



Benton's Long Pond in early fall splendor

*Benton, NH*

*Annual Report 2021*



**Richard Dickenson**  
**October 10, 1936 – December 27, 2021**

While Benton lost a great many residents this year, as the Vital Statistics section will bear out, I'd like to highlight one of them in particular. Richard Dickenson passed away in December. Dick served Benton first as an Auditor then as Treasurer for 12 years. He took the handwritten ledgers and created computer spreadsheets on his PC which simplified the task of keeping the books. His documents helped his successor to create the Excel version that is still in use today.

He volunteered along with his wife Nellie and my predecessor Lyn Bandy to update the front entrance to the Town Building with a new door and sidelights as well as install a new counter and sink in the kitchen. He created several display cases for Benton artifacts so that they could be safely displayed. He also built a case to organize and store myriad plans and maps that have accumulated over the years in the back room. In addition, he built the shelving units for the Selectmen's office. Richard was a generous man and always had time to sit and talk when I'd take my deposit documents over to his house.

*Michael P. Stiebitz* - Benton Town Clerk/Benton Tax Collector

**Town of Benton, New Hampshire**  
**Annual Report of Town Officers and Benton School District**  
Year Ending December 31, 2021

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Town of Benton, NH Website: <https://www.tobentonnh.org>

## Benton Town Officers

		<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>
Board of Selectmen	William Darcy	3 yrs.	2023
	Regina Elliott	3 yrs.	2022
	Kimberli Carpenter	3 yrs.	2024
Moderator	Gilbert Richardson	2 yrs.	2022
Treasurer	Dwight Swauger	1 yr.	2022
Tax Collector	Michael Stiebitz	1 yr.	2022
Town Clerk	Michael Stiebitz	1 yr.	2022
Supervisor of the Checklist	Richard Paquin	3 yrs.	2022
	Stephanie Saffo	3 yrs.	2024
	Erich Saffo	3 yrs.	2023
Ballot Clerk	Frances Hadden	1 yr.	2022
Ballot Inspector	Betty Nickles	1 yr.	2022
Surveyor of Wood and Lumber	Joseph Boutin, Jr	1 yr.	2022
Trustees of the Trust Funds	Laura Richardson	3 yrs.	2023
	Mark Elliott	3 yrs.	2024
	Martin Noble	3 yrs.	2022
Planning Board	Kenneth Kealey	3 yrs.	2022
	Martin Noble	3 yrs.	2024
	Sam Gregory	3 yrs.	2023
	William Darcy	3 yrs.	2023

## 2021 Select Board's Report

2021 was again a challenging COVID year to get things accomplished. Nevertheless, your Select Board met throughout the year in person, without any digital enhancements.

**Cemetery** The new area of Mountain View Cemetery that is higher up the hill was surveyed this year for future gravesites. Some more work needs to be done before the sites are available for sale, including some more site work and the development of new cemetery rules and rates. A new sign has been ordered for the cemetery, an illustration of what the sign will look like is shown here.



**Tax Map** The updated tax map project funded by a warrant article last year is well advanced and should be complete this year.

**The Broadband Project** The desperate need of Benton residents for reliable and fast internet service may soon be addressed. The New Hampshire Electric Cooperative (NHEC) has been more aggressive in pursuit of broadband for its members in the last year, which is good because all Benton residents receiving electric utility service are served by NHEC. Fiber internet projects were announced for Acworth and Sandwich and progress was made on plans to buildout their fiber internet to many more towns this year. A particular focus of NHEC is Grafton County because it has many NHEC members and many members with unreliable and slow Consolidated Communications DSL internet services, like in Benton. A public announcement of its 2022-23 broadband plans is expected soon.

**Budget and Taxes** The proposed general fund budget of \$123,275 is again a reduction from the prior year's budget. With the estimated revenues, the net result is that the Town budget contributes more than a dollar per thousand of property value *to tax reduction*, one of the few municipal budgets in New Hampshire that reduces overall property taxes. We should again be able to keep your taxes stable this year, which is always an important goal of your Select Board.

Respectfully submitted,

William Darcy, Chairman  
Regina Elliott  
Kimberli Carpenter

**2022 TOWN WARRANT**  
**Town of Benton, March 8, 2022**

To the inhabitants of the Town of Benton qualified to vote in Town affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Benton Community Building (Town Hall) in said Benton on the Second Tuesday of March next, the 8<sup>th</sup>, at seven o'clock in the evening.

When the town meeting opens, qualified voters will be asked to vote and act upon the following subjects:

**ARTICLE 1.** To choose persons for the following positions and terms of service: (Majority vote required)

<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>
Selectman	3 years	2025	Regina Elliott
Moderator	2years	2025	Gilbert Richardson
Treasurer	1 year	2023	Dwight Swauger
Town Clerk	1 year	2023	Michael Stiebitz
Tax Collector	1 year	2023	Michael Stiebitz
Supervisor of the Checklist	3 years	2025	Richard Paquin
Ballot Clerk	1 year	2023	Frances Hadden
Surveyor of Wood & Lumber	1 year	2023	Joseph Boutin, Jr.
Planning Board Member	3 years	2025	Kenneth Kealey
Trustee of the Trust Funds	3 years	2025	Martin Noble

**ARTICLE 2.** To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of the officers and agents as printed. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

**ARTICLE 3.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$123,275 for General Municipal Operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

**ARTICLE 4.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, previously established, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

**ARTICLE 5.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$35,000 to repave 500 feet of Tunnel Stream Road with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

**ARTICLE 6.** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 for Town Hall improvements including a fence on the side yard, a roof over the side door and lighted sign and notice board, with the funds to come from unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

## 2022 PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS

Account	Charge Point	Budget	Spent	Balance	Proposed 2022
4130	Executive	8,000	7,143.50	856.50	8,000.00
4140	Election & Town Clerk	4,750	3,608.10	1,141.90	5,500.00
4150	Financial Administration	10,000	7,919.33	2,080.67	9,000.00
4152	Property Revaluation	6,500	6,061.25	438.75	5,000.00
4153	Legal Expenses	125	0.00	125.00	125.00
4155	Personnel Admin	2,000	1,881.90	118.10	2,000.00
4193	Planning & Zoning	250	0.00	250.00	250.00
4194	Gov't Buildings	5,000	4,430.40	569.60	5,000.00
4195	Cemeteries	4,000	1,250.00	2,750.00	4,000.00
4196	Insurance	1,400	1,010.43	389.57	1,400.00
4197	Ads & Regional Assoc.	2,000	1,395.15	604.85	2,000.00
4199	Property Assessing Software	2,600	2,594.15	5.85	3,000.00
4210	Police	1,625	1,625.00	0.00	1,750.00
4215	Ambulance	7,600	7,519.00	81.00	8,000.00
4220	Fire	10,000	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00
4240	Building Inspection	200	0.00	200.00	200.00
4299	Other Public Safety	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
4312	Highways & Streets	60,000	26,356.43	33,643.57	55,000.00
4313	Bridges	250	0.00	250.00	250.00
4316	Street Lighting	300	284.58	15.42	300.00
4319	Other Streets	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
4414	Pest Control	250	168.06	81.94	250.00
4442	Direct Assistance Welfare	250	0.00	250.00	250.00
4444	Intergovernmental Welfare	2,000	1,500.00	500.00	2,000.00
4445	Vendor Payments	0	0.00	0.00	0.00
	TOTALS	129,100	84,747.28	44,352.72	123,275.00

**2022 Estimated Revenues**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Estimated 2021</b>	<b>Received 2021</b>	<b>Estimated 2022</b>
Property Taxes (3110)	440,000.00	442,963.97	440,000.00
Timber Taxes (3185)	3,000.00	5,401.69	3,000.00
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (3186)	65,500.00	68,005.00	65,500.00
Excavation Tax (3187)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Taxes and Fees (3189)	50.00	765.00	50.00
Int./ Penalties/ Taxes (3190)	4,000.00	2,682.75	4,000.00
Tax Lien Dep from Collector (3191)	0.00	15,195.11	0.00
Motor Vehicle Permit Fees (3220)	58,000.00	87,327.00	58,000.00
Building Permits (3230)	400.00	110.00	400.00
Pistol Permits (3290)	0.00	30.00	0.00
Dog Licenses (3291)	350.00	324.00	350.00
Rental of Town Hall (3292)	100.00	50.00	100.00
Shared Revenues (3311)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Meals and Rooms Tax Dist. (3352)	19,000.00	27,552.58	23,000.00
Highway Block Grant (3353)	15,300.00	15,273.44	15,300.00
Other State Grants (3359)	0.00	19,419.92	0.00
Sale of Municipal Property (3501)	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest on Investment (3502)	120.00	129.92	120.00
Ins. Dividends & Reimb. (3506)	1,500.00	160.05	0.00
Contributions & Donations (3508)	0.00	100.00	0.00
<b>Totals</b>	<b>607,320.00</b>	<b>685,490.43</b>	<b>609,820.00</b>

<b>Treasurer's Report 2021: Received from Town Clerk</b>	
Motor Vehicle Permits/Transfers/Titles/Fees	\$87,337.00
Vital Statistics -State of NH	\$140.00
Marriage Licenses Issued	\$100.00
Dog Licenses Issued	\$324.00
State of NH-Checklist Reimbursement	\$425.00
State of NH-UCC Share	\$75.00
Reimbursed check (plus fee and penalty)	\$85.00
<b>Total Received from Town Clerk</b>	<b>\$88,486.00</b>
<b>Received from Tax Collector:</b>	
Property Taxes+ (Liens, Interest & Penalties)	\$460,841.83
Timber Taxes-Timber Bonds	\$5,401.69
Timber Bond Refund	\$0.00
Returned check (plus \$10 fee)	\$0.00
Reimbursed check (plus fee and penalty)	\$0.00
Excavation Tax	\$0.00
<b>Total Received from Tax Collector</b>	<b>\$466,243.52</b>
<b>Received from Selectmen:</b>	
Building Permits	\$110.00
Pistol Permits	\$30.00
Town Hall Rental	\$50.00
<b>Total Received from Selectmen</b>	<b>\$190.00</b>
<b>Received from State and Federal Sources:</b>	
State of NH - Highway Block Grant	\$15,273.44
State of NH Rooms and Meals Tax	\$27,552.58
U.S. Dept. of Interior (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)	\$68,005.00
State of NH-America Recovery Plan	\$19,419.92
<b>Total from State and Federal Sources</b>	<b>\$130,250.94</b>
<b>Miscellaneous:</b>	
Interest on Investments	\$137.89
Contributions & Donations	\$100.00
Vendor Refund-Avitar	\$160.05
Returned check (plus \$10 fee)	-\$70.00
Transfer from General Fund	\$0.00
<b>Total Miscellaneous</b>	<b>\$327.94</b>
<b>Grand Total for 2021</b>	<b>\$685,498.40</b>

**Payments by the Select Board-2021**

Executive Expenses and Salaries	\$7,143.50
Election Expenses, Census, Vital Statistics	\$3,608.10
Financial Administration	\$7,919.33
Revaluation of Property	\$6,061.25
Personnel Administration	\$1,881.90
Planning & Zoning	\$0.00
Government Buildings	\$4,430.40
Cemeteries	\$1,250.00
Insurance	\$1,010.43
Ads & Regional Associations	\$1,395.15
Assessing Updates & Support	\$2,594.15
Police	\$1,625.00
Ambulance	\$7,519.00
Fire	\$10,000.00
Highways & Streets	\$23,872.09
Highways & Streets Materials	\$2,484.34
Street Lighting	\$284.58
Inter-Government Welfare	\$1,500.00
Pest Control	\$168.06
Purchase of Tax Liens	\$7,731.38
Grafton County Taxes	\$43,314.00
Local School Taxes	\$521,663.00
Article 4 (Revaluation Trust Fund)	\$3,000.00
Article 5 (Howe Hill Paving)	\$32,089.07
Article 6 (Cemetery Survey)	\$2,000.00
Article 7 (Tax Maps Upgrade)	\$1,000.00
ARPA-2021 (America Recovery Plan Grant-Computer for Town Hall)	\$1,314.95
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$696,859.68</b>

**Account Balances-2021      Operating Account**

Balance forward from 2020	\$424,947.20
Deposits	\$685,360.51
Checks Written	\$696,859.68
Interest	\$137.89
<b>Balance forward to 2022</b>	<b>\$1,807,305.28</b>

**ICS-General Fund**

Balance forward from 2020	\$233,457.06
Transfer to Operating Account	\$0.00
Interest	\$233.46
<b>Balance forward to 2022</b>	<b>\$233,690.52</b>

Respectfully submitted,  
Dwight A. Swauger, Treasurer

### Tax Collector' Overview

2022	Credit	Debit
Unassigned Credits at beginning of 2022	\$35,991.97	
Interest/penalties on 2021 Tax Payment	\$0.00	\$0.00
Overpayments/Refunds	\$0.00	\$0.00
2021	Credit	Debit
Taxes Committed This Year:		\$450,354.46
Yield Taxes & Gravel Tax Committed This Year	\$4,481.68	\$4,481.68
Total Unassigned Credits at Beginning of 2021	(\$35,287.09)	
Credits Received in 2021	(\$8,417.53)	
Taxes Collected & Sent to Treasurer:		
Property Taxes Collected in 2021	\$403,742.99	
Prior Year Credits Assigned	\$354.69	\$0.00
FY2021 Credits Assigned	\$2,876.28	
Yield Taxes & Gravel Tax Collected in 2021	\$0.00	(\$4,481.68)
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>\$404,097.68</b>	
Property & Yield Taxes Uncollected at year's end	\$46,256.78	
Refunds issued	\$0.00	
<b>2021 Tax Year Totals</b>	<b>\$450,354.46</b>	<b>\$450,354.46</b>
2020	Credit	Debit
Taxes Uncollected at Beginning of 2021		\$45,027.32
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$1,689.12
Property & Yield Taxes Collected In 2021	\$37,959.35	
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees/Penalties	\$1,689.12	
Conversion to Lien (principle only)	\$7,067.97	
Refund Abatements	\$0.00	
Abatements Granted	\$0.00	
<b>2020 Tax Year Totals</b>	<b>\$46,716.44</b>	<b>\$46,716.44</b>
2020 Liens	Credit	Debit
Liens Executed During 2021		\$7,731.38
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$13.27
Redemptions	\$1,202.94	
Interest & Fees	\$13.27	
Liens Deeded to Town	\$0.00	
Unredeemed Lien Balance at End of 2021	\$6,528.44	
2020 Liens Totals	\$7,744.65	\$7,744.65
2019 Liens	Credit	Debit
Unredeemed Liens Bal. at Beginning of 2021		\$10,461.53
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$510.07
Redemptions	\$5,042.97	
Interest & Fees	\$510.07	
Liens Deeded to Town		
Unredeemed Lien Balance at End of 2021	\$5,418.56	
2019 Liens Totals	\$10,971.60	\$10,971.60
2018 Liens	Credit	Debit
Unredeemed Liens Balance at Beginning of 2021		\$3,003.30
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$470.25
Redemptions	\$3,003.30	
Interest & Fees	\$470.25	
Liens Deeded to Town		
Unredeemed Lien Balance at End of 2021	\$0.00	
2018 Lien Totals	\$3,473.55	\$3,473.55
Net funds delivered to Treasurer in 2021	\$460,702.23	
Plus 2021 Unassigned Cred. & Cred. Assigned to Int.	\$5,541.25	
<b>Gross Funds Delivered to Treasurer in 2021</b>	<b>\$466,243.48</b>	

## Notes From the Town Clerk's Office

2021 carried on where 2020 left off. COVID-19 cases ebbed and flowed during the year, culminating with the Omicron Variant which helped introduce even the vaccinated population to COVID-19.

Our Town Meeting originally scheduled for March was postponed until June so that we would be able to make sure we could open the windows in the Town Building to ensure good airflow.

My office remains closed for all but necessary in-person transactions such as marriage license applications. Between email, texting, and phone calls, folks have been able to get their vehicles and dogs registered, vital records searched and taxes paid. I installed a secure locked box for payment and document drop off at the Town Building, and use the existing Town Clerk and Tax Collector mailboxes for paperwork returns. The hardest part of this process has been the lack of face-to-face interactions I have become accustomed to after 18 years. Here's hoping things get back to some semblance of normal sometime in the near future.

Last but not least, I'd like to thank the Beautify Benton Committee for the care and attention they pay to the Town Building, and to the wonderful Memory Tree that they put up every year.

Respectfully submitted,

*Michael P. Stiebitz* - Benton Town Clerk

**Report of Clerk to Treasurer - Benton, New Hampshire-Year End Totals for 2021**

Motor Vehicle Permits Issued (526):	\$87,337.00
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (55/0):	\$324.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (2):	\$100.00
Vital Record Searches (10):	\$140.00
Returned Check (incl \$10 fee+\$15 penalty)	\$85.00
UCC Payment from State of NH	\$75.00
Checklist Copy Payment from State of NH	\$425.00
<b>Total Collected by Town Clerk for 2021</b>	<b>\$88,486.00</b>

Motor Vehicle Permits Issued (526):	\$87,337.00
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (55/0):	\$324.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (2):	\$100.00
Vital Record Searches (10):	\$140.00
Returned Check (incl \$10 fee+\$15 penalty)	\$85.00
UCC Payment from State of NH	\$75.00
Checklist Copy Payment from State of NH	\$425.00
<b>Total Submitted to Treasurer by Town Clerk for 2021</b>	<b>\$88,486.00</b>

Motor Vehicles:	\$1,287.50
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (55/0):	\$28.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (2):	\$14.00
Vital Record Searches (10):	\$60.00
<b>Total Billed to Town by Town Clerk for 2021 (12/20-11/21)</b>	<b>\$1,585.50</b>

*Michael P. Stiebitz*, Town Clerk - 01/11/2022

## **Road Contractor's Report**

The winter of 2021 was uneventful with a normal amount of plowing. Ditches and culverts had good snow coverage and stayed free flowing. In June we graded the gravel roads adding gravel where needed. We had one heavy rain that caused three small washouts. They were taken care of quickly with gravel and one ditch line was reinforced with erosion stone.

The Howe Hill Road project was able to be completed within budget. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this project. The asphalt took a longer than we wanted to get completed due to scheduling difficulties. We replaced a driveway culvert, did some maintenance on another that kept eroding and did some ditch cleaning. The road sides got mowed and the guard rails got mowed around as well. In the fall we replenished the sand pile along with the resident sand pile behind the town hall. There were a few wind events that required a few trees to be cut out of the roadways.

Winter was slow to arrive but we did have a white Christmas. Thank you to all the residents and it is always a pleasure to serve you.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Boutin Jr. & Son

**2021 TOWN WARRANT**  
**Town of Benton — June 8, 2021**

(Note: Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Town Meeting originally scheduled for March 9, 2021 was postponed until June 8, 2021.)

The Town Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by the Moderator, Gil Richardson.

Moderator Richardson led us through the Pledge of Allegiance. He then asked that we recognize any members past or present of the Armed Forces as well as any First Responders and thanked them for their service to our community and country. A round of applause was given to those members. He gave tribute as well to all of the folks involved in service to the community during the pandemic such as teachers, medical professionals, cashiers and everyone else who helped bring us through the crisis and had to wear masks every day all day. He also recognized the folks we lost over the last 15 months, in particular, former Select Woman Carol Vincelette.

At 7:06PM a motion was made to recess to the School District meeting. The motion was seconded and by voice vote the Town Meeting was recessed to the School District meeting.

At 7:51PM, the Moderator reconvened the Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 1. To choose persons for the following positions and terms of service: (Majority vote required)

The following Town Officers were elected after a voice vote:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>	
Selectman	3 years	2024	Kimberli Carpenter
Treasurer	1 year	2022	Dwight Swauger
Town Clerk	1 year	2022	Michael Stiebitz
Tax Collector	1 year	2022	Michael Stiebitz
Supervisor of the Checklist	3 years	2024	Stephanie Saffo
Ballot Clerk	1 year	2022	Frances Hadden
Ballot Inspector	1 year	2022	Betty Nickles
Surveyor of Wood and Lumber	1 year	2022	Joseph Boutin, Jr.
Planning Board Member	3 years	2024	Martin Noble
Trustee of the Trust Funds	3 years	2024	Mark Elliott

Discussion was held regarding the Ballot Inspector position. Maxine Tyler had previously expressed her desire to step down. It was pointed out the position is not typically an elected one. In most towns two (or more) Ballot Inspectors are selected out of the registered voter population by the two political parties. In cases where the political parties fail to select inspectors, the Select Board chooses two persons to perform the function. Although there was some discussion of the Town revisiting this subject during the next election cycle, Betty Nickles was nominated and elected to this position.

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of the officers and agents as printed. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made to accept the article as written. Chairman Darcy detailed the extensive efforts being made to facilitate the design and construction of a fiber optic broadband network to bring high speed internet to Benton and other underserved communities in Grafton County. Benton in particular is somewhat unique in that it is 100% served by the New Hampshire Electric Co-operative (NHEC), and has little to no broadband internet availability. In December of 2020 the NHEC won the so-called Census Block which includes Benton in the Rural Digital Opportunity Fund (RDOF) auction. They are now obligated to design, construct and offer for service a Broadband Internet network in Benton within 8 years.

While that seems a long way off for some of us who presently have little or no service, Chairman Darcy is working to garner allies within the Broadband Committee of Grafton County. The NHEC, of which he is a director, as well as the State of NH to help accelerate the process. There is approximately \$121 million available at the state level for broadband initiatives and the NHEC has requested some of this funding for its project.

The Select Board has pledged Benton's share of the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (approximately \$36,000) funds as well as the \$25,000 which was appropriated on last year's warrant to any entity which can help to quickly provide broadband internet service to Benton.

The article passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$129,100 for General Municipal Operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made to accept the article as written and seconded. With no discussion the article then was passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$3,000 to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, previously established, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made to accept the article as written and seconded.

The Town-wide revaluation is statutorily required to take place in 2023. This year's appropriation will bring the total fund to approximately \$13,000. The Selectmen will determine the actual amount required for the audit and adjust next year's appropriation accordingly.

The article then was passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$35,000 to repave 500 feet of Howe Hill Road with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

It was clarified that this project will start at the intersection of Howe Hill Road and Route 116 and end at the section paved two years ago.

The article was then passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 for cemetery improvements, including a survey of new grave sites, gravestone repair and a sign, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the cemetery improvements are completed or by December 31, 2022, whichever is sooner. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that he has met with a surveyor and will be presenting a draft gravesite survey at the next meeting of the Selectboard.

In response to a question about the estimated date of availability of gravesites in the section cleared last year, Chairman Darcy said that a set of cemetery rules will probably be presented at next year's Town Meeting and that lot prices will undoubtedly rise. Our current fee of \$75 per plot is grossly underpriced in relation to the actual cost of providing and maintaining the plot, as well as in comparison to other towns.

A comment was made and resonated with the group regarding the great job Boutin & Son did last year on the upper section.

Similar comments were also made about the impressive rebuilding of the cemetery wall. It does look great and Chairman Darcy pointed out that proper drainage has been incorporated into the backside of the wall to hopefully eliminate the destructive effects of frost.

The dire condition of the High Street Cemetery was brought up by Linda Gregory. She has seen folks visiting the cemetery as she commutes to work at the Glencliff Home and said that she was appalled at the current state of the place. She would like to see it brought back into a respectful condition.

After much discussion, Selectwoman Gina Elliott agreed to head up a committee of volunteers to cut the brush, tend the gravestones and generally spruce up the place.

A follow-on suggestion was to have the cemetery lawn mowing contract include a once a year going over for the High Street Cemetery.

The article was then passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000 for new tax maps with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)  
Motion was made and seconded to accept the article as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that this article is a repeat from last year's warrant, as the project did not get done. The initial quote was for simply reissuing PDF maps that would incorporate changes to bring them up to date. We recently received a quote from a different vendor to bring the maps up to date and issue them in both PDF and digital formats. This will permit fairly simple updating when required.

The article was passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 for Town Hall improvements, including a fence on the side yard, a roof over the side door and lighted sign and notice board, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Chairman Darcy stated that this article is another repeat from last year, as the projects did not get accomplished. We will try to do better this year.

The article was then passed unanimously by voice vote.

ARTICLE 9. (By Petition) To see if the town will vote to urge that the New Hampshire General Court, which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the federal census, will ensure fair and effective representation of New Hampshire voters without gerrymandering. Additionally, these voters ask the town of Benton to urge the NH General Court to carry out the redistricting in a fair and transparent way through public meetings, not to favor a particular political party, to include communities of interest, and to minimize multi-seat districts. The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from town officials to Benton's state legislators, informing them of the demands from their constituents within 30 days of the vote. (Majority vote required) (Selectmen oppose this Article)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Lara Saffo, the principal sponsor of this article in Benton stood and expressed her belief that the redistricting should be a non-partisan affair, conducted in the public eye, as the results affect all of us, and should not benefit one political party. She declared that the current procedure is absolutely partisan.

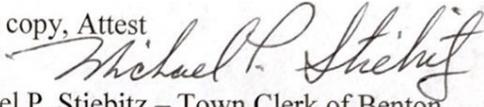
Chairman Darcy gave the Selectboard's opinion that a) redistricting is not something that towns should be giving guidance to the State on, b) we currently are represented by two State Representatives, giving us more representation than we would have with a single State Representative, and c) we shouldn't be "poking the bear" when the "bear", the current House, Senate, and Governor opposed to this proposal, when the "bear" doesn't have to listen to us in the first place. He finished up by stating that he and Lara agreed on one thing, that the process is indeed partisan.

Ballot slips were handed out and when the results were totaled, 14 were "Nay", 12 were "Yea". The measure was defeated. The article was then denied.

The Moderator asked for and received a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:43PM.

Chairman Bill Darcy administered the oath of office to all the newly elected present.

A true copy, Attest



Michael P. Stiebitz – Town Clerk of Benton



**Report of the Trustees of the Trust Funds**  
For the Year Ending December 31, 2021

Funds donated to the Town of Benton are in the custody of the Trustees. Donations are distributed as specified by the donors. Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank in Woodsville, NH holds all funds.

Status of the Funds is as follows:

Trust Fund Savings	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 617453	<b>\$ 1,499.81</b>
Cemetery/Common Trust Fund	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 662141	<b>\$14,616.06</b>
Capital Reserve Fund - Highways/Roads	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 655898	<b>\$59,638.42</b>
Capital Reserve Fund – Fires	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 617456	<b>\$10,882.17</b>
Revaluation Trust Fund	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #655901	<b>\$ 9,038.10</b>
Expendable Trust – Schools	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #659291	<b>\$203,871.43</b>
Expendable Trust – Town Maintenance	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #682180	<b>\$30,070.08</b>

**TOTAL HELD IN TRUST**  
**BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUND = \$329,616.07**

Respectfully submitted,

Trustees of the Trust Fund  
Laura Richardson, Chair  
Martin Noble  
Mark Elliott

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE 2022 SCHOOL WARRANT**

To the inhabitants of the School District of Benton in the County of Grafton, State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in district affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Town Hall in said district on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of March 2022, at 7:00 o'clock in the evening to act upon the following subjects:

**ARTICLE 1:** To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

**ARTICLE 2:** To choose a School District Clerk for the ensuing year.

**ARTICLE 3:** To choose one School Board Member for a term of three years to expire in 2025.

**ARTICLE 4:** To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.

**ARTICLE 5:** To hear reports of Agents, Committees, or Officers chosen and pass any vote related thereto.

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate Six Hundred Seventy-Seven Thousand, and Seven Hundred Forty-Six Dollars (\$677,746.00) for the support of schools, the payment of salaries of school district officials and agents, and the payments of statutory obligations of the district. This article is exclusive of any other article on the warrant. (The school board recommends this article.)

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate up to the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the previously established Benton School District Tuition and Education Expendable Trust Fund. This sum to come from June 30, 2022 fund balance available for transfer on July 1 in excess of \$30,000. (The first \$30,000 of the June 30, 2022 Unassigned Fund Balance will be used to reduce the school tax rate in 2022.) No amount to be raised from taxation. (The school board recommends this article.)

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the School District will vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, to retain year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, five percent (5%) of the current fiscal year's net assessment, in accordance with RSA 198:4-b, II. (Majority vote required)

Given under our hands at said Benton this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022.

A True Copy of Warrant – Attest:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joseph Boutin III, Chairman

\_\_\_\_\_  
Kristina Harris

\_\_\_\_\_  
Timothy Hickey

BENTON SCHOOL BOARD

**Town of Benton, New Hampshire**  
**School Warrant Minutes**  
**June 8, 2022**  
**(Postponed from March 9, 2021)**

The meeting opened at 7:04 PM.

**Article 1**

To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Gilbert W. Richardson was elected by voice vote.

**Article 2**

To choose a School Clerk for the ensuing year.

Michael P. Stiebitz was elected by voice vote.

**Article 3**

To choose one School Board Member for a term of three years expiring in 2023.

Two candidates, Dwight Swauger and incumbent Kristina Harris were nominated and ballot slips were handed out. The tally went in favor of Kris Harris.

Kris Harris was then declared the winner.

**Article 4**

To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.

It was stated that Penny Chicoine would like to step down, but in the absence of any other candidate, she would accept the position.

Discussion centered around finding someone during her upcoming term who would be willing to take over for her.

Penny Chicoine was elected by voice vote.

**Article 5**

To hear reports of Agents, Committees, or Officers chosen and pass any vote relating thereto.

Motion made to accept article as written, seconded.

Discussion ensued, with a suggestion by Sam Gregory that we as a town would be better off purchasing a house in Woodsville for our \$680K school bill, and housing our kids down there.

He also asked a question regarding free lunches which were supplied to families with children during the learn-at-home phases of the pandemic.

Laurie Melanson, Superintendent of SAU 23, explained that forms were distributed to all school children which, when filled out by the parents and returned to the SAU, allowed boxed lunches to be delivered to various drop-off

locations within the district's towns.

The article then passed unanimously on voice vote.

#### **Article 6**

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate Six Hundred Eighty Thousand, Ninety-Eight Dollars (\$680,098.00) for the support of schools, the payment of salaries of school district officials and agents, and the payments of statutory obligations of the district. This article is exclusive of any other article on the warrant. (The school board recommends this article.)

Motion to accept article as written, seconded.

A question was raised concerning the roughly \$20K per student fee and whether that was comparable to other districts within the State. Superintendent Laurie Melanson responded that it was, but that it represented tuition, transportation, and Special Education charges. She pointed out that Special Ed and transportation were not scalable, that is, whether you have two kids on a bus or a full bus, the transportation charge is the same.

The article then passed unanimously.

#### **Article 7**

To see if the district will raise and appropriate up to the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be added to the previously established Tuition and Education Expendable Trust Fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2021 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2021 in excess of \$55,000. (The first \$55,000.00 of the June 30, 2021 unassigned fund balance will be used to reduce the school tax rate in 2021). No amount to be raised from taxation. (The school board recommends this article).

Motion to accept article as written, motion made to amend, motion to amend was accepted and the following amended article was proposed by Select Board Chairman William Darcy:

To see if the district will raise and appropriate up to the sum of Fifty Thousand dollars (\$50,000.00) to be added to the previously established Tuition and Education Expendable Trust Fund. This sum to come from the June 30, 2021 fund balance available for transfer on July 1, 2021 in excess of \$70,000. (The first \$70,000.00 of the June 30, 2021 unassigned fund balance will be used to reduce the school tax rate in 2021). No amount to be raised from taxation.

Amended article was seconded and discussion ensued.

Bill Darcy explained that owing to a ruling by the DRA last year misinterpreting the vote of the Town Meeting, Benton had to appropriate \$65,000 of the Town's unassigned fund balance to keep the tax rate below \$18.00.

Since the SAU has forecast an \$85,000 surplus for the end of this school year, the tax rate can be kept stable by devoting the first \$70,000 of the surplus for tax reduction.

Laura Richardson, Chair of the Trustee of the Trust Funds, felt that the current level in the Trust Fund of \$188K is a good cushion, although she believed that it might not be legal to increase the amount in the article. Bill stated that it was. Superintendent Laurie Melanson weighed in that since it was so close to the end of the school year,

the likelihood of the surplus changing radically was slight. That is one advantage of having the Town Meeting in June. She stated that she would check with the DRA the next day and verify the legality of the amendment.

Note: Town Clerk verified with SAU 23 Business Manager Kathryn Ducharme later in the week that the proposed amendment was indeed legal.)

The article then was passed unanimously by voice vote.

#### **Article 8**

To see if the school district will vote to authorize, indefinitely until rescinded, to retain year-end unassigned general funds in an amount not to exceed, in any fiscal year, five percent (5%) of the current fiscal year's net assessment, in accordance with RSA 198:4-b, II. (Majority vote required)

Motion made to accept article as written, seconded.

Bill Darcy stated his opposition to increasing the amount which can be retained. He said that at the current budget level, allowing the extra 2.5% to be withheld from being returned to the Town would result in an approximate \$1 per thousand increases in the Town tax rate. Since there is a Trust Fund from which necessary amounts can be withdrawn it doesn't make sense to authorize this statutory increase.

School Board Chairman Joe Boutin III pointed out that the local School Board would make the choice as to the amount of the surplus to be retained, and that their meetings are open to the public. It turns out that in the last 5 years, this provision has never been required or authorized by the School Board, even at the 2.5% level.

The article was then denied by unanimous voice vote.

#### **Article 9**

Shall the Benton School District accept the provisions of RSA 198:20-b providing that any school district at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the school board to apply for, accept and expend, without further action by the school district, unanticipated money from a state, federal or other governmental unit or a private source which becomes available during the fiscal year? (Majority vote required)

Motion made to accept article as written, seconded.

SAU 23 Superintendent Laurie Melanson explained that for some reason this provision had never been formally approved by the voters. She pointed out that due to the pandemic, a lot of Federal as well as State funds have become available and this provision must be in place in order to accept them.

The article then was passed unanimously by voice vote.

Motion was made to close the meeting and the meeting adjourned at 7:51PM. A true copy

Attest:

Michael P. Stiebitz - Benton School District Clerk - Benton, New Hampshire

**ANNUAL REPORT**  
**of the**  
**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT**  
**July 1, 2020- June 30, 2021**

**DISTRICT OFFICERS SCHOOL BOARD**

Joseph Boutin III, CHAIR  
Kristina Harris  
Timothy Hickey

Term Expires 2023  
Term Expires 2024  
Term Expires 2022

**OTHER DISTRICT OFFICERS**

Gilbert Richardson ..... Moderator  
Penny Chicoine ..... Treasurer  
Michael Stiebitz ..... Clerk

**SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS**  
Laurie Melanson

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #23 REPORT  
OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S SALARIES**

One-half of the School Administrative Unit expenses are prorated among the school districts on the basis of equalized valuation. One-half is prorated on the basis of average daily membership in the schools for the previous school year ending June 30th. Below is a breakdown of each district's cost share for the Superintendent's salary of \$126,932 and the Business Manager's salary of \$103,839 for fiscal year 2021.

<b>SUPERINTENDENT SALARY</b>		
BATH	\$ 16,362	12.89%
BENTON	\$ 2,627	2.07%
HVERHILL COOPERATIVE	\$ 81,097	63.89%
PIERMONT	\$ 14,039	11.06%
WARREN	\$ 12,807	10.09%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 126,932</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b>BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR SALARY</b>		
BATH	\$ 13,385	12.89%
BENTON	\$ 2,149	2.07%
HVERHILL COOPERATIVE	\$ 66,343	63.89%
PIERMONT	\$ 11,485	11.06%
WARREN	\$ 10,477	10.09%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 103,839</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT**

As the 20-21 school year came to a close, the future looked brighter with just a handful of positive COVID cases in the schools in the spring, more availability of vaccines, a very low number of cases in our state, and none in our town. Summer was refreshing as teachers prepared for the new school year and our Administrative Team gathered for two days to look at our performance data and drafted some improvement goals. Our schools and plans felt "normaler".

The FY 2023 Benton budget is \$669,750 which is an overall decrease of \$10,348. This represents a 1.52% decrease from the FY 2022 budget. Last fall, Benton received an additional \$19,950 in adequacy funding aid that was unanticipated. The Board could have voted to have a special meeting to ask the town to spend the money or use the funds to reduce taxes. The board voted to use the funds to reduce taxes.

Woodsville Elementary School opened under the leadership of Principal Erin DeCotis. She quickly established strong teams with teachers and opened doors to welcome students, families, and the community with large outdoor events. HCMS opened the year under new leadership with Principal Jennifer Carbonneau and new Assistant Principal Casey McGill. They immediately established HCMS Hawks as a family and welcomed students and families with Open House activities before school opened. WHS began the year with a new format for Freshman Orientation, scheduled during an evening so families could attend together with activities for students while parents could gather together for administrative presentations, and Q & A sessions.

Our school teams analyzed student achievement data and identified priority areas to improve. K-12 Reading

was an immediate area we identified to improve. We assessed students in the spring of 2021 to identify those reading below grade level. We used grant funds to bring in a Direct Instruction reading trainer and provided three days of training on a specific model of instruction, purchased materials for this instruction, and had students grouped and ready to accelerate learning at the beginning of the school year. The reading trainer provided monthly coaching sessions, on-site, while the teacher was teaching. We have already seen improvement in student performance at the elementary school, which had the highest number of students negatively impacted by missed school days due to illness and quarantine, and remote instruction, especially in the Kindergarten and First Grades.

The Haverhill School Board adopted the following improvement goals and each school developed improvement plans to incorporate these goals:

1. Improve Academic Achievement
2. Address Social and Emotional Learning
3. Improve School Culture
4. Review and Update Policies
5. Continue with Facility Improvements

No one is satisfied with our state test scores and we will continue to work toward improvement. We had two more rounds of federal, ESSER, grant funds which we used for supplies, equipment, and additional staff to help address academic learning loss and mental health issues. Staff hired are two-year positions as the grant runs out September 2024. We added a full-time position for HCMS to staff a Student Support Center for students with difficulty being successful in the classroom. We also added a full-time Reading Interventionist at HCMS. For WES, we added a part-time Reading Interventionist, purchased a new literacy program for all students, and improved the air quality in every classroom. We hired retired Kindergarten Teacher, Jane Stimson as part-time Coordinator for Ready for Kindergarten workshops for families and purchased the kit materials for parents to bring home. Ready for Kindergarten workshops are part of the Children's Reading Foundation programs to support parents with children aged newborn to five to learn developmental milestones in the areas of Language and Literacy, Social and Emotional, and Math/Reasoning. WHS was able to hire a Counselor and purchase and install improved ventilation systems for the Bagonzi Gymnasium and cafeteria areas.

After six years, WHS Principal Eric Chase is retiring in June 2022. We wish him health and happiness in retirement and thank him for his dedication to our district.

We are all looking forward to the spring this year, in hopes that the current surge in cases in our schools, town, state, and country are drastically reduced.

Thank you to all taxpayers for your support during this unprecedented time. We are doing the best we can to provide a safe, healthy, and nurturing school environment for students and staff.

We are keenly aware of the rising costs of operating schools and work diligently to make good spending decisions, monitor your student tuition list, and give your school board responsible advice.

Respectfully,

Laurie Melanson  
Superintendent of Schools, SAU #23

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
TUITION STUDENTS  
2020-2021**

	<u>FTE Total Students</u>	<u>Total Tuition Costs Per School</u>
Haverhill Cooperative School District	19.36	\$264,014.88
French Pond School	2	\$46,212.00
King Street School	.05	\$11,553.00
River Bend Tech	.05	\$9,950.00
<b>Total Benton Tuition:</b>	<b>22.36</b>	<b>\$331,729.88</b>
Average Tuition Cost Per Student		\$14,835.86

**REPORT OF THE BENTON SCHOOL  
DISTRICT TREASURER  
FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2020 TO JUNE 30, 2021**

Cash on Hand, July 1, 2020	\$190,159.94
Total Revenues Received	\$1,310,066.75
Total School Board Orders Paid	(\$1,316,579.31)
Cash on Hand June 30, 2021	\$183,647.38

Dianne Norton  
SAU Accounts Receivable Clerk

**AUDIT REPORT**

The Benton School District has been audited by the Plodzick & Sanderson Professional Association. Copies of the audit are available for public review at the Superintendent's Office at the James R. Morrill Building, 2975 Dartmouth College Highway, No. Haverhill, NH.

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
BALANCE SHEET**

<u>ASSETS</u>		<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>TRUST/AGENCY FUND</u>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
CASH	100	\$ 183,647.00	\$ -
INVESTMENTS	110	\$ -	\$ 188,353.00
INTERFUND RECEIVABLE	130	\$ -	\$ -
INTERGOV'T REC	140	\$ -	\$ -
OTHER RECEIVABLES	150	\$ 4,074.00	\$ -
PREPAID EXPENSES	180	\$ -	\$ -

OTHER CURRENT ASSETS	190	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Current Assets</b>		<b>\$ 187,721.00</b>	<b>\$ 188,353.00</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; FUND EQUITY</b>			
<b>Current Liabilities</b>			
INTERFUND PAYABLES	400	\$ -	\$ -
INTERGOV'T PAYABLES	410	\$ -	\$ -
OTHER PAYABLES	420	\$ 102,252.00	\$ -
ACCRUED EXPENSES	460	\$ -	\$ -
DEFERRED REVENUES	480	\$ -	\$ -
OTHER CURRENT LIAB	490	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>		<b>\$ 102,252.00</b>	<b>\$ -</b>
<b>Fund Equity</b>			
<b>Non-spendable:</b>			
RESERVE FOR PREPAID EXPENSES	752	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Restricted:</b>			
<b>Committed:</b>			
RESERVE FOR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS	754	\$ -	\$ -
RESERVE FOR AMTS VOTED	755	\$ 15,469.00	\$ -
RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCES (non-lapsing)	753	\$ -	\$ -
UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE RETAINED		\$ -	\$ -
<b>Assigned:</b>			
RESERVED FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES	760	\$ -	\$ 188,353.00
RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCES	753	\$ -	\$ -
UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE	770	\$ 70,000.00	\$ -
<b>Total Fund Equity</b>		<b>\$ 85,469.00</b>	<b>\$ 188,353.00</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; FUND EQUITY</b>		<b>\$ 187,721.00</b>	<b>\$ 188,353.00</b>

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT REVENUES AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2021-2022**

DESCRIPTION	PROPOSED		
	FY2022 BUDGET	FY2023 BUDGET	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
CURRENT APPROPRIATION	\$ 368,947	\$ 448,694	\$ 79,747
INTEREST ON INVESTMENT	\$ 20	\$ -	\$ (20)
PRIOR YEAR REFUND	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
ADEQUACY AID (GRANT)	\$ 157,088	\$ 161,014	\$ 3,926
ADEQUACY AID (STATE TAX)	\$ 48,787	\$ 33,500	\$ (15,287)
VOCATIONAL ED TUITION	\$ 4,112	\$ 3,944	\$ (168)
VOC ED TRANSPORTATION	\$ -	\$ 450	\$ 450
MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT	\$ 21,000	\$ 20,000	\$ (1,000)
NATIONAL FOREST RESERVE	\$ 10,144	\$ 10,144	\$ -
TRANSFER FROM EXPENDABLE TRUST	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
USE OF FUND BALANCE	\$ 70,000	\$ -	\$ (70,000)
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 680,098</b>	<b>\$ 677,746</b>	<b>\$ (2,352)</b>

REGULAR EDUCATION	\$ 350,591	\$ 309,811	\$ (40,780)
SPECIAL EDUCATION	\$ 167,850	\$ 167,600	\$ (250)
FRENCH POND TUITION	\$ 46,212	\$ 46,212	\$ -
KING STREET TUITION	\$ -	\$ 23,106	\$ 23,106
VOC ED TUITION	\$ -	\$ 10,625	\$ 10,625
SUMMER SCHOOL	\$ 7,600	\$ 7,600	\$ -
SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES	\$ 14,880	\$ 16,006	\$ 1,126
SUMMER SPEECH SERVICES	\$ 2,160	\$ 1,542	\$ (618)
PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES	\$ 7,011	\$ 6,704	\$ (307)
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES	\$ 9,288	\$ 10,851	\$ 1,563
SCHOOL BOARD	\$ 5,046	\$ 5,316	\$ 270
TREASURER	\$ 359	\$ 359	\$ -
DISTRICT MEETING	\$ 94	\$ 94	\$ -
AUDIT SERVICES	\$ 800	\$ 850	\$ 50
LEGAL SERVICES	\$ 750	\$ 750	\$ -
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT	\$ 23,144	\$ 21,096	\$ (2,048)
REGULAR TRANSPORTATION	\$ 34,163	\$ 35,574	\$ 1,411
SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION	\$ 10,150	\$ 13,100	\$ 2,950
VOCATIONAL TRANSPORTATION	\$ -	\$ 550	\$ 550
TRANSFER TO EXPEND TRUST FUND	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
TUITION TO CHARTER SCHOOLS	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 680,098</b>	<b>\$ 677,746</b>	<b>\$ (2,352)</b>

### BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY2023 budget is \$677,746 which is an overall decrease in the budget of \$2,352. This represents a .35% decrease from the FY2022 budget.

#### EXPENDITURES:

- Regular education tuition (including vocational and charter schools) is **\$7,049** less than the current budget.
  - Haverhill set the tuition rate at a 3% increase for next year.
  - There are no contingency spots for additional students.
  - FY2023 budget includes 25 students (FY2022 budget is 27 and actual is 25 at this moment in time).
- Special education costs, including instruction, tuition, transportation, speech services, summer school, etc. have increased **\$4,464**.
- Transportation (regular/vocational) – increased **\$1,961**
- SAU Assessment – decreased **\$2,048**

#### REVENUE:

- As a result of a fund balance in FY2021, we were able to use \$70,000 to offset taxes for the current year.

- Adequacy Aid (estimated) decreased \$11,361 for FY2023. Included one-time funds from the State of \$19,950 in the prior year.

**TAX RATE:**

- This budget will result in a tax rate increase from \$15.99 to \$18.42. This is due to the fact that \$70,000 of fund balance was used to reduce taxes as well as the \$19,950 in extra funds in the prior tax year.
- The current year projection includes a fund balance of approximately \$30,000. This would reduce the tax rate to \$17.27.

**TRUST FUND:**

Balance is approximately \$203,822

**BENTON TAX RATE CALCULATIONS**

CALENDAR/TAX YEAR	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2021	
	FY2019 ACTUAL	FY2020 ACTUAL	FY2021 ACTUAL	FY2022 ACTUAL	FY2023 PROJECTED	CURRENT VALUATION	
Local Property Tax Rate	\$11.57	\$15.18	\$17.97	\$14.04	\$17.08	\$28,271,646	Per \$1,000
State Property Tax Rate	\$2.48	\$2.30	\$2.08	\$1.95	\$1.34	\$25,054,148	Per \$1,000
<b>Total School Tax Rate</b>	<b>\$14.05</b>	<b>\$17.48</b>	<b>\$20.03</b>	<b>\$15.99</b>	<b>\$18.42</b>		
INCREASE (DECREASE) FROM PY YEAR \$\$	(\$3.71)	\$3.43	\$2.55	(\$4.04)			
TAX RATE AS VOTE AT ANNUAL MEETING	\$20.06	\$20.62	\$19.25	\$17.09			
INCREASE(DECREASE) VOTED VS. ACTUAL	(\$6.01)	(\$3.14)	\$0.78	(\$1.10)			

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT  
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS  
PREVIOUS TWO FISCAL YEARS PER RSA 32:11-a**

		2019-2020	2020-2021
<b>Special Education Expenses</b>			
1200	INSTRUCTION	\$127,955	\$158,835
1230	FRENCH POND SCHOOL	\$30,423	\$46,212
1231	KING STREET SCHOOL	\$0	\$11,553
1430	SUMMER SCHOOL	\$0	\$1,720
2150	SPEECH/LANGUAGE	\$20,789	\$19,099
2159	SUMMER SCHOOL SPEECH/LANG	\$90	\$0
2162	PHYSICAL THERAPY	\$7,950	\$13,712
2163	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	\$12,049	\$18,400
2722	TRANSPORTATION	\$2,679	\$2,656
<b>Total District Expenses</b>		<b>\$201,935</b>	<b>\$272,187</b>

<b>Special Education Revenues</b>			
3110	SPED Portion State Adequacy Funds	\$17,941	\$19,963
3230	Catastrophic Aid	\$0	\$0
4580	Medicaid	\$26,141	\$20,104
	<b>Total District Revenues</b>	<b>\$44,082</b>	<b>\$40,067</b>

**DISTRICT ASSESSMENT SHARES AS DETERMINED BY NH RSA 194.C:9**

	2021-2022	2022-2023	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
DISTRICT	BUDGET	BUDGET	
BATH	\$ 173,167	\$ 164,385	\$ (8,782)
BENTON	\$ 23,144	\$ 21,096	\$ (2,048)
HAVERHILL	\$ 789,155	\$ 754,849	\$ (34,306)
PIERMONT	\$ 129,421	\$ 117,630	\$ (11,791)
WARREN	\$ 123,976	\$ 119,169	\$ (4,807)
<b>TOTAL DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS</b>	<b>\$1,238,863</b>	<b>\$1,177,129</b>	<b>\$ (61,734)</b>

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #23 BUDGET SUMMARY**

	2021-2022	2022-2023	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
DEPARTMENT NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED BUDGET	
ASSESSMENT	\$ 1,238,863	\$ 1,177,129	\$ (61,734)
FPS TUITION	\$ 271,760	\$ 314,902	\$ 43,142
KING STREET SCHOOL TUITION	\$ 509,390	\$ 556,195	\$ 46,805
SUMMER TRIP TUITION	\$ 12,958	\$ 12,960	\$ 2
SUMMER SCHOOL TUITION	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	\$ 175	\$ 250	\$ 75
SERVICES TO LEA'S	\$ 385,919	\$ 379,417	\$ (6,502)
SPEECH SERVICES	\$ 335,490	\$ 290,908	\$ (44,582)
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY REVENUE	\$ 110,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 5,000
OTHER LOCAL REVENUE	\$ 4,343	\$ 5,116	\$ 773
USE OF FUND BALANCE	\$ 47,870	\$ 100,000	\$ 52,130
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 2,916,768</b>	<b>\$ 2,951,877</b>	<b>\$ 35,109</b>
1100 ITINERANT TEACHERS	\$ 219,022	\$ 231,561	\$ 12,539
1230 FRENCH POND PROGRAM	\$ 323,131	\$ 338,873	\$ 15,742

<b>Special Education Revenues</b>			
3110	SPED Portion State Adequacy Funds	\$17,941	\$19,963
3230	Catastrophic Aid	\$0	\$0
4580	Medicaid	\$26,141	\$20,104
	<b>Total District Revenues</b>	<b>\$44,082</b>	<b>\$40,067</b>

**DISTRICT ASSESSMENT SHARES AS DETERMINED BY NH RSA 194-C:9**

	2021-2022	2022-2023	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
DISTRICT	BUDGET	BUDGET	
BATH	\$ 173,167	\$ 164,385	\$ (8,782)
BENTON	\$ 23,144	\$ 21,096	\$ (2,048)
HAVERHILL	\$ 789,155	\$ 754,849	\$ (34,306)
PIERMONT	\$ 129,421	\$ 117,630	\$ (11,791)
WARREN	\$ 123,976	\$ 119,169	\$ (4,807)
<b>TOTAL DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS</b>	<b>\$1,238,863</b>	<b>\$1,177,129</b>	<b>\$ (61,734)</b>

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #23 BUDGET SUMMARY**

	2021-2022	2022-2023	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
DEPARTMENT NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET	APPROVED BUDGET	
ASSESSMENT	\$ 1,238,863	\$ 1,177,129	\$ (61,734)
FPS TUITION	\$ 271,760	\$ 314,902	\$ 43,142
KING STREET SCHOOL TUITION	\$ 509,390	\$ 556,195	\$ 46,805
SUMMER TRIP TUITION	\$ 12,958	\$ 12,960	\$ 2
SUMMER SCHOOL TUITION	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	\$ 175	\$ 250	\$ 75
SERVICES TO LEA'S	\$ 385,919	\$ 379,417	\$ (6,502)
SPEECH SERVICES	\$ 335,490	\$ 290,908	\$ (44,582)
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY REVENUE	\$ 110,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 5,000
OTHER LOCAL REVENUE	\$ 4,343	\$ 5,116	\$ 773
USE OF FUND BALANCE	\$ 47,870	\$ 100,000	\$ 52,130
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUES</b>	<b>\$ 2,916,768</b>	<b>\$ 2,951,877</b>	<b>\$ 35,109</b>
1100 ITINERANT TEACHERS	\$ 219,022	\$ 231,561	\$ 12,539
1230 FRENCH POND PROGRAM	\$ 323,131	\$ 338,873	\$ 15,742

1231 KING STREET PROGRAM	\$ 356,131	\$ 375,190	\$ 19,059
1430 SUMMER SCHOOL	\$ 11,245	\$ 11,247	\$ 2
1431 SUMMER TUTORING PROGRAM	\$ 1,713	\$ 1,713	\$ -
2120 GUIDANCE	\$ 76,114	\$ 80,254	\$ 4,140
2125 DATA MANAGEMENT	\$ 58,408	\$ 36,849	\$ (21,559)
2140 PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	\$ 8,300	\$ 8,600	\$ 300
2150 SPEECH & LANGUAGE SERVICES	\$ 330,002	\$ 286,365	\$ (43,637)
2159 SPEECH SUMMER SERVICES	\$ 9,488	\$ 8,543	\$ (945)
2163 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	\$ 110,000	\$ 115,000	\$ 5,000
2213 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	\$ 4,643	\$ 4,643	\$ -
2220 TECHNOLOGY SUPERVISION	\$ 243,142	\$ 270,129	\$ 26,987
2311 SCHOOL BOARD	\$ 7,835	\$ 7,835	\$ -
2312 SCHOOL BOARD CLERK	\$ 739	\$ 739	\$ -
2313 DISTRICT TREASURER	\$ 2,796	\$ 2,796	\$ -
2317 AUDIT	\$ 7,100	\$ 7,250	\$ 150
2318 LEGAL COUNSEL	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ -
2321 OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT	\$ 656,340	\$ 692,086	\$ 35,746
2330 SPECIAL PROGRAMS ADMIN.	\$ 311,463	\$ 297,610	\$ (13,853)
2334 OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAMS	\$ 5,912	\$ 5,912	\$ -
2540 SAU-WIDE PUBLIC RELATIONS	\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	\$ -
2620 BUILDING & RENT	\$ 137,288	\$ 122,439	\$ (14,849)
2640 EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	\$ 4,707	\$ 6,465	\$ 1,758
2810 RESEARCH, PLANNING, DEVELOPMENT	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	\$ -
2820 COMPUTER NETWORK	\$ 23,849	\$ 32,378	\$ 8,529
2832 RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING	\$ 800	\$ 800	\$ -
<b>TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$ 2,916,768</b>	<b>\$ 2,951,877</b>	<b>\$ 35,109</b>
IDEA GRANTS	\$ 250,000	\$ 250,000	\$ -
<b>TOTAL BUDGET</b>	<b>\$ 3,166,768</b>	<b>\$ 3,201,877</b>	<b>\$ 35,109</b>

## Vital Statistics for 2021

### Benton, NH

#### Deaths

#### Died

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Judith Ann Hunter	(Glenclyff Home)	01/24/2021
Shirley Ann Bailey	(Glenclyff Home)	02/05/2021
Donald Cournoyer	(Glenclyff Home)	03/02/2021
James Augustine McLaughlin	(Glenclyff Home)	03/09/2021
Donald Charles Sleeper	(Glenclyff Home)	04/13/2021
Nicholas Kremer	(Glenclyff Home)	05/04/2021
Peter M. Gage	(Glenclyff Home)	05/24/2021
Priscilla Boutin	Benton	06/19/2021
Harry E. Jones	(Glenclyff Home)	06/27/2021
Deborah Brodhead	(Glenclyff Home)	08/20/2021
Mildred Warner	(Glenclyff Home)	08/23/2021
Nicholas J. Francis	(Glenclyff Home)	08/27/2021
Clement F. Hayes Jr.	(Glenclyff Home)	08/30/2021
Edward Denis Callahan	(Glenclyff Home)	09/03/2021
Larry E. Mackie	(Glenclyff Home)	09/05/2021
Dermott Wade	(Glenclyff Home)	09/12/2021
Mark Barnett	(Glenclyff Home)	09/26/2021
Linda Hudjsak	(Glenclyff Home)	10/26/2021
Rebecca A. Knight	(Glenclyff Home)	11/15/2021
Mark Builing	(Glenclyff Home)	12/15/2021
Sandra Harvey	(Glenclyff Home)	12/17/2021
Anthony M. Randano	(Glenclyff Home)	12/18/2021
Richard Alan Dickenson	Benton	12/27/2021

#### Marriages

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February 1 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	Jason L. Poirier and Holly A. Placey in Bath
May 21 <sup>st</sup> , 2021	Orsolya Renata Hegyi and Lars-Olaf Hoeger in Benton
August 8 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Timothy M. Churchill and Billiejo Sackett in Benton

#### Births

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November 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2021	Thorvald Jason Jensen, son of Megan and Jason Jensen in Littleton, NH
December 10 <sup>th</sup> , 2021	Elise Marie Finn, daughter of Indhira and Daniel Finn IV in Lebanon, NH