

# MINUTES *unapproved minutes*

**Budget Committee Meeting and Public Hearing:** February 3, 2021

**Present:** Jennifer Bland, Conan Cook, Claudia Istel, Sue Metsack, Cheryl Sanctuary, Judy Aron, Frank Emig, Jim Jennison, Brenda Melius

**Meeting began:** 7:00PM (SM)

1. Minutes January 20: Motion JA/JB to approve, passed.
2. FE reported on the replacement of the loader which broke down during the past week including potential repair cost and uncertainty of results. A rental was secured and Selectmen recommend a warrant article for a lease/purchase of the rental. First year funds would come from the Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and Unassigned Fund Balance with four annual payments to follow. There would be no increase in the 2021 tax rate. The annual payments would begin after the Town completes payment of the roller. The rental is slightly larger and has additional capabilities. The cost would be reduced by applying 80% of the amount of rent paid. There was discussion about the low trade in being offered and it was noted the machine is not in running condition. There was consensus to explore whether selling the old loader would exceed the trade in offered.
3. SM opened the public hearing. There was general discussion about the recent school district budget meeting, the level of Covid cases in Acworth and the plan for an in-person Town Meeting in March. It was noted the estimated tax rate for the Town's recommended budget was 43 cents lower than 2020 contrary to posts on social media. It was also noted that increases in the overall tax rate in recent years has been primarily due to increases in education spending.
4. SM closed the hearing and asked for a recommendation on the budget. Motion JA/CI to recommend all of the warrant articles as presented, passed. JA commended the Selectmen for their effort developing the budget.

**Meeting adjourned:** 7:50PM. Respectfully submitted, Kathi Bradt