

TOWN OF EATON, NEW HAMPSHIRE 03832
EVANS MEMORIAL BUILDING
BOARD OF SELECTMEN
PUBLIC HEARING ON THE BUDGET
February 5, 2026

The Public Hearing on the budget took place on Thursday, February 5, 2026 at the Eaton Town Hall. Present were Selectmen Greg Grinnell, Richard Fortin and John Schmerfeld. The Public Hearing was called to order at 6 pm.

Copies of the budget, the proposed Warrant, proposed Zoning Ordinance amendments, the 2025 detailed payments and the Sources of Revenues were distributed.

Dick Fortin reviewed the operating budget expenditures from last year versus the proposed operating budget for 2026. Dick Fortin noted that the Executive budget has a large increase due to the required tax map and GIS data updates. Paul Hennigan questioned the legal expenses for last year. Dick Fortin explained that the Board hired an outside agency to perform an investigation regarding a complaint received by the Selectmen. Dick Fortin explained that the Building budget has increased as there are areas on the exterior that need to be painted. John Hartman questioned the status of addressing security issues. Dick Fortin stated that the Board is still looking at all the options. Dick Fortin noted that the contract cost with Center Conway Fire has increased by \$8,000 and Freedom Fire by \$1200. Dick Fortin explained the process for setting the ambulance contract cost based on the number of calls. Dick Fortin explained that the Building Inspector has been reviewing plans prior to issuance of a Building Permit, which has increased the costs. Dick Fortin stated that the Selectmen are working with Eversource to correct the billing issues and number of light fixtures. Dick Fortin noted that there is an estimated 6.2% increase in the operating budget.

Greg Grinnell reviewed Articles 9 and 10 on the Warrant which will be voted on by ballot and indicated that due to the change in State laws, gambling is permitted unless prohibited by Town vote. Greg Grinnell reviewed Articles 13 through 21 on the Warrant. Greg Grinnell noted that the Road Reconstruction monies will be used for work on Towle Hill and Bull Pasture Road this year. Cindy Hall questioned Article 20 and why the classification of a road is necessary. Dick Fortin explained that in 1989, the State updated the laws regarding roads not plowed during the winter and that the Board was advised to update the prior vote of the Town. Dick Fortin stated that if laws are revised regarding the Town being required to maintain, it would be expensive to address that issue. Cindy Hall stated that she is unsure of what the terminology implies. Dick Fortin stated that the road is still a Class V, but will be closed from November 15th through April 30th. Jonathan Simonds asked for clarification on the section of road this effects. Road Agent Heath explained that it is the section from Alice Williams to Peddler's End.

Greg Grinnell reviewed petitioned Articles 22 through 28. David Smolen of the Gibson Center gave an overview of the programs and stated that in 2025 184 meals were

delivered to 9 residents. David Smolen noted that already this year, 295 meals have been delivered to 9 residents. Dick Fortin gave an overview of the services provided by Tri-County CAP and noted that 25 residents in 13 households (value of \$23,231) in Eaton were served last year. Deb Weinstein gave an overview of services provided by Starting Point and noted that last year services were provided to 5 Eaton residents. George Diller questioned the increase in funding. Deb Weinstein explained the costs of provided services for emergency situations.

Bethany Hicks gave an overview of the Conway Recreation usage and indicated there are 303 days available at the teen center and the cost is approximately \$70 for the parents. Bethany Hicks stated that there is about 55 days of childcare for the summer camp programs at a cost of approximately \$300. It was noted that adults are also using services by obtaining parking and ski passes. John Hartman stated that the voters asked for actual attendance numbers. Cindy Hall stated that they cannot know how many times the kids showed up once they were signed up for a program. John Hartman stated that actual attendance numbers should be made available at Town Meeting.

John Schmerfeld reviewed the revenues from last year and proposed for this year.

John Hartman asked about the status of Town Hall and the Town Garage construction projects. Greg Grinnell stated that the Selectmen are discussing the option of consolidating all offices on one side of Town Hall and stated that the Town Garage project has been put on hold while other issues were addressed. Dick Fortin explained that the Selectmen plan out proposed expenses through 2035 in an effort to maintain a level tax rate.

There being no further questions or comments, ***Dick Fortin made a motion, seconded by John Schmerfeld, to adjourn this Public Hearing. Motion unanimously carried.*** Greg Grinnell closed the Public Hearing at 7:06 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lianne Boelzner

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