

**Town of Milton**  
**BUDGET COMMITTEE PUBLIC HEARING**  
**January 17, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Humphrey Williams (Chair), Peg Hurd, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham, Lisa Gautreau, Laura Turgeon, Larry Brown, Mike Beaulieu (arrived after meeting had begun)

**Staff:** Chris Jacobs, Town Administrator

**Public:** Karen Golab

Humphrey Williams, Chair, opened the session at 5:00PM.

**1.) Pledge of Allegiance:** Humphrey Williams, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2.) Roll Call:**

a. Mr. Williams, Chair, led the roll call of members to determine if a quorum was present.

Humphrey Williams (Chair), Laura Turgeon, Lisa Gautreau, Peg Hurd, Larry Brown, Bob Carrier, Claudine Burnham. A quorum was present.

b. Public participation: Chris Jacobs, Town Administrator, and Karen Golab, were in attendance.

Mr. Williams explained this public hearing of the Budget Committee is in accordance with RSA32:5 I: to review and receive public comment on the proposed 2022 Town Budget and Warrant, followed by the School Budget and Warrant.

**3.) Public Review of 2022 Town Warrant:**

Mr. Williams notified the public of the following sessions:

First session – Deliberative Session, Saturday, February 5, 2022 @ Nute HS Gymnasium: Town session to begin at 10:30AM (School session begins 9:00AM).

Second session – Vote, Tuesday, March 8, 2022 @ Nute HS Gymnasium, polls are open from 8AM-7PM.

First session: Explanation, discussion and debate of the warrant articles below (it should be noted voters who are present are allowed to debate and propose amendments to warrant articles, except for warrant articles required by state law).

Second session: Purpose to elect town officers by official ballot and to vote on all Warrant Articles as they have been amended at the First session.

Article 1: Election of Officers

Article 2: Zoning

Article 3: Zoning

**OPERATING BUDGET:** Vote to approve an operating budget of \$4,723,991. If not approved through vote, default budget will be \$4,774.952. (Mr. Williams stated that with projected Revenues, the Estimated Tax impact could fall between \$5.50 to \$5.60/\$1,000)  
*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**HIGHWAY AND ROAD CONSTRUCTION FUND:** Vote to raise and appropriate \$350,000 for Highway and Road Reconstruction. It is anticipated the town will receive funds from the Highway Block Grant in the amount of \$130,000. (Tax impact: \$.44/\$1,000)  
*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**DAWSON STREET & SILVER STREET DRAINAGE PROJECT – COMPLETE PHASE 2:** Vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$781,000 to complete the Dawson Street & Silver Street area drainage project as Phase 2 of the total project. (Tax impact: \$1.562/\$1,000)  
*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0); Not recommended by Budget Committee (3, 5, 0)*

Ms. Golab requested clarification between Article 6 and Article 7 as the two articles could be confusing to voters. Mr. Williams explained both committees understand this is a very expensive Warrant Article. The hope is if Article 6 does not pass, Article 7 will be approved. Passing either Article 6 or Article 7 will allow the town to apply for state and federal grant monies. Mr. Jacobs has had recent conversation with Underwood Engineers, requesting specific information in writing regarding potential available grant monies. Mr. Williams requested language be added to this Warrant Article explaining to the voter if this Article does not pass, in order to move the project forward, Article 7 has been included.

**ESTABLISH DAWSON STREET & SILVER STREET DRAINAGE PROJECT – Phase 2 & 3 CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** Vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$60,000 to be placed in Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)  
*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (6, 2, 0)*

By having the Capital Reserve Fund for both Phase 2 & Phase 3, monies can then be utilized for both phases. Ms. Golab said there are voters that have been supportive of Phases 1 and 2, but not Phase 3. By having both Phases included in this Warrant Article, those voters may not support the Warrant Article. Ms. Hurd questioned why some voters may not like Phase 3? Mr. Williams explained while residents want to see the drainage issues taken care of (Phase 2), Phase 3 is specifically for modifying how Silver and Dawson streets come together and join up with Route 125, and to add parking for downtown. Mr. Brown recommended that taking out the wording “Phase 2 & 3” would not change the intent of the warrant article.

**ESTABLISH PUBLIC SAFETY RADIO COMMUNICATIONS CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To establish a Capital Reserve Fund and to raise and appropriate \$30,000 to be placed into this fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)  
*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**AMBULANCE VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT AND/OR FIRE DEPARTMENT CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:**

To vote to raise and appropriate \$30,000 to be placed in the Ambulance Revolving Fund Capital Reserve Fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

Mr. Jacobs explained this Capital Reserve Fund was actually changed to the Milton Ambulance Revolving Fund. Mr. Williams said the Article will also be updated to state Milton Ambulance Revolving Fund Capital Reserve Fund.

**REPLACEMENT OF TOWN STREET AND PARKING LOT LIGHTING:** To vote to enter into agreement with Affinity LED Light, LLC of Dover and Portsmouth, NH, to replace all town-owned street and parking lot lights with LED fixtures. To raise and appropriate \$38,859. It is anticipated that the Town will receive funds in the amount of 10,550 from Eversource Energy Efficiency Incentive once the new LED fixtures are installed. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

Ms. Golab asked if anticipated cost savings could be added to the Warrant Article to help voters understand the benefit? Mr. Jacobs said according to law, language which could be construed as “electioneering” which is not allowed on a Warrant Article. It will be added to the voters’ guide which is a separate document.

**HIGHWAY TRUCK CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To vote to raise and appropriate \$75,000 to be placed in Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**BRIDGE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**MILTON RECREATION CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To raise and appropriate \$5,000 to be placed in the Milton Recreation Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of replacing the boat ramp at the town beach. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**MILTON FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To raise and appropriate \$20,000 to be placed in Milton Free Library Public Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**ERADICATE INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES:** To raise and appropriate \$10,000 to eradicate invasive plant species from bodies of water in the town. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**HISTORICAL BUILDING – MILTON MILLS:** To authorize acquisition of the land and building currently owned and occupied by the Milton Historical Society for purchase price of \$1.00. To further allow the BOS to lease the building back to the Milton Historical Society for 20 years. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**ESTABLISH POLICE TASERS CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To establish a Capital Reserve Fund to purchase tasers for the police to replace current models being used. To raise and appropriate \$3,300 to be placed in this fund. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000; comes from unassigned fund balance)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**CONSERVATION COMMISSION LEGAL DEFENSE CAPITAL RESERVE FUND:** To establish a Town of Milton Conservation Legal Defense Capital Reserve Fund. Purpose to accrue sufficient funds to defend town-held conservation easements and fee-owned conservation lands against violations. To annually raise and appropriate \$1,000 to be placed in the fund. This will replace the Conservation Commission Legal Defense budget line. (Tax impact: \$0.00/\$1,000)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**APPOINTMENT OF BOS AS CEMETARY TRUSTEES:** To vote to delegate duties and responsibilities of Cemetery Trustees to BOS.

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0)*

**TAX EXEMPTION FOR SOLAR, WIND AND WOOD ENERGY SYSTEMS (SUBMITTED BY PETITION):**

To see if town will vote to adopt provisions which will provide for optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value for properties equipped with solar, wind or wood energy systems intended for use at the immediate site. (Estimated Tax impact: \$.08/\$1,000)

*Recommended by BOS (3, 0, 0) and Budget Committee (8, 0, 0)*

**VOTING AND COUNTING METHODS SUBMITTED BY PETITION:** All voting shall be by paper ballot and all ballots shall be hand counted only, rather than by use of optical scanning or any other types of programmable electronic counting devices.

#### **4.) Public Review of FY23 School Warrants:**

Article 1: Election of Officers

**Article 2: "Shall the Milton School District vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts 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 \$11,292,375? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be \$11,382,673, which is the same as last year., with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Milton School District 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? Warrant article 2 (operating budget) does not include**

appropriations in any other warrant article. The total operating budget will be offset by federal, local and state revenues by \$4,716,228 leaving a net budget amount of \$6,630,486 (RSA 32:5 III). The amount of \$4,716,228 will not be raised by taxation. (Tax impact: \$13.26/\$1,000)  
The School Board has not voted on the amount (0 - 0).  
The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6, 2, 0).

**Article 3: “Shall the Milton School District vote to approve the cost items included in the Collective Bargaining Agreement reached between the Milton School Board and the Milton Education Association, which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels over the amount paid in the prior fiscal year:**

Estimated Increase

Year 2022-23 \$138,797.20 (estimated tax impact \$0.28/\$1,000)

Year 2023-24 \$144,265.72 (estimated tax impact \$0.29/\$1,000)

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of \$138,798 for the 2022-2023 school year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits over those of the appropriation at current staffing levels paid in the prior fiscal school year?”

The School Board recommends this appropriation (4, 0, 0).

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (6, 2, 0).

**Article 4: If Article 3 is defeated, authorize the School Board to call one special meeting to address Article 3 costs only.**

The School Board recommends this article (5, 0, 0)

**Article 5: “Shall the Milton School District vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000.00 to purchase library media for the Nute High School and Library?”** This is a special warrant article appropriation.

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0). (estimated tax impact \$0.01/\$1,000)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (7, 0, 0)

**Article 6: “To avoid the need to raise additional taxes, shall the Milton School District use unreserved fund balance (surplus) available on July 1, 2022 and raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$50,000 from this source to be placed in the Milton School District Building Maintenance Repair, Renovation and Capital Project Reserve Fund established in 2005 for the purpose of repairing and maintaining school buildings?”** NOTE: Warrant article 6 WILL NOT result in additional taxation.

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (7, 0, 0)

**Article 7: “To avoid the need to raise additional taxes, shall the Milton School District use unreserved fund balance (surplus) available on July 1, 2022 and raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$20,000 from this source to be placed in the expendable trust fund for the School Bus Trust Fund established in 1993?”** NOTE: Warrant article 7 WILL NOT result in additional taxation

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (7, 0, 0)

**Article 8: “Shall the Milton School District vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in the expendable trust fund for the education of educationally disabled children** established in 2011, with such amount to be funded from the June 30, 2022 unreserved fund balance (surplus) available on July 1, 2022, and no amount to be raised from additional taxation?”

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (7, 0, 0)

Mr. Williams welcomed the arrival of Budget Committee member, Mike Beaulieu.

**Article 9: “To avoid the need to raise additional taxes, shall the Milton School District use unreserved fund balance (surplus) available on July 1, 2022 and raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$21,000 from this source to be placed in the expendable trust fund for the Maintenance Vehicles Trust Fund** established in 2021?” NOTE: Warrant article 9 WILL NOT result in additional taxation

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (7, 0, 0)

**Article 10: “To avoid the need to raise additional taxes, shall the Milton School District use unreserved fund balance (surplus) available on July 1, 2022, and raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$10,000 from this source to be placed in the Milton School District Technology Expendable Trust Fund** established in 2007?” NOTE: Warrant article 10 WILL NOT result in additional taxation

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

The Budget Committee recommends this appropriation (4, 3, 0)

**Article 11: Employee Retention Plan to see if the Town will vote to adopt the Employee Retention Plan, which establishes a Step Plan for classes of employees of the Milton School District.** If approved, any scheduled increases, as laid out in the Plan and approved by the School Board, will be incorporated into the operating and default budgets in subsequent years starting with 2023. No funds shall be raised in 2022.

The School Board recommends this appropriation (5, 0, 0)

Mr. Jacobs, as town resident, questioned if the step plan would cover teachers? Mr. Williams explained the teachers are covered through their Collective Bargaining Agreement; this would cover those employees not covered through a CBA. Ms. Gautreau recommended adding specific language outlining which employees this Warrant Article refers to.

Ms. Golab said many of the articles assume there is going to be a surplus at FY21 year end. Mr. Williams clarified even if the Warrant Articles pass, if there is no surplus, those articles will not be funded.

Ms. Gautreau questioned to Mr. Jacobs, is there a way of changing the tax impact wording – in addition to the \$1,000 figure, could also add in what that equates at the \$100,000 valuation? Mr.

Jacobs said that information could be added to the voters' guide. Ms. Gautreau said instead of relying on voters try to figure out the calculations, have that information provided for them. This would provide more meaningful information to the voters. Mr. Jacobs will discuss this with the town attorney.

Ms. Turgeon questioned if the School Board includes petitions in the Warrant Articles? According to Ms. Hurd, yes those will be included.

**5.) Other business that may come before the board:**

There was no other business.

**6.) Public Comments or Questions:**

There were none.

**7.) Next Scheduled Meeting: January 25, 2022, 6:00PM**

Goals of this meeting:

- a.) Approve minutes from previous meetings;
- b.) Receive MS737 form from town and MS27 from school; forms to be signed at meeting (required by January 28);
- c.) Establish 2022 Budget Committee schedule

**8.) Adjournment:**

Mr. Williams stated he would entertain a motion to conclude the meeting.

Mr. Brown made the motion to adjourn at 6:05PM; Seconded by Ms. Hurd. All were in favor. Meeting adjourned.

**Respectfully Submitted,**

**Amy Winslow-Weiss, Recording Secretary – Budget Committee**

**Minutes Approved on January 25, 2022**