asked that eat up hours and hours of time and don't always have anything to do with the purview of this committee.

Mr. Smith stated that he felt they should be able to ask a question in their group email and decide if it was a question that should be posed to the School, Town or Precinct.

It was clarified that this practice would be having a meeting outside of a meeting.

Mr. Loth stated that Mr. Angers had asked for a bunch of information between the meetings while he believed it should have probably gone through the chair, he did copy the Chair on the emails and will be entered into the public record.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that wasn't just about Mr. Angers, but they had questions directly from the Committee in open session that in his opinion were completely unnecessary.

He believed that they should be asking a bigger question such as, is this necessary for your decision as you put together a budget for now", before posing questions to the Town, School or Precinct.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that some of the staff is working 14 or 15 hour days to answer everyone's questions.

He believed that they need to be thinking about budget as a team and what questions they should put forward.

Chairman Loth stated that he could argue that there were two things that could help this.

He believed that the group as a whole could override a request.

He also felt that the Town, School, Precinct or Chair could push back if they felt it was an unreasonable question or that it required a huge amount of work.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that Dr. Frechette does everything she can to answer everyone's questions and he does not believe it is her responsibility to go and do that when it is already publicly available.

Mr. DiGregorio read his motion again.

Mr. Angers stated that he could not go along with having to have all questions go through the Board for their permission.

He explained that he would rather be able to ask the questions directly instead of having to go through the 91-A process which would require the entity to drop everything else they are doing and provide the information immediately.

Mr. Smith explained that he believed it was important that all of the committee members have a voice and did not feel that they should require everyone on the board to have to agree with a certain question in order for it to be asked.

Mr. Shepard explained that he did not believe that the sentiment of this addition to the bylaws was to censor anyone, but to give the Town, School or Precinct the ability to prioritize.

He believed that people need to approach information gathering with a little more finesse.

Mr. DiGregorio also agreed that the intention of this addition was not to censor.

He added that he believed the questions being asked should be budget related as that was this committee's purview.

It was emphasized that the work of the committee should ultimately happen in meetings, in front of the public.

Chairman Loth suggested that they could word the addition to the bylaws by saying "all requests for information from the budget committee to the Town, School or Precinct shall be submitted by the Chair but are subject to override by the committee.

Mr. Angers stated that he could go along with that change, but if there was something he felt strongly about, he would look into alternative methods such as 91-A requests in order to obtain the information.

Mr. DiGregorio agreed and rescinded his motion.

**Alex Loth moved, seconded by Steve Angers, to add #15 to the Bylaws that reads "In general, all questions from the Budget Committee to the Town, School or Precinct shall be the wishes of the full board, submitted through the chair or to the representative Board member, or both."**

**The motion carried (9-0-1) with Mr. Shepard abstaining.**

Frank Jost stated that he would like to see them remove appendix B in its entirety as it was outdated.

He noted that they should follow the rules set by the Town or the School moving forward.

**Mr. Jost moved, seconded by Mr. DiGregorio, to remove appendix B from the Budget Committee Bylaws.**

Chairman Loth noted that appendix B was the guidelines for meeting in the Marshall Gymnasium during COVID-19.

Mr. Shepard just noted that he would love to see the Marshall Gymnasium with cameras so they could have a proper meeting in the future.

It was stated that this could be up to the Selectmen in the future.

Mr. DiGregorio asked if anyone knew why there was so much information regarding ethics in the bylaws.

He wondered if there had been an issue and this was the way that was addressed.

There did not seem to be anything that committee members could remember.

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Mr. Loth moved, seconded by Mr. Burke Jr., to remove "Please refer to Appendix B" from Number 14. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. Angers wanted to discuss Section 4B, Meeting Minutes.

He stated that he did not believe they could change that as it was an RSA, however, it says preliminary meeting minutes.

He wondered if the Chair would consider having basic meeting minutes taken during the meetings that would give them a set of preliminary meeting minutes to meet the requirements of the law.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that he does not disagree with the concept, but the ownership of the minutes belongs to the recording secretary until they are voted in by the Board.

He stated that you can limit your meeting minutes to just action items or verbatim.

Mr. Jost noted that they had some challenges keeping recording secretaries in the past.

Mr. Jost thought that they could use AI for their meetings.

Mr. DiGregorio asked if they had discussed with the Town upping the wage for the recording secretary.

Mr. Jost stated that they are currently around 25-30 dollars per hour which does not seem unreasonable.

Chairman Loth said they are currently looking into changing two things: the pay and the job requirements.

He noted that perhaps 'less is more' and that was the direction they needed to go.

Mr. Shepard noted that according to the State, AI may be used for many things, but they would then need human review and approval.

Mr. DiGregorio implored the Board to review the Technology Committee meeting minutes as they were done with AI.

Mr. Smith stated that he uses AI quite a bit and it has come a long way.

Chairman Loth noted that they could try AI and then have someone at the Town review it.

He added that for now, they will continue to make sure that the preliminary minutes are done and available.

Chairman Loth noted that the bylaws would now say updated on March 25, 2026.

### **Old Business**

(none)

### **New Business**

Mr. Angers stated that they are in the middle of tuition contracts.

He requested that Mr. DiGregorio explain this a little more as he understood from reading the paper that the Bartlett School Contract is going to give the school district a \$400,000 shortfall in revenue.

He stated that if that is the case, he believed that it would come before this committee because that would be asking the taxpayers to make up that \$400,000 unless there are other plans.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that the contracts are now public because they had been voted on.

He summarized that now everyone is paying the same price per student with the exception of Jackson who wanted to be able to have the option of zero attendance so they are paying a 13% premium.

Mr. DiGregorio explained that it is not only Conway who is making up that cost, but Tamworth and Albany as well.

He reviewed that they have some upcoming meetings with both Tamworth and Madison.

He added that Conway's cost per student has certainly increased because of the amount of maintenance money they have spent in the last few years for the roof at the high school.

He noted that they used to be \$23,000 per students whereas now they are \$25,000.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that one of the things they did change in regards to the costs of maintenance, was they at they put CPI into the new contract so that the sending Towns would have to pay that.

He added that because they have spent so much money out of Article 9, their cost per student has inflated.

The hope is that if they do not have to spend as much on maintenance, that cost per student should come down.

He highlighted that whatever the cost per student is for Conway, it is the same per student of these other Town's.

Mr. Angers noted that they still had a \$400,000 shortfall.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that he did not believe this was accurate because they are going to be getting funds from Albany and Tamworth.

If they still have a shortfall, they will end up having to cut more staff.

Mr. DiGregorio stated that the goal was to get all of the Towns to Conway under a fair contract.

There was mention regarding Mr. DiGregorio's belief that SAU 13 should collapse. He also added that he felt it would be beneficial to get Bartlett Kids to Kennett Middle School as well.

Mr. DiGregorio noted that he believed some form of a Mt. Washington Valley Regional School should be.

Mr. Jost stated that this new way seemed to be fairer.

Mr. DiGregorio also noted that for the SAU 13 Towns, they will only be able to sign a one-year contract as they do not have permission from their legislative body for more than that.

Chairman Loth noted that at their next meeting they will have a reorganizational meeting.

**Chairman Loth moved, seconded by Mr. Shepard, to schedule a meeting on Wednesday, May 6, 2026. The motion carried unanimously.**

Mr. DiGregorio wanted to say he appreciated everyone's hard work and thought Mr. Loth did an excellent job.

Mr. Jost emphasized Mr. DiGregorio's statement saying he thought Mr. Loth did a stellar job.

**Adjournment**

***The Meeting adjourned at 7:37 pm by the power of the Chair.***

**The motion carried unanimously.**

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Krista Day**

**Recording Secretary**

**Budget Committee Rules and Procedures (modified January 2021)**

**1. NAME**

The name shall be "Town of Conway, NH Municipal Budget Committee." Hereafter, the term "Budget Committee" shall be used to simplify the text.

**OFFICERS**

- a. A chairman shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Board at the first scheduled meeting after the Annual Town Meeting. The chairman shall preside over all meetings and hearings, **appoint such committees as directed by the board and shall affix his/her signature in the name of the board.**
- b. A vice-chairman shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Board at the first scheduled meeting after the Annual Town Meeting. The vice-chairman shall preside in the absence of the chairman and shall have the full **authority** of the chairman on matters that come before the board during the absence of the chairman.
- c. All officers shall serve for one (1) year and shall be eligible for reappointment.

**2. MEMBERS**

- a. Members must be registered voters in the Town of Conway and are expected to attend each meeting of the Board to exercise their duties and responsibilities. Any member unable to attend a meeting shall notify the chairman as soon as possible. Members shall participate in the decision-making process and vote to approve or disapprove all motions under consideration.
- b. There shall be seventeen members on this committee: twelve members to be elected (the "Elected Member"), one member appointed from Center Conway Fire Precinct, East Conway Fire Precinct, Redstone Fire District, one representative of the Board of Selectmen and one representative of the School Board (the "Appointed Member").

**3. MEETINGS**

- a. Regular meetings will be held as necessary at a place to be announced. Meetings shall begin at 6:30 pm.
- b. Town staff shall provide technical assistance as well as maintain a record of all meetings, transactions, and decisions of the Board.

- c. Quorum. A quorum for all meetings of the Board shall be half the Budget Committee members plus one (1).
- d. Virtual meetings are permitted and shall be so noticed in advance.
- e. Order of Business. The order of business for regular meetings shall be as follows:
  - i. Call to order by the chairman
  - ii. Pledge of Allegiance
  - iii. Minutes of previous meeting
  - iv. Budget reviews/discussions
  - v. Old business
  - vi. New business
  - vii. Public Comment
  - viii. Adjournment

#### 4. RECORDS

- a. The records of the Budget Committee shall be kept by town administrators and made available for public inspection at the Town Offices.
- b. **Preliminary meeting minutes will be made available five (5) days after the conclusion of the meeting.**
- c. Official meetings minutes will be made available once voted on and approved by the Budget Committee.

#### 5. JOINT MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

- a. A joint meeting and public hearing shall be held annually with the Board of Selectmen to review and discuss funding request by non-profit agencies.
- b. In compliance with RSA 32:16, II, the Budget Committee Shall confer with the governing body or bodies and with other officers department heads, and other officials, **"relative to estimated costs, revenues anticipated, and services performed to the extent deemed necessary by the Budget Committee. It shall be the duty of all such officers and other persons to furnish such pertinent information to the Budget Committee."**
- c. In compliance with RSA 32:16, III, the Budget Committee shall conduct public hearings as required under RSA 32:5, I.
- d. In compliance with RSA 32:16, IV, the Budget Committee shall forward copies of the final budgets to the clerks, as required by RSA 32:5, VI, and in addition shall deliver two copies of such budgets and recommendations upon special warrant articles to the respective governing bodies at least 20 days

before the date set for the annual or special meeting, to be posted with the warrant.

6. AMENDMENTS These rules of procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the Budget Committee, provided that such amendment is read at two successive meetings immediately preceding the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

7. Ethics Policy and Its Application.

- a. Prior to any vote, each Budget Committee member should consider whether a potential conflict of interest of the Town Ethics Policy exists (See Appendix A). If the member believes a conflict of interest may exist, the member should disclose such facts to the Chairman.
- b. Whenever a Budget Committee member discloses there is a potential conflict of interest of the Ethics Policy, the chairman shall review the facts and rule whether the member shall vote in this instance. The chairman's ruling shall be binding unless overruled by a vote of the majority of the Budget Committee.
- c. Any member of the Budget Committee seeking to disqualify another member from participating in a decision on the basis of a potential violation of the Ethics Policy must raise the challenge as soon as the basis for disqualification is made known or reasonably should have been made known. The party seeking to disqualify the member shall state, with specificity, the basis for disqualification. Should such challenge be made prior to the hearing or vote, the chairman shall review the facts and rule whether the member shall vote in this instance. The chairman's ruling shall be binding unless overruled by a vote of the majority of the Budget Committee.
- d. The chairman shall have sole authority to postpone any matter or vote if and when a potential for a violation of the Ethics Policy exists in order for the Town Attorney to review the matter and render an opinion to the Budget Committee whether the member's participation would violate the Town's Ethics Policy.
- e. After receiving the Town Attorney's opinion that a violation of the Ethics Policy exists, the chairman shall rule that the Budget Committee member shall not vote in the matter subject to the opinion. The Budget Committee, by a two-thirds vote, may override the chairman's ruling and the member shall be permitted to vote in the matter before the Budget Committee.

8. Conflict of Interest

- a. Budget Committee members shall not vote on any matter in which there is a conflict of interest.
- b. Conflict of Interest is defined as (a) the potential for a financial or material gain to a Budget Committee member or a member of his (her) immediate family, (b) the circumstances of a public office holder whose personal interest might benefit from his or her official actions or influence.
- c. Immediate family is defined as the member's spouse, parents, siblings, children, or in-laws.

9. Dissents and Protests

Any Budget Committee member shall have the right to express dissent from or protest against any decision of the Budget Committee and have the reason therefor entered in the minutes.

10. Rules of Order

To the extent these rules and orders are not comprehensive all questions of order shall be resolved by reference to Robert's Rules of Order. The chairman shall rule on all matters raised by this rule.

11. Suspension of Rules

A motion to suspend these rules shall be in order at any time except during discussion. A motion to suspend shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

12. Unexcused Absences

Any Budget Committee Member who has three (3) unexcused absences in a 12 month period measured from the first meeting after the public election, the "Budget Committee Year," will be sent a certified/registered letter requesting their resignation.

13. Vacancies

In compliance with RSA 32:15, VII, vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Budget Committee.

- a. An open position for an Elected Member shall first be offered to the individual who received the next highest number of votes from the last
-

municipal election. In the event that the candidate list is exhausted, or the remaining candidates received less than (10) votes in the election, a notice of open position shall be advertised locally and be posted on the town's website.

Persons appointed to fill vacancies shall serve until the next municipal election.

#### 14. Public Health Policies and Meetings

The Budget Committee shall follow all health and safety guidelines relating to its meetings as set by the Town of Conway Selectmen. Please refer to Appendix 8.

## APPENDIX A

### POLICY: ETHICAL CONDUCT

The ethical Town official and employee accept the responsibility that his or her mission is that of servant and steward to the public.

Accordingly, it shall be the policy of the Town of Conway that public officials shall:

- Properly administer the affairs of Town government
- Promote decisions that only benefit the public interest.
- Actively promote public confidence in government.
- Keep safe all funds and other properties of the Town.
- Conduct and perform the duties of the office diligently and promptly dispose of the business of the Town.
- Maintain a positive image to pass constant public scrutiny.
- Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility. Inject the prestige of the office into everyday dealings with the public employees and associates. Maintain a respectful attitude toward employees, other public officials, colleagues and associates.
- Effectively and efficiently work with governmental agencies, political subdivisions and other organizations in order to further the interest of the Town.
- Faithfully comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the Town and impartially apply them to everyone.

Officials shall not:

- Engage in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties.
  - Improperly influence or attempt to influence other officials to act in his or her own benefit.
  - Accept anything of value from any source that is offered to influence his or her action as a public official.
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**APPENDIX B**

**MARSHALL GYM PUBLIC MEETING  
POLICIES**

- The Right-to-Know Law RSA Chapter 91-A PART I, ARTICLE 8 OF THE NH Constitution: Government ... should be open, ....
- SECTION 1 OF RSA 91-A: The purpose of this chapter is to ensure both the greatest possible public access to the actions, discussions and records of all public bodies, and their accountability to the people
- Due to the COVID-19/Coronavirus crisis and in accordance with Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, this Board is authorized to meet electronically, and these reasons shall be reflected in the minutes.
- The meeting shall be posted in at least two public places.
- A quorum shall be present either physically or remotely.
- The public will be provided physical access until such time as the Chairman declares that social distancing has become impossible and will limit attendance.
- Masks will be required in all hallways and areas where social distancing of six feet is not possible.
- Masks may be removed once an attendee is seated and socially distanced.
- In regards to Select Board Meetings, the public will be able to watch the meeting live on the Town's face book page.
- In regards to Select Board Meetings, the public will also be provided access to the meeting via Zoom and be able to make public comment if the Chair allows.
- The meeting shall be adjourned if the public is unable to access the meeting.
- All votes taken during meetings shall be done by Roll Call vote.
- If Board members are in remote attendance, they must state whether there is anyone in the room with them as required under the Right-to-Know law.

## Budget Committee Rules and Procedures (modified March 2026)

### 1. NAME

The name shall be "Town of Conway, NH Municipal Budget Committee." Hereafter, the term "Budget Committee" shall be used to simplify the text.

### OFFICERS

- a. A Chairman, ("Chair") shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Board at the first scheduled meeting after the Annual Town Meeting. The Chair shall preside over all meetings and hearings, **appoint such committees as directed by the board and shall affix his/her signature in the name of the board.**
- b. A Vice-chairman ("Vice-Chair") shall be elected annually by a majority vote of the Board at the first scheduled meeting after the Annual Town Meeting. The Vice-Chair shall preside in the absence of the Chair and shall have the full **authority** of the chairman on matters that come before the board during the absence of the chairman.
- c. All officers shall serve for one (1) year and shall be eligible for reappointment.

### 2. MEMBERS

- a. Members must be registered voters in the Town of Conway and are expected to attend each meeting of the Board to exercise their duties and responsibilities. Any member unable to attend a meeting shall notify the chairman as soon as possible. Members shall participate in the decision-making process and vote to approve or disapprove all motions under consideration.
- b. There shall be 12 members at large elected by the voters of Conway, ("Elected Members", or individually, "Elected Member"), one appointed member from the Conway School Board, one appointed member from the Board of Selectmen, and one appointed member from the Center Conway Fire Precinct, ("Appointed Members", or individually, "Appointed Member"), for a total of 15 members.
- c. At the first reorganizational meeting held after the April vote, all Elected Members newly elected or re-elected and all Appointed Members newly appointed or re-appointed shall show proof of oath taken, to the Chair or Acting Chair. Proof shall be recorded in the minutes.
- d. All Appointed Members from School Board, Board of Selectmen, or Center Conway Fire Precinct shall show documented minutes from each of their respective boards of their appointment. Proof of appointment shall show motion to appoint, and the vote shall be recorded in their minutes and presented to the Chair of the Budget Committee.

### 3. MEETINGS

- a. Regular meetings will be held as necessary at a place to be announced. Meetings shall begin at 6:30 pm.
- b. Town staff shall provide technical assistance as well as maintain a record of all meetings, transactions, and decisions of the Board.
- c. Quorum. A quorum for all meetings of the Board shall be half the Budget Committee members plus one (1).
- d. Virtual meetings are permitted and shall be so noticed in advance.
- e. Order of Business. The order of business for regular meetings shall be as follows:
  - i. Call to order by the chairman
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  - iii. Minutes of previous meeting
  - iv. Budget reviews/discussions
  - v. Old business
  - vi. New business
  - vii. Public Comment
  - viii. Adjournment

### 4. RECORDS

- a. The records of the Budget Committee shall be kept by town administrators and made available for public inspection at the Town Offices.
- b. **Preliminary meeting minutes will be made available five (5) days after the conclusion of the meeting.**
- c. Official meetings minutes will be made available once voted on and approved by the Budget Committee.

### 5. JOINT MEETINGS AND HEARINGS

- a. A joint meeting and public hearing shall be held annually with the Board of Selectmen to review and discuss funding request by non-profit agencies.
- b. In compliance with RSA 32:16, II, the Budget Committee Shall confer with the governing body or bodies and with other officers department heads, and other officials, "**relative to estimated costs, revenues anticipated, and services performed to the extent deemed necessary by the Budget Committee. It shall be the duty of all such officers and other persons to furnish such pertinent information to the Budget Committee.**"
- c. In compliance with RSA 32:16, III, the Budget Committee shall conduct public hearings as required under RSA 32:5, I.

d. In compliance with RSA 32:16, IV, the Budget Committee shall forward copies of the final budgets to the clerks, as required by RSA 32:5, VI, and in addition shall deliver two copies of such budgets and recommendations upon special warrant articles to the respective governing bodies at least 20 days before the date set for the annual or special meeting, to be posted with the warrant.

6. AMENDMENTS These rules of procedure may be amended by a majority vote of the members of the Budget Committee, provided that such amendment is read at two successive meetings immediately preceding the meeting at which the vote is to be taken.

7. Ethics Policy and Its Application.

- a. Prior to any vote, each Budget Committee member should consider whether a potential conflict of interest of the Town Ethics Policy exists (See Appendix A). If the member believes a conflict of interest may exist, the member should disclose such facts to the Chairman.
- b. Whenever a Budget Committee member discloses there is a potential conflict of interest of the Ethics Policy, the chairman shall review the facts and rule whether the member shall vote in this instance. The chairman's ruling shall be binding unless overruled by a vote of the majority of the Budget Committee.
- c. Any member of the Budget Committee seeking to disqualify another member from participating in a decision on the basis of a potential violation of the Ethics Policy must raise the challenge as soon as the basis for disqualification is made known or reasonably should have been made known. The party seeking to disqualify the member shall state, with specificity, the basis for disqualification. Should such challenge be made prior to the hearing or vote, the chairman shall review the facts and rule whether the member shall vote in this instance. The chairman's ruling shall be binding unless overruled by a vote of the majority of the Budget Committee.
- d. The chairman shall have sole authority to postpone any matter or vote if and when a potential for a violation of the Ethics Policy exists in order for the Town Attorney to review the matter and render an opinion to the Budget Committee whether the member's participation would violate the Town's Ethics Policy.
- e. After receiving the Town Attorney's opinion that a violation of the Ethics Policy exists, the chairman shall rule that the Budget Committee member shall not vote in the matter subject to the opinion. The Budget Committee, by a two-thirds vote, may override the chairman's ruling and the member shall be permitted to vote in the matter before the Budget Committee.

## 8. Conflict of Interest

- a. Budget Committee members shall not vote on any matter in which there is a conflict of interest.
- b. Conflict of Interest is defined as (a) the potential for a financial or material gain to a Budget Committee member or a member of his (her) immediate family, (b) the circumstances of a public office holder whose personal interest might benefit from his or her official actions or influence.
- c. Immediate family is defined as the member's spouse, parents, siblings, children, or in-laws.

## 9. Dissents and Protests

Any Budget Committee member shall have the right to express dissent from or protest against any decision of the Budget Committee and have the reason therefor entered in the minutes.

## 10. Rules of Order

To the extent these rules and orders are not comprehensive all questions of order shall be resolved by reference to Robert's Rules of Order. The chairman shall rule on all matters raised by this rule.

## 11. Suspension of Rules

A motion to suspend these rules shall be in order at any time except during discussion. A motion to suspend shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

## 12. Unexcused Absences

Any Budget Committee Member who has three (3) unexcused absences in a 12 month period measured from the first meeting after the public election, the "Budget Committee Year," will be sent a certified/registered letter requesting their resignation.

## 13. Vacancies

In compliance with RSA 32:15, VII, vacancies shall be filled by appointment by the Budget Committee.

- a. An open position for an Elected Member shall first be offered to the individual who received the next highest number of votes from the last
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municipal election. In the event that the candidate list is exhausted, or the remaining candidates received less than (10) votes in the election, a notice of open position shall be advertised locally and be posted on the town's website.

- b. No persons appointed to fill an at large position may do so until oath of office is taken and recorded in the minutes.
- c. Persons appointed to fill vacancies shall serve until the next municipal election.

#### 14. Public Health Policies and Meetings

The Budget Committee shall follow all health and safety guidelines relating to its meetings as set by the Town of Conway Selectmen.

15. All requests for information from the Budget Committee to the Town, School or Precinct shall be submitted through the Chair and at the Chair's discretion, subject to override by the Budget Committee.

## APPENDIX A

### POLICY: ETHICAL CONDUCT

The ethical Town official and employee accept the responsibility that his or her mission is that of servant and steward to the public.

Accordingly, it shall be the policy of the Town of Conway that public officials shall:

- Properly administer the affairs of Town government
- Promote decisions that only benefit the public interest.
- Actively promote public confidence in government.
- Keep safe all funds and other properties of the Town.
- Conduct and perform the duties of the office diligently and promptly dispose of the business of the Town.
- Maintain a positive image to pass constant public scrutiny.
- Evaluate all decisions so that the best service or product is obtained at a minimal cost without sacrificing quality and fiscal responsibility. Inject the prestige of the office into everyday dealings with the public employees and associates. Maintain a respectful attitude toward employees, other public officials, colleagues and associates.
- Effectively and efficiently work with governmental agencies, political subdivisions and other organizations in order to further the interest of the Town.
- Faithfully comply with all laws and regulations applicable to the Town and impartially apply them to everyone.

Officials shall not:

- Engage in outside interests that are not compatible with the impartial and objective performance of his or her duties.
  - Improperly influence or attempt to influence other officials to act in his or her own benefit.
  - Accept anything of value from any source that is offered to influence his or her action as a public official.
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## Subject: Fwd: Message from Steve Angers



**Alex Loth** <aloth@conwaynh.org>

Wed, Mar 25, 9:

to Mike Lacey, Kevin Lebel, Quentin Lewis, Steve Angers, Alex Loth, William Marvel, David Smolen, Frank Jost, Wesley

See attached for correspondence related to a request by a budget committee member for information regarding the schools.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Aimee Frechette** <a\_frechette@sau9.org>

Date: Mon, Mar 23, 2026 at 3:39 PM

Subject: Re: Message from Steve Angers

To: Steve Angers <sangers@conwaynh.org>

Cc: Alex Loth <aloth@conwaynh.org>, Joe Mosca <j\_mosca@sau9.org>, Mike DiGregorio <m\_digregorio@sau9.org>

Christa Biche <c\_biche@sau9.org>

Hello Steve,

Attached is a report that I have written that outlines the relationship our SAU has with Building 21, signed contract dating back to 2021, and a summary of funding sources. This should provide you with the information you request not, please let me know.

On Wed, Mar 18, 2026 at 4:56 PM Aimee Frechette <a\_frechette@sau9.org> wrote:

Hello Steve,

Thank you for the clarification. Typically requests from Board or Committee members are directed through the B Chair, hence my reason for asking. While I am happy to continue to provide you with the information you seek, I remind you that these contracts are funded through federal grants as I stated at the Board meeting when you asked. Therefore the CMBC has no jurisdiction or authority to guide expenditure of these funds. It is my assumption that the CMBC working for the taxpayers would be in support of large scale, continuous professional development being funded by grants with no impact on the local budget.

On Wed, Mar 18, 2026 at 12:27 PM Steve Angers <sangers@conwaynh.org> wrote:

Of course it is a CMBC question. That committee never stops working for the taxpayers

What a foolish question

Steve

Sent from my iPad

On Mar 17, 2026, at 11:57 AM, Alex Loth <aloth@conwaynh.org> wrote:

Steve can speak to whether he is requesting the information as a member of the budget committee or as a private citizen. As I was copied on the request, I assumed Steve is requesting this in his capacity as a member of the budget committee, in which case this information will be shared with the whole committee upon receipt. I can confirm the request did not come from the overall budget committee.