

Town of Canterbury, NH  
Board of Selectmen  
Date: 2024 February 5  
Location: Meeting House

Selectmen: Cheryl Gordon (Chair), Kent Ruesswick, Scott Doherty

Town Administrator: Ken Folsom

Others Present: Edgar Rivera (Libertad Press NE), Silvia Styles, Beth Blair, Al Edelstein (Treasurer), Lisa Carlson (ZBA Secretary), Judy Nelson, Rachel Baker (Library Director), Teresa Wyman, Jim Miller (Moderator)

1. Call to Order
  - a. The meeting was called to order at 4:59 p.m.
2. Administration
  - a. The Selectmen signed:
    - i. Kent made a motion to sign the Accounts Payable Manifest in the amount of \$524,021.59. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
    - ii. Kent made a motion to sign the Payroll Manifest in the amount of \$59,174.12. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
    - iii. The Selectmen signed the list of 2024 Encumbrances in the amount of \$123,681.66.
      1. This is a replacement for the document signed on 1/8/2024. At the time, the Town was expecting to encumber the Fire Truck money, but that is not necessary.
    - iv. Cheryl signed an engagement letter with the attorney who does the bond paperwork for the Town.
      1. See Selectmen's Minutes 1/22/2024 Section 5.a. for previous discussion.
      2. This is for a bond in the amount of \$490,000 to purchase the firetruck that was approved in warrant article 2023-2.
      3. The attorney will put together a package with 5-year and 10-year rates so the Selectmen can decide which to go with.
      4. We had been putting \$50K into the Fire Truck Capital Reserve, and the 10-year rate is likely to be similar amount. If the truck lasts us 20 years, that will give us an additional 10 years to rebuild the Capital Reserve account.
  - b. Previous Minutes Approval
    - i. Scott made a motion to approve the public minutes for the Selectmen's meeting on January 22, 2024. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
3. Public Hearing for 2024 Proposed Budget and Warrant Articles
  - a. Kent made a motion to open the Public Hearing at 5:30 p.m. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
  - b. Warrant Articles
    - i. Cheryl read aloud **Article 12**. "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-six Thousand Four-Hundred and Five dollars (\$26,405) for the first year's payment towards a new backhoe. This payment is for a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of \$197,950 payable over a term of seven (7) years. Furthermore, to offset the lease agreement amount using \$40,000 from the Capital Reserve Account created for this purpose as the Selectmen are agents to expend, and to trade-in the current Backhoe for Twelve Thousand Dollars (\$12,000). This lease contains an escape clause. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen."

- ii. Cheryl read aloud **Article 13**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four-Hundred and Forty-Thousand Dollars (\$440,000) for the purpose of purchasing a new Motor Road Grader and the withdrawal of Four-Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) from the Capital Reserve Account created for this purpose. The balance, Forty-Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to be raised by taxes. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
  - 1. The term “Motor Road Grader” is the name of the machine in the Caterpillar contract. It refers to a generic “grader” that would replace the current “grader” that Highway is using that has had some critical mechanical issues.
  - 2. It was determined that Article 13 and 15 would need to be taken out of order at the Town Meeting so that the Capital Reserve account would have enough money to cover the \$400K. Moderator Jim Miller said this could be done.
- iii. Cheryl read aloud **Article 14**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three-Million, Three-Hundred and Twenty-Three Thousand, Four hundred Fifty-Three Dollars (\$3,323,453) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
- iv. Cheryl read aloud **Article 15**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Eighteen Thousand Dollars (\$118,000) to be deposited into the following Capital Reserves: Highway Equipment \$10,000, Highway Truck \$30,000, Highway Grader \$30,000, Rescue Truck \$12,000, Landfill Closure \$1,000, Maintenance & Repair of Town Buildings \$5,000, Highway Loader \$30,000. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
- v. Scott read aloud **Article 16**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Six Thousand Seven-Hundred and Four dollars (\$36,704) to pay principal (\$35,000) and interest (\$1,704) on the Gold Star Bond, said amount to be removed from the Town’s Unassigned Fund Balance. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
- vi. Scott read aloud **Article 17**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$33,000) for the purpose of preparing new cemetery lots at the Maple Grove municipal cemetery and to complete a lot line adjustment with abutter to add a parcel of land at the Cemetery for future expansion. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
  - 1. This will add 400 lots, and that should last beyond our lifetimes. 1960 was the last time the Cemetery was expanded. This is talking about the Baptist Hill side of the Cemetery. Web Stout has already done the surveying work on this project for free.
- vii. Scott read aloud **Article 18**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten-Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the purchase and installation of a Ductless AC and Heating unit at the Canterbury Historical Society Archives storage room in the Elkins Public Library. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
  - 1. Town got three estimates from different companies, so the amount in the Article is based on those numbers. This would be a replacement mini-split for the one that is currently there. The existing one has not worked for 5 years and due to the older model, it is cheaper to replace it than repair it.
- viii. Scott read aloud **Article 19**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten-Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the purpose of negotiating a contract to upgrade the Town Website. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
- ix. Scott read aloud **Article 20**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten-Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for the purchase of a Steam Cleaner and to withdraw the

funds from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Account created for this purpose. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”

1. This steam cleaner would be used to clean the vehicles and thaw the culverts when they are frozen in winter. Highway currently has one, but it is broken and cannot be fixed.
  - x. Kent read aloud **Article 21**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five-Thousand and Five Hundred Dollars (\$5,500) for the purchase of a Folder/Inserter for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector’s office. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
    1. A Folder/Inserter is a machine that can fold papers and put them into envelopes. Sam Papps (Town Clerk/Tax Collector) currently goes to Sanbornton who has been nice enough to let us use theirs for free.
    2. Ken was unsure how many hours of labor it would take to pay back this machine, but he provided an estimate that Sam sends out 5,200 pieces of mail annually, and when combined with revaluations this amount is about 27,600 in 5 years.
  - xi. Kent read aloud **Article 22**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six-Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) for the purpose of replacement and repairs to the Town Gazebo hand rails. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
    1. There has only been one bid received for this one. The handrail system is structural so a specific type of craftsman is required to do this work.
  - xii. Kent read aloud **Article 23**. “To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four-Thousand Dollars (\$4,000) for the purchase and installation of gutters for the Meeting House. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
    1. The two estimates received only covered the cost of the gutters and the downspouts, not grading. The grading would be done by the Highway Department and the costs would fold into their regular work.
  - xiii. Kent read aloud **Article 24**. “To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to accept up to Fifteen-Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) from the forced distribution of funds from the Sam Lake Trust Fund. The exact dollar amount is to be determined by the Trustees of the Sam Lake Trust Fund and distributed to the Town by the end of the calendar year. Majority Vote Required. Recommended by the Selectmen.”
    1. This money goes to the Sam Lake House Capital Reserve Fund. About 7 years ago the tax laws changed and it is now required that the Town take a portion of the earnings each year. Citizens Bank requires the Selectmen to write them a letter each year to ask for the money and then put it in the SLH CRF.
    2. At the end of 2023 there was \$56,862 in the SLH CRF. The Selectmen are agents to expend and could use it for any project that maintains the Sam Lake House property. However, if they had a larger project in mind, it would be a warrant article.
    3. Fixing the garage is likely the next project. However, estimates have been all over the place and the big question that needs to be answered is what does the Town want to use that garage for. The funds do not need to be spent within a certain timeframe, so the money can be saved indefinitely.
  - xiv. Ken reviewed the 2024 Tax Impacts of Warrant Articles document.
  - xv. When no further questions were forthcoming, the Selectmen signed the warrant articles.
- c. 2024 Budget
- i. Ken went over the 2024 Budget Highlights document.
  - ii. Land Use Professional (under item 4191)
    1. See Selectmen’s Minutes 1/8/2024 Section 3. and 12/4/2023 Section 3.f. for previous discussion.

2. The Planning Board Secretary and the Zoning Board of Adjustment Secretary wages are down because part of the existing duties for those positions will be transferred to the new Land Use Professional position.
  3. A draft of the job position has been created, but it has not been approved by the Selectmen yet.
  4. When an application came in to one of the land use boards (PB, ZBA, HDC, etc.), the Land Use Professional would review the application for completeness, guide the applicant through the process, explain technical matters to the board, and follow-up when conditions or variances are put in place.
  5. This person will not be a Code Enforcement Officer, but they would work with the existing Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer on research and identification of violations.
  6. The 2024 budget estimates this position as working 20 hours per week for \$20 an hour. They would work at the Town Offices. They would do some field work (e.g. walk-throughs with PB, site-plan reviews).
  7. They would need to have some relevant training, possibly through NHMA, City Managers Association, etc.
- iii. Dirt Road Repair
1. See Selectmen's Minutes 1/22/2024 Section 2.e.vii. for previous discussion.
  2. The Town received \$250K in ARPA money a few years ago. The Selectmen have decided to use this money to repair the dirt roads in Town.
  3. This was discussed with the Budget Committee (Selectmen's Minutes 12/4/2023 Section 3.g.) and they suggested using it to cover several existing line items. Ken explained that each separate item would add additional paperwork for the Town, so it is less of an administrative burden to do one project.
  4. Road Agent John O'Connor is coming up with a list of roads that are in the worst condition and should be prioritized.
  5. This money is not specified in the 2024 budget. The Selectboard had public hearings to receive the money and they are responsible for deciding how to spend it.
- iv. Ground Water Testing (item 4323.19)
1. The Town tests ground water around the old Landfill for PFOA and PFOS. The DES is requiring more frequent testing and the costs of testing have gone up so this line has an increase of 30%.
  2. These chemicals are near the Transfer Station at the old Landfill. The Town/DES have been unable to determine the exact reason for this. There is no remediation available for these chemicals, so all the Town can do is test.
  3. The Town also tests the drinking well of a neighboring property. If these chemicals start appearing in that water, the Town may need to drill them a new well.
- v. Community Power Committee (item 4351.6)
1. This item includes training, and mailers that the Committee may be putting out. Howard Moffett (CPC Chair) will be speaking to that at the Town Meeting.
- vi. Soccer Field Maintenance (item 4520.3)
1. The soccer field belongs to school, but our soccer program uses the field and puts new lines down for the Town's kids league. The kids league is not associated with the school district.
- vii. EMT Retirement
1. The Fire Department has someone available full-time during the day to respond to emergencies. Nights and weekends are covered by on-call people, and incidents requiring an ambulance are covered by Penacook.

2. Dave Nelson's retirement will not change the Town's coverage. Instead of one full-time person, there will be several part-time and per diem employees.
  - viii. Center Maintenance (item 4194.63)
    1. Last year the budget was up because the Town bought a flagpole. The remaining money in there is for treatments of the Cushman Elm and new lights for the Christmas tree in the Center.
    2. Some discussion was had about the health and care of the trees in the Center.
  - ix. Highway Truck (item WA-2023-7 and 2023-7E)
    1. The truck was acquired in August and brought to HP Fairfield to have the body and plow put on it. It was finally delivered to the Town last week, so the money to pay HP Fairfield had to be encumbered.
  - x. Bonds
    1. The Town Buildings Improvement Bond ended in 2023, the Gold Star bond ends in 2025, and the Morrill Road Bridge/Command Car/Police Cruisers bond ends in 2026.
    2. The new firetruck bond will likely be a 10 year commitment. Details can be found in the 2022 Town Report on page 34.
    3. The Town is in good shape financially with over \$1 million in the Unreserved Fund Balance.
  - d. Kent made a motion to close the public hearing at 6:43 pm. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
4. New Business
- a. Letter from Merrimack County
    - i. Merrimack County has created a Community Power Committee that is working towards the same type of program that Canterbury's Community Power Committee created last year. They had their first meeting last week.
    - ii. This program would apply to all residents in the County including Canterbury. Ken is going to talk to Howard Moffett (Community Power Committee Chair) to see how this affects us.
  - b. Invoice for Transfer Station Baler
    - i. The new baler at the Transfer Station was having an issue with the heater. The company came to repair it and replaced the fuses and changed the oil. They also replaced the heater entirely without letting anyone know and billed \$1,700 for it.
    - ii. Ken is in discussion with the company about whether or not this should be paid and will ask for usage guidelines and a manual for the baler.
  - c. Town Officers Election
    - i. The registration closed on Friday. There are contested races for Selectboard, Planning Board, and Trustee of the Trust Funds.
5. Old Business
- a. Fire Alarm Ordinance
    - i. See Selectmen's Minutes 2/19/2024 Section 2.b.iv. for previous discussion.
    - ii. The Selectboard approved the ordinance in the last meeting. Ken had the Town's counsel review it.
    - iii. The Selectmen signed the ordinance.
    - iv. Ken will post it publicly for 30 days and then it will go into effect. The Fire Chief will send a copy to the company on Hall Road.
    - v. It was noted that the property on Hall Road has had a gate installed, but it is being left in the open position. No one was sure what the Planning Board had approved regarding the gate.
  - b. Ownership dispute of Tax Map 256 Lot 3
    - i. See Selectmen's Minutes 1/22/2024 Section 2.a.iii. for previous discussion.

- ii. Mr. Cambril's attorney met with the Town's attorney last week. The Town gave Mr. Cambril a summary of the history of the property and information about the potential Lovering heirs.
- iii. Abutter Mike McGill is now also saying that he owns that property. The Town received an offer from Mr. McGill to buy Map 256 Lot 3 on 2/5/2024.
- iv. Ken is going to ask Web Stout, who surveyed it last time, to come in and discuss.
- v. There are potentially two pieces of property here, one owned by the Town and one owned by the heirs of Samuel Lovering. Web thinks the parcel owned by the Town isn't owned by the Town. Sam Papps thinks it is all one lot and none of it is owned by the Town.
- vi. Ken advises not even entertaining the offer by Mr. McGill until we get some kind of proof about who actually owns this land.
- vii. The Town hasn't collected taxes for this property since 1949 when the last living heir of Samuel Lovering passed away and the Town lost track.
- viii. The Town has issued a tax bill for Map 256 Lot 3. The bill was not mailed anywhere, but is available in the Tax Collector's Office under the "Heirs of Samuel Lovering". If that bill doesn't get paid for 3 years, then the Town will officially deed it. No back taxes are being charged, just annual taxes going forward.
- ix. Scott made a motion to table the offer from Mr. McGill for Map 256 Lot 3 pending a resolution to the entire matter. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- c. Sale of Town owned property Map 102 Lot 37
  - i. See Selectmen's Minutes 1/22/24 Section 4.a. for previous discussion.
  - ii. Ms. Steenbergen is offering \$2,500 for Map 102 Lot 37.
  - iii. Moving forward, when someone offers to buy Town-owned property, an expiration date needs to be put on the offer.
  - iv. Ken will develop standard paperwork that can be filled out when making an offer like this.
  - v. Scott made motion to accept Ms. Steenbergen's offer of \$2,500 for Map 102 Lot 37. Kent seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.
- 6. Adjournment
  - a. Kent made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:46 p.m. Scott seconded. All in favor by roll call, motion carried.

Next Meeting: 2024 February 20, 5:00 p.m. at the Meeting House

Minutes submitted by Kathleen McKay, Administrative Assistant