

**BOARD OF SELECTMEN MEETING MINUTES
TOWN OF EPPING, NEW HAMPSHIRE
January 4, 2021**



VIA ZOOM

CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Adam Munguia called the meeting to order at 7:10 PM via Zoom.

ATTENDANCE

Chairman Adam Munguia with Selectmen; Bob Jordan, Mike Yergeau, Cody Belanger and Joe Trombley. Also in attendance was Town Administrator Gregory Dodge. Executive Secretary Joyce Blanchard was excused.

EOC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Director Don DeAngelis reported that cases increased by another 329. Also a number of first responders have tested positive as well. The EOC has also been fielding calls from the public regarding questions on how to handle exposures.

CHIEF LOMBARDO'S REPORT

Chief Lombardo all stated that more cases have been reported. There are 37 active cases in Epping.

CHIEF WALLACE'S REPORT

Chief Wallace had no report other than to say New Year's was uneventful.

WARRANT ARTICLE REVIEW

ARTICLE : 2021 OPERATING BUDGET

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amount 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 Ten Million, Two Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand, Two Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars (\$10,267,295.00). Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Ten Million, One Hundred Thirty-Two Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty-Nine Dollars (\$10,132,269.00), which is the same as

last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the town 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.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee 8-3]

Majority Vote Required

The Selectmen already taking action on this article moved on to the next.

ARTICLE : POLICE UNION CONTRACT

To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Epping and the New England Police Benevolent Association – Local #28, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year	Estimated Increases
2021	\$31,260.00
2022	\$60,495.00
2023	\$20,355.00

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty One Thousand, Two Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$31,260.00) for the current budget year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increases in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels under the prior agreement. The total estimated aggregate cost for the three (3) years is Two Hundred Forty-One Thousand, Four Hundred Dollars (\$241,400.00). Note: This agreement has an automatic renewal or “evergreen” clause. If approved, the terms of this agreement shall continue from year to year. The estimated additional cost attributable to the evergreen clause after 2023 is \$ per year.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

There was discussion on the Union contract article however there was still work to be done on the amounts. The article will be in “draft” form until calculations are refined. The Budget Committee will receive this article as a “draft”. Selectman Yergeau said that the Town should calculate the costs of the contract should it not pass. Selectman Trombley wanted to know how the contract will play out if it is not approved. Administrator Dodge he will have to look into those details.

ARTICLE : ACCRUED BENEFITS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Accrued Benefits Expendable Trust Fund.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0]

[Recommended Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

The Selectmen already voted to recommend this article and to have it on the warrant.

ARTICLE : TOWN HALL IMPROVEMENT EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Town Hall Improvement Expendable Trust Fund.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

The Board of Selectmen already voted to recommend this article at a previous meeting.

ARTICLE : HIGHWAY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

There was considerable discussion on this article regarding the correct amount of money that should go into the fund. Other pieces will have to be purchased in the coming years and \$25,000 may not be enough. Different amounts were suggested with the following resulting motion.

Motion by Selectman Adam Munguia to establish an amount of \$40,000 in the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Belanger, Yergeau, Trombley, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : WATSON ACADEMY REPAIRS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Watson Academy Repairs Expendable Trust Fund.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

Selectmen discussed with Nicole Bizzaro the anticipated repairs for Watson Academy. The roof project was completed this year and the next project would probably be to replace the boilers. Nicole reminded the Board that the L-CHIP commitment for Watson ends this year. Nicole felt that funding this account at \$10,000 was appropriate.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend \$10,000 be funded in the Watson Academy Repairs Expendable Trust Fund. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Yergeau, Belanger, Trombley, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : RECREATION FACILITIES EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Recreation Facilities Expendable Trust Fund.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

The Board discussed this warrant article at length with Nicole Bizzaro who expressed to the Selectmen that it was her desire to fund the trust fund at \$10,000 which would give her enough money to replace the Pre-school playground. The discussion evolved into a discussion about the playground only. Ms. Bizzaro said that with the balance or \$40,900 in the fund now and other donations plus the \$10,000 she is recommending she would like to move forward with the playground plans. For now she asked that the Board agree with the \$10,000 that if approved she would have the discussion with the Board to move forward with the playground project at a later date.

Motion by Selectman Cody Belanger to recommend \$10,000 to be placed in the Recreation Facilities Expendable Trust Fund. Seconded by Selectman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Yergeau, Trombley, Belanger, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : LANDFILL CLOSURE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000.00) to be placed in the previously established Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund.

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

The Selectmen discussed this capital reserve fund for quite some time. Selectman Mike Yergeau said if \$20,000 was the amount to be placed in the fund he would just as soon not fund it at all and advocated for an amount of \$200,000 saying that it would do two things, heighten awareness that at some point the landfill closure is going to happen and be costly and secondly with an amount of \$200,000 the fund would start to grow to a point where at least maybe an engineering study could be paid for. Selectman Trombley supported the \$200,000 as did Selectman Jordan. Selectman Cody Belanger was concerned with moving forward at \$200,000 this year. Chairman Adam Munguia agreed with Selectman Belanger that it was a bad year to advocate for such a large increase. Selectman Trombley also mentioned that he would like to see an article on the warrant whereby revenues derived from the sales of dump stickers would go into the landfill closure reserve fund. Discussion continued and an amount of \$100,000 was considered.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan recommending that the Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund be funded with an amount of \$100,000. Seconded by Selectman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye, Selectman Cody Belanger voting nay. Motion carried 4-1.

ARTICLE : GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

To see if the Town of Epping will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000.00) to be place in the previously established Government Buildings Expendable Trust Fund.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

There was little discussion on this article.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend that \$15,000 be placed in the Government Buildings Expendable Trust Fund. Seconded by Selectman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Belanger, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : EPPING YOUTH ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) in support of the Epping Youth Athletic Association.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

The Selectmen supported having this as a "Selectmen's" warrant rather than a petition. Chairman Munguia said that this is a worthy cause.

Motion by Chairman Adam Munguia to place the EYAA article on the warrant as a "Selectmen's" article and recommended that the amount by \$5,000. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Belanger, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : HIGHWAY GARAGE ADDITION

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Seventy Five Thousand Dollars (175,000.00) for the purpose of constructing a 50' x 75' addition to the existing Highway Garage. The Highway Garage is located at 129 Coffin Rd., Map 24, Lot 96.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

Dave Reinhold was in on this Zoom meeting and discussed the estimated costs to put an addition on to the highway garage. The building would have electricity, be insulated and weather tight. There are no plans to heat the building but he suggested that perhaps placing a fan into the wall to draw heat in from the main building might be a consideration. Building costs have increased drastically however he felt the project could be completed for \$175,000. Though Mr. Reinhold was not in support of going forward with the addition he was asked by the Board to bring forward these costs.

Motion by Chairman Adam Munguia to place the Highway Garage addition on the warrant with a recommended cost of \$175,000. Seconded by Selectman Bob Jordan. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : BY PETITION: NEW OVERHEAD DOORS FOR THE EPPING FIRE DEPARTMENT AND BRICKYARD MUSEUM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to replace the overhead doors on the 1935 Fire Station, now being converted to the Epping Fire Department and Brickyard Museum. The doors will have windows as they were when this building was an active fire station.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]
[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]
Majority Vote Required

This is a petitioned article drafter by Clifton Cray. The petition is to replace the overhead doors at the old Fire Station built in 1935. Selectman Bob Jordan shared a picture with the Board on how it would look.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend the article for the overhead doors at the old Fire Station. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Yergeau, Trombley, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : BY PETITION: ROCKINGHAM NUTRITION & MEALS ON WHEELS PROGRAM

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand, One Hundred and Fifty-Two Dollars (\$5,152.00) to enable Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels Program to continue to provide the meal service to elder, homebound and disabled Epping residents.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]
[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]
Majority Vote Required

This petitioned article is seen most every year. Selectman Trombley asked Lisa Fogg if the funding was the same as last year to which she replied, yes.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend the article of \$5,152 for Rockingham Nutrition & Meals on Wheels Program. Seconded by Chairman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : CHANGE TOWN CLERK/TAX COLLECTOR ASSISTANT POSITION TO FULL TIME

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand, One Hundred Dollars (\$40,100.00) to change the current Part Time Town Clerk/Tax Collector Assistant position to Full Time with benefits.

[Recommended by Board of Selectmen]

[Recommended by the Municipal Budget Committee]

Majority Vote Required

This warrant article has been discussed many times in the past and the Board supports it being on the warrant.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to place the change in Town Clerk/Tax Collector assistant position to a full-time position and recommend the cost of \$40,100. Seconded by Chairman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Belanger, Jordan and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ARTICLE : Motor Vehicle Race Tracks Bylaw Change

1. To see if the Town will vote to amend the "By-Laws to the Regulation and Licensing of Motor Vehicle Race Tracks" as adopted by Article 20 of the March 1971 Town Meeting and amended by Article 36 of the March 1976 Town Meeting as amended by Article 14 of the March 1977 Town Meeting as amended by Article 15 of the March 1986 Town Meeting as amended by Article 18 of the March 1990 Town Meeting as amended by Article 32 of the March 1994 Town Meeting as amended by Article 26 of the March 2018 Town Meeting as follows:

Amend Article IV of the By-Laws which reads, "Sufficient fire protection equipment and facilities as may be required by the Fire Chief shall be provided on the race track premises at the expense of the race track owner and/or operator."

To read as follows:

New Language - "Article IV: Sufficient fire protection equipment, personnel, planning and facilities as may be required by the Fire Chief shall be provided on the race track premises whenever the facility is open to the public and includes scheduled and nonscheduled events, track rentals, practice sessions and private sessions at the expense of the race track owner and/or operator. Protection, equipment, personnel, planning and facilities shall adhere to all provisions of National Fire Protection Association 610 (NFPA 610) Guide for Emergency and Safety Operations at Motorsports Venues."

2. Amend Article VI of the By-Laws which reads, "Adequate ambulance service shall be provided on the race track premises at all time during which the race track is open to the general public and/or operating, at the expense of the race track owner and/or operator. In determining what is adequate, consideration shall be given to the nature of the activities being conducted, the number of persons present on the race track premises, and the requirements of the Fire Chief."

To read as follows:

New Language - "Adequate ambulance service shall be provided on the race track premises at all times during which the race track is open to the public and includes scheduled and nonscheduled events, track rentals, practice sessions and private sessions at the expense of the race track owner and/or operator. In determining what is adequate, consideration shall be given to the nature of the activities being conducted, the number of persons present on the race track premises, and the requirements of the Fire Chief. A Memorandum of Understanding shall be executed annually by the Fire Chief and the race track owner and/or operator detailing requirements for emergency medical services to include transport and standby responsibilities for the ensuing year prior to Fire Chief approval."

[Recommended by the Board of Selectmen]

Majority vote required

This warrant article was written by Chief Joe Lombardo. He did the research on it and wanted to bring the By-Laws up to date. This change would help the race tracks understand what they need to do in terms of having fire and ambulance protection. Chief Lombardo addressed questions of the Board.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend the Motor Vehicle Race Tracks Bylaw Change. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

The Selectmen concluded the review of all warrants and with that the Town Administrator asked that the Board reaffirm their desire to have all the articles discussed this evening on the warrant with the exception of the petitioned articles which must be placed on the warrant.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to reaffirm that all warrant articles discussed this evening by placed on the warrant with the exception of the petitioned articles. Seconded by Chairman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge said he was anticipating a petitioned article from Rockingham Community Action and a citizen's petition to change the polling hours.

Selectman Joe Trombley asked if there needed to be a motion to place the Union contract on the warrant as a draft. Administrator Dodge thought that would be a good idea.

Motion by Selectman Joe Trombley to place the Union contract on the warrant as a draft for the Budget Committee and for the Board to discuss this article again next week. Seconded by Chairman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

ACCRUED BENEFITS ARTICLE

This article was recommended 4-0 when there was not a full Board. Chairman Munguia asked if the Board would like to re-vote this article.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to reconsider the recommendation on the Accrued Benefits article for \$30,000. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan and Munguia voting aye with Selectman Cody Belanger abstaining. Motion carried 4-0-1.

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to recommend the Accrued Benefits article at the cost of \$30,000. Seconded by Chairman Adam Munguia. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

TOWN HALL IMPROVEMENT EXPENDABLE TRUST FUND

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to reconsider the recommendation of the Town Hall Trust Fund of \$15,000. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Jordan, Yergeau and Munguia voting aye, with Selectman Cody Belanger abstaining. Motion carried 4-0-1.

Motion by Chairman Adam Munguia to recommend the Town Hall Trust Fund article of \$15,000. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Jordan, Trombley, Yergeau, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

TOWN WARRANT

Finance Director Lisa Fogg advised the Board that there would be two (2) Planning/Zoning articles coming forward and they would be listed first on the warrant followed by the Operating budget. She asked if the Board wanted any particular order as she assigns numbers to the articles. The Board was satisfied with the present order.

TOWN ADMINISTRATOR'S REPORT

Town Administrator Gregory Dodge

Mr. Dodge advised the Board that the Budget Committee meets on Wednesday January 6, 2021 and if anyone needed the Zoom link he would send that along.

No further report.

SELECTMEN'S INDIVIDUAL REPORTS

Selectman Cody Belanger

No report.

Selectman Mike Yergeau

Selectman Yergeau wanted the Board to know he has the last study done relative to the Town Landfill prepared by Santec. It is old information and he plans on reviewing it. Chairman Munguia was interested in getting a copy.

Selectman Joe Trombley

Selectman Trombley asked if the new Planner started today. Administrator Dodge said that she did start today, met with Lisa Fogg and then met with Phyllis to get acclimated to her new office and position. Mr. Trombley also asked Dave Reinhold when the railings would be installed at the library. Mr. Reinhold said he was planning on getting that done this week. Lastly Mr. Trombley asked that a copy of the Master Plan be sent to Sandy Goodspeed and to him.

Selectman Bob Jordan

Selectman Jordan wished Dennis Pelletier a speedy recovery as he is in the hospital.

Selectman Adam Munguia.

Chairman Munguia also wished Mr. Pelletier well and a speedy recovery. He wished the Board a Happy New Year. He thanked everyone for their hard work.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Steve Thomas was on the Zoom meeting however he did not have any questions.

Glenn Fredericks asked that as the Board considers increasing the cost of the dump stickers that they consider families such as his that buy more than one sticker that the first sticker be at the higher cost with the second sticker being \$5.00.

He addressed his concerns with broadcasting from the school in conjunction with Zoom. The audio will not be good at all particularly if presentations are to be made via Zoom. Mr. Dodge said that if we can't find tune the audio there is not much else we can do as the Public Hearing will have to go on with the current conditions. While he understood Mr. Fredericks concerns he did not anticipate many presentations being made via Zoom anyway. Selectman Mike Yergeau asked Glenn if an HDMI hook up to the Chairman's laptop and hook up the sound. Glenn said it may work but he thought the reverberation would be too great in a large room such as the gym. Selectman Trombley he has a PA system that might help.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion by Selectman Bob Jordan to adjourn after thirty seconds. Seconded by Selectman Joe Trombley. Roll Call Vote; Selectmen Trombley, Yergeau, Jordan, Belanger and Munguia all voting aye. Motion carried 5-0.

Meeting adjourned at 9:05 PM

Respectfully Submitted,

**Gregory C. Dodge
Town Administrator**

Adam Munguia, Chairman

Bob Jordan, Vice-Chairman

Mike Yergeau, Selectman

Cody Belanger, Selectman

Joe Trombley, Selectman

Dated: January 12, 2021