

Selectboard Minutes

January 17, 2023

Present: Andy Artimovich, Chair
Jennifer Jones, Vice-Chair
Robert Mantegari
Russ Kelly

At 6pm, Artimovich called the meeting to order.

The Board reviewed payroll and accounts payable then signed the register.

Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to accept the consent agenda which consisted of public minutes from 01/10/2023, non-public sealed meeting minutes from 01/10/2023, recreation manifest, treasurer's report (found at the end of these minutes), and the following building permits:

- Roger & Johanna Goun, 88 Ole Gordon Road, Building
- Jan & Donna Jakubowski, 9 Homestead Lane, Electrical
- W/R 2015 Joint Rev Trust, 9 Block Drive, Electrical
- 3 Ponds LLC, 78 Three Ponds Drive, Building
- Jon Lariviere, 80 Three Ponds Drive, Building

All were in favor.

Karen Clement, Town Administrator, presented the board with the 2023-2024 Tax Map Maintenance contract with CAI in the amount of \$3,100. Mantegari motioned, seconded by Kelly, to sign the contract. All were in favor.

Clement requested expending funds from the Capital Reserve Fund for IT Hardware for two computers. Mantegari motioned, seconded by Kelly to expend \$2,429.99 for a desktop computer with a 27" monitor and speakers for the highway shed and a laptop for the Supervisor's of the Checklist. All were in favor.

Jack Mitchell, Budget Committee Chairperson, was present to speak to the board about Elderly Credits and Exemptions. Mitchell explained Brentwood has a "reasonably high median household income". He feels the town could do more to make tax relief available to elderly residents. Mitchell presented the board with proposals based on information gathered from 37 NH towns.

Jones asked for clarification on what the exemption is exactly. Mitchell explained the exemption would be off their assessed value. Mantegari responded it factors in the income level and assets of the resident. Artimovich added the asset amount does not include their primary residency. Mitchell explained it is a state program that allows the exemptions to be offered.

Mitchell explained he does not have the answers to how many residents could benefit from the proposed changes. Jones asked if there is an estimate. Clement responded there are currently 8 residents who qualify. She explained on any given year she will receive 1 or 2 applications. Clement went on to say some residents who come in for the application see the asset and income limitations and know right away they will not meet the criteria, so they opt to not take the paperwork.

Jones asked how the amounts were derived. She questioned if the exemption amount would be enough considering Brentwood is the 13th highest median household income in the state. Mitchell responded that he does not know the answer to that. He went on to explain in the 2020 census it was discovered 29 people in Brentwood are living in poverty based on the federal poverty definition. Mitchell recommended not going much beyond the numbers he proposed and reasoned that within a year or two, the board would know if the change in asset/income amounts made a difference in being able to assist more elderly residents than currently qualify. He explained more could be done in the future, if needed.

Jones stated she was in support of the asset and income changes and believes it is reasonable to put this in front of the voters. Artimovich stated he would like to bring the asset amounts down to \$200,000 opposed to the proposed \$225,000, making it closer to the median. Mantegari stated he could support the change in the asset amount. Jones asked Mitchell the reasoning behind the proposed numbers. Mitchell explained the survey was done in the summer based on the previous year's numbers making the numbers a little old. He also explained it was 2017 when the exemptions were last examined.

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Jones motioned to accept the elderly credit/exemption with the change of net income of \$50,000 for a single person, \$65,000 if married; assets of \$200,000; and the exemptions 65-75 years of age – \$125,000; 75-80 years of age – \$160,000; 80 and older – \$190,000 as a warrant article. Mantegari seconded the motion. All in favor.

Mantegari made a motion for a warrant article for the Veteran's credit to increase to \$750 exemption. Jones seconded the motion. In favor – 3; Opposed – 0; Abstained – 1.

Clement asked if the board wanted to address the exemption for the totally and permanently disabled credit under RSA 72:35. She explained the town currently offers a \$1,700 credit and the statute allows up to \$4,000. Jones asked how many people currently benefit from this exemption. Clement responded there are currently 11 residents receiving this credit. Jones noted Brentwood is lower than many other towns. Artimovich responded \$2,000 was the median.

Mantegari motioned to accept a warrant article to increase the credit for totally and permanently disabled directly related to service to \$2,000. Jones seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Clement explained the disabled exemption is currently \$62,500 with the criteria of single income of \$22,000; married income of \$33,000; and total assets of \$55,000. She further outlined the median is \$85,000 for the exemption, \$32,500 for single income, \$52,500 for married income limits, \$87,500 for single asset limits, and \$100,000 for married asset limits. The proposed is to increase the exemption to \$100,000, increase single income limits to \$45,000, married income limits to \$60,000, increasing single asset limits to \$125,000 and married asset limits to \$150,000, according to Clement. She explained there are currently 2 residents that qualify for this exemption. Clement also explained a resident cannot qualify for the disabled exemption and the elderly exemption.

Mantegari made a motion for a warrant article for the disabled exemption of \$100,000, increasing the single income limit to \$45,000, married income limit to \$60,000, and asset limits to \$125,000. Jones seconded the motion. All in favor.

Jones asked about the blind exemption. Clement responded historically the blind exemption lined up with the disabled exemptions. Jones motioned for a warrant article to have the blind exemption increase from \$62,500 to \$100,000 to match the disabled exemption. Mantegari seconded the motion. All were in favor.

Clement offered an update on the Communications Subcommittee. She explained they met last Thursday and plan to meet again this Thursday. They will be on the agenda next week to present some of their recommendations.

Liz McConnell, library trustee, was present to obtain some direction and advice from the board on the amphitheater project and its funding. McConnell was seeking direction on whether the funds could be obtained from a warrant article or if there was need for a bond. Artimovich asked what the cost of the project would be. McConnell was unsure of the final cost, as the landscape architecture firm just presented the trustees with information and no RFP's have been sent out yet, some items may be able to be reused such as the granite curbing, and some items will be either donated or fundraised for.

Mantegari asked when the project would occur. McConnell explained it would be a process because the parking lot is going to be redesigned, new sidewalks, and fencing installed in addition to the building of the amphitheater itself. Artimovich explained a warrant article would be for a project in the price range of \$200,000 and a bond would be for an expense higher than \$300,000. McConnell stated the amphitheater is urgent because of the safety aspect. Artimovich suggested a Capital Reserve Fund for the amphitheater and possibly using ARPA funds.

Artimovich requested McConnell meet with Clement to write up a warrant article for next week, in order for the budget committee to have the warrant articles for their meeting on January 30th.

Lois DeYoung, Crawley Falls Road, asked if another warrant article can be drafted in the event the amphitheater warrant article is voted down because of the safety hazard that exists. Mantegari stated the amount could be modified and voted on again at Town Meeting.

Kelly had no committee updates.

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Mantegari updated the board on Conservation Commission. He explained they are finalizing signs for the trails during mud season and should be coming before the board for approval soon. Mantegari stated there was concern from the Conservation Commission about an amount that was previously approved by the Selectboard, but the name of the company being utilized has changed. Mantegari wanted to make the board aware, but that no action was needed.

Jones wanted to follow-up on the school not feeling comfortable with all the elections being held at the school. She wanted to know the plan for moving forward and what the communication strategy will be. Clement responded the March election was approved use of the school facilities. She explained Daphne Woss, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, would like to see how the election goes, and wait until the new school board takes effect and then revisit the request.

Clement shared she spoke with Principal Kew and he has agreed to allow the use of the Steam Room, which is located next to the gym, for childcare being offered during Town Meeting. She explained there was some concern on Mr. Kew's part about the liability. Clement explained to him that Andy Gray is recruiting staffing for that day and they are all town employees therefore liability will not be on the school. Clement shared that seemed to be sufficient for him.

Artimovich had no committee updates.

Letty Bedard, Middle Road, speaking on behalf of herself and no board she sits on, stated she supports the exemptions for the elderly. She encouraged the board to look at the money paid to some town employees next year as the pay rates are less than exemptions given.

Jack Mitchell, budget committee chair, asked how information would be disseminated and publicized regarding the exemptions, if the warrant article passes. He suggested having information inside the next tax bills. Clement responded it would be posted on the town's website and Facebook page because the tax bills do not go out until July and the deadline for applying is April 15. She further explained that deadline is set by state statute. Artimovich suggested maybe sharing information at the next senior luncheon. Mantegari stated the information will also be discussed at Town Meeting.

Lois DeYoung, Crawley Falls Road, asked when the deadline is to apply. Artimovich responded that April 15 is the deadline to apply for this year.

At 6:57pm, Mantegari motioned, seconded by Jones, to go into non-public for legal. All were in favor.

At 7:07pm, Jones motioned to come out of nonpublic and seal the minutes from the non-public meeting. Mantegari seconded the motion. Jones – aye; Mantegari – aye; Kelly – aye; Artimovich – aye.

At 7:07pm, Jones made a motion, seconded by Mantegari to adjourn. All were in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Tamera Peek

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WEEKLY TREASURER'S REPORT

DATE:

1/17/2023

General Fund:

TD BANK

Previous Balance:	8,145,186.44		
Deposits:	27,352.92		
Payroll:	26,787.52	DDP: \$26,718.26	
		CHK: \$69.26	
FICA:	6044.44		
A/P:2022	56,484.53	Reg A/P Cks \$12,197.61	NHRS \$
A/P: 2023	193,197.61	Swasey \$181,000.00	CO-OP: \$
GF to Impact Fees			
Trans to Rec CC Pd			
Account Balance:	7,890,025.26		
Interest Earned YTD:			

Joyce A. Gallant, Treasurer

DRAFT