

**Town of Milton**  
**BOARD OF SELECTMAN MEETING**  
**January 10, 2022**

**ATTENDANCE:**

**Members:** Claudine Burnham (Chair), Andrew Rawson, Matthew Morrill

**Staff:** Chris Jacobs, Town Administrator

**Public:** Chief Krauss, Chief Marique, Karen Brown, Pat Smith, Humphrey Williams

Claudine Burnham, Chair, opened the public session at 4:30PM.

**1.) Pledge of Allegiance:** Claudine Burnham, Chair, led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2.) Public Comment:** Mr. Humphrey Williams, Chair of the Budget Committee, thanked Ms. Burnham for holding this special meeting. He indicated the town is in good shape regarding the tax rate. The Budget Committee proposal will go on the warrant article.

**3.) NEW Business – Discussion and Possible Actions:**

- a.) **Vote to place the FY2022 budget as created by the Budget Committee on the warrant:**  
**Article 4: Operating Budget** – Ms. Burnham said this has been thoroughly reviewed by the Budget Committee and she agrees with the recommendation.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept Article 4 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Williams questioned when they would receive any final revenue data. Mr. Jacobs said they are working to get the information as quickly as possible.

- b.) **Vote to approve and move the proposed articles on the warrant:**

**Article 5: Highway and Road Reconstruction Fund** – Mr. Jacobs said he did a quick calculation, and the tax impact is projected to be \$.43/\$1,000. At last year's deliberative session \$300,000 was appropriate; this year is slightly higher. He also explained every increase of \$50,000 is equal to ~.5 cents. Mr. Rawson is OK with this and just wished it could be more; \$350,000 won't get much done, however it's all the town can afford.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to accept Article 5 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 6: Establish Dawson Street & Silver Street Area Drainage Project – Phase 2 & 3 Capital Reserve Fund** – Mr. Jacobs explained the road agent has requested the whole project be moved forward. He also did a quick calculation of the tax impact which is \$1.55/\$1,000. Mr. Williams said he felt this should be a bond rather than a warrant article; however, it is too late for this year to do a bond. Mr. Smith indicated possible large amounts of federal monies that could potentially include drainage projects. Mr. Jacobs to use federal funds would require huge amounts of paperwork and would still need to get

approval for the project. Mr. Williams understood last year's project was based on urgency and did think phases 2 & 3 were not as urgent and could potentially be put off. Mr. Smith felt since the public voted on Phase 1, Phase 2 should be left up to them as well. He also said with any delays in the project, costs are going to continue to increase. Mr. Rawson felt Phase 3 could possibly wait. According to Mr. Smith, Phase 2 includes sidewalk and pedestrian safety. Mr. Williams is concerned by adding this article along with several other big-ticket items, voters could and would probably vote no as it has happened before. Mr. Rawson understands how the voting occurs in Milton but believes using a bond would actually cost more with all the related interest and is the right way to go. Mr. Williams said with the average property valued at \$300,000 that would equal a \$600 increase per year. Mr. Rawson questioned if there was any way to make Phase 2 smaller or to spread this out into 4 phases instead of 3? According to Mr. Smith, the sidewalks is the big money item. He explained the sidewalks will get ripped up when the drainage is ripped up that's why Phase 2 included both the drainage and sidewalk. Ms. Burnham agreed this amount might be difficult to digest but something does need to happen and agreed should go to the voters for their decision. Mr. Smith said if it would not pass perhaps next year they could try to a bond. Ms. Burnham questioned to reduce the amount could they still start with just part of the phase. Mr. Smith said he would call and ask. Mr. Rawson agreed with making these 4 phases which might be more tolerable for the tax-payers to help keep the project going. Ms. Burnham questioned if the amount could be amended at the upcoming Deliberative Session. According to Mr. Jacobs, the amount can only be increased by 10%. To buy some time, Mr. Smith will discuss this with the engineer and get additional options which might help with voter approval.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move Article 6, Dawson & Silver Street, at \$781,000 with the understanding Mr. Smith will contact Underwood Engineers and discuss potential options with a Phase 4 to reduce the price. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion.

Discussion: Mr. Williams said this would be confusing to voters. Mr. Rawson concurred and recommended moving it forward leaving it as written – establish Dawson & Silver Street Capital Reserve Fund Phase 2 & 3.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move Article 6 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

#### **Article 7: Establish Public Safety Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund -**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move Article 7 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion as approved.

**Article 8: Ambulance Vehicles and Equipment and/or Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund** – Chief Marique questioned why the CIP recommendation of \$50,000 was decreased to \$30,000. Mr. Rawson said while they did want to reduce by \$10-\$20,000 they were willing to meet in the middle which should make it more tolerable to the voters. Ms. Burnham – the CIP it listed it for two years which would amount to \$100,000. According to Chief Marique, the ambulance needs to be purchased next year. However, this will not happen if not adding to the revolving fund. He also discussed his staffing issues. Ms.

Burnham questioned if he needed more than the \$100,000. Chief Marique – this should be added to every year or add the proper amount to hire full staff to run the ambulance. There are two different options to stop the bleeding. \$30,000 is not sufficient to move this forward. Mr. Rawson agreed the staffing is an issue that must be addressed. Mr. Jacobs questioned if they were billing at a high enough rate to recover expenses. Chief Marique had previously researched what other communities are doing and Milton is currently on the higher side. A big issue is that 50% of the calls are to individuals using Medicare which is a contracted rate. You can raise the rate all you want; Medicare will not increase their amounts. Mr. Williams suggested going with the \$30,000 for this year. Mr. Rawson agreed but said the personnel issues must be resolved in 2022.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 8 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 9: Replacement of Town Street and Parking Lot Lighting** – Mr. Rawson said by going with the proposal from Affinity the lights will pay for themselves in 3.5 years.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move Article 9 forward as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 10: Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund** – Mr. Jacobs asked for clarity since the article did not say how this would be paid for. According to Mr. Smith, the dealers have told him they would not get the trucks till the end of 2023. The voters would not approve this. He recommended adding money into the Capital Reserve Fund. Mr. Rawson agreed with taking this from the fund balance.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move Article 10 forward with the money coming from the fund balance. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 11: Bridge Capital Reserve Fund**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 11 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 12: Milton Recreation Capital Reserve Fund** – Mr. Rawson indicated this had previously been the ramp fund and they are moving forward with the engineering design of the boat ramp.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 12 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 13: Milton Free Public Library Capital Reserve Fund**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 13 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 14: Eradicate Invasive Plant Species** – this is an increase from last year’s \$5,000.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 14 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 15: Historical Building – Milton Mills**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 15 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 16: Establish Police Tasers Capital Reserve Fund**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 16 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 17: Conservation Commission Legal Defense Capital Reserve Fund**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 17 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 18: Appoint Selectmen as the Cemetery Trustees**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 18 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

**Article 19: Tax Exemption for Solar, Wind and Wood Energy Systems (Submitted by Petition)** – Mr. Jacobs explained the amount assessed proposed would be \$35,000-\$40,000. However, if solar, wind and wood energy is not the primary heating source, it would not qualify for exemption. Residents would have to apply for any exemption.

Mr. Rawson made a motion to move forward Article 19 as written. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion was approved.

Mr. Jacobs said there may be another petition to have all ballots counted by hand. Mr. Rawson questioned if other municipalities are doing this. Ms. Burnham said she knows of other places who are also looking at this. Mr. Jacobs said, in his moderator position, this means he would not begin to count any of the ballots until the polls close. He would not run for the position again if this was included on the ballot. He also indicated if this would pass, there is not enough money to fund all the elections as the town would need to increase the number of people counting the ballots. Mr. Rawson said additional education needs to happen first and doesn’t recommend it for this year. According to Mr. Morrill this will go onto the ballot even if the BOS doesn’t recommend it. Mr. Williams suggested during the Deliberative Session to inform the residents why the BOS is not recommending this due to the increase finances associated with it.

**4.) OLD Business:**

There was no old business for discussion.

**5.) Other Business That May Come Before the Board:** There was none.

**6.) Public Comments Relative to Current Meeting Topics:**

There were no public comments.

**7.) Selectmen Comments:**

There were none.

**8.) Adjournment:**

Mr. Rawson made a motion to adjourn the public meeting. Mr. Morrill seconded the motion. All were in favor; the motion passed. The public meeting adjourned at 6:15PM.

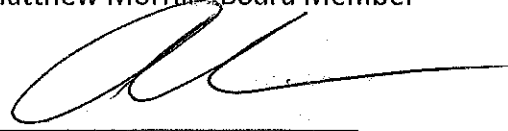
Given under our hands this 24th day of January, 2022.



Claudine Burnham – Chairman BOS



Matthew Morrill – Board Member



Andy Rawson – Board Member

**END OF MINUTES dated Jan 10, 2022**

