

**Town of Woodstock
Select Board Special Meeting
December 18, 2023
5:30 pm
Town Hall & Zoom
Minutes**

Draft minutes are subject to approval.

Present: Chair Ray Bourgeois, Susan Ford, Keri Ford, Greg Fullerton, Laura Powell, Eric Duffy, Nikki Nourse, Jill Davies, Roger Logan, Alex Young

A. Call to order

1. Chair Bourgeois called the Select Board Special Meeting of December 18, 2023, to order at 5:30 pm.

B. Additions to & deletions from posted agenda

1. Addition – 1% local options tax

C. Citizen comments – none.

D. FY25 budget

1. Concerns were raised about firefighter retention due to competitive pay issues. Suggestions were made to consider benefits across departments for equitable treatment.
2. The idea of deferring the decision until the end of the fiscal year was also proposed. The Board was left to decide on the matter, with a suggestion to set recruitment and retention as a Board goal for the next budget.

Motion: by Ms. Powell to approve the Town Budget as proposed.

Seconded: by Ms. Cole.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

3. Sewer budget: detailed discussion ensued regarding proposed increases, allocation of capital reserves, and potential rate adjustments based on different project splits.
4. Ms. Davies expressed concerns over a 4.75% increase in sewer taxes and suggested implementing a smaller increase now instead of a larger one later. There was also a discussion about the fairness of having all sewer users pay the same rate, regardless of usage.
5. Further research and discussions on varied sewer rates for different usage levels.

Motion: by Ms. Powell to approve the Sewer Budget as proposed.

Seconded: by Mr. Fullerton.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

E. Other business

1. Local options tax: consideration of allocating funds to specific areas like infrastructure and housing incentives was discussed. The need for clear communication regarding the use of tax funds was emphasized.
2. Attention was drawn to the timeline constraints, especially considering upcoming holidays and the Town Report deadline.
3. Consideration of a special meeting for discussions related to the 1% local options tax and water company matters.

4. Additional clarity and communication planning for the allocation of funds from the local options tax, specifically focusing on infrastructure projects.

F. Adjournment

Motion: by Ms. Cole to adjourn the meeting at 6:09 pm.

Seconded: by Ms. Powell.

Vote: 5-0-0, passed.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nikki Nourse*