

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
BUDGET COMMITTEE
WORK SESSION MINUTES
February 7, 2024**

Budget Committee Members Present: Chair, Dayna Titus, Kristen Fuller, Kim Beardwood Smith, Bennett Evans, Morgan Stepp, School Board Representative, Joanne Pearce, Select Board Member, Kelly Schwaner and Select Board Alternate member, Jill White.

Others Present: Town Administrator, Michael Capone

Call to Order: Ms. Titus called the meeting to order at 5:34PM. The agenda for this evening's meeting called for a review of the Holderness Central School and the Town's budgets for review and amendment/approval by the Budget Committee. It would also include recommendations from the committee on the other proposed warrant articles.

Ms. White mentioned that the Select Board had approved the addition of \$1,500 in funding under the public service portion of the budget for the Lakes Region Visiting Nurses Association. This increase brought the Select Boards recommended operating budget total to \$3,671,200. The Committee then proceeded to go through the Town warrant.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee's recommended sum of Three Million Six Hundred Seventy-One Thousand Two Hundred Dollars (\$3,671,200) for general municipal operations. Said sum does not include special or individual articles elsewhere within this warrant. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Ms. Schwaner made a motion to recommend Article 4. Ms. Fuller provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred and Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$480,000) to be placed in the following Capital Reserve Funds: (Majority vote required)

ROAD RECONSTRUCTION	\$200,000
FIRE/RESCUE VEHICLES	100,000
PUBLIC WORKS VEHICLES	100,000
LIBRARY BUILDING	5,000
FIRE EQUIPMENT	10,000
CONSERVATION	5,000
POLICE CRUISER	50,000
TOWN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY	<u>10,000</u>
Total	\$480,000

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Mr. Evans made a motion to recommend Article 5. Ms. Beardwood-Smith provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. Ms. Fuller asked if the Highway Department Road Grader had been added to the Capital Equipment Plan. The Town Administrator responded that he was hoping to use additional State funding in conjunction with fund balance to work the purchase of a used highway grader into the plan in the next two years. There being no further questions, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Twenty Thousand Eight Hundred and Eighty-Five Dollars (\$420,885) for the following Capital projects and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the Select Board to withdraw the sums indicated from existing Capital Reserve Funds as noted: No additional funds will be raised through taxation. (Majority vote required)

Road Reconstruction: \$200,000 (from the Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund)
Ford F550 series or equivalent dump truck with plow, wing and sander body: \$110,000 (from the Public Works Vehicle Capital Reserve Fund)
Assessing Activity: \$27,000 (from Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund)
SUV for Police Department: \$65,000 (from the Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund)
Town IT Equipment: \$18,885 Replacement of Three Workstations and one Server: (from the Town Information Technology Capital Reserve Fund)

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Ms. Fuller made a motion to recommend Article 6. Ms. Schwaner provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirteen Thousand Five Hundred Thirty-Eight Dollars (\$13,538) for speed enforcement, DUI enforcement and distracted driving enforcement patrols as well as the purchase of three dual antenna radar systems for the Police Department and to further authorize the sum of Three Thousand Eight Hundred Twenty-Nine Dollars (\$3,829) to come from Unassigned Fund Balance for that purpose. Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Nine Dollars (\$9,709) to come from a Highway Safety Grant previously obtained by the Police Department. No additional Funds will be raised by taxation. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Ms. Fuller made a motion to recommend Article 7. Mr. Evans provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) to be placed in the Abatement Capital Reserve fund and to further authorize the amount to come from unassigned Fund Balance for that purpose. No additional funds will be raised by taxation. (Majority vote required.)

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Ms. Fuller made a motion to recommend Article 8. Mr. Stepp provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 9: Shall the town MODIFY the elderly exemptions from the property tax per RSA 72:39-b, to allow the elderly taxpayer who qualifies for the exemption to have an income of not more than \$28,000 (presently the limit is \$20,000) or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$53,000 (presently the limit is \$25,000); and own assets of not more than \$100,000. (presently the limit is \$50,000) excluding the value of the persons residence. (Majority vote required)

Recommended by the Select Board; (5 yeas, 0 nays).

Ms. Fuller made a motion to recommend Article 9. Ms. Schwaner provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There was some discussion with regard to the format of the article. The Town Administrator explained that he was using the format suggested by the Department of Revenue Administration (DRA) There being no further discussion, the Committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Ms. Pearce then reviewed the Holderness Central School Warrant.

Article 2: Building Improvements from Capital Reserve Fund: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Three Thousand Dollars (\$43,000) for classroom furniture, main entry flooring, fencing around the dumpster and bollards for the loading dock and well head, from the School Building Renovation capital reserve fund and authorize the withdrawal of \$43,00 from the School Building Renovation Fund created for that purpose. No amount is to come from general taxation. School Board recommends this article. (Majority vote required.)

Ms. Schwaner made a motion to recommend Article 2. Mr. Evans provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 3: Building Renovation Capital Reserve Fund: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be placed in a previously established capital reserve fund for building renovations. The School Board recommends this article. (Majority vote required)

Ms. Titus made a motion to recommend Article 3. Ms. Fuller provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 4: Technology Capital Reserve Fund: To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the Technology Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The School Board recommends this article. (Majority vote required)

Ms. Fuller made a motion to recommend Article 4. Ms. Schwaner provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 5: Support Staff Collective Bargaining Agreement: To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the School Board and the Holderness Education Support Staff which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2024-2025	\$49,720
2025-2026	\$22,404
2026-2027	\$22,927

And further to raise and appropriate Forty-Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Twenty (\$49,720) for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. (Majority vote required.)

Ms. Schwaner made a motion to recommend Article 5. Mr. Stepp provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. Ms. Pearce provided some additional detail regarding the proposed increases. Ms. Titus asked if there were any additional questions. There being no further questions, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 6: Teachers Collective Bargaining Agreement: To see if the School District will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the School Board and the Holderness Education Association which calls for the following increase in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2024-2025	\$97,908
2025-2026	\$77,357
2026-2027	\$82,116
2027-2028	\$88,902

And further to raise and appropriate Ninety-Seven Thousand Nine Hundred Eight (\$97,908) for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels. (Majority vote required.)

Mr. Stepp made a motion to recommend Article 6. Ms. Titus provided a second. Ms. Pearce provided some detail on the step increases associated with the agreement. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 7: Fund Balance to Building Capital Reserve: To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) to be added to the School Building Capital Reserve Fund previously established. This sum to come from June 30 fund balance available for transfer on July 1. No amount to be raised from taxation. The School Board recommends this article. (Majority vote required)

Ms. Schwaner made a motion to recommend Article 7. Ms. Beardwood Smith provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Article 8: Operating Budget: To see if the School District will vote to raise and appropriate the budget committee's recommended amount of Four Million Nine Hundred Sixty-Four Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-Three Dollars (\$4,964,843) for the support of schools, for the payment of salaries for the school district officials and agents, and for the payment for the statutory obligations of the district. This article does not include

appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. The School Board recommends this article. (Majority vote required)

Mr. Stepp made a motion to recommend Article 8. Mr. Evans provided a second. Ms. Titus asked if there was any additional discussion. There being none, the committee voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Draft Minutes of the January 8, 2024 meeting – Ms. Schwaner made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 8, 2024 meeting. The Town Administrator mentioned that Ms. Titus had emailed a grammatical correction to him and he amended the minutes accordingly. Ms. Schwaner amended her motion. Mr. Evans provided a second. There being no further discussion the Committee voted 7-0 to approve the minutes of January 8, 2024 as amended.

Other Business – The Town Administrator mentioned that the proposed budgets and warrants will be posted on the Budget Committee page of the Town website. The public hearing on both will be on Wednesday, February 14, 2024 beginning at 6:30PM in the Holderness Central School cafeteria. After the hearing the Committee will take a final vote to send the operating budgets to the floor of the second session of Town Meeting on March 13, 2024.

There being no further business to come before the meeting, Ms. Schwaner made a motion to adjourn at 6:50PM. Mr. Stepp provided a second. There being no further discussion, the voted 7-0 in favor of the motion.

Respectfully Submitted,
Michael R. Capone
Town Administrator