

Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS District
Warrant Public Hearing
Meeting Minutes February 6, 2024

Commissioners Present: Paul Auger, Timothy Sattler, Eric Pyra

Budget Committee Members Present: Jason Wright, Jane Alden, Katherine Dawson, Paul Blaisdell, Scott Lewandowski, Eric Pyra

Also Present: Jean Samms, Michael Sitar, Sean Valovanie, Kathy Tobine, Timothy Pearson

Commissioner Paul Auger opened the public hearing for the 2024 Warrant articles at 7:09pm

Commissioner Timothy Sattler read the warrant articles. The public was invited to ask questions concerning the proposed 13 warrant articles.

Article 1 and 2 were skipped as they are standard language for the election of District officers and reports from the treasurer and commissioners.

Article 3, Operating Budget: Discussion ensued concerning the increase from last year's budget.

The questions were answered by board members as well as Chief Sitar. The personnel costs are due to a proposed pay raise, to keep the District competitive with surrounding communities, the addition of a 4th fireman per shift which was previously covered by a grant for the past three years and the increase in insurance costs.

The increase in the water services line is due to the court mandated settlement that was reached by both entities upon the insistence of the court. The District will have to raise this amount for the next 7 years to pay for pressurized hydrants. After 7 years a new agreement should be reached.

Other questions revolved around the difference between the Budget Committee recommended operating budget and the Commissioner's budget. The difference was due to denial of an upgrade to the radio system. Chief Sitar was questioned as to whether the District really needed as many firemen. He explained that last year 2200 plus calls were handled, an increase of approximately 1000 calls. The department runs on 4 shifts of 4 people and every shift has at least 1 paramedic. At times more than one call comes in at a time stretching the department's manpower. Response time has improved over the years and the department has highly trained professionals.

Article 4, Apparatus & Equipment Replacement Fund had a recommended amount by the Budget Committee different than the Commissioner's budget because of the denial of a radio system upgrade.

Article 5, Purchase New Ambulance from the Apparatus & Equipment SRF, a special revolving fund that is used to purchase ambulances, other equipment and maintenance costs. The District requests to replace the 10-year-old ambulance with a 911 ambulance that has the ability to handle medical emergencies of a large scale versus a transfer ambulance that is mainly used to transport patients between hospitals.

Article 6 Purchase New Pickup with Plow from the Apparatus and Equipment SRF. The current pickup is 19 years old and needs to be replaced.

Article 7, Add to the Land & Building Fund and make the commissioners agents of the fund. This is a capital reserve fund that has been added to over the years with the hope that sometime in the future a new fire station would be approved. Monies from this fund would be used to decrease the cost of a bond to fund the project.

Articles 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 and 13 were read, no comments were made.

With no further questions, the Public Hearing closed at 7:57pm.

No adjustments were made to the 2024 Warrant Articles.

Minutes recorded by Jean F Samms, District Clerk