

**TOWN OF FRANCONIA  
BUDGET WORKSHOP  
FEBRUARY 14, 2019 AT TOWN HALL**

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**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Eric Meth, Jill Brewer, Jeff Blodgett.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Holly Burbank, Jenny Monahan, Mary Grote, Peter Grote, Dawn Steele.

**The meeting was called to order at 4:05pm.**

**DISCUSSION:**

After the Town Budget Hearing, the Board met to discuss some ideas proposed by residents. Town Administrator Burbank said she had checked with the Department of Revenue Administration and the Town's Highway Block Grant funds (\$39,900 carried over from last year and \$50,000 anticipated this year) and the Highway Department's paving funds for this year (\$75,000) in addition to the Bridge repair funds (\$42,500) can be used towards the Bickford Hill Bridge repairs. Town Administrator Burbank said this would fully fund the Bridge Project's anticipated cost of \$200,000 and would deduct \$.55 from the originally proposed municipal tax increase this year.

As this would delay the sidewalk and crosswalk project another year, Town Administrator Burbank checked with HEB Engineers to see if the engineering that the Town has already paid for would still be valid in a year. They said yes but the Town may need to reapply to the State for permission to excavate the road.

The Board briefly discussed the State's mandate that the Town widen the road during the Sidewalk Project and bear the additional cost. Chairman Brewer said it may be something to speak with Representative Tim Egan about.

Town Administrator Burbank also said she had revisited the numbers for the Personnel Administration Budget. She said that for the NH Retirement numbers for Group I employees, and Dental Insurance, she had included numbers for the entire calendar year rather than the likely start date after Town Meeting of May 1, 2019. She also adjusted the Health Insurance amount due to the newly hired employee declining Town Health Insurance. These deductions totaled \$17,242.

Town Administrator Burbank also said Karen Foss said she anticipated the Streetlights monthly billing to cost about \$12,000 this year, but the Town has not experienced a full year of billing yet. That line was reduced from \$16,000 to \$14,000.

Town Administrator Burbank said these changes, along with the removal of the Bickford Hill Bridge Repair Warrant Article, would reduce the total municipal tax increase to \$.83 from the originally proposed \$1.44.

There was a brief discussion about 192 Main Street Demolition. Town Administrator Burbank said the back taxes were \$78,000 and \$81,000 in interest. Selectman Meth opined that the decision should be

entirely up to the voters, thus the article should remain on the warrant. Chairman Brewer said she agreed. Selectman Blodgett said he would like to see the building gone as it is an eyesore and the Town could then reclaim the green space for other uses. The Board agreed that if the building is not demolished, it should be boarded up for safety reasons.

Selectman Blodgett said he agreed with a resident who stated that there should be a greater effort at prioritization of Capital Projects going forward. The Board and Town Administrator Burbank agreed. It was mentioned that deferred maintenance over the years had contributed to the current situation of a number of projects becoming critical at once.

Town Administrator Burbank said if the Board decides they want to proceed with these changes to the warrant, she will move forward with inputting the updated numbers into the DRA site to update the warrant. The Board agreed.

Selectman Blodgett said he thought the Wage and Salary Committee should remain intact in case they are needed. He also said he agreed with a resident who inquired about the possibility of trying to create a five year expense plan.

The Board entered non-public session at 4:35pm for reasons of personnel and reputation.

The Board left non-public session at 5:08pm.

With no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 5:08pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Jenny Monahan  
Administrative Secretary