

# Deliberative Session Minutes – 2023

TO THE INHABITANTS OF THE TOWN OF BELMONT IN THE COUNTY OF BELKNAP, IN THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE, QUALIFIED TO VOTE IN TOWN AFFAIRS:

## FIRST SESSION

You are hereby notified to meet for the first (Deliberative) Session of the Annual Town Meeting, to be held at the Belmont High School, 255 Seavey Road, Belmont, New Hampshire on the 4<sup>th</sup> day of February 2023, being a Saturday at 10 o'clock in the afternoon. The First (Deliberative) Session will consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of each of the following warrant articles, and will afford those voters who are present the opportunity to propose, debate and adopt amendments to each warrant article, except those articles whose wording is prescribed by State Law.

Town Moderator, Alvin Nix, introduced himself and welcomed everyone to the annual session. Everyone stood up and joined in the Pledge of Allegiance. He then introduced Ruth Mooney, Chairman, Board of Selectman; Jon Pike, Vice Chairman, Board of Selectman; Claude "Sonny" Patten, Board of Selectman; Ronald Mitchell, Chairman, Budget Committee; Alicia Jipson, Town Administrator; Cynthia DeRoy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Jenn Thomas, Assistant Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Leigh Smith, Assistant Town Clerk/Tax Collector; Brenda Paquette, Donna Shepherd, and Nikki Wheeler, Supervisors of the Checklist.

The Moderator, A. Nix, made all emergency exits known, and surveyed the room to confirm if all in attendance were registered voters. Three attendees were not. A. Nix then announced the session was being recorded by Lakes Region Public Access, and was live on Zoom.

Moderator Nix declared each speaker be limited to no more than three minutes. If speaking on behalf of a particular petition of a warrant article, a maximum of ten minutes would be allowed.

**Ballot #1.** To choose necessary officers, including:

Selectman 3-Year Term (1)  
Selectman 2-Year Term (1)  
Selectman 1- Year Term (1)  
Budget Committee 3- Year Term (4)  
Budget Committee 2- Year Term (1)  
Budget Committee 1- Year Term (1)  
Trustee of Trust Funds 3- Year Term (1)  
Library Trustee 3- Year Term (2)  
Cemetery Trustee 3- Year Term (1)  
Planning Board 3- Year Term (2)  
Zoning Board of Adjustment 3- Year Term (2)

Moderator Nix read the list of names of candidates for office.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #2** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as summarized below?

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Add housekeeping clause to Article 1 to allow the Planning Board to make non-substantive changes such as correcting typos and adding bullets without requiring a vote at Town meeting.

P. Harris, Chairman of the Planning board, stated these articles are for upgrades to current ordinances. This would stop applicants from submitting incorrect plans which increases workload. P. Harris is available to answer any questions.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #3** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as summarized below?

Add new definition of solar as any ground or roof mounted solar collection system, add solar as a permitted use in all Zones for agricultural and residential purposes, and add commercial solar as a permitted use in the Commercial and Industrial Zones and permitted by Special Exception in the Rural Zone.

P. Harris explained that this would make solar more accessible, primarily to residents.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #4** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #5 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as summarized below?

Change definition of Storage Facilities in Article 15 to include shipping containers and add Shipping Containers to the Storage Vehicles and Trailers Use in Article 5 Table 1, Table of Permitted Uses.

F. Fecteau, 28 Main Street, asked what zones this applies to.

P. Harris shared there are concerns about the size of the units and that adding language including shipping containers to the existing ordinance should be regulated. There is a size restriction limited to 640 square feet per lot that cannot exceed 10 feet in length. A container would require a special exception and is not to be used in the village.

Chairman R. Mooney asked if they would be taxable and how many are allowed.

P. Harris stated shipping containers would be considered a building and are taxable. Only one would be allowed per parcel.

K. Santoro, Land Use Technician- Interim Town Planner, stated that it is considered a structure and would be assessed at some value.

R. Mitchell asked what the laws are regarding windmills.

P. Harris replied that there was discussion about that, but the topic requires more research.

R. Mitchell then asked what laws the planning board has in place regarding windmills.

K. Santoro added that windmills are not regulated and would need to apply for a zoning variance.

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R. Mitchell stated in the future, this may need to be addressed as some of these are 400 feet tall.

K. Santoro replied that this will be added in the future, but they are not currently listed permitted uses.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #5** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #6 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as summarized below?

Expand the definition of Day Care Facilities in Article 15 to include all establishments offering care for any individual, rather than just facilities offering care for young children.

P. Harris explained they are changing the language as it pertains to day care facilities to encompass facilities providing care to all ages.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #6** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment #7 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as summarized below?

Change definition of Frontage in Article 15 to clarify that Right-of-Ways do not provide frontage unless they meet the requirements of RSA 674:41.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #7** Shall the Town vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in an amount up to Five Hundred and Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$575,000) payable over a term of sixty (60) months for a new ambulance for the Fire Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000) for the down payment for that purpose and further to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said amount from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c (Created 1994/Amended 1999). (3/5 Majority Ballot Vote Required.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$50,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall, Fire Chief, explained the fund. Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund has generated \$1.6 million dollars to date that could be used for equipment or apparatus at no cost to taxpayers. They would replace a 2013 ambulance that is showing signs of wear and tear. The replacement would be the same or similar model.

R. Mooney clarified that \$50,000.00 is a deposit.

M. Newhall stated that if allowed to purchase, there would be an 18 to 24 month waiting period before the replacement is delivered.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

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**Ballot #8** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the deliberative session, for the purposes set forth herein, totaling Nine Million Seven Hundred Sixteen Thousand Eight Hundred Seventy- Eight Dollars (\$9,716,878)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Nine Million Three Hundred Fifty Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety Nine Dollars (\$9,350,799) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Note: This warrant article (operating budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant article.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$9,716,878 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

R. Mooney thanked the budget committee and department heads for their time spent to keep the budget in check with consideration to current inflation. R. Mooney added that the increases are due to items outside of the municipality's control, referring to insurance and other employee benefits.

R. Mitchell concluded that one of the largest issues was trash pickup and how difficult it has been to find personnel to ride on the back of the truck especially with freezing temperatures. With the new system, the truck pulls up, uses a hydraulic arm to empty the trash bins and the driver doesn't have to exit the vehicle. R. Mitchell extended thanks to those on the budget committee that have given their time unpaid. He added that it costs \$12,761,651 to run the town of Belmont.

T. LeClair, 321 Brown Hill Road, asked that there be a motion to close articles one through eight. P. Harris seconded the motion, by show of hands motions passed.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #9** To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Belmont and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 3657 (Public Safety Employees Union-Fire Unit B) for the term April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year Increase (Wages)	Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2023 \$40,984	\$5,531
Year Estimated Increase (Wages)	Estimated Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2024 \$22,160	\$(1,248)
2025 \$22,567	\$7,241

And further to raise and appropriate \$46,515 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.)

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(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$46,515 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

R. Mooney stated that it is important to keep union employees at a pay level for retention, and that the increases are to remain competitive.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #10** Shall the Town, if Warrant Article #9 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Warrant Article #9 cost items only? (Majority vote required.)

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #11** To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Belmont and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 3657 (Public Safety Employees Union-Police Unit A) for the term April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2026, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year Increase (Wages)	Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2023 \$65,735	\$20,960
Year Estimated Increase (Wages)	Estimated Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2024 \$31,156	\$2,363
2025 \$31,537	\$9,892

And further to raise and appropriate \$86,695 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.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$86,695 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

R. Mooney noted that this would be a three-year contract and an attempt to be a competitive employer as it's important we continue to support our public safety departments.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #12** Shall the Town, if Warrant Article #11 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Warrant Article #11 cost items only? (Majority Vote Required.)

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #13** To see if the Town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Belmont and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, Council 93, Local 534 (Public Works

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Employees Union) for the term April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Year Increase (Wages)	Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2023 \$20,003	\$4,402
Year Estimated Increase (Wages)	Estimated Increase/(Decrease) Benefits
2024 \$16,118	\$2,404
2025 \$16,763	\$3,602

And further to raise and appropriate \$24,405 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.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$24,405 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

R. Mooney re-stated the importance of being competitive. Without a strong public works team, the fire and police departments would struggle with accessibility during weather events. The town has been fortunate to have a dedicated group thus far.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #14** Shall the Town, if Warrant Article #13 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address Warrant Article #13 cost items only? (Majority Vote Required.)

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #15** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy- Six Dollars \$60,776 for the eighth year's payment on the long term lease/purchase agreement entered into in 2016 for the purchase of a new pumper truck for the Fire Department, and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said amount from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c (Created 1994/Amended 1999). The Town is obligated by the terms of the lease/purchase agreement, as well as the super majority ratifying that agreement in Article 4 at the 2016 Town Meeting, to make these yearly payments.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$60,776 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall shared that the pumper truck, being a primary truck in service, was purchased with voter approval in 2016 for \$560,000. M. Newhall stated so far, there have been 7 payments made on the truck, and that will continue until it is paid in full. The funds are sourced from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

T. LeClair motioned to close articles nine through fifteen for reconsideration; Seconded by R. Mitchell, by show of hands motion passed.

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**Ballot #16** To see if the Town will vote to amend the vote taken on Article 7 at the 1999 Annual Meeting to restrict all revenues from ambulance billings to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund to instead restrict all but the first \$124,500 of revenues from ambulance billings received during the 2023 budgetary year to be deposited in the Special Revenue fund known as the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Fund. The first \$124,500 of revenues from ambulance billings will be deposited in the Town's General Fund to defray the cost items identified below. This restriction shall only be effective for the 2023 budgetary year (2/3 Majority Vote Required).

Training Expenses \$3,000  
Medical & Supply Expenses \$30,000  
Ambulance Billing Fees \$20,000  
Overtime \$40,000  
Telephone \$2,000  
Conferences & Dues \$1,500  
Office Expense \$12,000  
Vehicle Repair & Parts \$8,000  
Fuel \$8,000

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$124,500 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall stated that this comes from Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus fund to help defray the cost.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #17** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) for the cost of hose replacements for the Fire Department and further to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$25,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall said this is for replacement of fire hoses as they haven't purchased any in several years.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #18** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Eight Thousand One Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$78,181) for the cost of a utility truck for the Fire Department and further to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of Seventy-Eight Thousand One Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$78,181) from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95-c. (Majority Vote Required.)

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(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$78,181 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall stated this is for a utility truck to use for miscellaneous projects such as forestry, plowing the station driveway, and picking up fire hoses.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #19** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000) for the cost of an Engine 1 refurbish for the Fire Department and further to fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of Two Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$225,000) from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund previously established in accordance with RSA 31:95- c. (Majority Vote Required.)

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$225,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

M. Newhall spoke in regard to the condition of the Engine 1 which was initially a demo truck when acquired 13 years ago. It is now experiencing paint issues and the pump needs to be repacked. He suggests with \$225,000 to maintain and refurbish, they can hopefully use it for another 10-15 years. The cost for a new engine is roughly \$850,000 and would have no impact on taxation as it would be coming from the Fire/Ambulance Equipment and Apparatus Special Revenue Fund.

T. LeClair added that though we've heard a lot from the fire department, this is all to be offset by the ambulance fund and not raised by taxation. T. LeClair also noted that not passing these items will affect tax dollars later if it comes from the operating budget.

B. Paquette asked what the current balance of the fund is and how much is being contributed annually. M. Newhall responded that as of December 31, 2022, the balance was \$705,607 and the average over the last 6 years was \$275,000 per year.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #20** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand One Hundred Forty-One Dollars (\$255,141) for the operation and maintenance of the Water Distribution and Treatment System for the ensuing year, said sum to be offset by user fees. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be of Two Hundred Seventy-One Thousand Seven Hundred Ninety-Eight Dollars (\$271,798) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$255,141 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

C. Clairmont, Public Works Director, stated that the water distribution system covers operating costs and is offset by revenue. C. Clairmont continued on to say the system covers monitoring treatment, state sampling issues, treatment costs, chemicals, and day to day maintenance.



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Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #21** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Hundred Thirty-Three Thousand Five Hundred Sixty-One Dollars (\$633,561) for the operation and maintenance of the Sewage Collection and Disposal System for the ensuing year, said sum to be offset by user fees. Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Six Hundred Thirty-Six Thousand Three Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$636,350) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$633,561 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

C. Clairmont stated that this covers day to day operations and eight town-maintained sewer pump stations. He added that several of the costs associated with this are paid to the Winnepesaukee River Basic Project (for what is delivered to them for treatment).

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #22** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$500,000) to be placed in the Highway Reconstruction and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$500,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve account as of 12/31/2022 is \$1,334,280.64.

C. Patten stated that this could be dropped to \$250,000 as there is a block grant for \$165,000 to be added to the \$500,000 which would save taxpayers \$250,000. He also added that the budget was scraped thin.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

T. LeClair motioned to close articles sixteen through twenty-two. R. Mitchell second the motion, by show of hands motion passed.

**Ballot #23** To see if the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$300,000) to be placed in the Municipal Facilities Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$300,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve account as of 12/31/2022 is \$468,173.69.

R. Mitchell began by stating the majority of the money is going to be spent on renovating the Mill as the current town hall is overcrowded. He continued to say that since we have a new fire station, police station and highway department, getting the rest of the municipality's services into one facility would be more efficient. When the Mill was first renovated, there were federal funds for nonprofit organizations and now that term is up, the building can be used for our own use.

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R. Mooney added that the first thing that needs to be addressed is updating the elevator. Meetings are currently held on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor, but when the elevator is out of service, meetings are held in the basement for wheelchair accessibility. R. Mooney also said even though the elevator has been inspected and is working, its tired and has broken down several times. By law, handicap requirements must be met.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

A. Jipson contributed, after the deliberation the town publishes voters' guides that will be available on the municipal website and hard copies can be picked up at town hall.

**Ballot #24** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be placed in the Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2007), and further to fund said appropriation by authorizing the transfer of \$100,000 from the unexpended fund balance as of December 31, 2022. No amount to be raised from taxation.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$100,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Expendable Trust as of 12/31/2022 is \$25,170.57; the total liability accrued to this account as of 1/25/2023 is \$209,586.

A. Jipson stated that no funds will be from taxation. There are currently 13 employees who are eligible for retirement. She added that an employee payout at retirement is roughly \$16,000 each, and there is currently about \$25,000 in the account.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #25** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to be placed in the Water System Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2006) with said sum to be offset by user fees.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$100,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$227,339.37.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #26** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$60,000) to be placed in the Highway Department Heavy Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2002).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$60,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve account as of 12/31/2022 is \$134,972.54.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #27** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Ninety-Six Thousand Nine Hundred Sixty-Five Dollars (\$196,965) for the reconstruction of highways, it is anticipated to be offset by Highway Block Grant funds provided by the State of New Hampshire. No funds to come from taxation.

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(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$196,965 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #28** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty Five Thousand Eight Hundred Eighty-Eight Dollars (\$125,888) to be placed in the Town Bridge Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2003), with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance (this represents the State of NH for repair, maintenance, and construction of municipal bridges from State Surplus that was received by the Town on December 28, 2022). No funds to come from taxation. The Town has already received these funds.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$125,888 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation). The balance in the Capital Reserve account as of 12/31/2022 is \$206,009.75.

A. Jipson shared that the State had a record surplus of funds and as a result have distributed monies to municipalities across New Hampshire for roads and bridges. These funds will be placed in this account.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #29** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000) to be placed in the Property Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2005).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$75,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$77,015.

A. Jipson stated that there was a big discussion this year with property values increasing and that in 2024 the town will conduct a required 5-year full measuring of assessments. The account is just to pay for the assessments done by KRT. In 2022 voters approved statistical updates to be done in 2022 and 2023.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #30** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be placed in the Library Building Improvements Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2000).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$25,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$339,162.48.

R. Mitchell began by providing a brief history on the Library building. He went on to share that in 1991, CIP recommended putting \$50,000 away year to fund an addition and to-date, no addition has been done. He explained that his idea is not to add to the library as doing so would be very costly, but instead, to build a new library on the school grounds (corner of Memorial and Concord Street) for \$1,750,000. R. Mitchell stated the placement would be close to the Middle school for

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programs and after school activities.

S. Cunningham, on behalf of the library trustees, clarified they do not wish to pursue this.

A. Nix stated that the idea of a new library is not part of this article but rather putting money into the existing fund.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #31** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in the Information Technology Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2002).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$10,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$23,018.03.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #32** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be added to the Durrell Mountain Road Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2021). This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Majority Vote Required.) No funds to come from taxation.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$5,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$5,591.88; funds were used in 2021 to repair portions of the road.)

C. Clairmont stated this fund was established by the effort of the Board of Selectman. There is a gravel pit located at the end of Durrell Mountain Road, past the town line in Gilford, and the owners are seeking compensation. C. Clairmont encouraged voters to vote yes as the road will deteriorate over time.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #33** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) to be placed in the already established General Cemetery Maintenance Fund governed under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a for the purpose of cemetery maintenance, said amount to be expended at the discretion of the Cemetery Trustees (1997).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$5,000 and the Budget Committee supports that recommendation.) The balance in the Cemetery Maintenance Fund as of 12/31/2022 is \$30,172.35.

T. LeClair motioned to close articles twenty-three through thirty-two. C. Patten seconded the motion, by show of hands motion passed.

S. Ciampi, Cemetery Trustee, explained that the use of the capital reserve is for large projects or emergency situations. S. Ciampi stated that \$3,000 was expended from the account towards

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storm damage around Christmas time when some trees were injured.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #34** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$4,500) to be placed in the Heritage Fund previously established (2004).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$4,500 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Heritage Fund as of 12/31/2022 is \$41,828.63.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #35** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$2,500) to be placed in the Dry Hydrant and Cistern Repairs and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2011).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$2,500 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve account as of 12/31/2022 is \$22,099.22.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #36** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000) to be placed in the Election Equipment Expendable Trust Fund Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2020).

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$1,000 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.) The balance in the Capital Reserve Account as of 12/31/2022 is \$6,101.07.

C. DeRoy, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, advised that our current voting booths are aged and deteriorating. The state mandates how election polls operate. C. DeRoy stated that for every 100 voters, we're required to provide one booth (with 4,400 voters, we would need 44 booths). C. DeRoy is looking to replace booths and the cost is \$1,000 each.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #37** Shall the Town vote to authorize the expenditure of the unused portion of the bond approved in 2020 for the Construction of a New Police Station for Mill Renovations instead, and to raise and appropriate \$48,646 in unused bond proceeds for Mill Renovations per RSA 33:3-a, II. NO amount of money needs to be raised from taxation. (3/5 Majority Vote Required.) No funds to come from taxation.

(The Board of Selectmen recommends \$48,646 and the Budget Committee supports this recommendation.)

R. Mooney opened the discussion stating unused funds came from the police station and could be used for mill renovations.

A. Jipson stated that legally, we are allowed to re-appropriate these funds as it has zero impact. She explained the funds were originally set aside for a bond payment for the purpose of

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constructing the Police Department, because the use is similar by law, we are allowed to re-appropriate the funds in this nature. This would offset costs to Mill renovations.

N. Wheeler asked if the Police Chief can speak to the excess funds. She added that there are new phones and radios that need to be replaced.

Chief M. Lewandoski stated that the phone systems are town-wide and would require the entire town to change phones or service. M. Lewandoski reported the equipment was not compatible with the current system and as a result the department was waiting to determine how to navigate that deficiency. M. Lewandoski added that he was satisfied to see the police department came in under budget.

R. Mooney mentioned it would be helpful to know what was received for equipment through grants due to the new police station.

M. Lewandoski replied that the grant amount of \$500,000 has been exceeded as it was used for a pet officer and equipment. He added that Lt Belanger has been aggressive on the grant money. M. Lewandoski added that they will keep equipment at its current level given the circumstances and will see what money is available through the federal government to offset the costs.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot # 38** To see if the Town will vote to expend the income from the John M. Sargent Trust Fund for the purposes recommended by the Sargent Fund Committee. No funds to come from taxation.

Belknap County 4-H Fair Assn. \$2,000  
Belknap House \$2,000  
Belmont Cemetery Trustees \$200  
Belmont Boy Scouts Troop 65 \$540  
Belmont Conservation Commission \$100  
Belmont Elementary Support Team \$200  
Belmont Girl Scouts Troop 12117 \$540  
Belmont Girl Scouts Troop 60200 \$495  
Belmont Community Girl Scouts \$250  
Belmont Heritage Commission \$250  
Belmont High School PTO \$200  
Belmont Historical Society \$300  
Belmont Middle School Fifth Grade Camp Cody \$3,500  
Belmont Middle School PTO \$200  
Belmont Old Home Day Committee \$100  
Belmont Park and Recreation \$1,500  
Belmont Public Library \$1,165  
First Baptist Church of Belmont Mission/Food Pantry \$2,492  
Saint Joseph Food Pantry \$2,492.74  
Save our Gale School \$200  
Winni Womenade \$2,000

## Deliberative Session Minutes – 2023

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #39** Shall the Town, pursuant to RSA 33:8-f, vote to rescind the unused portion of the bonding authority granted in 2016 for the Hoadley Road Culvert Reconstruction? Of the \$375,000 in bonding authority that was granted, \$68,319 was not spent and is not necessary for this purpose. (3/5 Majority Vote Required.)

(The Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this article.)

A. Jipson stated that funds were originally budgeted for in 2016 but is no longer necessary as the project is complete. She noted that there is no tax impact and no reason to carry the balance forward within the 2023 budget.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #40** Shall the Town vote in accordance with RSA 72:27-a(IV) to re-adopt the provisions of the Optional Veterans' Tax Credit (RSA 72:28(II)) in the amount of \$500, to include not only Veterans who have been honorably discharged, but also those who have served at least four (4) years and are continuing in service in the armed forces. [NOTE: If this article does not pass, the Optional Veterans' Tax Credit will no longer be in effect, and the Standard Veterans' Tax Credit of \$50 would apply as of April 1, 2023.]

NOTE: This article is required because legislature expanded the eligibility criteria for this credit to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces.

R. Mooney stated if voters want to support the Veterans in Belmont, vote yes.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #41** Shall the Town vote in accordance with RSA 72:27-a(IV) to re-adopt the provisions of the All-Veterans' Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b) in the amount of \$500, to include not only Veterans who have been honorably discharged, but also those who have served at least four (4) years and are continuing in service in the armed forces. [NOTE: If this article does not pass, the All-Veteran's Tax Credit will no longer be in effect, and the Standard Veteran's Tax Credit of \$50 would apply as of April 1, 2023.]

NOTE: This article is required because legislature expanded the eligibility criteria for this credit to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces.

R. Mooney again stated, if you want to support the Veterans in our town, vote yes.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #42** Are you in favor of amending the Noise Ordinance adopted by the Town in 2010 to exempt from its provision's noises related to farming and agricultural related activities?

(This article recommended by the Board of Selectmen)

R. Mooney stated there is an Apple Farm on Route 106. Neighbors have complained about their spraying in the evenings.

## Deliberative Session Minutes – 2023

A. Nix asked if this was a citizen petition and if so, was the citizen in attendance. There was no response.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #43** Are you in favor of discontinuing the combined office of Town Clerk/Tax Collector? At the next annual meeting in which an election for Town Clerk/Tax Collector is to be held (2025), the voters shall choose one individual as Town Clerk and another as Tax Collector, each for a three-year term, unless article 46 (43) passes, in which case the Tax collector will be appointed.

(This article recommended by the Board of Selectmen)

T. LeClair asked for a motion to amend the article to correct an error.

A. Nix then motioned to amend the language in article 43 where it reads, “unless article 46 passes,” to read “unless the article passes”. R. Mitchell seconded motion.

C. DeRoy stated that the position has always been combined to give the town the option to have a separate town clerk and tax collector. C. DeRoy explained that the town clerk must be a resident and must be elected whereas the tax collector would not have to be either. This would allow the Town Clerk/Tax Collector to have a deputy town clerk and a deputy tax collector.

C. DeRoy shared that in the past with the positions being combined, it has been difficult to keep the deputy's position intact. Additionally, if the article passes, the town clerk would still be elected and still be a resident because they oversee elections.

A. Jipson stated that the Planning Board met after the warrants were created and removed 3 articles, thus the renumbering of articles was adjusted and the numbering in this article got missed. It does not change the intent of the article.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #44** Are you in favor of rescinding the provisions of RSA 40:13 (known as SB 2), as adopted by the Town of Belmont on March 11, 2008, so that the official ballot will no longer be used for voting on all questions, but only for the election of officers and certain other questions for which the official ballot is required by State law?? (3/5 Majority Vote Required.)

(This article submitted by Petition)

T. LeClair said she doesn't anticipate the budget to pass, but to open up discussion to become more educated on the articles.

S. Cunningham agreed she also doesn't anticipate this to pass but would like to challenge the Board of Selectmen to brainstorm ways to reach out to the community.

S. Ciampi asked, should the budget not pass by vote, is there no default budget to fall back on? She also stated that there is minimal voter participation and expressed her concern.



## Deliberative Session Minutes – 2023

R. Mooney stated that when speaking with new residents, they have no interest in getting involved in town business, and we need engagement from younger people. R. Mooney noted that one of our leading complaints is around morning meetings; morning meetings save money while evening meetings require overtime pay to the hourly employees. Averaging, roughly 20 hours per week.

T. LeClair added that the iron treatment plan grant was turned down (free money) due to lack of knowledge by the voters. The goal is to get people talking about what these items are. Per R. Mooney, the grant amount was 1.5 million and was denied.

R. Mitchell added that people expect that someone is making decisions for them and that our meetings started when the town was founded.

Amanda Liakas, 31 Brook Hollow Road, contributed that there is a small group of younger individuals that do want to get involved, but have limited time to commit after managing work and their families.

Dennis Grimes, 21 Gilman Shore Road, advised after spending years working in tech that social media is good technology when properly utilized. D. Grimes asked how we can get younger residents involved.

Mark Ekberg, Code Enforcement Officer, noted that his understanding of the article would be to have a smaller group of people that are well informed making a vote, versus a large number of uninformed voters.

Woodbury Fogg, 433 Jamestown Road, stated democracy is a participatory sport and is in favor of this article.

Vicki Donovan, 4 Johnson Street, extended her support and claims nothing is better than being educated on what your taxes are paying for.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #45** Are you in favor of imposing a term limit of 3 consecutive terms that can be served by a member of the Board of Selectmen?

(This article submitted by Petition)

T. LeClair asked if it is possible to remove or if we are too far in the process, do we keep it on our warrant.

A. Nix replied yes, its non-binding.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

**Ballot #46** Are you in favor of increasing the number of Cemetery Trustee Board members from 3 to 5?

(This article submitted by Petition)

## Deliberative Session Minutes – 2023

S. Ciampi stated that she submitted this petition because there are currently three, and she would like two more trustees.

T. LeClair raised the question, do we need two more trustees, or are we seeking volunteers?


R. Mooney advised that maybe this is where the high school steps in, noting the Conservation Commission has a couple student members on their team (non-voting members).

S. Ciampi shared that there is an RSA that allows alternates. She was referred to the Heritage Commission for more information by the Board of Selectmen, but there was no representative that could go over the terms and process. Her intent is that having a 5-member board provides the ability to vote on decisions.

Upon no discussion article moved to ballot.

Moderator A. Nix advised that the warrant articles have been completed for the 2023 deliberative session. A. Nix concluded the session, declaring the meeting dissolved until the March 14, 2023, election and thanked everyone for attending.

**A true copy attest:**

  
Cynthia M. DeRoy, Town Clerk

Feb 15, 2023