

**TOWN OF BEDFORD
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES
January 25, 2023
10 Meetinghouse Road**

1. ROLL CALL: A meeting of the Bedford Town Council was held on Wednesday, January 25, 2023, 10 Meetinghouse Road. Participating were Bill Carter (Chair), Lori Radke (Vice Chair), and Councilors Phil Greazzo, Chris Bandazian, Sue Thomas, Dave Gilbert, and Kathleen Bemiss. Also present was Town Manager Rick Sawyer.

Chairman Carter opened the meeting at 7:00 PM.

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE – Led by Chairman Carter.

3. PUBLIC COMMENTS – None.

4. PUBLIC HEARINGS

a. Second public hearing on the proposed 2023 budget

Mr. Sawyer stated that the proposed budget was \$38,106,798. The proposed tax rate is \$4.11. Possible changes were a BCTV grant and the Meals & Rooms revenue the Town would be receiving in a letter from Senator Ricciardi. Making that change would further reduce the tax rate to \$4.05. In the budget for Meals & Rooms revenue is \$1,775,000. Based on that letter and their history on collections, he believed they could bring it up another \$325K to \$2,100,000. Also, a grant they had anticipated doing in 2022 did not get completed, so the request from BCTV was to add the \$7,750 to their appropriation and revenue lines to offset that grant. As an enterprise fund, it has no impact on the tax rate. The grant was to complete an emergency alert notification system that would interrupt BCTV, WBNH and streaming all at the same time.

The Council needed to move the budget forward to the Budgetary Town Meeting. The recommendation includes making those changes to BCTV and Meals & Rooms and moving two separate warrant articles. The warrant articles were listed as 8 & 9, but those could change if they end up having a Police contract added to the warrant. He mentioned a \$38M total budget earlier, which was a combination of the Capital Reserve warrant and the Operating warrant. Mr. Sawyer went through some items in the handout:

Election Day – Tuesday, March 14th.

Budgetary Town Meeting – Wednesday, March 15th.

Voted on at Election Day

Article 1 Election of officers

Article 2 Formation of Charter Commission proposed by Citizen Petition

Article 3 Election of a Charter Commissioners

Article 4 Zoning Amendments

Article 5 Issuance of Long-Term Debt for a solar array at the Transfer Station

Voted on at Budgetary Town Meeting

Article 6 Collective Bargaining Agreement - DPW

Article 7 Collective Bargaining Agreement - Fire

Article 8 Capital Reserve Fund

Article 9 Town Operating Budget

Mr. Sawyer stated that there were two new Capital Reserve items for 2023. The Fire Protection Cistern (\$25K) and replacement of the Material Waste Screener (\$10K). The biggest item in the Capital Reserve was \$1.5M being added to the Facilities Design/Build, which was the money from the sale of 4 Sunset Lane.

Chairman Carter opened the public hearing.

Sue Labrie, 14 Jefferson Road, had questions on the following items:

Town Council – Elected Officials – \$11K – Ms. Labrie wanted to know if they all got paid and the response was yes. Councilor Radke explained that each Councilor gets a stipend of \$1,500 a year and \$2K for the Chair.

Town Council – Miscellaneous – \$4,500 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for. Mr. Sawyer explained that the Council uses it for employee appreciation events. In 2022, they did an appreciation event for volunteers of boards and commissions. They use it for name plates, plaques, and flowers that might go to a memorial service. Ms. Labrie wanted to know why they couldn't break it down. Chairman Carter stated that it wasn't standard every year. Ms. Labrie thought it was outrageous. Councilor Radke stated that she could go to the Town Office and get that information. Mr. Sawyer stated that they could give her the history of what it was used for. Councilor Thomas stated that it's miscellaneous because it's a pool of money they would use throughout the year. They work within it and it wouldn't be appropriate to break it out. Councilor Bandazian stated that the ledgers were available online and had been for close to 10 years on the Finance webpage.

Town Manager – Merit Adjustment – Ms. Labrie wanted to know if it was just him. Mr. Sawyer stated that there were three people in the regular wage line. Ms. Labrie wanted to know what a merit adjustment was. Mr. Sawyer stated that those were the potential raises for all of the Department Heads plus the Town Manager.

Town Manager – Vehicle Allowance – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was. Mr. Sawyer stated that it was a contractual allowance that he got as Town Manager. Ms. Labrie wanted to clarify that it was for his car for gas or if it breaks down, etc. and Mr. Sawyer responded yes. Councilor Radke explained that in the Town Manager's contract was a vehicle allowance, because it was less expensive than buying a car for the Town Manager to use to go to events and to go to different facilities in Town, meet with Department Heads, etc. He uses his own car.

Town Manager – Miscellaneous – \$1,700 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for and if she could get that broken down. Mr. Sawyer stated that she could get the history of how it had been spent. Ms. Labrie wanted to clarify if that was through Finance and Mr. Sawyer responded yes or through his office. She could get that for any line in the budget.

Elections – Miscellaneous Equipment – \$16,900 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for. Councilor Radke stated the Council approved the purchase of poll pads to be used at the elections to move the line faster without having to use an alphabet system. Chairman Carter added that it allows for reconciliation at the end of the evening, which would be a lot quicker. Councilor Radke stated that it was for the benefit of the residents. Ms. Labrie wanted to know how many poll pads and the response was 10.

Information Systems – Overtime Regular – \$2,800 – Ms. Labrie stated that last year overtime regular it was \$669. This year it's \$2,800. Councilor Thomas explained that the \$669 was expended to date. That's what had actually been used in 2022. In the 2022 adopted budget it was \$2,457. Ms. Labrie wanted to clarify that they have all of that leftover for 2023. Mr. Sawyer stated that it would fall to Fund Balance. Ms. Labrie wanted to know if it rolled over. Councilor Thomas stated that it does, but they still need to start with a clean budget for that department. It has to be on there. Anything that they didn't get to the budget last year goes into the Fund Balance to be used to fund this budget.

Information Systems – Cell Phones – \$42,000 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know whose cell phones they were paying for. Mr. Sawyer stated that there were cell phones for just about every Department Head plus many other positions that were on call or needed within the Fire vehicles and Police vehicles; their cellular connectivity.

Information Systems – Hosted Services Contracts – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was. Councilor Thomas explained that every company has hosted services. That's internet provider. Every company has a big line item for hosted services. It gets you to the World Wide Web; it's the internet service and email and everything that goes into IT.

Insurance/Employment Costs – Compensated Absences – Ms. Labrie stated that this went from \$30K to \$50K. Mr. Sawyer stated that it was budgeted for \$50K last year, but they transferred \$20K to help pay for police vehicles they purchased early. Ms. Labrie wanted to know compensated absences were. Mr. Sawyer explained that when a long-term employee retires from a department and they can't cover the full last paycheck for all their accrued time. There might be a transfer into that department to pay for somebody who was retiring and has a tremendous amount of balances. Ms. Labrie wanted to clarify that there wasn't enough money for payroll. Mr. Sawyer stated that it's unanticipated. If they know there is a retirement then they would budget for that. Ms. Labrie wanted to clarify that it's for retirees and that's all. Mr. Sawyer stated that was correct. Its unanticipated balances usually for someone who was retiring or leaving, separation from the community. They have to pay them out for their sick and vacation accruals.

Planning Department – Engineering/Architectural Services – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was. Mr. Sawyer explained that if they need to hire someone to do a survey on a Town piece of property, look at where conservation easement markers might be in a location and see if they were in the right spots, put in a bound for a property the Town might maintain or any consultant the Planning Department might need for a significant project review. It needs to have an appropriation. It might be offset by a contribution from a developer, but if they need expert services they have to have a line to be able to compensate for that.

Police Patrol Operations – Grant Funded Payroll – \$20K – Ms. Labrie wanted to know if for \$20K was money they received to put into payroll that was a grant from someplace. Mr. Sawyer responded exactly. Ms. Labrie wanted to know if they were receiving it through a grant, why they have to put it in their budget and pay for it. Councilor Thomas explained that it shows up on both the revenues and the expenses. They have to show every dollar going out. There is an offset on the revenue side for the same amount of money. Ms. Labrie stated that it's in their budget and it's a grant. Councilor Thomas explained that the grant was on the revenue side and the expense is on the expense side; they offset to zero. Ms. Labrie stated that their budget wasn't based on the expense side and Mr. Sawyer stated that it was. Councilor Thomas explained that this was a budget for the departments, so throughout the year they know what they can spend. She was only looking at the expenses right now, she wasn't looking at the revenues. The revenue side has the offset. Ms. Labrie stated that she was looking at the appropriations and Councilor Thomas stated that an appropriation was an expense. There was a revenue side to the budget, she just wasn't looking at it right now.

Police Patrol Operations – Overtime-Vacancies – \$20K – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was. If there was nobody there she wanted to know who they pay. Chairman Carter stated someone to be there. They have to pay someone to be there if it's a vacancy. Mr. Sawyer explained that it's the backfill.

Fire Hydrants – \$453K – Ms. Labrie wanted to know who the Town paid. Mr. Sawyer stated Manchester Water Works and Pennichuck. They charge the Town a fee for having hydrants on their systems and maintaining them. Ms. Labrie wanted to know if the water they use to put out a fire came from Merrimack. Mr. Sawyer explained that they don't pay for the water; they pay for the hydrant. Ms. Labrie wanted to know if they rent the hydrants. Mr. Sawyer explained that they are the Town's hydrants, but they have to pay to have them on their systems. Mr. Sawyer stated that it's the fee that they have annually for hydrants. Councilor Bandazian stated that it's for the utility to have the capacity to supply water that's sufficient for fire suppression if they need it in the hydrants. It's like an electric demand charge when the electric utility has to have sufficient power capacity to deliver electricity to all of the residents and businesses in Town. The water companies were obligated to have sufficient reservoirs and pumps and infrastructure to provide Bedford with sufficient fire suppression for all of the hydrants that they need. Ms. Labrie wanted to know where the water came from in the hydrants. Councilor Bandazian stated that it would come from Manchester or the Pennichuck system.

Public Works Administration – Grant/Donation Expenses – \$2.9M – Ms. Labrie wanted to know if the \$2.9M was going to be offset. Mr. Sawyer stated that it was in 2022. It's not in the proposed 2023 budget. They were grants for PFAS remediation.

Public Works Winter Maintenance – Seasonal Wages – \$8K – Overtime – \$135K – Councilor Thomas when they are plowing in the middle of the night they are getting overtime. Mr. Sawyer stated that they were two different groups of people being paid out of the two lines. Seasonal wages were for employees they hire just to work snowstorms. The overtime was for the regular employees who were working many extra hours.

General Assistance – \$12,000 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for. Councilor Radke explained that it was for any resident who was unable to pay their rent, utilities, etc. It's a State requirement that every town offer assistance to these folks.

Bedford Community TV – Professional Services – \$97,000 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for. Mr. Sawyer stated that was for one of the employees. Councilor Thomas stated that all of BCTV was offset by cable access revenue. The taxpayers actually do not pay for BCTV. The Comcast users do.

Bedford Community TV – Professional Services – \$97,000 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know if this was people brought in for something. Mr. Sawyer stated that some of those things were for the On Demand services that you can go back and watch the meetings. There is a contracted service that helps provide that. It's those types of services.

Sewer – \$850,000 – Ms. Labrie wanted to know what this was for. Councilor Radke explained that it was an enterprise fund, so people who are hooked up to sewer pay a fee. The Town collects the money and then pays Manchester and Merrimack for the sewer services. There is no tax impact to residents. Councilor Thomas stated that any of the businesses on South River Road were hooked up to the Manchester sewer system. Mr. Sawyer explained that Bedford didn't have its own sewer treatment plant, so they have to send the sewage elsewhere.

Ms. Labrie wanted to know when the 2022 annual report would be online. She's been checking constantly and it's not there. Mr. Sawyer stated that they were still receiving invoices for 2022. The annual report was always provided before Town Meeting.

Chairman Carter closed the public hearing.

Mr. Sawyer stated that the Council has proposed to use \$3,090,000 of fund balance to offset the tax rate. He mentioned increasing the revenue for Meals & Rooms to \$2.1M.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council amend the BCTV appropriations and revenue lines as noted in the staff report dated January 17, 2023 by \$7,750 each. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

MOTION by Councilor Thomas that the Bedford Town Council amend the Rooms & Meals revenue line by \$325K for a new total of \$2.1M. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council move Article 8 the 2023 Capital Reserve Fund as presented forward to the Budgetary Town Meeting Scheduled for March 15, 2023 with a total appropriation of \$3,275,325. Seconded by Councilor Radke. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

MOTION by Councilor Thomas that the Bedford Town Council move Article 9 the 2023 operating budget as presented forward to the

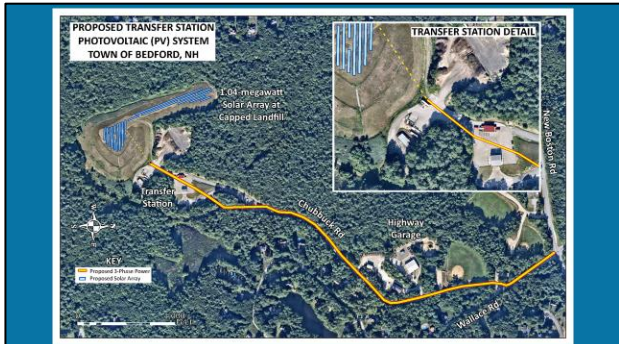
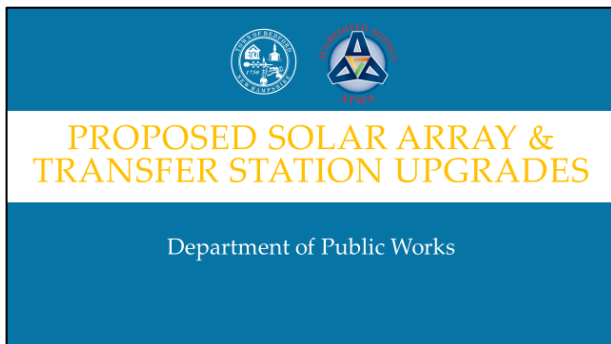
Budgetary Town Meeting Scheduled for March 15, 2023 in the following amounts:

General Fund	32,531,308
Recreation Day Camp	106,320
Bedford Comm. TV	482,816
Sewer Fund	1,718,779
Total Appropriations	\$34,839,223

Seconded by Councilor Radke. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

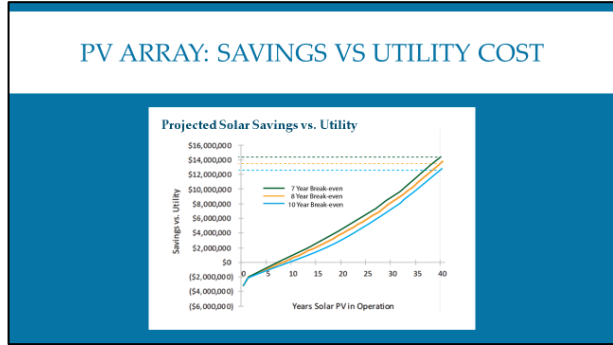
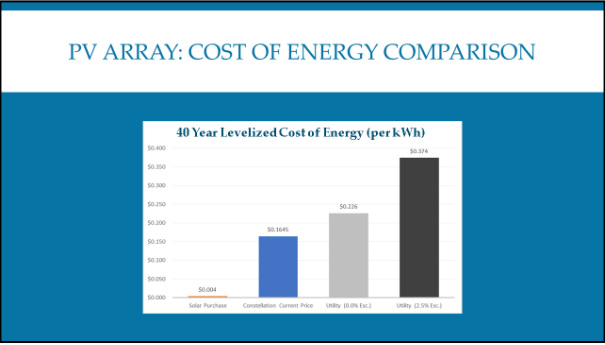
b. Proposed \$3.5 million bond for a 1 megawatt solar array and improvements to the Transfer Station

Jeff Foote, Public Works Director, stated that the DPW had been working on this project for nearly three years. This project will save Bedford taxpayers well over \$10m over the projected 40 year life of the solar array. If the Town moves forward with this project, electrical consumption costs would be between .5 cents to 1 cent per kilowatt hour over the next 40 years. In 2022, DPW secured a \$500K grant for the purpose of upgrading the electrical service to the Transfer Station. The extension was to allow for the construction of the solar array and also for the introduction of automatic compaction of municipal solid waste using electrical compactors. The electrical upgrade on Chubbuck Road was funded and scheduled for 2023. The Energy Commission explored ground-mounted solar for more than a decade and they commissioned an inventory of all Town-owned properties and this location at the capped landfill was the most desirable location. DPW was proposing this project for three major reasons. First, the construction of a solar system on the capped landfill would produce enough electricity to offset all of Bedford's existing municipal electrical consumption for all Town-owned facilities. If this project moves forward, Bedford's municipal government facilities could be a net zero carbon emissions entity by the end of 2024. Second, it would allow the Town to pursue electrical compaction of municipal solid waste vs. manually compacting trash with a diesel backhoe. The project would include life safety improvements to the office area attached to the MSW building. Third, the construction of a solar field on the capped landfill was good for the environment and would save taxpayers more than \$10M over the expected useful life of the system. Moving forward with Bedford's solar proposal would allow the Town to supply clean, renewable energy that would substantially offset electrical costs at all Town facilities. The project would serve as a positive example to the community and region of the economic viability of renewable energy. Mr. Foote went through a presentation.



PROJECTS INVESTMENT SUMMARY

COST	DESCRIPTION
\$3,556,720	PV ARRAY
\$10,000	TRENCH PAVING
\$202,000	ELECTRICAL
\$3,768,720	SOLAR GROSS COST
(\$1,130,616)	INFLATION REDUCTION ACT REBATE 30%
(\$150,000)	THREE PHASE EXTENSION IRA REBATE 30%
\$2,488,104	SOLAR NET COST
\$462,653	ELECTRICAL COMPACTORS
\$100,000	BUILDING IMPROVEMENTS
\$60,000	FACILITY PAVING
\$3,110,757	NET GRAND TOTAL



PV: ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS

Environmental Benefits	Annually
Annual CO2e offset (lbs)	1,225,848
Equivalent to...	
Gallons of gasoline not burned	62,567
Passenger cars removed from the road	120
Pounds of coal not burned	612,644



Councilor Bemiss thought the compactors would be smaller and wouldn't allow for the volume of people like before and wanted to know how that would affect traffic flow. Mr. Foote stated that they were working on the plan, but the engineering team told him that compactors would go in and the trucks would back up. They can extend the hoppers so they could accommodate more people, but it won't accommodate as it was today. Their goal was to have those hoppers at an angle so that when the trash is thrown into the hopper that it would slide down into the compaction hopper. Councilor Bemiss wanted to know if they would still be able to use the easy access speed door. Mr. Foote stated that he was told yes. He took great pride in the speed door and wouldn't want to negate that. Councilor Bemiss wanted to know if they would need to replace that building as a whole at any point. Mr. Foote responded yes. He thought they needed to make it about five feet longer towards the handicapped spaces. They would keep the lean-to out to get another five feet, so they could put a shower in it, so if someone gets injured again they could accommodate them. He thought it was expected that when employees show up in the morning to go to work they were going to have running water, so they could use the toilet.

Councilor Bandazian stated that the revenue projections were extremely safe and understate the savings to taxpayers at \$10M. They were based on 2% and more recently on a 3% annual increase in electricity rates. Over the last 12 years until 2022, they were increasing at a rate of 5%. In 2022, they added \$131K to the 2023 budget for the electricity rate increases, which was a 54% increase in one year (18 years of 3% increases). To say that the savings projected from this project was safe was an understatement. There were other benefits as well. In 2013, the State passed a municipal net metering statute, which had a cap of one megawatt, which meant the Town could power from the landfill only its own facilities. The door was open now that the cap was increased in August of 2021 in the future including the school district. At that point it would be a little bit more expensive to develop since they would be looking at sloped areas, but they could bring their rate down from by a similar factor of 40 times what it is. The only rates that the Town would be paying in the future of the supply, transmission, distribution demand charges that were now on the bill are 25% of the distribution charge and whatever the demand charges turn out to be. It would be much smaller. The sooner they do this the sooner they have taxpayer savings. Even in the bond projections they were being very conservative. They were about 2% over if they go the bond route. They could go the bond route or have a little bit more flexibility when they get to the actual warrant language.

Councilor Gilbert assumed they were doing one compactor and then the other side would be as it is and then once that one is done they would do the other one when they install them. Mr. Foote thought that for the 3-5 days it takes them to build they would have crews set up at the Highway Garage and people would come in and get rid of their household trash. Councilor Gilbert wanted to know how many compacted loads go into the trailer. Mr. Foote stated that it just keeps pushing until it fills up. Chairman Carter thought it would be less trucks. Mr. Foote stated that they were limited by what a tractor trailer could haul over the road and those companies the trucks go to don't want overloaded trucks and would reject them. They know where they should be. The contract says they have to have at least 19 tons in the truck and many of theirs to go 21-22, which was still legal over the road. They don't want to be at 28 tons in a truck. Councilor Gilbert thought people needed to do better at not putting trash in there that should be in the recycle bins.

Chairman Carter opened the public hearing.
Chairman Carter closed the public hearing.

Mr. Sawyer stated that since the agenda was published and it's at \$3.5M, bond counsel came back and indicated that they need to list it bonding the full project cost amount, which was \$4,391,000. They won't necessarily bond that amount, but it gives the Council the authority to do so if necessary. There was potential for significant rebates, but they have to have the full appropriation and hopefully get those rebates down the road. They don't have a schedule for when the rebates would be in their hands, what years or exactly how much they would be at this point, so they can't fully detail out all of that. The proposed language went to bond counsel and shows the changes from bond counsel for the warrant article. He thought they were self-explanatory primarily dealing with the dollar amount and some additional language about the rebate and the Federal Inflation Reduction Incentive Program. There was also a common English explanation that goes along with the warrant that has historically been put forward by the Council. The explanation part was open for the Council to change the wording. They could potentially change the language on the warrant, but he wouldn't sway too far from what bond counsel has reviewed.

Councilor Radke questioned the article as written. They were asking for \$4.3M 'for the purpose of constructing a solar array at the capped landfill', but the title says 'electrical trash compactors'. She wanted to know if they should be putting in electrical compactors. She thought the DRA would have an issue with that. Councilor Thomas suggested 'capped landfill at Chubbuck Road and electrical trash compactors.' Councilor Radke stated that if they didn't include it they wouldn't be able to use that money for the trash compactors. Councilor Bandazian thought they may want to add site improvements. Councilor Radke stated that they wouldn't be able to do the site improvements without that in there as well. Councilor Bandazian stated that otherwise it makes it look like the array costs more than it does too.

Councilor Bandazian thought the explanation should include how much it was going to reduce the cost of electricity to one cent or less per kilowatt hour. Councilor Radke stated that she and Councilor Gilbert spoke how the rebate would offset the cost of the project. Councilor Gilbert stated that the statement was, '*...which the Town would apply for and offset the overall project costs with rebates expected to be around 15-30%...*' Councilor Radke stated that the explanation says they were going to have a rebate, but it would be nice to add in there that it would offset the cost of the project. The edited language would say, '*...the Town would apply for to offset the overall project costs.*' Councilor Bandazian's added language was '*...provide tax savings by reducing the Town's cost per kilowatt hour to one cent or less for a total savings in excess of \$13M over the 40 year life of the project.*'

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council approve the warrant article as amended relative to seeking authorization to bond up to \$4,391,373 for constructing a solar array at the capped landfill on Chubbuck Road on Town-owned land further described as Lot 8-4 and place such warrant article on the ballot to be voted on by the public on Tuesday, March 14, 2023.

Councilor Thomas thought the motion should include electrical compactors. Mr. Sawyer stated that they should add, 'electrical compactors and associated site improvements.' Councilor Gilbert agreed with that. Councilor Radke add, 'as amended per our discussion at the January 25th meeting.' Councilor Gilbert stated they could say that also. The amended motion reads:

MOTION by Councilor Gilbert that the Bedford Town Council approve the warrant article as amend relative to seeking authorization to bond up to \$4,391,373 for constructing a solar array at the capped landfill and electrical compactors and associated site improvements on Chubbuck Road, as amended per our discussion at the January 25th meeting, on Town-owned land further described as Lot 8-4 and place such warrant article on the ballot to be voted on by the public on Tuesday, March 14, 2023. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

c. Acceptance of \$381,538.28 of unanticipated bridge aid funds from the State of NH

Chairman Carter opened the public hearing.

Chairman Carter closed the public hearing.

MOTION by Councilor Thomas that the Bedford Town Council accept \$381,538.28 of unanticipated bridge aid funds from the State of NH. Seconded by Councilor Radke. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

Councilor Radke thought keeping it in a fund, they could use it down the road for future repairs. Mr. Sawyer clarified repairs and maintenance of bridges or construction of bridges. Councilor Radke stated that they didn't have to use it all at once.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Appointment of Assistant Town Manager/Director of Strategic Initiatives

Mr. Sawyer stated that Pursuant to Article C4-6&8 of the Town Charter, He was pleased to submit his appointment of Jeanne Walker, current Town Engineer and Assistant Public Works Director and resident of Nashua as the Bedford's first Assistant Town Manager and Director of Strategic Initiatives. He was convinced that Jeanne was the best person for the job given her knowledge of Bedford and proven skills over her five-year employment as Town Engineer and a result of her overall 30 years of professional experience. Prior coming to Bedford, Jeanne served as the Wastewater Project Engineer and the Deputy Manager of Engineering for the City of Nashua. In Both Nashua and Bedford, Jeanne has been responsible for projects of all sizes and complexities and has expertise in contract development and management, permitting, specification, easements, and budgeting. In addition to managing the Town Roads Program over the past five years, Jeanne was the Project Manager for the DPW's recent success in obtaining accreditation from the APWA, and has served on the Town's Planning Board Technical Review Committee. Jeanne already has a very good working relationship with employees in all departments and already versed in all of our procedures given her current role as Town Engineer. The appointment comes following a formal selection process where the position was advertised externally and resumes were collected over the last several months. A selection committee interviewed the candidates and strongly supported offering the position to Jeanne. Jeanne is well qualified for the position given her experience and certification as a licensed NH & MA Professional Engineer as well as her Masters of Public Administration from the University of NH.

Councilor Bandazian stated that Jeanne came when the MS4 permit went into effect. It ramped up from when it was verbal requirements to year five when there were real teeth in the requirements. Jeanne very capably managed that whole transition. There is a lot of public information that's very important. He appreciated the work that Jeanne had done and DPW in general. It's been at the head of digitization of records and improvements of the GIS system, document management, so hopefully those processes could move forward Town wide.

MOTION by Councilor Thomas that the Bedford Town Council confirm the appointment of Jeanne Walker as the Assistant Town Manager and Director of Strategic Initiatives for the Town of Bedford effective February 20, 2023. Seconded by Councilor Bandazian. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

b. Appointments to Boards and Commissions

MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council appoint David Clark as an alternate member of the Historic District Commission with a term to expire in 2024. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 5-2 (Bandazian-nay, Gilbert-nay).

MOTION by Councilor Thomas that the Bedford Town Council appoint Tom Slattery as an alternate member of the Conservation Commission with a term to expire in 2023. Seconded by Councilor Gilbert. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council appoint Logan Johnson as an alternate member of the Planning Board with a term to expire in 2023. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

c. Other New Business – None

6. OLD BUSINESS

a. Composting and recycling

Jeff Foote, Public Works Director, stated that there were receiving about a ton a week of recycling. He explained a couple of slides on the screen.



Mr. Foote stated that on March 1st, MSW disposal was going to \$115.52/ton. They need to recycle more. He mentioned that when someone puts something in the blue food waste bin, it goes out back, they mix it with other compost and their plan was to repurpose that towards replacement of synthetic fertilizers in their parks and fields. He encouraged people to food compost at home and reuse it at home or bring it to the Transfer Station.

Councilor Bandazian mentioned when they began separately recycling glass and that the public had been very good about doing that. He mentioned that on the mixed recycling side, they have a good reputation down in Billerica with waste management and it was because they send them excellent quality mixed recyclables. That benefits their rate as well that they have such a good reputation. It's credit to the staff and public.

Mr. Foote stated that when they were negotiating with Covanta to extend their contract, one of the things the Town highlighted was that the Town sends them good material to incinerate. They don't send them things that shouldn't be incinerated, so Bedford has a very good relationship with their vendor for MSW as well.

Councilor Radke wanted to know what the school district does with their composting and leftover food and wanted to know if they brought it to the Transfer Station. Mr. Foote stated that the school district was just now introducing food composting. They have a vendor. Chairman Carter thought they were doing testing in one school. Councilor Bemiss stated that she sent them some information about a large garbage disposal type of thing, which seemed to be economical for large volumes like that. They send it off and produce methane out of it versus it going to the Transfer Station.

Chairman Carter asked Mr. Foote to thank his personnel who had been out there the last few days to keep the roads clear and passable.

7. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. Interview Minutes – January 11, 2023

MOTION by Councilor Radke that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the January 11, 2023 Interviews. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

b. Public Session – January 11, 2023

MOTION by Councilor Bemiss that the Bedford Town Council approve the minutes of the January 11, 2023 Public Session. Seconded by Councilor Thomas. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.

8. TOWN MANAGER REPORT

1) The filing period for open elected positions is January 25, 2023 through 5 PM February 3, 2023.

Open Town Elected Positions:

- Two Town Council positions (3-year terms)
- One Town Council position (1-year term)
- One Library Trustee (3-year term)
- One Trustee of the Trust Funds (3-year term)
- One Town Clerk (3-year term)

Open School District Positions:

- Two School Board positions (3-year terms)
- One School Board position (1-year term)

Those filing on the last day must do so in person before the Town Clerk by 5:00 PM.

2) Candidates Forum Live on BCTV hosted by the Bedford Men's Club.

- Town Council – February 10th – 7 PM, BCTV
- School Board – February 16th – 7 PM, BCTV

- 3) Potential Charter Commission Members filing period is February 15 – February 24. There are 9 open seats. Those filing on the last day must do so in person at the Town Clerk's office by 5:00 PM. This Commission would be formed as a result of a citizen's petition that would be on the warrant to form a Charter Commission that would look at the potential of moving to be an SB2 or Official Ballot community for the Town budget, which was currently on at the Budgetary Town Meeting. This Commission would take the remainder of this year and into January of 2024 to come up with their analysis of that potential and issue a report. If the report comes forward as yes, that's the right thing to do, then that question would be moved forward to the ballot in 2024 for the voters to decide if the Town would move to that form of government. If the Commission is formed and they study it and ultimately determine that it should not move forward, then that's the end of it. It would not appear on the ballot in 2024. If the question on the ballot to form the Commission does not pass, does not get the 50% needed, then the question about the positions on that Commission become moot. Both questions would be on the ballot; one, should they form the Commission and two, if so, they need to elect 9 people to serve on it. The Commission would need to meet a number of times, do a lot of research and come up with a preliminary report in October and then a final report due back to the Council by January.
- 4) As a reminder political signs are not permitted on any Town property or traffic island.
- 5) BCTV has launched a new app for easy access to their live and on demand content. Search "BCTV" at the Apple App Store or Google Play Store.
- 6) January 28 – Burning of the Greens (2nd session), 5:30-7:30 PM, EFJH.
- 7) Family Snowman Challenge: Build a snowman in your own yard and submit a picture by January 31st to: recreation@bedfordnh.org.
- 8) The Bedford Recreation Department is sponsoring the "Spread the Love" event February 1-28 in partnership with Bedford Community Food Pantry. Drop off jars of peanut butter, jelly, and jam at the Town Office Building.
- 9) February 3rd – Moonlight Snowshoe Hike – Legacy Park – Ages 5+ – 5:30 – 7:30 PM, Ages 16+ – 8-10 PM. Register through Bedford Recreation Department.
- 10) February 4 – EFJH, Annual Snow Ball Gala, 6 – 10 PM, Manchester Country Club.
- 11) February 9 – Thursday Theater, "Tár", 2 PM, Bedford Library. Please register through the Library website.
- 12) February 9 – Thursday Theater, "Till", 6 PM, Bedford Library. Please register through the Library website.
- 13) February 12 – Super Sunday 4 Miler road race, 9:30-Noon, taking place at the Nashua Road Little League complex and on Nashua Road, County Road, John Goffe Drive, Liberty Hill Road, Gault Road, and Maple Drive.
- 14) February 12 – Cinema Sunday, "Sabrina", 1:30-4:30 PM, Bedford Library. Please register in advance on the Library website.
- 15) February 16 – Snowshoe to the State Big Tree Champion Red Maple, Joppa Hill Farm, 2 PM (ages 21+). This will change to a walking event if there is no snow. Please register in advance on the Recreation website.
- 16) February 20 – The Town Office Building, Library, Transfer Station will be closed for Presidents Day.
- 17) February 26 – Concert & Cookies Series, 2:30 PM "Mr. Aaron Kids Concert" at the Library. A kid's concert with music and readings. Please register in advance on the Library website.
- 18) The Bedford Winter Parking Ban began on November 1st, which requires no parking on public roads between midnight and 8 AM.

Mr. Sawyer thanked all of the Public Works employees for the work they've been doing the last 10 or 12 days working either during the storm or cleaning up after the storms and also Police and Fire for the tremendous amount of calls they had to respond to with the number of trees and power lines down and issues that were created with the last storm. He thanked all three departments for all their extra work in the last couple of weeks.

9. COUNCILOR COMMENTS AND COMMITTEE UPDATES

Councilor Greazzo stated that the Planning Board passed zoning amendments to the ballot. Amendment 9, which was the banishment of roosters will be on the ballot. Although the petitioner requested to have it removed and didn't support it, he didn't gather the signatures to remove it from the ballot. Zoning amendments 1 – 8 all passed. He voted against a zoning amendment 1, which reduced elderly housing from 28 to 18 per development. He voted against zoning amendment 3, which increased the number of open space from 25% to 40% for a cluster development. He thought it was a bit excessive.

Councilor Bandazian stated that on the 13th, the Legislative PFAS Study Commission met and the Department of Health and Human Services delivered Phase 2 of its cancer study. The first phase indicated an increased rate of kidney cancer in Merrimack. Phase 2 with the aid of Dartmouth provided some standardized incident rates for Merrimack, Bedford, Litchfield, and Londonderry. They're talking about extremely small numbers, but Merrimack numbers did reflect a statistically significant increased rate of kidney cancer, most commonly renal cancer, over a 10 year period. They had 65 where 45.5 would have been normal from NH; about two extra cases per year. The study doesn't do anything to correlate having renal cancer in NH was higher than the national average. DHHS supports a Phase 3, which was not funded, but hopefully would be by the Legislature, to fine tune that. The good news in Bedford was that Bedford's renal cancer rate, although not statistically lower, was lower than the State average. Most of the Town was fed by bedrock wells or Manchester Water Works other than Greenfield Farms and Cabot Preserve. Bedford had a very slight elevated breast cancer rate, but not anything that would cause alarm. No indication of kidney cancer in Bedford, Litchfield or Londonderry. It's very concentrated in Merrimack, which might make sense considering their water source and proximity to Saint Gobain. There has to be a Phase 3 or they'll never know.

Councilor Thomas stated that the design/build facilities subcommittee met with the design/build team for the Police and Fire substation. They were still going along and still refining the plans. The Council approved a communications committee of residents and they determined that they would have a meeting with them to get them on board. What the two chiefs and their departments feel they need in a building; they're refining it. There are some preliminary designs although there's still no place to put it. It's still on the radar.

Councilor Bemiss stated that the Conversation Commission approved the redo of a porch into a 4-season porch and it's not impacting the wetlands any more than it was currently. One of the boy scouts did a project at Van Loan putting mile markers on the trails, so if something happens on the trail they can say what mile marker they were at so first responders could find you. She gave a shout out to Kathleen Ports from the Planning Department, because she does a phenomenal job with the trails, trail stewardship and the Conservation Commission.

Councilor Radke stated with a heavy heart that they lost another elder, Edie Schmitchden, who was a longtime resident. She was also the Town Clerk/Tax Collector and retired in 1996 and that was the last time it was a combined position. She spent many years as the Town Treasurer. She was a wonderful woman and poured her heart and soul into this town and condolences to her family.

Chairman Carter mentioned that CUB Clean-up day was April 15th, 9-1. They're getting the word out and would be doing a PSA.

10. NON-PUBLIC – RSA 91-A:3 II

11. ADJOURNMENT

**MOTION by Councilor Thomas to adjourn public session at 8:50 PM.
Seconded by Councilor Radke. Vote taken – Motion Passed – 7-0.**

Respectfully submitted,

Dawn Boufford