

Board of Selectman
April 21, 2020 Meeting
Via Zoom

Present: Angevine, Nelson, Papp
Regrets:
Recording: C Frisbie

Meeting was called to order at 5:06 pm by Angevine

1) Opening of Fire Truck Bids:

- a. Marion Body Works, INC \$ 581,000
- b. Gowans & Knight \$ 526,480
- c. KME Fire aka Bulldog Fire \$ 610,036.83
- d. Peirce Manufacturing \$ 561,519

Truck Bids will be given the WVFC Truck Committee for verification of package

2) Minutes: *Motion (Nelson/Papp) to accept the minutes of April 7, 2020 All Approved*

3) Additions to Agenda: *Motion (Angevine/Nelson) to Add (a) update building security (b) public comment All Approved*

4) Form a Committee for the Wasley Farm Property: Angevine would like to form a committee to research and gather information for the best uses for the property with volunteers from the Town and not the Selectmen Possible renting of home and property – Nelson stated that would need to go to a Town meeting – per the town ordinance *Motion (Angevine/Papp) to for/create a committee to make recommendations to the Selectmen on the use of the property All Approved* Question on the timeline of forming the committee and volunteers – Angevine has a few people at the moment, but each selectman should have a couple of volunteers interested – looking at a committee of 6

5) Property Tax – Executive Order 7S & 7W: Angevine read the EO 7S and called on H Perssonatt (tax collector) for explanation of the orders – 2 options a)deferment program b) low interest rate program Perssonatti has been working with the CT Tax Association, lawyers and Quality Data on recommendations to the towns. The deferment program would be most beneficial to residents. You cannot run one program and then the other - both programs end October 1, 2020. Tax payments in escrow are not exempt- they must be made on time. *Motion (Angevine/Nelson) that the municipality of Warren, approve the deferment program enabling the tax payers in our community, if needed, the 90 day extension of taxes. All Approved* Tax payers are encouraged to pay their taxes as usual if they can. Taxpayers do not have to apply for the deferment program with the tax collector. If taxpayers don't pay by October 2, 2020, the full interest rate of 6% at that time will be added to the amount owed. Past due taxes are not included in the deferment program, only current taxes.

6) Budget Workshop: Angevine wants to hold off because he hasn't reviewed the information. Nelson and Papp have reviewed the information requested by the BOF on salaries. Nelson feels the rate for Assistant Registrars should be readjusted to be brought into line with other towns *Motion (Nelson/Papp)to approve the salary increases with the correction of the Assistant Registrars receiving the 2% increase* Discussion followed Nelson, yes Papp, yes Angevine, no *Motion passes 2-1-0* Continued discussion on the budget: Line #76 Recycling to stay as is Line #91 Tree Removal – should be increased to \$30,000 due to the amount of Ash trees

that need to be removed Line #89 – Road Fund- Contact J Tanner (Foreman) to see what we might need for the next year if we don't get the Town Aid Road money from the State Line #60 – NWCOG: need to add \$1095 for 5 year mitigation program update (this is our town's portion of the fee)

- 7) **Public Comment:** Residents wanted to discuss the budget – Frisbie informed the Selectmen that this is a meeting of the Selectmen and they are the ones that discuss items on the agenda. Once the BOF has finalized the budget, residents will then have the right to ask questions or comment. Public Comment is a statement from the public per FOIA. At a town meeting, public comments, questions and discussion are welcomed. W Tammen read their statement into record
- 8) **Update of Building Security:** Nelson received a quote from Low Voltage Solutions for the installation of cameras at the Town Hall in the amount of \$6950 Contract needs to be signed and returned Berkshire Alarm has not sent a written quote, but a verbal for four (4) panic buttons for the Town Hall including installation will be under \$2000 closer to \$1500 Angevine would like to add a panic button to the Registrars Nelson is waiting for a quote for cameras and monitoring at the Community Center There is no security at the Academy and found the door open and the heat on. Pad locks will be installed on the doors until the pandemic is over. There was a question on the actual RSD6 budget and assessment credit. B Dinicola (BOE) will get the information for Frisbie Angevine is working on a zoom meeting with RSD6, BOF & BOE
- 9) **First Selectman's Report:** (a) updated us on the Governor's plan (b) K Castgnetta has taken the ZEO position with another town but has agreed to stay on a limited basis to help (c) attached letter from L Fedewa thanking first responders
- 10) Nelson wanted all to know that the Food Bank will continue to be open every Thursday until further notice. We are in need of cans of soup and coffee CERT team is making food and prescription deliveries: please contact Missy in Social Services if you are in need of any services. Deliveries are made to the door step of the resident's home. No one enters the home and all volunteers are equipped with masks, gloves, disinfectant, wipes, etc. Thank you to all the volunteers for their help

Motion (/Nelson/Papp) to adjourn at 6:37pm All Approved

Respectfully submitted,
Colleen Frisbie

Submitted attachments are available at the Town Hall, Town Clerk's Office

[Click here for meeting audio](#)

Please take note of our comment for today's meeting and please pass this on to the Chair of the Board of Finance for their meeting tomorrow.

Thank you!

Waltraud & Hermann Tammen

COMMENT BY HERMANN AND WALTRAUD TAMMEN

We are writing to you in regard to meetings by the Board of Selectmen on April 21 and the Board of Finance on April 22 in which the proposed 2020/2021 Warren Town budget will be discussed.

We have looked at the proposed budget numbers carefully and would like to be pro-active and make our opinion known at this time.

EXPENSES

We do not believe the proposed steep increases in expenses are wise and called for.

When many people face lay-offs or pay cuts, we should not increase salary expenditures. The proposed budget calls for an increase in salaries and benefits of over \$105,000.

Even if, and this is something that needs to be studied very carefully and shared with the public, it would turn out that salaries paid in Warren are less for comparable jobs than in neighboring towns, we should not be asked to raise salaries this much in one year.

Some of the positions should be reviewed. At a time when most likely there will be fewer activities for trips etc. an increase of \$10,000 is proposed for the Park & Rec position. With a salary of \$44,600 this would be the third-highest paid position in town.

INCOME

The town should be prepared to expect lower real estate tax revenues. With real estate values tumbling, it is very possible that owners will ask for a re-assessment, resulting in drastically lower real estate tax income.

Example based on the 2019/2020 budget:

Current real estate value \$382 M. Reduction by 20% = 306 M. At a mil rate of 14.25 this would result in a revenue loss of over \$1 M. Mil rate would need to be raised by 25% = 17.8 mil.

BOTTOM LINE

The proposed budget looks only balanced because expenses for Wamogo have declined by \$157,000. As we know, this can change, and in the future our share may be significantly be higher.

CONCLUSION

This is a time to batten down the hatches. Keep expenses and taxes low.

Hi Tim,

First and foremost, the town of Warren and its officials deserve recognition for the commendable work they have done in communicating critical information to ensure the welfare of the entire community over the past weeks – thank you.

There is an effort underway in northwestern CT to thank first responders for their incredible service to our communities during COVID-19. These first responders include police officers, volunteer and paid fire and ambulance services, and healthcare workers. The effort involves the collaboration of the CT Office of Rural Health, the Northwest CT Community Foundation, the Litchfield County Opiate Task Force, and other organizations and individuals. It involves ringing church bells, yard signs, and other campaigns of recognition and thanks.

Church bells have been ringing in Kent and, beginning tomorrow morning, in Warren at 9:11am. This is being done to widely acknowledge the selfless commitment of community-minded citizens who are so important to our towns. Yard signs are being produced now and will be distributed to firehouses over the next week.

We would greatly appreciate the assistance of your office in sharing this message of gratitude with Warren residents and with the officials of our neighboring towns. A PR initiative is being rolled out this week.

As this initiative spreads and the bells ring more widely and loudly, first responders throughout Litchfield County will start each day with the thanks that they deserve.

With gratitude for your leadership and support,
Lori