

MUNICIPAL BUDGET COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
Wednesday, February 14, 2018
Auditorium @ Kennett High School,
Conway, New Hampshire

Chairman Jim LeFebvre called the meeting to order at 6:02 pm. The following Budget Committee members were present: David Jensen, Mike Tetreault, Terry McCarthy, John Colbath, Doug Swett, Bill Marvel, Joe Mosca, Bob Drinkhall, John Edgerton, Pat Kittle, Ted Sares, Bill Masters, Mike Fougere (arrived at 6:13), Steve Steiner (arrived at 6:03), and John Whittier. Also present: Lisa Towle, recording secretary

Excused: Pat Swett

Mr. Mosca led those present in the Pledge of Allegiance.

OPENING REMARKS:

Remember we are here tonight to listen and not to debate, we will let the public do as they wish and as we are here to absorb and not engage the public.

PRECINCTS:

1. Redstone Fire District:

Chief Neal Henry; our budget is \$67,000 up 10% from last year for equipment purchase.

Motion by: Mr. Marvel, seconded by Mr. Sares to recommend Redstone Fire District's Budget. (Recommended 13-0-2 [Mr. Sares and Mr. Whittier])

2. East Conway Fire District:

Peter Campbell, Fire Commissioner; our budget is the same as last year, \$57,650.

Motion by: Mr. Drinkhall, seconded by Mr. Tetreault to recommend East Conway Fire District's Budget. (Recommended 13-0-2 [Mr. Sares and Mr. Whittier])

3. Center Conway Fire District:

Chief Glen Merrill, Nancy Leavitt, Treasurer, and Albert Eaton, Fire Commissioner;
The 2018 budget is \$230,812 an increase of 2.8% over last year. There are two special articles; \$35,000 for the capital reserve fund and \$20,300 for the purchase of jaws of life.
The total budget is \$286,142

Motion by: Mr. Mosca seconded by Mr. Steiner to recommend Center Conway's Fire District's Budget. (Recommended 13-0-2 [Mr. Sares and Mr. Whittier])

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Marvel to recommend Center Conway's Special Warrant Article for \$35,000 to be put into the Capital Reserve Fund. (Recommended 13-0-2 [Mr. Sares and Mr. Whittier])

Motion by: Mr. Steiner, seconded by Mr. Marvel to recommend Center Conway's Special Warrant Article for \$20,330 to purchase Jaws for Life Equipment. (Recommended 15-0-1 [Mr. Sares])

The precinct session ended at 6:07 PM. Voting on the precinct's budgets ended at 6:15 PM.

TOWN OF CONWAY MUNICIPAL BUDGET:

Opened at 6:30 PM and presented by Town Manager Holmes.

- The towns budget is up 1%. There was a 10% reduction in health insurance cost, we finished paying the library bond, and had some personnel changes that created reduced salaries.
- The increases this year are due to the ambulance and non-precinct contracts that kick in this year at approximately \$55,000. Town assistance has increased due to a housing shortage and the opioid crisis leaving many people who required assistance and in some cases expensive assistance. People are unable to find affordable housing and we are responsible to put them up wherever we can. The legal budget is up as we have 3 active legal suits one which is very difficult.
- The department break down is on page 10 of the report and you can see where we were in relation to last year as well as the items I just mentioned in terms of increases and reductions.

Questions on the operating budget:

- Ms. Snow: Did we retire some debt? Mr. Holmes: Yes, the library bond
- Mr. Hounsell: Under Patriotic Purposes are you still carrying money for the expansion of the fireworks at Schuler Park for July 4th? Ms. Gilligan: The 4th of July budget that includes the cost of fireworks is \$10,500.

Warrant Articles: (begin on page 22)

- Article 4: The operating budget of \$11,078,998, which is up .99%.
- Article 5: CBA for the police department and union personnel, 2018 increase of \$8,365 and 2019 increase of \$48,333 for a 2-year total of \$65,063.
- Article 6: If Article 5 fails, this will allow them to go back to the table and address other issues.
- Article 7: Moving the town recreation department to Kennett Middle School. The estimated cost is \$700,000 for renovations, moving, and other minor costs. 50% of the cost is being donated by private individuals, Sut and Margaret Marshall. The recreation department would have approximately 22,000 sq. ft. in the middle school.
- Article 8: Moving the Town Hall, this is the most recent article that came out at the 11th hour as the bank was waiting on Federal approval to move into a new building before finalizing negotiations with the town. We are going to move into the Bank of New Hampshire building on Main Street in Conway Village. It does not involve the purchase of the property, rather it

involves the renting the property for 36 years at the town's sole discretion. It is estimated we would need \$160,000 for moving costs and minor renovations. This article is to allow the selectmen the authority to sign a lease agreement if it is determined in the best interest of the town.

Questions:

- Ms. Snow: Is this scheduled to happen in 2018? Mr. Holmes: It could possibly with voter approval and signing of the lease. However, we would not be able to take possession of the building until the very end of the year as the bank needs to submit a proposal to the planning board for approval and construct a new building and move into it.
- Ms. Snow: What are the plans for the current Town Hall? Mr. Holmes: That is still under discussion and would be up to the selectmen to decide as there are options to sell it, keep it, or rent it.
- Mr. Sares: Why are we renting instead of buying a property? Mr. Holmes: You can't buy a building that isn't for sale. The bank had originally agreed to sell the property but had a change of heart as they wanted to remain in Conway Village and came up with the idea of leasing. The rent would be equal to the taxes paid on the property, which would come back to the town, making it almost free except for the increased operating cost as it is a larger building and more parking. My analysis is the cost would be around \$500/year as the bank would also pay taxes on the building in the back of the property.
- Mr. Fougere: Who is responsible for maintenance? Mr. Holmes: It is common with commercial lease agreements that the tenant is responsible for all areas of maintenance. We did volunteer to take care of the entire parking lot simply because it is easier as the town has the right equipment.
- Mr. Fougere: Will the town be the sole renters? Mr. Holmes: We will not take possession with any tenancies. Mr. Hounsell: For clarification, if anything happens to the HVAC or electrical systems it is our responsibility? Mr. Holmes: Yes, it is a triple net lease, which is an appraisal term referring to common area charges.
- Rep. Umberger: What is the increase in square footage available at the bank? Mr. Holmes: It is 30% larger, approximately 8,000 sq. ft not including the basement.
- Rep. Umberger: What are you going to do with the Town Hall? Mr. Holmes: That will be determined in the future by the selectmen. Personally, moving Valley Vision to the Town Hall would save the town \$8,000 that is paid to rent private property.
- Rep. Umberger: AT this time are you planning on moving all of the offices from the Town Hall to the bank? Mr. Holmes: There is plenty of room.
- Mr. Fougere: Would the Budget Committee be able to hold their meetings at the new Town Hall rather than KMS? Mr. Holmes: It is very possible; the meeting room is 2-3 times larger than the current selectmen's meeting room. There is also an elevator and 2 restrooms that will be converted to be ADA compliant.
- Mr. Holmes: The property fits like a glove for the town hall, the numerous vaults that are required by statute for the fire proof storage of certain documents and the night drop that will allow after hour tax payments. I researched banks sales back 3 years and banks are opting for the smaller buildings as they don't need the large buildings anymore and find it difficult to find tenants.

- Rep. Umberger: When are you planning to actually move? Mr. Holmes: First, we get voters' approval, then we agree to lease terms, then the fine print is reviewed by lawyers, as right now we have a broad memorandum of intent. The bank then goes to the planning board with their proposed construction plans, the concept plans show a proposed 800 sq. ft building with a drive thru and an ATM. We are asking for the approval at this time in case everything moves along quickly, and we are able to move in late December or early January rather than waiting until next April for approval.
- Rep. Umberger: Will you be able to start renovations before the bank leaves? Mr. Holmes: I don't believe so, the interior requires very little such as moving portable cubicles, replace carpet, and some other minor changes as well as a change of signage. Some of the major changes include, becoming ADA compliant and increasing parking spaces.
- Article 9: The Capital Reserve Fund for Infrastructure Reconstruction for \$850,000. Due to the recession money was tight, the budget was tight, revenues were contracting, and we had put off some paving that was scheduled. Last year, Mr. DegliAngeli, Public Works Director, convinced the selectmen it was time to catch up before the streets become irreparable. We are in a 3-year program which is deemed vital as there are people who live on streets that had been promised paving and reconstruction for years; broken culvert on Thompson Rd., Grove St., and Seavey St.

Questions:

- Ms. Snow: Is this a new account as the starting amount is zero. Mr. Holmes: No, it is a revolving fund.
- Mr. Hounsell: This is a large amount of money, but you have the rationale behind it. If we look at Article 10, 12, 13, and 14 the selectmen aware of the asking and impact made a \$357,000 reduction. They cut their own budget down and I like to commend them for making those adjustments. Mr. Holmes: This triage came about as we looked at the impact on the tax rate with the move of the Rec Center and the Town Hall. The reduction of the land fill expansion to \$1 is due to the success of the recycling program which is creating a longer life of the land fill.
- Rep. Umberger: Were the funds received from the State in July or August for the infrastructure saved to go into this? Mr. DegliAngeli: We used a portion of it this year for unanticipated items, however, what is left over will carry over into these projects. You will see the budget is \$926,400 and the warrant article is only asking for \$850,000
- Articles 10 – 14: You will see that for Article 14 was reduced to \$1 from \$7,000, we didn't have any scheduled purchases for this year.

Questions:

Rep. Umberger: Is there a schedule of what you are going to spend the highway equipment funds on? Mr. Holmes: Yes, page 29, the equipment includes a grader, which was last bought in 1987 and owes us nothing, and a vibratory roller. Rep. Umberger: Plus, a new snow blower. Mr. Holmes: We found a replacement part today that we purchased for \$10,000. Mr. Hounsell: When will it be on the road? Mr. DegliAngeli: By the end of the day tomorrow. Ms. Snow: Is insurance paying for it? Mr. Holmes: Not our insurance. Mr. Fougere: Are there plans to repair the damaged snow blower? Mr. Holmes: No, what was

damaged was the auger, the truck was undamaged, and we found a replacement assembly that will be put back on the same truck. We will use the old one for parts in case this happens again.

- Article 15: We have a program where we replace at least one vehicle every year and save up for it, then the Town Hall gets the hand me downs. This year we will be replacing two vehicles.
- Article 16: The town gets money from the franchise fees paid to Spectrum and \$75,000 is used to fund Valley Vision. This money allows them to stay on the air and show these fine programs.

Questions:

- Mr. Hounsell: Is there any truth to the rumor that Spectrum is going to do away with that? Mr. Holmes: We have a contract until 2019 and I have counter negotiations to offer them.
- Article 17: This is in case the police department gets the grant they are hoping for to replace the console system which is out of date, unrepairable, and the software is no longer supported.

Questions:

- Rep. Umberger: Where is the grant coming from? Mr. Holmes: State Homeland Security.
- Ms. Snow: Where are we in the grant process? Chief Wagner: We have applied and the last time I spoke with grants management I was told we wouldn't know until the Spring and that funds would not be available until the fall.
- Article 18: The supervisors of the check list are asking for a raise due to a change in State law, being that there can be only one voter registration list for the town. Conway has 6 precincts and 6 floating voter registration list that don't match up. The Federal and State mandates say they must match, which means the supervisors must attend every annual precinct meeting and register voters as well as meet a couple extra times a year. After being presented with this information the selectmen felt the increase from \$1,000 to \$1,500 per year was warranted.

Comments:

- Rep. Umberger: There was a change in election law that has fallen onto the supervisors of the checklist and the amount of time they put in. In the last 3-4 years we have put a lot of burden on the supervisors of the check list and this is well worth the salary increase. I am just sorry I don't see a new computer on here for them. Mr. Holmes: I have promised them an office in the new Town Hall.
- Article 19: This is a multi-purpose recreation path that has been proposed by a private group that the selectmen have supported. The money authorized under this article has been funded entirely by private sources and grants. The selectmen have assigned Mr. DegliAngeli to manage the project. This multi-use (skateboarding, walking, etc.) path is going to go from Cranmore across Thompson Rd down to Hemlock and onto Walmart.

Questions:

- Ms. Snow: Is this a four-season path for snowmobiling, cross country skiing, horses or just summer recreation? Mr. Holmes: It will not be maintained however people can use it as

snow covered and the snowmobile trail runs parallel to it. Ms. Snow: Is the town responsible for the paving and maintenance of the path? Mr. Holmes: No, the private group will be.

- Article 20: Website for the public library and the funds are coming from the trustee donation account. People donate money to the library for various purposes and it is at the discretion of the trustee's they are using \$7,500 to update their website.
- Article 21: The new State law allows for Keno to be in a liquor licensed establishment and the selectmen agreed to place it on the ballot and let the voters decide. This is a no cost article.
- Article 22: Allow for a 50% property tax reduction for industrial properties for a period of 5 years on the amount that would be assessed on any new construction or additions for industrial use only.
- Article 23: To raise and appropriate \$10,000 as an annual contribution to Eastern Slopes Regional Airport, which serves both the States of Maine and New Hampshire particularly the Mt. Washington Valley and the Western Maine Townships. Additional funding is received from the FAA and surrounding towns. The selectmen have supported this article.
- Article 35: A petitioned article that asks the Town of Conway to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:81, to allow property tax exemption of 50% for a period of 5 years for commercial development including new construction, additions, or improvements to existing structures. This mirrors Article 22 for industrial properties. The selectmen did not support this article.

Questions:

- Mr. Hounsell: I am encouraged by this article, it gives an incentive to for diversification and to open an enterprise that is going to use higher skilled labor, increased wages, and allow people to make a living other than the primary use of tourism. Industrial expansion goes along with the revitalization theme along with the new rec center, Town Hall, Main Street, and the industrial park.
- Mr. Steiner: Why are we picking winners and losers with commercial getting the short end of the stick? Why did the selectmen vote against it? Mr. Holmes: It was their individual vote and I will leave it up to them to discuss. Mr. Hounsell: For clarification, they voted to support the industrial article and not commercial? Mr. Holmes: Correct.
- Mr. Whittier: Is this just for specific areas or all throughout the town? Mr. Holmes: We can't target a specific area of the town or type of property beyond the basic categories the statute allows.
- Rep. Umberger: This article as well as the industrial one is only for currently occupied or current buildings, it is not to go out and build new. Mr. Holmes: That is not my interpretation. Rep. Umberger: The taxes currently being paid on a commercial or industrial property would remain the same for 5 years then at the end of the 5 years you would begin paying the full tax amount. This is legislation put in by Rep. McCarthy that mirrors what was approved for Coos County. Mr. Holmes: I disagree, based on research of the statute, an entity can buy a vacant lot and build a new building.
- Mr. Weathers: The selectmen approved the industrial article; this article came in late yesterday to add the commercial property and the selectmen voted 2-3 against it. It is our

understanding that anything existing would remain the same and any expansion or new business would get the 50% reduction.

- Ms. Snow: When you say a new commercial business, does that mean an old one closes and new one opens? Mr. Holmes: Any renovations that a building permit was approved would qualify for the 50% reduction for 5 years. If a vacant lot is purchased and a new building is built, only the building is eligible for the reduction and the land would be taxed at the full rate.
- Mr. Steiner: Economic development is economic development and I don't think there should be winners and losers, rather it should be fair to all.

Non-Profit Warrant Articles: (Begin on page 26)

- Article 24: To raise \$4,000 for Tri County Transit Bus Service, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1

Questions:

- Mr. Drinkhall: Did we get the actual costs that were asked for at the previous meeting. Chairman LeFebvre: No.

- Article 25: Conway Area Humane, may have read that there was an error with the initial request, however they have resubmitted an article for \$10,000, recommended by the selectmen 4-0-.

Questions:

- Rep. Umberger: What is meant by medical care? Chairman LeFebvre: I believe it is for taking care of animals that they have taken in from the town and other areas that need medical care. CHS Rep: It is medical care provided to community animals that are surrendered, educational programs, and additional services in the community. Rep. Umberger: The warrant is restricted to medical care, yet the explanation goes beyond that.

- Article 26: The Mental Health Center request for \$10,115, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1
- Article 27: Tri-County Community Action request for \$13,500, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1.
- Article 28: Family Resource Center at Children Unlimited request for \$14,000, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1.
- Article 29: Vaughn Learning Center request for \$3,000, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-2.
- Article 30: Vaughn Community Service request for \$17,000, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-2.
- Article 31: Gibson Center for Senior Services request \$35,000, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1.
- Article 32: White Mountain Community Health Center request for \$35,565, recommended by the selectmen 3-0-1.
- Article 33: North Conway Community Center request for \$65,000, recommended by the selectmen 2-1-1.

- Article 34: Starting Point request for \$8,456, recommended by the selectmen 4-0-1.

Town Session concludes at 7:31 PM

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Jensen to recess for 5 minutes. (16-0-0)

CONWAY SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET:

Opened at 7:40 PM and presented by Kadie Wilson, Assistant Superintendent.

- The overall recommended budget for the school district is \$37,161,463 and the overall total with the all special warrant articles included is \$38,744,874.
- On the back of the first page you will see the overall breakdown by unit including; special education, the different schools, district wide pieces, the Career Tech Center, and technology. At the bottom there is a highlighted line that shows the budget presented to you is an increase of \$394,381 which is a 1.12% increase over last year's budget. The \$417,927 figure represents total expenditures including grant funding.
- The increase is approximately \$400,000, that includes the 2nd year of the CEA contract and the 3rd year of the CESP contract with a 6.97% increase in health insurance and increase in maintenance cost.
- Pages 3-4 of the packet is an outline of the different functions and all increases and decreases are reflected in the right-hand column.
- Page 5, Revenue: Unencumbered fund balance is determined when you combine the revenue plus expenses it is just over \$800,000 which is an estimate based on information we had as of November. If you combine that with the monies not retained by the school board, you are just over \$1 million or \$500,000 less than last year. The other piece is the anticipated Kindergarten State Aid (new this year), which is based on the projected enrollment, tuition from sending towns is up \$473,000, the NH State Education Tax, and the district assessment all have an impact on the tax rate.
- Page 6, Tax Rate; The rate for the operating budget excluding warrant articles would be an increase of \$.24/ \$1,000 or 1.9% and with all of the special articles it would be an increase of \$.48 / \$1,000 or 3.73% which includes the \$1.2 million bond for work at Pine Tree School.
- The default budget; should recommended budget not be approved it the default budget, which is a combination of the current year's budget plus contractual obligations, the difference would be \$22,018.

Questions:

- Rep. Umberger: You are expecting to receive \$88,000 in Kindergarten aide? Ms. Wilson: Yes, it is \$1,100 per student which is based on a conservative anticipated enrollment from all 3 elementary schools. We are unclear at this time when the figure will be determined, ie: who shows up for the first day of school. Ms. Jefferson: The anticipated 88 students are for Conway students only, the sending towns would receive their own funding.
- Mr. Whittier: Does the Kindergarten figure include money that is expected from Keno if it passes? Ms. Jefferson: No, that comes from State funds not local.

Warrant Articles: (begin on page 7)

- Article 2: Vote and appropriate the \$1.2 million for the upgrades to Pine Tree School.
Questions:
 - Rep. Umberger: Why did we take a bond for 20 years for \$1.2 million, seems like a lot of interest? Mr. Hill: Strictly a tax rate piece, rather than an increase to the operating budget, we could pay it over the projected life expectancy of the equipment, which is 30+ years.
- Article 3: To change the terms of the clerk, moderator, treasurer from 1 year to 2 years.
(Articles 4-6 are based on the current tuition agreements with sending towns)
- Article 4: The expendable trust fund for the KHS maintenance fund, looking to raise and appropriate the sum of \$54,443 to be offset by \$35,780 from sending towns. Current balance is \$532, 735.
- Article 5: The expendable trust fund for the KMS, to raise and appropriate \$17,086 to be offset by \$7,470 from sending towns. Current balance is /\$189,545.
- Article 6: The expendable trust fund for the elementary schools, to raise and appropriate \$9,900 to be offset by \$1,206 from sending towns. Current balance is \$99,855.
- Article 7: Is the collective bargaining agreement with AFSCME, it is a 3-year agreement with the estimated increases in the first year of \$51,127; the second year of \$51,827; and the third year of \$48,121. AFSCME worked with us and made changes to their prescription plan, increased their dental premiums, increased starting wages, and entered a provision that allows the district to select the insurance provider.

Questions:

- Rep. Umberger: What school workers? Ms. Wilson: AFSCME represents our custodial, maintenance, cafeteria, and bus drivers.
- Mr. Mosca: AFSCME is a union that came to the table and renegotiated their health care and saved the district \$200,000 this year.
- Article 8: previously discussed.
- Article 9: To vote and appropriate \$47,473 to supplement funding for the elementary school's Project Succeed programs.
- Article 10: To see if the school district will raise and appropriate \$182,000 for the purchase of two full size school buses and authorize the withdrawal of \$45,000 from the capital reserve fund (balance of \$47,480) established for that purpose.
- Article 11: To authorize the school district to enter into a long-term lease agreement with the town to lease space at KMS for the rec department. This is just looking for permission to enter into the agreement, there is an agreement of principle that is in the hands of the attorney. There is no funding on our end associated with this.

Comments:

- Rep. Umberger: We won't see the lease agreement before this is approved? Ms. Wilson: Correct. Mr. Mosca: We can't enter into an agreement until there is an approval. Ms. Wilson: You are not approving the lease, you are approving to go into a lease.

School Session closes at 7:55 PM

Chairman LeFebvre provided all present members with a written synopsis of his conversation on February 14, 2018 at 10:09 AM with DRA representative Michelle Clark regarding the Budget Committees authority to change or not change a petitioned warrant article. In addition, there was discussion if a non-profit can present at the public hearing if they missed the non-profit presentation meeting that was held on January 31, 2018.

VOTING ON NON-PROFIT WARRANT ARTICLES:

Opening comments:

Chairman LeFebvre: I have a concern that non-profits are getting monies from the town, however they are not seeking contributions of some degree from their own members yet seek monies from people who have no interest or ability to use the organization. One of the jobs of the town government is to make sure we are spending money in the best interest of the tax payers across the board and I question if a non-profit is doing their due diligence when they are asking for money from the town and not from their specific audience.

Mr. Sares: I believe it is fair and reasonable to expect a reduction in donations for non-profit agencies and for some this is very important and for me this gives an urgency for the numbers we are faced with here. I usually make a large donation to the Gibson Center; however I won't be this year as I will not be receiving a deduction for it.

All warrant articles were read aloud by Mr. Jensen prior to voting on them.

Article 24: TRI COUNTY TRANSIT BUS SERVICE (\$4,000)

Motion by: Mr. Colbath, seconded by Mr. Steiner for discussion.

- Mr. Drinkhall: This is the second year I have asked for complete cost per unit of service and we have not received it, I can't vote for this.
- Mr. Sares: I volunteer at the hospital, I watch the Blue Loon come in, I took photographs of people on the Blue Loon and they made a great presentation and I am 100% for them.
- Mr. Steiner: I think that to help the working poor and folks that need transportation \$4,000 is a deal.
- Mr. Marvel: I usually am opposed to this as well, I do see the busses empty a lot, I have seen people at the hospital, I do support the idea of public transportation, it never pays for itself, the ridership is holding steady and I am inclined for the first time ever to support them.
- Mr. Swett: Did we get an answer on how we are going to replace these busses when they are worn out? Chair LeFebvre: There was commentary of the Federal Government covering 80% of the cost and 20% out of the non-profit.
- Mr. Mosca: The money goes to DOT and they purchase busses and that are used by Tri County. It is Federal and State money, Tri County doesn't own them, they maintain them and when their useful life is over the State applies for funding for a new bus.

RECOMMENDED: 13 – 3 [Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Swett, and Mr. Masters] - 0

Article 25: CONWAY AREA HUMANE SOCIETY (\$10,000)

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Steiner for discussion.

- Mr. Marvel: Being on the Budget Committee for several years, this is the first time I remember an agency of this type coming forward to ask the town for money. I fear that it will set a precedent as it is going beyond the usual human service type agencies as well as financially with the \$10,000 requested. I know many members of the committee are animal lovers and I am one of them, however I don't think that is relevant to our responsibility to the town and we should vote against it.
- Mr. Sares: It sounds like Mr. Marvel is suggesting we would be fiscally irresponsible if we voted for this and setting precedence, which is merely speculation as there is no assurance that will happen. I feel the only issue is that they came in with a \$10,000 request and a lesser amount would have been better, however we cannot amend that. I support this article 100% I think they do a great job.
- Mr. Whittier: We need to keep in mind they said they have a \$400,000 endowment and it is our obligation to keep taxes low.
- Mr. Mosca: My concern is the wording, which is limited to medical care, therefore, I am torn on how to support this.
- Mr. Edgerton: Has the Humane Society ever paid by the town for strays that are turned in?
Ms. Gilligan: The town used to have an MOU for stray animals, however it expired 3 years ago. Currently, any animals brought to the Humane Society, any costs associated with kenneling and medical care it is charged to the animal's owner.
- Chairman LeFebvre: I also have concerns on the way the warrant article is written and what we heard from the director who gave a broader explanation of what the money will be used for and on that basis, I cannot support this warrant article.
- Mr. Steiner: There was a time when I had two dogs, a car and no place to live and I needed dog food for my dogs and they gave me a couple weeks' worth of food and didn't ask for a dime. In addition, if I vote against this my 190lb mastiff will beat my butt, therefore, I ask everybody to support it because they deserve it.
- Mr. Kittle: Personally, I will vote for this when I am at the ballot booth, however as a committee member I don't think I can support it this year.
- Mr. Sares: We need to focus on the substance of the issue, which is they want to help animals.
- Mr. Marvel: I would like to point out that the daycare in North Conway is only asking for \$3,000 and their director and staff are paid about 60% of what the salaries are for the staff at the animal rescue. In addition, part of coming to Conway is that we don't get paid as much and it doesn't matter how much people get paid elsewhere. Mr. Sares: I think it is extremely important to do comparative studies when you are trying to hire a director and this one is paid less than most.
- Mr. Drinkhall: I support this knowing the fact that people don't take care of their animals and the animals can't take care of themselves.

NOT RECOMMENDED: 5 – 9 [Mr. Tetreault, Ms. McCarthy, Mr. Kittle, Mr. Swett, Mr. Whittier, Mr. Marvel, Mr. Fougere, Mr. Masters, and Chairman LeFebvre] – **2** [Mr. Mosca and Mr. Edgerton]

Article 26: THE MENTAL HEALTH CENTER (\$10,115)

Motion by: Mr. Drinkhall, seconded by Mr. Mosca for discussion.

RECOMMENDED: 13 – 2 [Mr. Swett and Mr. Marvel] – **1** [Mr. Whittier]

Article 27: TRI-COUNTY COMMUNITY ACTION (\$13,500)

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall for discussion.

- Mr. Whittier: As previously mentioned I have a concern about giving town money to an agency that had such fiscal concerns and ask that you keep that in mind. They used restricted fuel assistance funds for other purposes. Mr. Mosca: That issue has been addressed, therefore it is a moot and we need to move past it.

RECOMMENDED: 12 – 3 [Mr. Swett, Mr. Drinkhall, and Mr. Whittier] – **1** [Chairman LeFebvre]

Article 28: CHILDREN UNLIMITED, INC. (\$14,000)

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Ms. McCarthy for discussion.

- Mr. Mosca: For clarification this used to be for children under the age of 3 and they no longer have that program, and this is for the family program which is older children and adults, it is a new program in it's second year.

NOT RECOMMENDED: 5 – 11 [Mr. Steiner, Ms. McCarthy, Mr. Tetreault, Mr. Edgerton, Mr. Kittle, Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Mosca, Mr. Masters, Mr. Swett, Mr. Whittier, and Chairman LeFebvre] – **0**

Article 29: VAUGHN LEARNING CENTER (\$3,000)

Motion by: Mr. Kittle, seconded by Mr. Mosca for discussion.

RECOMMENDED: 11 - 3 [Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Swett, and Chairman LeFebvre] – **2** [Mr. Colbath and Ms. McCarthy]

Article 30: VAUGHN COMMUNITY SERVICE INC. (\$17,000)

Motion by: Mr. Drinkhall, seconded by Mr. Mosca for discussion.

- Mr. Marvel: Although, I am sure the intent isn't to deceive, I don't understand the numbers the way they were presented which makes it hard for me to grasp the impact of the monies. For this reason, I am on the fence and wonder if they would be better served by another agency.

RECOMMENDED: 9 - 5 [Mr. Drinkhall, Mr. Swett, Mr. Masters, Mr. Marvel, and Chairman LeFebvre] – **2** [Mr. Colbath and Ms. McCarthy]

Article 31: THE GIBSON CENTER FOR SENIOR SERVICES INC. (\$35,000)

Motion by: Mr. Edgerton, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall for discussion.

- A discussion ensued among committee members that was centered around the cost of the meals that are provided through the meals on wheels program and the desire to see contributions made by individuals who use the facility and its programs and can afford to do so.

RECOMMENDED: 15- 0– 1 [Chairman LeFebvre]

Article 32: WHITE MOUNTAIN COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTER (\$35,565)

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Kittle for discussion.

RECOMMENDED: 15- 3 [Mr. Swett, Mr. Masters, and Mr. Drinkhall] – **2** [Chairman LeFebvre and Mr. Whittier]

Article 33: NORTH CONWAY COMMUNITY CENTER (\$65,000)

Motion by: Mr. Drinkhall, seconded by Mr. Marvel for discussion.

RECOMMENDED: 11- 1 [Mr. Whittier] – **4** [Chairman LeFebvre, Mr. Edgerton, Mr. Swett, and Mr. Sares]

Article 34: STARTING POINT (\$8,456)

Motion by: Mr. Mosca, seconded by Mr. Kittle for discussion.

- Chairman LeFebvre: The director of Starting Point emailed me after not making it to the January 31st meeting, stating she was sick and asked we take that under consideration. They did submit the appropriate paperwork before the deadline asking for \$8,456.
- Mr. Sares: What is the delta over last year? Mr. Marvel: Last year they asked for \$8,704, so it is down approximately \$250.
- Mr. Mosca: They are the first responders when the police call and save the town a lot of money. The service they provide and the amount of money they are asking for is money well spent.
- Mr. Drinkhall: I won't be voting for this as this is the second time they haven't properly submitted their paperwork. In addition, I have personally dealt with their clients through tenancy and feel they did not follow up in a manner they should have.
- Mr. Sares: To their credit the decreased request shows an increase in the fundraising through Boots and Blings.

RECOMMENDED: 14- 2 [Mr. Drinkhall and Mr. Swett] – **0**

Chairman LeFebvre: Something to keep in mind is that every time we don't follow procedures it potentially causes problems for subsequent Budget Committees, such as when they don't submit on time and it could create future issues with other non-profits stating they got away with it why can't we.

Article 35: COMMERCIAL PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION

Motion by: Mr. Steiner, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall for discussion.

- Mr. Sares: The selectmen prevailed on industrial only and did not include commercial, when the petition was for both? Chairman LeFebvre: No, the petition specifically discusses commercial, they are two separate articles.
- Mr. Mosca: The law was for both industrial and commercial, the selectmen chose to include a warrant article for industrial only. The petitioned article is for commercial only. They are two separate articles and if one passes doesn't mean the other passes.
- Mr. Colbath: The way the legislature reads; it is industrial and/or commercial and can be one or both and the tax relief percentage can be set up to 10 years. The selectmen chose an article for industrial only at 50% for 5 years.
- Chairman LeFebvre: Since this article is not in the non-profit group I am going to defer further discussion until tomorrow evening when we discuss the town's warrant articles.

ADJOURN:

Mr. Mosca moved, seconded by Mr. Drinkhall, to adjourn the meeting at 9:09 PM. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Lisa E. Towle,
Recording Secretary