

**MINUTES OF THE 2022 TOWN MEETING FOR THE TOWN OF WEBSTER
THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
SATURDAY, MARCH 12, 2022**

Moderator Mike Jette called the meeting to order at 10:01 am at the Webster Town Hall.

He invited newly elected Select Board Member, Normandie Blake, to lead everyone in the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Jette welcomed all service veterans to stand and be recognized for their service. Next, all Webster volunteers were asked to stand and be recognized for their time served on a board, committee, with an election or in any way to support the Town.

Moderator Jette acknowledged the Town Report dedication was to three special citizens of Webster: Faith Anderson, Cyndel Sue Roberts Donoghue and Robert Drown, Sr.

Moderator Jette noted some topics brought up in the meeting may go beyond the scope of what the Town Meeting could address and directed voters to contact Webster's state-level Representatives Margaret Kennedy and Natalie Wells and Senator Harold French.

Moderator Jette noted a reporter from the Concord Monitor was at the meeting. It was announced that the fire department was issuing fire permits to those at the meeting, if requested.

Moderator Jette introduced the Select Board Chair David Hemenway and invited him to introduce the remaining Select Board, Town staff and officials.

Select Board Chair Hemenway introduced Select Board Members Normandie Blake and Marlo Herrick. He then introduced the Town staff: Town Administrator, Dana Hadley; Assistant Town Administrator, Russell Tatso; Finance Coordinator, Wendy Pinkham; Town Clerk (Michele Derby) and Supervisors of the Checklist (Sarah Chalsma, Jennifer Heath-Stilwell and Nancy Webster).

Moderator Jette asked everyone to silence their cell phones.

Moderator Jette explained the Moderator's Rules of the Meeting were in the Town Report and were the same as in past years. He explained the process voters would take if they wanted to speak and thanked Paul King for sanitizing the microphone between speakers.

MOTION TO ACCEPT MODERATOR'S RULES

Moderator Jette called for a motion to adopt the rules as listed. David Collins made the motion to approve the rules as written in the Town Report and it was seconded by Chris Schadler.

Moderator Jette called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Moderator Jette explained it was his intent to read the warrant article fully at the start of the question but not at the vote. It would only be fully read at the vote if it had been amended. He asked if anyone had objections to this and there were none. He drew attention to the empty ballot box at the front of the hall and said the Election Officials were prepared for a ballot vote, if necessary. He encouraged voters to use this option only if a voice or card vote was not certain or there was a petition for a ballot vote.

MOTION TO ALLOW NON-VOTERS TO SPEAK

Moderator Jette asked for voter approval to allow non-voters to speak at the meeting for Town employees or others to speak.

David Collins moved the motion; and was it seconded by David Richardson.

Moderator Jette called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Moderator Jette reminded voters to bring their yellow voting card (given to the voter at check in with the Supervisors of the Checklist; 94 voters checked in) to the microphone, if they were going to speak. He asked anyone wishing to speak to clearly state their name and address for the record. He announced the Library was set up as an auxiliary room for those preferring a mask-only environment. (No one actually used this option). He announced his assistants for the day; Nancy Picthall-French and Linda Clark would be counting

if any hand(card) votes occurred, and Dave Richardson would act as Assistant Moderator, if needed.

Moderator Jette announced a correction to the Town Meeting Minutes of 2021 (page 93 in the 2022 Town Report). The Election Results for Jennifer Health-Stilwell should be for a 3-yr term rather than the 1-yr term shown in the minutes. It was accurate on the election day ballot and was to complete the term of a vacant position.

Moderator Jette read the results of the Articles 1 and 2 from the Town Election held on Tuesday, March 8, 2022. He announced there were 289 ballots cast:

Article 1: To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year. (BY BALLOT)

OFFICE	TERM	NAME	# OF VOTES
Moderator	2 yrs	Mike Jette	247
Selectman	3 yrs	Normandie Blake	245
Supervisor of the Checklist	6 yrs	Nancy Webster	261
Treasurer	1 yr	Michele L. Tremblay	253
Cemetery Trustee	3 yrs	Matt Cummings	259
		Craig Fournier (write-in)	5
Library Trustee	3 yrs	Martin Bender	256
Trustee of Trust Funds	3 yrs	Therese E. Larson	258

Moderator Jette asked any newly elected officials to stay after the meeting to be sworn in by the Town Clerk. He noted there were 17 Election-Day registrations bringing the total to nearly 1300 registered voters.

Moderator Jette read the first sentence of Article 2 and announced the defeating results of 187 against and 96 in favor.

ARTICLE 2 FAILED

Article 2: Are you in favor of the adoption of the Wetlands and Watershed Protection Ordinance, an amendment to the existing Zoning Ordinance, as proposed by the Planning Board?

The purpose of the ordinance is to: protect clean water for current and future Webster residents; maintain drinking water quality; reduce stormwater and flood impacts; provide a habitat for plants and animals; and preserve the quality of life for Webster citizens. Current existing uses and activities are largely grandfathered, as are legal nonconforming uses, structures, and lots, with some conditions. These rules will be in addition to NHDES regulation.

This ordinance establishes two districts with buffers for each district. The buffer is a strip of vegetative land that protects the wetlands and water bodies from destruction and pollutants by regulating the uses and activities allowed in the buffer. The districts are depicted on the map attached to the ordinance.

The Level 1 District consists of the 25 most important wetlands, ponds, and rivers; other wetlands and surface waters equal to or greater than two acres in size that have certain functions; and vernal pools.

The Level 1 District includes a buffer of 100 feet from the edge of the wetlands and surface waters.

The Level 2 District includes all wetlands and surface waters that are greater than a quarter acre in size and that are not included in the Level 1 District, plus a buffer of 50 feet from the edge of the wetlands or surface waters.

For existing lots less than two acres in size, the applicable buffer is 50 feet from the edge of the wetlands or surface waters.

The ordinance is administered by the Planning Board and includes procedures and requirements for applications, conditional use permits, waivers, mitigation, and enforcement.

The proposed ordinance supports the goals of the Webster Hazard Mitigation Plan and the Master Plan.

YES	96
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NO	187
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Article 3: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,637,400 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)*

The Select Board recommends 3 to 0

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Chair Hemenway and seconded by Select Board Member Blake.

Selectman Hemenway explained the Select Board was elected with a specific message to keep an eye on the budget while getting things done and feels they have done that. He mentioned the highlights to the warrant listed in the Town Report. Overall, the operating budget increased by less than one percent. The past two years the town spent from the Unassigned Fund to offset the taxes during the pandemic but would not be able to do so again this year at the same level without unexpected revenues. He explained they trimmed where they could while considering increases for employee compensation to keep the town competitive with market salaries, new contracted services to better handle emergency service records and increases in shared services cost such as dispatch, overdue increases for road work, adding employee dental coverage and considering the three elections in 2022. However, the cost of goods, especially energy, has dramatically risen of late. Prior budgets did not reflect the double contract with the assessors and a general assessing line needed to be added effecting last-minute increases to the budget. The Highway Block Grant is back to pre-pandemic values based on communication with the State. However, this is an estimate and a 100% spending and revenue match and will not affect the local property tax rate. Some other lines such as the energy committee are not actually changes in the overall budget from last year's spending but are shifting municipal membership in more appropriate line items. The operating budget settled at an increase of .7%. He noted one correction to the operating budget that was brought up at the Budget Hearing. The Penacook Community Center no longer exists as it is now part of the Concord Boys and Girls Club. The change was not made to the budget, as presented.

MOTION TO AMEND ARTICLE 3

Select Board Chair Hemenway made a motion to amend the budget by setting the Penacook Community Center line item to \$0.00. Changing the budget to \$1,636,900.

Seconded by Dee (Normandie) Blake

Moderator Jette opened the amendment to the article for discussion.

Kim Fortune, Tyler Road, asked for clarity on "There was a donation planned but as in the case with Youth Soccer this donation will not be made unless requested." (Town Report pg. 18) She requested the \$500 remain and be used for Webster children. Chairman Hemenway explained the comment she read was a descriptive text prepared by the Town Administrator aiding voters in their understanding of the budget. He noted there is no longer a Webster Youth Soccer program either and asked Town Administrator Hadley to comment. Town Administrator Hadley said it was brought up at the Budget Hearing that the Penacook Community Center is now the Concord Boys and Girls Club and the \$500 was not removed after the hearing. The \$500 could remain in the budget to benefit Webster children but he was unsure where the monies would go.

Moderator Jette asked if there were other comments or questions on the amendment.

He called for a vote on the amendment explaining a YES vote is to reduce by \$500 generating a new bottom line of \$1,636,900; a NO vote is to leave the \$500 in to be available to the Select Board to choose to spend.

AMENDMENT TO ARTICLE 3 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Moderator Jette asked for discussion on the amended warrant article.

MOTION TO AMEND ARTICLE 3 AS AMENDED

Roy Fanjoy, Clothespin Bridge Road, noted the budget has been in the works since November and the current energy crisis could not have been anticipated. He wants emergency services when needed, the potholes fixed and asked to amend the budget by \$15,000. He noted that last year we received back approximately \$51,000 from the budget and is confident the current Select Board will continue to effectively monitor spending. He asked for \$15,000 be added to the operating budget specifically for fuel. Whether to be used by the Police Department, Fire Department or Road Agent.

Moderator Jette clarified there was a motion to add \$15,000, which increases the operating budget to \$1,651,900. He asked for a second to the motion, which was made by Zach Dziura. He asked for any discussion and there was none.

Moderator Jette stated this was another amendment for an increase of \$15,000 to make sure the town had enough money for various energy, propane, gasoline, diesel fuel. Town Clerk Derby asked for clarification because Mr. Fanjoy did not say propane. Moderator Jette asked Mr. Fanjoy and he said it was to be for any rising energy costs, including electricity.

Moderator Jette called for a vote on the amendment to the amended article, for those in favor of increasing the operating budget by \$15,000, to \$1,651,900.

AMENDMENT TO AMENDED ARTICLE 3 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

David Collins, Centennial Drive, asked what major projects were planned for 2022. He requested a listing of projects be included each year in the Town Report. Chairman Hemenway directed Town Administrator Hadley to note this suggestion for next year's report. He mentioned general road preservation and replacing White Plains bridge. He invited Road Agent Emmett Bean forward to speak further about projects in 2022. Road Agent Bean explained that some of his projects were delayed the last couple of years because of revenue concerns due to Covid. He has plans for paving from the Pillsbury Lake Clubhouse at Concord Drive towards Cedar Mill Group on Deer Meadow Road. Also, the dirt part of Pleasant Street is on his list. This is in preparation for the Clothespin Bridge construction project, which will close Detour Road and Clothespin Bridge Road from the bridge to Dingit's Corner to no-thru traffic. He intends to do road work on the dirt portion of Pleasant Street to open it up for better sight distance. He will be using a rock pounder to tackle rocks sticking out along Pleasant Street and ditching. Road Agent Bean provided a brief history on the Clothespin Bridge project and said to "hold on, it's gonna happen".

Mike Borek, White Plains Road, asked for an update on Clothespin Bridge and understands the money should be available this year. He asked if the town has a contractor for the project and will it start this year. Select Board Chair Hemenway explained the project is nearing the end of the State's approval and is in the 2023 State's fiscal budget, which starts in July 2022. Construction could begin as early as this summer. VHB is the engineering firm the town is working with.

David Collins, Centennial Drive, asked about the plans for the concrete pad at the Public Safety Building. He explained he has been the Chair of the Joint Loss Management Committee for many years and continuously brings up the deteriorating condition of the pad and the need for its replacement. He stated it is an unsafe area even with the ongoing patching performed by Emmett Bean and needs immediate attention. Fire Chief/Road Agent Bean responded that he has been working on obtaining a quote for the cost and it should be done this year.

Moderator Jette asked for any further discussion on the amended article. There was no more discussion and he reread the amended article before bringing it to a vote. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,651,900** for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (Majority vote required)

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF ARTICLE 3

David Collins, Centennial Drive, made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 3; seconded by Julie Nudd.

Moderator Jette reminded voters the article could not be discussed later in the meeting, if the motion were passed. He called for a vote to restrict reconsideration on Article 3.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 4: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$364,500 to be added to the following established Capital Reserve Funds under RSA 35:1.*

(Majority vote required)

Medical Equipment	6,000
Fire Department Air Packs	20,000
Emergency Apparatus	65,000
Fire Department-Mobil Communications	10,000
Police Cruiser	21,000
Highways and Roads	125,000
Bridge/Culvert Improvements	75,000
Public Safety Building	5,000
Town Hall Improvements	5,000
Town Office Equipment	5,000
Webster/Hopkinton Transfer Station	4,000
Fire Department Dry Hydrant Repairs	2,000
Fire Department Bunker Gear	2,500
Highway Equipment	7,500
Police Equipment	1,500
Highway Land/Building Fund	10,000

The Select Board recommends – 3 to 0

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Member Blake and seconded by Select Board Member Herrick.

Select Board Member Blake explained the Capital Reserve Funds are funded each year so there is money saved for when the big-ticket items are needed so as to not greatly impact the tax rate.

Moderator Jette opened the article for discussion.

Thomas McWilliams, Deer Meadow Road, asked about Article 8 which was regarding a police cruiser and how it relates to the amount for a police cruiser in Article 4. Select Board Member Blake explained the monies are voted to be added into the Capital Reserve Fund to be withdrawn to purchase the police cruiser. Select Board Chair Hemenway added the Select Board are generally Agents to Expend but this authority does not apply for the police cruiser. The voters must approve the spending of Capital Reserve Funds for this item.

Mike Borek, White Plains Road, asked what page in the Town Report he could find the Capital Reserve Funds balances. He was directed to the Trustee of Trust Funds Report on page 57.

Moderator Jette called for a vote after there was no further discussion.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 5: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$226,000 to be added to the following established Expendable Trust Funds per RSA 31:10-a.*

(Majority Vote Required)

Road Preservation	200,000
Technology Fund	5,000
Forest Fire	2,000
Fire Department Equipment	5,000
Highway	5,000
Legal (Webster)	1,000
Compensated Absences	1,000
Municipal Property Maintenance	5,000
Police Vehicle Maintenance	1,000
Welfare	1,000

The Selectboard recommends 3 to 0.

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Member Herrick and seconded by Select Board Chair Hemenway.

Select Board Member Herrick explained an increase of \$88,000 from last year due to moving monies from one fund to another for easier access when there are unexpected costs.

Moderator Jette asked for any discussion.

Thomas McWilliams, (Deer Meadow Road), asked how many police vehicles are being maintained with the \$1,000. Moderator Jette asked Police Chief Adams how many police vehicles the town currently had, and he responded, three. McWilliams stated the money was too low for three vehicles. Moderator Jette invited the Police Chief forward to speak on this concern. Select Board Chair Hemenway noted this article is about the Expendable Trust Funds and not the normal budget. These funds are used when you go over budget. Chief Adams provided an example of the use of this fund would be if a transmission failed in a cruiser and there was not enough in the annual budget to pay for it, this fund could be used. There is \$2,500 in this year's budget for Vehicle Maintenance and the Chief explained two of the cruisers are fairly new.

Moderator Jette called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 6: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year under the provisions of RSA 31:98-a for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,954 to put into the fund. This sum is to come from the unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the General Fund. This is an Individual Warrant Article (Majority vote required)*

The Selectboard recommends 3 to 0.

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Member Blake and seconded by Select Board Member Herrick.

Town Administrator Hadley explained similar articles have been on the warrant in past years. It is allowed by the State to use 1 % of the operating budget less the amortization for loans. The amortization this year is \$42,000 which is the last bond payment for the Public Safety Building. He said it comes out of the fund balance and does not affect the tax rate. He provided an updated amount of \$16,099, due to the amendment of Article 3, if anyone wanted to amend this article.

There being no discussion, Moderator Jette called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 7: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to help offset the cost of the bond for “Funds to Repair Dam” passed at the Pillsbury Lake Water District Meeting held August 5, 2006. (Majority vote required)*

The Selectboard recommends 3 to 0.

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Member Blake and seconded by Select Board Chair Hemenway.

Select Board Member Blake explained this article has been placed on the Town’s Warrant annually to support the payment to the bond taken out by the Pillsbury Lake Water District in 2006 to repair the dam and should be paid off in 2026.

There being no discussion, Moderator Jette called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

RESTRICT RECONSIDERATION OF ARTICLES 4, 5, 6 & 7

Roy Fanjoy made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Articles 4, 5, 6 & 7; seconded by David Collins.

Moderator Jette called for a vote to restrict reconsideration on Articles 4, 5, 6 & 7.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 8: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$37,000 for the purchase of a 2022 Police Cruiser and related equipment, with \$37,000 to come from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. This is a special Warrant Article.*

(Majority Vote Required)

The Selectboard recommends 3 to 0.

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Select Board Chair Hemenway. and seconded by Select Board Member Herrick.

Moderator Jette invited Police Chief Adams to speak on the article. Chief Adams explained there are currently three police cruisers. The one he is looking to replace is a 2016 with 115,818 miles, also has 3,777 hours of idle time. He said, according to Ford, the idle time figured at 32 mph, adds 120,864 miles to the engine for a total of 236,682 miles. He said if a new car were purchased this year the department would skip next year.

Moderator Jette opened the article for discussion. There being no discussion, he called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 9: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for the purpose of ongoing restoration/painting of the Old Meeting House.*

Submitted by Petition

Moderator Jette noted it was moved by Mark Kimball and seconded by Barbara Corliss.

Mark Kimball, Mutton Road, explained he is part of a group of people invested in preserving the history of the town. He spoke in support of the article and the mission to preserve Webster’s “hidden gem”.

Barbara Corliss, Deer Meadow Road, stated she is a Trustee and Treasurer of the Webster Historical Society. She spoke at length of the accomplishments the Society has made and is available to the residents/public. For example, extensive genealogy records, Town Reports, photo stories and diaries, Webster cemetery records. She stated the Old Meeting House is 231 years old and the only surviving meeting house in the upper Merrimack Valley that retains its original form and function. Carol Young, Potash Road, the Curator for the Webster Historical Society, spoke to the importance of saving our stories and noted in the 1980s residents’ stories were recorded and will soon be available through the website. Alison Eiserman, (White Plains Road), a Trustee for the Webster Historical Society and life-long resident, noted the Virtual Silent Auction would end that night. She said the proceeds would be for the restoration of the Old Meeting House.

Moderator Jette asked if there was further discussion; there was none. He called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

Article 10: *The Moderator read the Article in its entirety, To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.*

Sally Embley, (Rolfe Road), announced Earth Day was approaching in April and time for the 9th Roadside Cleanup in town. She invited residents to take a blue bag (or more), supplied by the Conservation Commission, and clean up a section of road in Webster. She noted the fines for littering in New Hampshire were minor compared with other states. There are recent bills “stuck” in the State Legislature to increase the fines and monies to go to the Fish & Game Department. The opposition to increasing the fines is primarily the cost to make the changes. Chris Schadler, Tyler Road, stated the blue bags would be available outside the Town Offices and the full month of April could be enjoyed picking up trash whilst avoiding poison ivy.

Kim Fortune, Tyler Road, stated that any and all public funding that has been appropriated today and prior to distribution making sure that from the Board’s perspective that each and every entity that is not only in state statute compliance and best management practices compliance.

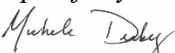
MOTION TO DISSOLVE

Moderator Jette called for a motion to dissolve the 2022 Annual Business Meeting of the Town of Webster; motion moved by Dan Nudd and seconded by Julie Nudd. He called for a vote.

PASSED BY VOICE VOTE

MEETING DISSOLVED AT 11:11 AM

Respectfully Submitted,


Michele Derby
Town Clerk