

**North Conway Water Precinct
Annual Meeting**
Saturday, May 8, 2021

Voting from 9:00AM to 1:00PM
Business Portion of the Meeting 1:00PM

North Conway Fire Department
70 Norcross Circle
North Conway, NH

Commissioners

John Santuccio (Board Chair)
Robert F. Porter
Suzanne Nelson

Superintendent

Jason Gagnon

Fire Department Chief

Patrick L. Preece

Treasurer

Robert T. Anderson

Clerk

Gary Chandler

Moderator

Donald Ekberg

Moderator Don Ekberg opened the meeting at 9:00AM.

Motion of Commissioner John Santuccio to open voting for Article 01: Election of Officers from 9:00AM to 1:00PM. Seconded by Commissioner Porter.

Motion Passed

Article 01: Election of Officers

To choose all necessary officers

Commissioner	3-year term 2024
Treasurer	1-year term 2022
Moderator	1-year term 2022
Clerk	1-year term 2022

Business Portion of the Annual Meeting started at 1:00PM.

Don Ekberg: I'm Don Ekberg and I'm the Moderator and I'm calling the Meeting of the North Conway Water Precinct in order. Article 1 which is the Election of Officers is by the ballot, and that should end now or for anybody that's still in the building. The first thing that we are going to do now that the meeting is open is have the Pledge of Allegiance. The Flag is over there. If everybody could rise please.

The Commission and crowd joined the Moderator in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Don Ekberg: And just a reminder about the mandatory silencing of electronic devices. Anybody who is a voter, member, is allowed to speak and when you come, could you please use the microphone and could you please give your name so everybody knows who you are. Now, there should be a motion, if somebody wants to make that, to **allow Precinct Superintendent Jason Gagnon, Precinct Attorney Steve Bennett and Precinct Accountant Tammy Letson...** is she here?...

Suzanne Nelson: She is.

Don Ekberg: Ahh, ok... **and Precinct Business Administrator Hannah Andersen to speak.** So, does anybody want to make that motion?

Tim Anderson: I'll make the Motion.

Robert Porter: Second!

Suzanne Nelson: Excuse me, I would like to add Allan Clarke to that...

Don Ekberg: I'm sorry, what?

Suzanne Nelson: I'd like to **add Allan Clarke to that list.**

Don Ekberg: And who?

Suzanne Nelson: Allan Clarke.

Don Ekberg: and Allan Clarke is who?

Suzanne Nelson: He's the Project Manager.

Don Ekberg: Oh, the Project Manager! Yeh, I'm sure we want to hear from him. Of course. Ok, so moved by Mr. Anderson, and was there a second? Second by Mr. Porter. All in favor of said motion, say aye. Opposed? **Motion carries.**

Don Ekberg: So, we will go right into, while they're counting the ballots, we'll go right into the Articles. If anybody needs a copy of the Articles, I think they're in the books in back and I will read all the Articles starting with **Article 2, which is Long Term Debt.** To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate... incidentally, can everybody hear me alright, this coming through the way it is? Yup. Ok. Thank you...will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,833,607 for the retirement of outstanding bonds, notes, interest, and temporary loan interest for the ensuing year. This article will be offset by grant revenues estimated to be \$376,645 and Sewer Funds in the amount of \$522,728 and the remainder to be raised by general taxation. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion on that? Is there a motion on that?

Suzanne Nelson: I will move to place Article 2 on the floor.

Don Ekberg: Is there a second?

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Second by Mr. Porter. Jason Gagnon will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Ok, so, no real changes or shocks here. Really the biggest difference from last year is that we have the addition of the Fire Station Bond which was not on the payment schedule last year. We do have some good news though for this and that is; our Bond Sale for refinancing a large number of bonds that we had outstanding was had on Thursday. And we got the results back and it looks like we're going to be saving a million fifty-three thousand dollars over the next twenty years. So, very positive results.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Is there was anybody who wishes to speak on this Article 2. Seeing no hands are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 2 say aye. *Room filled with responding ayes.* Opposed? **Article 2 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 03: Operating Budget - General Fund

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$118,555 for the General Fund (Commissioners) operating budget, not including other appropriations voted separately for the ensuing year. This is a tax funded article.

[Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0] Is there a motion to place this on the floor?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to put Article 3: Operating Budget - General Fund on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second

Don Ekberg: Second by Mr. Porter. Jason will also address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Alright, thank you. No real changes this year. It's a standard Commissioners Budget. The one main change is that we have removed the special articles for the Schouler Park Skating Rink and the North Conway Public Library and those are now their own special articles again, like they were in the past, rather than being part of the Commissioners budget.

Don Ekberg: Is there anybody who wishes to speak on Article 3? Seeing no hands, are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 3 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 3 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 04: Operating Budget - Water Department

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,317,517 for the operating budget of the water department for the ensuing year to be offset by water usage fees and revenues with no amount to be raised through general taxation. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3-0-0]

Don Ekberg: Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: Motion to put Article 4: Operating Budget - Water Department on the floor.

Don Ekberg: Second. Jason will also address this article.

Jason: Thank you. So with this Article and also Article 5 there are no major changes. We've been pretty conservative with our revenue estimates this year. Not knowing what's going to happen with tourism activity which drives our commercial billing for water and sewer. So we've been pretty conservative as far as predicting those revenues. We do have two sort of larger projects going on in the water department this year that are somewhat time sensitive. One is the Watermain for North South Road which is an extension to help give us a complete loop from the north end to the south end and that needs to be done this year because of impending development along North South Road with a round-about for the Market Basket project and the potential development of the spot next to Michael's and Petsmart for Tractor supply. And the other one is in conjunction with our Well #2 project which you'll hear about later. We are taking the opportunity to, while the Scada folks are in house anyways, Scada is the computer system that runs our entire water and sewer system, while they're here anyway doing the Well #2 work, we're going to get them to update some of our out-of-date IT infrastructure on the water side.

Don Ekberg: Is there was anybody who wishes to speak on Article 4?

Karen Umberger: Jason, how much was water usage down last year?

Jason: So, water usage was actually not down as much as sewer usage was. So, if you look at our water billing last year versus the 4-year average, it was down about \$70,000. We did however, that's for actual water use. Construction activity is up in the Valley so we did actually have some, what we call, service billing, where we sell parts and pieces, and things like that, that was up and that kind of offset it so it's almost an exact wash over the last 4 or 5 years for average. But it was also a dry year so we used a lot of water for irrigation and that's money that you can't count on every year because you never know what the weather is going to do.

Karen Umberger: Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Anybody else wishes to speak on Article 4? Seeing no hands are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 4 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Opposed? **Article 4 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 05: Operating Budget – Sewer Department

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,840,680 for the operating budget of the sewer department for the ensuing year to be offset by sewer usage fees and revenues with no amount to be raised through general taxation.

[Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]

Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 5: Operating Budget - Sewer Department on the floor.

Don Ekberg: Is there a second?

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and Seconded. Jason will address this article ... which I think he already did.

Jason: Sure. In addition to the kind of conservative nature of our revenue estimates for this year, you'll notice there is actually an increase in the operating budget. That increase in the operating budget is related to the additional \$130,000 we've added to the Capital Contribution. So if you remember last year we, as part of the Fire Station, we also elected to go ahead and expand the solar array at the wastewater treatment facility. The idea being that the savings from that solar array would then be used to offset long-term debt associated with the fire station. So that \$130,000 increase in the sewer budget is actually that savings from the electricity going toward capital contribution that is then coming over to help offset

long term debt. So, the actual operating budget outside of that capital contribution is, the net increase over last year is only, let's see, \$73,602. So, when you take out that \$130,000 contribution the actual sewer operating budget did actually go down for 2021.

Don Ekberg: Anybody wish to speak on Article 5?

Karen Umberger: Thank you. Karen Umberger. It appears that we did not do any meter changeouts last year. Was that because of Covid? Or was that because of something else?

Jason: No, so I've been playing a little bit of a game of chicken with the meter supplier. It's been in the budget now for a couple of years. When we agreed to the pricing with the new meter supplier they were just about to release their updated meters and I got them to agree to give us the new style meters for the same price as the old style meters and the new style meters have a couple of benefits that I think are pretty helpful for the Precinct. But because of Covid they have been delayed in production of the new meters which is why we haven't gotten them yet. So we are, we did just order our first, I think we ordered 170 of them, so those should be in soon and we will get underway with that soon.

Karen Umberger: I'm anxious to see that occur. My other question is that you're showing REC Sale Funds at 30,000?

Jason: For moving forward. Yup.

Karen Umberger: So you expect the new solar array to be ready and be able to produce that amount of...

Jason: Yeh, so we had a little bit of a delay last year through New Hampshire DES with the approval of our alteration of terrain permit to begin construction so we weren't able to begin construction until I think it was the end of October. They worked diligently. We got lucky with construction weather. It was bad for the ski areas but good for construction for the solar panels. The solar array has actually been ready to come online since the end of February. We've been waiting on the CoOp and they have one little piece of work that they need to do, and they finally installed their new pole and did their switch work Thursday and Friday of this past week. So the only thing that remains now is for the representative of the CoOp to come out and do the witness test and fire up the panels. So I'm optimistic that they'll be online this week.

Karen Umberger: Great. Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Is there any further discussion on Article 5? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 5 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 5 Passes.**

Article 06: Operating Budget – Fire Department

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$661,896 for the operating budget of the fire department for the ensuing year. This is a tax funded article. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0] Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 6: Operating Budget- Fire Department on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Pat Chief Preece will address this article.

Pat Preece: Thank you very much. Presently the budget went up 2.6%. A lot of that has to do with... can everybody hear me ok? Hello? The budget went up 2.6%. The major cost is going to be electricity delta for the new building when we start taking it over so there's some cost that we had to incorporate into the new budget. Fortunately, the new station, when it comes online, maintenance cost we didn't have to raise an appropriate much over last years because most everything will be under a 12-month warranty and service package. So, I'll answer any other questions. Last year we were able to turn money back, not because we wanted to but we could get some of our equipment tested because the third parties that come here would not travel state to state for testing purposes and things of that nature.

Don Ekberg: Is there any other discussion or anyone else who wishes to speak on Article 6? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 6, say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 6 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 07: Appropriation Capital Reserve Funds

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$459,861 to be added to the following Capital Reserve Funds previously established. \$13,062 to come from Water fund balance, \$115,000 to come from water usage fees and revenues, \$51,799 to come from Sewer fund balance, \$55,000 to come from sewer usage fees and revenues, and \$225,000 to come from general taxation. In your packet there is a breakdown of the Capital Reserve Fund and this is recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0. Is there a motion to place this on the floor?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 7: Appropriation of Capital Reserve Funds on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Jason will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Thank you. So these are all our standard Capital Reserve Contributions. The only one that is not here that is usually here and that is the Green Energy Capital Reserve. So that's the money that we used to get from the Renewable Energy Credits, that was deposited into the Green Energy Capital

Reserve. So this year we've included those REC proceeds in the projected savings for the Solar Array. So that's part of that Capital Contribution moving over. We're hoping that our projections for savings on the Solar Array are very conservative and that we may actually see more than that. If that's the case, then we can talk about moving those REC funds back into a Capital Reserve in the future but given that this year it's starting, the solar array is starting up almost half way through the year, and we don't have any history with it, I think it's safe to keep that money in play, really, for that Capital Contribution, rather than moving it to the Capital Reserve Fund.

Don Ekberg: Is there anyone else who wishes to speak on Article 7? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 7 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? 7 carries. **Article carries.**

Motion of Commissioner Nelson and seconded by Commissioner Porter to place the article on the floor.

Don Ekberg:

Article 08: Use of Commissioners Fund Balance to Offset State Aid Grant Revenue Shortfall

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$228,806 for the purpose of payment of the retirement of outstanding bonds, notes, interest, and temporary loan interest for the ensuing year in the event that State Aid Grant payments are suspended in the 2022 – 2023 State of New Hampshire biennial budget. This appropriation is contingent upon the suspension of State Aid Grant payments in the approved 2022 – 2023 State of New Hampshire biennial budget. If State Aid Grant payments are not suspended in the approved 2022 – 2023 State of New Hampshire biennial budget the funds appropriated in this Article will not be used for this purpose and shall be available for the purpose of Article 09, should Article 09 also be approved by voters. Funding for this article will come from Commissioners General Fund balance,--phone rings--, I don't even listen to myself half the time—Don Ekberg silences phone—I hate these things--with no amount to be raised by taxation. About 23 minutes in. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Could I have a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I will move to put Article 8: Use of Commissioners Fund Balance to Offset State Aid Grant Revenue Shortfall on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Jason will also address this article.

Jason Gagnon: So this article here is really a 'cover our back sides' article. So, we have an obligation to pay our debts, any of the projects that we've done that have required borrowing, we have to make those payments every year. Also, each year, for many of those projects, we anticipate receiving State Aid Grant funding and what that is is funding that comes directly from the State of New Hampshire to offset the

cost of that debt. In this year's budget process it's unclear whether or not the State will make those payments yet. So we don't know. If for some reason the State does not make those State Aid Grant payments, we still have to pay our debt, but if we don't appropriate that money, legally we can't pay it. So what this article does is it takes existing Commissioners fund Balance and it allocates it in case we don't get that State Aid Grant payment. Basically to cover that difference. So if State Aid Grant payments are included in the Biennial Budget, then we won't need to use it for this purpose and we can use it for the purpose of Article 9.

Don Ekberg: Yes, sir?

Tim Anderson: This isn't the first year I've had to stand up and say this same thing over and over again. The little part Jason forgot to mention is that we have a signed contract with the State of New Hampshire that starts "We shall pay...". The State. So, here we are again. We went through this in 2007,2008,2009 and 2010, of not getting paid and having to raise our own money. I just want it on the record that personally I'm not very happy with our State. As long as we keep going through this, I'm going to keep saying it. Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Anybody else wish to speak on Article 8? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 8 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 8 passes.** Has the voting been tabulated? Any time that you're ready you can just bring it up. We'll move on to **Article 9 then...**

Use of Commissioners Fund Balance for Payoff of SRF Note 30: Skyline / Crown Ridge Sewer Contingent Upon Receipt of State Aid Grant Payment

Okay...thank you...To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$510,000 to pay off the remaining balance of SRF Note #30 (Skyline / Crown Ridge Sewer Project). This payoff will only occur if State Aid Grant payments are included in the 2022 – 2023 State of New Hampshire biennial budget and the appropriation of \$228,806 in Article 08 is not needed. Funding for this article will come from Commissioners General Fund balance, with no amount to be raised by taxation. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 9 Use of Commissioners Fund Balance for Payoff of SRF Note 30: Skyline / Crown Ridge Sewer Contingent Upon Receipt of State Aid Grant Payment on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Jason will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Like I said in the last one, if the State Aid Grant Payments are included in the State's Biennial Budget, then we don't need that fund balance to make our debt payments and we can continue the Precinct's efforts to reduce it's long term debt by paying off the Note 30 which is the work for Skyline

and Crown Ridge Sewer. So, we have the fund balance available in the Commissioners fund to be able to do this. Again, just another step that we're trying to take to reduce our Long Term Debt.

Don Ekberg: Yes?

Karen Umberger: Karen Umberger. So, am I of the understanding that even if the 228 is used for Article 8, we still have an additional 510 to put against that note? That was very confusing to me, I'm sorry.

Jason Gagnon: Yeh, it is confusing and we went through this with, these two article specifically with the Department of Revenue Administration and our Attorney to make sure that they were worded, even if they weren't crystal clear, at least they were legally correct. So, if we do need to use the money in Article 8 to offset the State Aid Grant payment, then the money is not available for article 9 because the State's biennium budget is a two-year budget. So, we will have approximately, that 228,806 shortfall in the remainder of calendar year 2021, but we'll also have another \$350,000 shortfall in calendar year 2022 because the State's biennial budget is over 2 state fiscal years. So, we don't want to use any of that left over money to pay off a note knowing that we'll need it in future years to offset the State Aid grant.

Robert T. Anderson: so the long and short is that you're screwing us over.

Karen Umberger: Don't blame me.

Robert T. Anderson: Oh, I'm not!

Karen Umberger: I was not in favor of that as a matter of fact. In case you were wondering...okay...so, what you're saying is if we get the State Aid grant for both 8 and 9, then we will not use any of the money that is currently sitting in the Commissioners budget?

Jason Gagnon: So, if we do get the State Aid grant payment from the State, then we don't need to use the money for Article 8 and instead we will use it for Article 9. So Article 9 is conditional upon what we do with Article 8. So if we don't get the State Aid grant payments, then we need to use that money in Article 8 and we won't do Article 9.

Karen Umberger: Oh, you will not?

Jason Gagnon: We will not do Article 9.

Karen Umberger: Ok.

Jason Gagnon: So Article 9 will only happen if we do get the State Aid grant payments.

Karen Umberger: And...does this... if the grant money comes in, does it pay off that particular note?

Jason Gagnon: Yup. Article 9, it's like \$509,000 and change right now so that \$510,000 will completely pay off that note.

Karen Umberger: Ok. Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Anybody else wish to address Article 9? Are you ready for the question? All in favor of Article 9 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 9 passes.**

Don Ekberg: Here are the vote tallies:

Commissioner- 3-year term, Suzanne Nelson, 20 votes

Moderator - Ekberg, 20 votes

Treasurer - Anderson, 21

Clerk - Chandler, 19

Those are the elected.

Don Ekberg:

Article 10: Additional Well 2R Project Funding

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to authorize the sum of \$400,000 for Well 2R project to include construction, construction engineering, and equipment for the Control Building; installation of water main; purchase and installation of the well pump, motor, column, and well appurtenances; and electrical and communications infrastructure from the Control Building to the well. Funding for this article will be as follows: \$260,000 shall come from Water fund balance and \$140,000 shall come from the Water Capital Reserve Fund, with no amount to be raised by taxation. This article further authorizes the Board of Commissioners to accept federal, state, or local grant funds or other funding contributions to offset this amount.

[Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there an article? I mean a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 10: Additional Well 2R Project Funding on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second

Don Ekberg: Moved and Seconded. Jason will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Okay, so, Well Number two was originally lost in 2011 during tropical storm Irene and the Precinct has been working since that time to replace it. The original Article, I think for the Control Building... I think there were actually three different articles that were approved through the years and the short of it is that we are out of funding for that. The reasons for that being that 1) The length of time that it has taken to get the project to get the project to bid and to construction. We had some engineering challenges. So specifically, the funds in this article are broken down approximately in this way: so we did receive bids for the construction of the control building in early February. Our low bid 260,000 higher than what we had allocated and in the control building funding project. We were very fortunate that we were able to get the contractor to agree to hold their pricing in March pending this funding being approved here at Annual Meeting. He was able to pre-order a lot of his materials sort of

in good faith knowing that the Precinct wanted to move forward with this project. As anybody knows just by walking into Lowes or Home Depot, the price of a 2x4 has just about tripled since February, and they're still holding their price. So, I feel very fortunate about that. We are also going to be using about \$140,000 for Capital Reserve, Water Capital Reserve, and what that will pay for is the \$82,000 for the electrical feed from the control building out to the well. That will be electrical, conduit, communications lines... it will also pay for the roughly \$35,000 for the actual well pump, the well motor, the piping within the well column and the raw water main to get from the well to the control building. So, the electrical, the pump motor, and the raw water main we all have firm pricing on. That all went out to bid and we got the pricing back recently so we feel very comfortable with those numbers. And the short of it is that if this funding isn't approved, then the Well #2 project doesn't move forward and it sits there until some point in the future when we would have to re-bid it and then reallocate some money based on those future prices.

Don Ekberg: Is there anybody who wishes to speak on Article 10? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of Article 10 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 10 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 11: Water Asset Management Project

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to authorize the sum of \$40,000 for the purpose of Asset Management for the Water distribution system, to be offset by a \$20,000 grant from the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services and \$20,000 to come from water revenues. This article authorizes the Commissioners of the North Conway Water Precinct to enter into and approve a grant agreement with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services in the amount of \$20,000 to the North Conway Water Precinct and authorizes Superintendent Jason Gagnon to sign paperwork associated with such grant on behalf of the Precinct. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to put Article 11: Water Asset Management Project on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Jason will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Thank you. So this is the standard water asset management project that we've had for the last few years so the State has indicated that they want to be a partner in helping communities get a better hold on the condition and maintenance and operation of their infrastructure so if, as communities are willing to invest in some of that technology and some of that infrastructure planning, the state provides 50% grant, up to \$40,000. So, we try and max that out every year that we can get the State to purchase half of what we should be doing out there anyway. This is the article that was on the ballot last year but because Annual Meeting was held so late, we missed the deadline for the State Fiscal year. So, it's the same work that was in the article last year that we will be doing this year.

Don Ekberg: Anybody wish to speak on Article 11? Yes, sir?

Robert Anderson: Tim Anderson. So, there's no chance they're going to back out of paying this one is there?

Jason Gagnon: No. No, this one is a, this one comes, it's basically federally backed, so this one comes through the SRF program, so it's a federally backed grant specifically for Asset Management.

Don Ekberg: Anybody else wish to address Article 11? Are you ready for the question? All in favor of Article 11 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article 11 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 12: Rescue 1 Replacement

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$555,486 for replacement of the Rescue 1 vehicle of the North Conway Fire Department. Funding for this article will come from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve, with no amount to be raised by taxation. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0].

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 12: Rescue 1 Replacement on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Chief Preece will address this article.

Robert Anderson: Mr. Moderator, Tim Anderson.

Don Ekberg: Yes.

Robert Anderson: I'd like to make an amendment to this. I'd like to amend it from \$555,486 to \$600,000, an increase of \$44,514. The reason for that is that we talked to the manufacturer this morning and the steel prices on that truck went up 8% on us.

Don Ekberg: Is that a motion?

Robert Anderson: That's a motion, please.

Don Ekberg: Is there a second to that motion?

Nick Preece: Second.

Don Ekberg: Ok. There's a second out there. Ok, now, Chief, you want to address it?

Patrick Preece: Yeh, unfortunately we just got the phone call about 10 minutes prior to the meeting that the pricing had a 3% increase and we've got another 5% coming in the next very short time. We won't be able to have the 8% increase, there's no way that with this warrant article that we could buy the truck for that money. So, we need the additional money. And we do have the money in the capital reserve at this time, it would leave us with \$32,000... wait a minute...\$232,000 because you guys just approved the warrant article already for the truck replacement.

Don Ekberg: Anybody wish to speak on the amendment? Are you ready for a vote on the amendment? All in favor of amending Article 12 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? Does anybody wish to speak on the original article? All in favor of Article 12 as amended say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? No. **Article passes as amended.** Better buy it this afternoon before it goes up again!

Don Ekberg:

Article 13: Fire Department Radio System Work

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will raise and appropriate the sum of \$55,000 for the purpose of upgrades to improve the reliability of the North Conway Fire Department radio system as required following recent Town of Conway communications system upgrades, and to authorize the Board of Commissioners to accept federal, state, or local grant funds or other funding contributions to offset this amount. This is a tax funded article. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Can I have a motion please?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 13: Fire Department Radio System Work on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Chief Preece?

Patrick Preece: Thank you. I've got to stand. As everybody knows, the Town of Conway if you've not known, improved the radio system throughout the Town of Conway and areas where they were having troubles before. With the change they changed our transmitting site, by changing our transmitting site, we lost a lot of radio ability. So, there's times even in this new building where the tone goes off....) can everybody hear me? There's times when the new system creates a hinderance for us, when we are not going our tones, and the reliability is not there. So, we have to improve the system back where we can

get radio coverage back to our area. So, we are applying with the department of Safety and other places for grant funding to offset this.

Don Ekberg: Does anybody else wish to address article 13? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of 13 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **13 carries.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 14: Abutting Property Restoration for Fire Station Project

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will raise and appropriate the sum of \$80,000 for the purpose of restoring the pavement of the adjacent North Conway Country Club's parking lot and pavement and landscaping of Conway Scenic Railroad property that was damaged to a much greater extent than anticipated in the Fire Station project budget. Funding for this article will come from existing fund balance, with no amount to be raised through taxation. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place **Article 14: Abutting Property Restoration for Fire Station Project** on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and Seconded. Chief Preece?

Patrick Preece: I'll answer questions if anyone has any on this.

Don Ekberg: Yes, Sir?

Wayne Byer: I wonder why the contractor who built the fire station not responsible for the damage that was caused here?

Don Ekberg: Does somebody wish to address that?

Patrick Preece: The North Conway Water Precinct was the one who requested the use of the property to use for the staging area.

Wayne Byer: And not the contractor?

Patrick Preece: No.

Wayne Byer: But it was the contractor's equipment and the contractor's employees vehicles that used the parking lot right?

Don Ekberg: Anybody else wish to address Article 14? Any further discussion on 14? Yes, sir.

Tim Anderson: The only statement I got to make on that is that any projects this Precinct has done over the 64 years I've lived here, if the Precinct and any of their projects has caused damage or anything else, we've always put it back better than we've left and I think that's what the goal is here. In all of the meetings that I was involved in, this project has been going on since 09', heavily in the last year, we had an agreement with the Country Club that we would fix any damage that was done. We didn't get a contract with them but we had a handshake agreement that we would put it back the way we found it, and at this point we're going to put it back a lot better than where it was when we started. Thank you.

Suzanne Nelson: Yeh, we have kind of a long-standing policy if we break it, we fix it. We had no idea of the construction of their parking lot. I don't think anybody did. It was put together a long time ago and it didn't quite follow the procedures that you would use today. Therefore, there was a lot more damage than anybody anticipated. The Country Club and the Railroad have been phenomenal neighbors for us for this project. It was not easy for them. We took their parking, wrecked their parking lot, I mean they were just really patient, and they support us totally and I think this is a small amount to pay to bring them back whole. Actually, it's going to look a lot better than it did before and I think this is important. We break it, we fix it.

Don Ekberg: Anybody else wish to address Article 14? Are you ready for the question? All in favor of 14 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **14 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 15: Appropriation to North Conway Public Library

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the purpose of supporting the programs of the North Conway Public Library. This is a tax funded article. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 15: Appropriation to North Conway Public Library on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Pretty Straightforward. Does anybody have anything to say on...yes, sir?

Scott Gleason: I just came here as a representative. My name is Scott Gleason. I came here as a representative of the North Conway Public Library, to known in the future as the Pope Memorial Library, to thank the Water Precinct for the past help and especially ask for continuing help in the future. This

money has helped immensely with the operations costs and so forth, and I'm sure everybody here has seen the additions onto the Library and how beautiful it is and they've kept the same look and feel of the original building. To give you a little background, the construction costs totaled \$3.9 Million. Lyman Pope donated \$3 Million so we still need to raise almost a million dollars. So, this \$10,000 is going to help a lot with the operations. I especially want to thank the North Conway Water Precinct Members for giving us this money and voting to appropriate it in the past and hopefully continuing into the future. And especially for the North Conway Water Precinct personnel who do a fantastic job of maintaining and supplying us with high quality water. I think if you all remember the Water Boy, it was called high quality H2O, so you might use that in your marketing. The other thing is that I can't believe anybody would come into North Conway and bring bottled water. It's just amazing.

Don Ekberg: I think that's unanimous. Is there anybody else who wishes to address Article 15? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of 15 say aye.

Room filled with responding ayes.

Don Ekberg: Opposed? **Article passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 16: Appropriation to Schouler Park Skating Rink

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,750 for the purpose of supporting the programs of the Schouler Park Skating Rink. This is a tax funded article. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 16: Appropriation to Schouler Park Skating Rink on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Also pretty straight forward. Does anybody wish to address 16? Yes, Sir?

Robert T. Anderson: Does anyone in this room have any idea what programs this \$6,750 is going to? Can you explain them to me, Karen?

Don Ekberg: Yes, Sir?

Jim Umberger: My name is Jim Umberger. Way back when there was an organization that did the skating rink, I can't remember exactly what it was...

Robert Anderson: The Outing Club.

Jim Umberger: The Outing Club. And then when they decided they didn't want to do it anymore, the Town agreed to take it over with the help of the North Conway Water Precinct. We've been making this

contribution now for numerous years. We keep the skating rink on, and I urge for you to vote for it again.

Don Ekberg: Anybody else wish to address 16? Just a minute, Tim. Anybody that hasn't spoken yet wish to address 16? Ok.

Robert Anderson: I understand exactly what you said Jim. And I agree with everything he said. The question was, what programs? I drive by that skating rink almost daily in the winter time and I'm going to be out spoken here but I'm going to say that thing wasn't open half the time. I'd like to make an amendment to article 16. I'd like to change that \$6,750 to \$0.

Don Ekberg: There's a motion on the floor to change the \$6,750 to \$0. Is there a second to that motion?

Craig France: I will.

Don Ekberg: Is that a second? There's a second in the back. **So, the motion is to amend Article 16 from \$6,750 to \$0.** Is there any discussion on that amendment?

Karen Umberger: I'm Karen Umberger and I am totally opposed to the North Conway Water Precinct not helping to provide ice skating in the Schouler Park. I realize that at 8:00 in the morning there's probably not going to be a lot of people ice skating but there are people ice skating on the weekends, after school, and it is the kind of thing that makes North Conway in particular, unique. Because we do have the old fashioned, if that's the right term, skating rink so that kids have a place to go without paying money. And I think it's important that we keep this option for recreation available, not only to our local children, but also to any visitors that we might have. So, please vote against reducing the amount of this article to zero. Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Is there anybody who has not spoken yet that wishes to? Yes. Could you address the mic, please and identify yourself?

Tom Eastman: I'm not a voter. This is Tom Eastman.

Don Ekberg: Hold on...

Tom Eastman: Tom Eastman; the Conway Daily Sun.

Suzanne Nelson: I don't think he can speak...

Don Ekberg: Hold on. Can he speak without being a voter?

Tom Eastman: I just had a point...

Don Ekberg: Just a minute please.

Suzanne Nelson: Can I make a motion for him to speak?

Don Ekberg: Before a Non-Voter can speak there needs to be a motion to approve that. So, do you wish to make the motion?

Tim Anderson: Can't have a motion on top of a motion.

Tom Eastman: Oh, ok.

Don Ekberg: Wait a minute... yes sir?

Steve Bennett: There is a motion on the floor.

Don Ekberg: There is a motion on the floor so we have to address the amendment to the motion. You wish to address the Amendment?

Suzanne Nelson: Yeh, I don't want to go out there and tell my granddaughters that they can't come and skate at Schouler Park because the North Conway Precinct could not come up with \$6,750. The skating rink is used. You may not see them when you come into work but even if it's used, you know, just by some kids it is worth it. I grew up with the Weirs and we had a skating rink at the Weirs and the local kids were out there skating all the time. I can't say no to the kids and I suspect Tom may have wanted to make the same comments.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Is there anybody who has not spoken yet on either the amendment or the motion who wishes to speak? Ok.

Tim Anderson: I want to say that I grew up here in this town skating on the skating rink when the outing club ran it. The Outing Club did a very good job doing it. We turned it over to the Town for unfortunate reasons. The first thing they did is take the boards away so now you're skating on a 2x12 wall that all I do is see kids out there pushing buckets and egg crates around. I still don't understand why the Town of Conway can't take this on themselves. We support it. I've been supporting this forever and I just think it's time for the Town to step up and then put their \$6,750 in. We're playing by their rules anyway. We have no say in it, we're just giving money away.

Robert Porter: I move the question.

Don Ekberg: The question has been moved. Is there a second to moving the question?

Tim Anderson: There's no second on moving...

Don Ekberg: The question has been moved. We will vote on the amendment. All in favor of the amendment, say aye. Opposed? We're voting on the amendment now. The amendment says to put it down to zero. If you vote yes, you're voting to put it to zero. If you're voting no, you're putting, you're voting against putting it to zero. So, all in favor of the amendment?

Just Anderson: Could we have a show of hands?

Don Ekberg: Wait a minute. All in favor of the amendment? Yes. A show of hands. One. Opposed? More than one. **The Amendment fails.** Are you ready for the underlying motion which is to fund it for \$6,750? Any further discussion on the underlying amendment? All in favor of Article 16 for the \$6,750 say aye. Opposed? **Article 16 passes with \$6,750.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 17: Ratify Auditor

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will rescind ratification of Roberts and Greene CPAs as the Precinct auditor for the calendar year of 20 and ratify Plodzik & Sanderson as the Precinct auditor for the calendar years 20 and 21. [Recommended by the Board of Commissioners 3 – 0 – 0]. Is there a motion?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 17: Ratify Auditor on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Jason will address this article.

Jason Gagnon: Thank you. So, if you read the papers at all last fall, you might have read an article about how the State could not set the tax rate for the Town of Conway because they were still waiting on information from the Precinct. That information was from the Precinct's Auditor primarily and because of that, that's why the tax rate was set so late last year. I think all of us here who work with the auditors on a daily basis appreciate them as people but I think they've got probably a little bit more on their plate than they can handle and it's been a pattern where they have become later and later with their deliverables for us. So, at this point and time I think it's a good move for the Precinct to switch to a different auditor. We did put out an RFQ earlier this year for auditing firms, not intending really to change auditors for 2020 but one of the best proposals we received also included a proposal to take over for this year as well. It's actually less money than what we were paying the previous firm and Plodzik & Sanderson is the firm we are recommending. They're currently the auditor for the Town of Conway. They're in town anyway. To our knowledge, they've done an excellent job with the Town of Conway and it makes sense just to use the same auditor.

Don Ekberg: Is there anyone else who wishes to address Article 17? Are you ready for the vote? All in favor of 17 say aye. Opposed? **17 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 18: Borrowing Against Credit of Precinct

To see if the voters of the North Conway Water Precinct will vote to allow the Commissioners to borrow against the credit of the Precinct such sums of money as may be necessary in anticipation of taxes, bond sales, water, and sewer bills as permitted in Section 6 of the Precinct Charter.

Tim Anderson: I'll make it...

Suzanne Nelson: I move...

Don Ekberg: Is there a motion to place it on the floor?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 18: Borrowing Against Credit on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: She's on a roll, Tim. Anybody wish to address Article 18? Are you ready for the question? All those in favor of Article 18 say aye. Opposed? **18 passes.**

Don Ekberg:

Article 19: Act upon any other Business

To act upon any other business which may legally come before this meeting.

Is there any motions on Article 19?

Suzanne Nelson: I move to place Article 19: Act Upon any other Business on the floor.

Robert Porter: Second.

Don Ekberg: Moved and seconded. Anybody have any new business under 19? Yes.

Karen Umberger: Thank you, Mr. Moderator. Karen Umberger. I just want to make sure that our Capital Reserve account for our Energy, the Green, the REC's and those things, the money that was supposed to go in there so that we would have dollars to improve our energy facilities, or improve the energy, that that Capital Reserve has not gone away. And that we are using it for the purpose that it was originally established. And the reason that I brought this up is because we're showing the REC money going directly into the budget rather than going into the Capital Reserve account and then being removed from the Capital Reserve account to be placed in the budget or in whatever needed to be done. So I'm a little concerned that we are kind have circumventing what this particular Capital Reserve Account was established for. And I know that this might not be the right place to discuss that but I will come to one of your meetings sometime when I've got a Wednesday off to ask you to provide me with a complete explanation of what is going on with this particular Capital Reserve Account. Thank you.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. That's not in the form of a motion but does anybody wish to address that?

Jason Gagnon: I can address that real quick. So we had about \$95,000 in that Capital Reserve account before this year and I believe \$90,000 of it was allocated toward the construction of the new solar array. So up until this point, it has served it's exact purpose of those REC proceeds were put into that Capital Reserve Fund and then they were used for their intended purpose which is investment in future green energy in the form of these solar panels. I think this year is kind of a special case just because we anticipated that the system was going to be online by the end of 2020 and because of delays at the State level with the review and now further delays from the Co-Op getting their end of the business done, we find ourselves here in the middle of May before the Solar Array comes online. We made a promise to the taxpayers that we were going to transfer that savings to offset the cost of the Fire Station

so we're doing that anyways even though we're not sure this year that we'll get the full year worth of savings out of that new Solar Array. So in order to kind of cover ourselves, we want to make sure that this year, we have that money to transfer from Sewer to offset the tax, as Capital Contribution to have, help offset the cost of taxes and part of doing that this year is making sure that those REC's are included in the savings. I agree with you Karen that that Capital Reserve is very important and that there are, there's no shortage of things we can do to reduce future costs at the Precinct by continuing to put money in that Capital Reserve and then using it for future projects. This year is, again, like everything going on in the world right now, it's not normal and my intention is to make sure that we do continue to add to that Capital Reserve Fund in the future, and continue to invest in those green energy technologies that save the Precinct money in the long term.

Don Ekberg: Thank you. Is there any other motions or any other business? Yes, sir.

Patrick Preece: Yes, I hope everybody comes to join us at May 22nd at 10:00 for the dedication of this new facility that we're going to open up. Hopefully it will be almost 100 percent complete. I think you guys are going to be amazed when we take you through the building and give you the tour of what this building can do. But yeh, on the outside it looks like a very historic building that belongs here for a very long time. Past and present so... I hope you join us on May 22nd, 10:00AM! We have some special guests arriving as well so... see you then!

Don Ekberg: Any further business? Motion to adjourn?

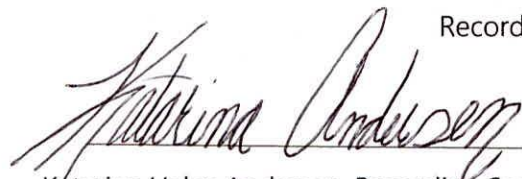
Tim Anderson: Motion to adjourn.

Don Ekberg: Motion to adjourn, is there a second?

Robert Porter: Second.

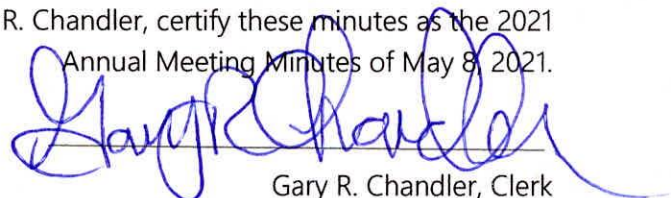
Don Ekberg: All in favor? That's a wrap!

Recorded by:



Katarina Haley Andersen, Recording Secretary

I, Gary R. Chandler, certify these minutes as the 2021
Annual Meeting Minutes of May 8, 2021.



Gary R. Chandler, Clerk
North Conway Water Precinct