

**Town of Benton
Select Board Meeting
Wednesday, January 24, 2024**

Select Board Members: William R. Darcy, Chair; Gina Elliott (via phone) and Kim Carpenter
Also Present: Dwight Swauger, Treasurer; Michael Stiebitz, Town Clerk and Tax Collector; and Joe Boutin, road contractor.

These draft minutes of the Town of Benton Select Board are believed accurate and correct, but they are subject to additions, deletions, and corrections by the Select Board at the next meeting when the Board votes its final approval of the minutes. These minutes are made available at this time to conform to the requirements of New Hampshire RSA 91-A:2.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Darcy at 6:30 PM.

Member Elliott moved approval of the January 9, 2023 minutes, seconded by Member Carpenter, and approved.

The Board discussed the budget for 2024. Expenditure increases were noted for ambulance services, property assessment by Avitar and elections because there will be three elections this year instead of the one last year. The revenues will be increased to be consistent with the DRA approved estimates provided late last year to establish the tax rate.

The warrant articles include paving projects, Town Hall improvements and an addition to the bridge maintenance and repair reserve fund due to receipt of more funds for that dedicated purpose from the State.

Paving projects were discussed with Joe Boutin and the Board agreed another section of Tunnel Stream Road will be paved along with patch work on a small section of Howe Hill Road where a culvert will be replaced. Joe will provide an estimate for the Board to consider including as a warrant article. The joint budget hearing with the Board of Education is scheduled for January 31, 2024 at 6:00 PM.

Chairman Darcy noted the fiber internet in Town was to be "lit" on January 29, and that Scott Matz already had an installation date in March.

The Board approved an increase in compensation for poll workers to \$10 per hour.

Chairman Darcy noted that he implemented a transfer of \$180,000 from the Woodsville bank account to NH PDIP. Treasurer Swauger reported that there was \$247,642.48 in the operating fund at Woodsville Savings Bank Guaranty Trust and \$450,932.18 in the NH PDIP account.

School Board member Swauger discussed the superintendent search and other issues.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:14 PM.

