

**TOWN OF READFIELD
BUDGET COMMITTEE**

**Meeting of April 16, 2020
Minutes**

The Budget Committee of the Town of Readfield held a special meeting on April 16, 2020. Due to state mandated stay at home rules, the meeting was held by video conference on a line that was accessible to the public. Committee members in attendance were Andrews Tolman, Chair; Ed Sims; Martin Hanish; and Ellen Schneider. Eric Dyer, Town Manager, was also present. The meeting was convened at 6:35 pm

The first order of business was review and consideration of the minutes of the Committee's last meeting. Sims offered a motion to accept the minutes as presented; Tolman provided a second. The minutes were adopted unanimously.

The only other item of business for this meeting was consideration of warrant Article 36, as revised by the Select Board at its meeting of Monday, April 13, 2020. It was noted that the substantive change to the wording of the Article was the substitution of \$200k for 25% of unobligated funds.

Committee members discussed their thoughts about the Article given the revisions made by the Select Board. The Members shared a sense that while appreciating the effort made by the Select Board to tighten up the language of the Article, they still do not support the policy reflected in the proposal. They all remain uncomfortable with the level of funding reflected in the Article (now \$200k).

Hanish moved that the Budget Committee vote Ought Not to Pass on Article 36 as proposed by the Select Board on April 13, 2020. Sims provided a second.

Members briefly discussed the issue again. There is a recognition that the Select Board, not the Budget Committee, sets fiscal policy for the Town and the policy articulated in the Warrant Article clearly falls within their purview. The Members, however, have been asked to express their view of the Article and each finds themselves in opposition to the proposal.

A vote on the motion was unanimous in favor of passage. This means that Article 36 will appear on the warrant with a notation that the Budget Committee does not recommend the Article.

Dyer briefed the Members on the likelihood that the Town secret ballot vote will be delayed because of the stay at home orders and pandemic. A firm date, however, has not yet been identified but is likely to be in July. Dyer also noted that the Legislature has provided towns with the ability to spend into the next fiscal year for up to one fiscal quarter, based on the final

quarter of the prior fiscal year. This allows towns to continue to operate without having passed a budget.

The next meeting of the Budget Committee will be the public hearing on the proposed budget. That meeting will take place – likely using a video conference platform – on May 7th at 6:30 pm.

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 6:50 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Jane Schneiter

Note: The Budget Committee reviewed these minutes electronically. One typo was noted and corrected as part of that review. There were no substantive comments on the draft minutes. The Committee conducted an electronic vote to accept the minutes, as corrected, with Tolman offering the motion and Schneiter seconded the motion. On April 18, the members voted on the motion. Lambert abstained from voting, as she was not present for the meeting itself. All other members voted in favor of the motion and the minutes are adopted.