

Minutes for the Budget Committee

December 11, 2025

Town of Danbury, New Hampshire

6:45 p.m. Meeting called to order by Ashlynn Comeau, Budget Committee Chair

Present: Ashlynn Comeau, Tracy Feinauer, Jessica Hatch, Ruby Hill, Anna Hullinger, Karen Padgett.

Not Present: Lenny Ryan

Public Present: None

Old Business:

Minutes from the December 4 meeting were reviewed. Ruby made a motion to approve the minutes as written, second by Tracy, minutes accepted with an aye vote (Ruby abstained.)

New Business:

Karen asked about oil prices and whether the Town was getting the municipal rate from Dead River Company. Jessica was not present at that time, but prices for the last year have varied from over \$3 per gallon to \$1.849 now.

Tracy asked if the group felt the Town should have a professional audit done and is planning to work with Lenny on a warrant article to pay for one.

The most recent budget worksheet was reviewed, line by line, with the following modifications made to 2026 requests, as follows:

Ruby moved to accept the Executive Department's requested budget of \$78,075, Karen seconded, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ashlynn moved to accept the Town Meeting requested budget of \$2,100, Anna seconded the motion, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Town Clerk/Tax Collector computer support line to \$5,800, Karen seconded, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ashlynn moved to accept the now modified Town Clerk/Tax Collector total budget of \$65,024, Ruby seconded, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby moved to reduce the Ballot Clerk wages to \$1,800, Karen seconded, motion carried with an aye vote.

Anna motioned to accept the now modified Election budget of \$4,000, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept both the Trustees and Auditors budgets as proposed, second by Ashlynn, motion passed with an aye vote and one abstention by Tracy Feinauer, who is a town auditor.

Ruby motioned to accept the Town Treasurer proposed budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby moved to accept the Budget Committee proposed budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby moved to accept the Assessor proposed budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Anna motioned to accept the proposed budget for Legal Expenses, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote.

Anna motioned to accept the Health, Unemployment, Retirement, and Social Security budget as proposed, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote.

Karen motioned to accept the Planning Board proposed budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the Zoning Board of Adjustment proposed budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Jessica explained that the increase in General Government Buildings (GGB) Maintenance & Repairs line was to pay for a new waste oil burner since ours broke.

Ashlynn motioned to accept the GGB proposed budget, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

The group decided to remove the CEM Mileage line from the Cemetery budget since it has a \$0.00 dollar value and mileage is being paid on another line.

Karen motioned to accept the proposed Cemetery budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Anna motioned to accept the proposed Property Liability Insurance budget, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Lakes Region Mutual Fire request of \$26,684.21- Selectmen recommended \$26,000-second by Anna, motion carried with an aye vote.

Karen motioned to drop the 21 cents from that line, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the now modified budget for Lakes Region Planning, Lakes Region Mutual Fire, Community Action Program, and Kearsarge COA, totaling \$33,142, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed budget for Gasoline and Tax Mapping, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Police Department Officers Wages to \$50,000, second by Tracy, three aye votes, three nay votes, motion failed.

Anna motioned to reduce the Police Department Chief Wages to \$75,000, second by Ruby, three aye votes, three nay votes, motion failed.

Ruby stated a preference for making the police chief position full-time through a warrant article and learned that the former part-time police chief, C. Kelby, has returned to working for the Town in that role.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Police Department Administrative Assistant wages to \$19,500, second by Tracy, three aye votes, three nay votes, motion failed.

Ruby motioned to accept the unmodified Police Department requested budget, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Ambulance Service budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Fire Department Volunteer Stipend line to \$20,000, second by Tracy, Anna abstained, two aye votes, three nay votes, motion failed.

Karen motioned to reduce the Fire Department Volunteer Stipend line to \$25,000, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote and Anna abstained.

Karen motioned to accept the now modified Fire Department budget of \$81,701, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Emergency Management and Forest Fire budgets, second by Tracy, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Highway Wages line to \$160,000, second by Tracy, motion carried with an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Highway Office Administrative Assistant line to \$5,500 at Ashlynn's suggestion (Ashlynn is the Admin. Asst.), second by Tracy, motion carried by an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Karen motioned to reduce the Highway Telephone line to \$3,300 which is the Selectmen's recommendation, second by Ruby, motion carried with an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Ruby motioned to reduce the Highway Diesel Fuel line to \$45,000, second by Tracy, motion carried with an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Karen motioned to accept the now modified Highway Department budget-Part One-of \$438,900, second by Tracy, motion carried with an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Highway Department budget-Part Two, second by Anna, motion carried with an aye vote and Ashlynn abstained.

Ashlynn motioned to accept the Municipal Street Lighting budget as proposed, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

Jessica proposed a Transfer Station Operator Wages amount of \$38,000, second by Tracy, motion carried with an aye vote. (Note: The TS budget asked for wage rate increases but they had not provided a new amount for this line.)

Karen motioned to accept the requested Compactor Maintenance line item of \$600 (Selectmen had recommended \$1.00), second by Ruby, discussion held, motion retracted by both Karen and Ruby.

Ashlynn motioned to accept the now modified Transfer Department budget of \$199,451, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Health Associations budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Welfare & Health Inspector budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Recreation budget, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Library budget, second by Karen, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Patriotic Flags & Markers and Old Home Day budgets, second by Ashlynn, motion carried with an aye vote.

Ruby motioned to accept the proposed Danbury Community Center and Historical Society budgets, second by Jessica, motion carried with an aye vote.

The resulting Budget Committee Recommendations total \$2,081,564.39

Discussion was held about the proposed warrant articles, which will be revisited at our January meeting. Ruby said the Police Vehicle Capital Reserve warrant article should be \$20,000 instead of \$40,000 to match the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and that the \$50,000 Building Capital Reserve should not be on the warrant because it is not in the CIP. Jessica said the CIP never gets

followed anyway. Karen shared recent Town of Alexandria warrant articles. They lease all of their vehicles. Previously, Ruby had shared language about lapsing vs. non-lapsing warrant articles for leases with Jessica. Some discussion ensued about the possibility of leasing instead of buying. Jessica said the Police Department was researching that for their vehicle, so that warrant may change and the same is possible with the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve warrant article.

9:06 pm. Meeting adjourned with a motion from Karen, second by Ruby