

2012 Town Warrant Review Caucus

February 8, 2012

Executive Board Present: Margaret Schillemat, Chair, Warren Hammack, Winston O. French, Edie Drinkwater, Administrative Assistant

Chair, Margaret Schillemat opened the meeting at 7:10 PM.

Margaret opened by reading the rules of civility that all were expected to follow. The audience was informed that anyone not following the rules would be called out of order.

Review of the Warrant followed with Margaret Schillemat reading aloud each article and offering discussion.

Margaret reminded the audience that this was just a draft and could change.

Article nine drew questions about the Fire Department expenses. It was explained that several factors cause the increase in accounting for those numbers. 1. The Fire Chief's salary was previously placed under the town executive in error, 2. Gas and diesel had not been included in any previous budget although both are needed for the trucks and equipment. The cost of the Fire Department usage of these items was previously levied against the Highway for diesel and the Police for gas. This practice creates an inaccurate accounting for each department's costs. The largest increase is due to the Mutual Aid cost now being directly charged by Mutual Aid to all Fire Departments. The county tax previously included this cost as part of the tax assessment for each town. The question was asked if this meant the county tax would drop. Most offering comment agreed, while that may seem logical, there was doubt it would be the case.

Article 16 drew a question about what the Agricultural Commission spends money on. Committee chair, David Voymas, gave an overview of the committee and informed the audience about a Joint Farmer's Market project being held with Harrisville and some of the costs include signage, advertising and material associated with such events.

Article 21 drew a question about the amount to be raised and appropriated. Upon review from the DRA this may be changed from \$3500 to \$7000 with \$3500 raised by tax and \$3500 from a grant. Lisa Sievert explained the grant and said this would start the planning process for the Town Office and Town Hall. When complete this would provide designs and plans for moving forward with renovations.

Article 22 was presented by Mike Iselin who explained the program and indicated this was a legally formed Non-Profit program with a Board of Directors. Questions arose about the selection process given the article states Nelson School Students and that may include students who reside in other towns. Currently it was agreed only 1 student was not a resident and at least for this year the article need not be changed.

Terri Upton spoke to her job and a handout she provided regarding her replacement in the future. Her stated her intention is not to run in 2013. She addressed questions from the floor about the pros and cons of advance training of someone who may or may not run for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector position. While prior training would provide a smooth transition it comes without guarantee that this person would be elected or even remain as deputy. Then the money is wasted. However if the person is elected it could mean a seamless transition. Terri suggested \$6000 could be considered for this purpose with the risks and rewards evenly balanced.

Bob Jones suggested that due to the amount of training needed it seems placing someone in by a popularity contest may not be best for the town. It was pointed out that this is still the State Law to fill this position by election..

Terri responded to a question regarding State training. She indicated that the State does provide training but did not have times or details. In response to another question She replied that there would be 2 deputies for a while.

Karen Tolman asked if the \$6000 was included in her budget. No, Part of the increase in the budget is due to the fact that 2012 has 4 elections . This occurs every 4 years.

Bud asked if the Town Clerk/Tax Collector could be separated and the Tax Collector be appointed. Terri replied not at this time due to RSA requirements.

It was noted that the money could be added prior to posting or from the floor at Town Meeting by amendment.

Discussion continued for a time and then rested.

An overview of items contained in the Financial Admin. budget was given in response to a question from Karen Tolman. Some items included but limited to would be Telephone, advertising, Salaries, all office supplies, computer service, and software updates, in general all operations of the Town Office.

Margaret Schillemat offered a chance for further discussion. With no response she made a motion to adjourn. This was seconded by Warren Hammack and the motion to adjourn carried by unanimous vote.

February 8, 2012

Margaret Schillemat

Warren Hammack

Winston O. French