

Chairman Kreider called the work session to order at 6:33 p.m.

PRESENT: Chair Hal Kreider, Vice-Chair Tom Chase, Selectboard Representative Matt Frye, Cove Village Representative Michael Jobin; Members: Dan McNally, Betty Smith, Michael Moore, David Brown, Norm Royce, Ginger Dole (arrived 6:36), and School Board Representative Brian Winslow (arrived 6:50).

ABSENT: Excused absence: Water District Representative Robert Young, Gulf Village District Representative Eric Buckland, Paul Tudor, and Stephen Oles.

MINUTES:

4/29/2026 Motion was made by Mr. Chase, seconded by Ms. Smith to approve the minutes, with a typo noted on Pg. 1. Vote: 7/0/2

VACANCIES: Chair Kreider noted that he understands that Ms. Colburn had moved out of town and that a letter was sent to her. No reply has been received. Mr. Chase stated that he is 99% sure that she is no longer on the voter checklist. Ms. Dole arrived late and was asked if Ms. Colburn is off the voter checklist. Ms. Dole stated that she has not received confirmation that she registered elsewhere but she will be removed from the Northwood checklist as she has moved out of state. Discussion was held on her status on the checklist and Ms. Dole stated for the record that she will be removed. **Motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Chase to advertise for the position. Vote: 10/0.**

Motion was made by Mr. Frye, seconded by Mr. Chase to appoint Mr. Benjamin Winsor to the vacant position left by Mr. Copeland. Discussion was held on his letter of interest. Mr. Frye spoke in favor of appointing him. **Vote: 10/0.**

TOWN - FIRST QUARTER REVIEW:

Revenue report: Selectman Frye was present to speak to the second quarter review. Mr. Frye stated there are no surprises in the report. He added that the town is receiving grant reimbursements and the ARPA grant cycle is being closed off. Mr. Chase noted building permits indicate building construction is doing well, and highway block grant money is anticipated. He also stated that he noticed non-Northwood officers working special duty and asked about the reason. Mr. Frye stated it is based on personnel issues with open positions in the police department. Mr. Frye added that he feels it is still important to propose replacing one cruiser every year. Discussion was held on building permit fees. Mr. Frye stated that the fees were revamped to be fairer and more equitable and noted that issuance of permits is staying steady.

Chair Kreider asked about the Ambulance/Fire Vehicle Replacement Spec. Rev. Fund 3401 and the related Interest on Investments 3502. It was agreed that Mr. Frye will check these numbers with finance department.

Mr. Moore asked where one would find the amount of tax revenue received. Chair Kreider stated that the treasurer's monthly report includes that information. The total for the year is included in the MS report signed by the budget committee.

Expenditure Report – Second Quarter

Mr. Frye gave an overview of the status of the expenditures, noting that the numbers are significantly below where the selectmen anticipated to be at this point. He added that includes many one time payments made early in year. He noted there is still a lot of time left in the year, including the months when highway maintenance costs are high. He stated that many lines are overspent/underspent which is difficult to track and is due to the number of years of default budget. He added that areas of concern include payments which are being made on the 2025 reassessment and the board voted to give eligible employees a 3% COLA to encourage retention. Mr. Royce stated at a BOS meeting it was stated that there would be a deficit. Mr. Frye responded that it does not appear to be the case now due to decisions that were made, including a change in health insurance which resulted in savings in the employer's contribution. Also, a hiring freeze was put in place for vacancies (except for public safety positions).

Ms. Dole stated she prefers to receive the original format for the expenditure report. She noted it would be best to have the sections put in the summary form the committee has received in the past. Mr. Brown stated he prefers a basic overview or pie chart, noting all the details are not necessary for the committee. He added that he prefers to see the higher percentage areas reviewed. Mr. Frye stated that anyone who would like to receive the information in electronic format may have it, and he agrees with providing subtotals as requested. He does not feel there is a lack of transparency as all information is being provided.

Ms. Dole asked about line **41506-4416** budget committee printing. Mr. Frye stated that it may be the wages for the minutes. Ms. Dole asked where the wages are being applied as there is no wage line. Mr. Frye stated he will ask and provide the information.

Mr. Royce suggested that the committee go through by page as it was done in the past.

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41502-4400 Audit. Ms. Dole asked if the audit has been completed and are there additional anticipated costs. Mr. Frye stated he believes the audit is complete but will get an answer.

41501-4432 Finance Contracted Services. Mr. Brown inquired about this expense. Mr. Frye stated this cost was when the finance director left the position and work was contracted to make the transition.

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41550-4108 Health/Dental. Mr. Royce asked if this reduction is due to reduced costs to the town. Mr. Frye responded that is due to savings from the premiums and due to a vacancy.

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41960-4418 Property/Liability Insurance. Ms. Dole asked about the increase in the line. Mr. Frye responded that he believes the rates went up and are not reflected in the default budget.

42101-4402 Police Legal & **42101-4432** Contracted Services. Ms. Dole noted that she believes the amount in the legal line should be for prosecution expenses in the contracted services line. Mr. Frye will confirm.

42101-4004 Police Wages Full time. Mr. Jobin asked how many full time officers are there. Mr. Frye stated he believes the department is short two or three full-time officers. He added that it may take some creative ways to handle the need for officers and added his concern over wages not being competitive.

42101-4603 Police Vehicle Repairs & Maintenance. Ms. Dole asked what is included in the cost (overage). Mr. Frye responded that some of the cost is due to an accident with a cruiser.

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42200-4404 Ambulance Billing. Mr. Frye stated that he will look into the amount in this line relative to how the billing cost is being paid.

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43110-4603 Highway Vehicle Maintenance & Repairs. Ms. Dole asked about the status of the truck to replace the one that burned. Mr. Frye stated one vehicle has been delivered, and the other is coming later. He added that the highway foreman will go over his proposal for the department during the budget process. Mr. Royce asked about the building inspector's vehicle. Mr. Frye stated the Ford Ranger is not usable; a vehicle is being rented. Additional discussion was held on anticipated snow maintenance/plowing this winter.

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43210-4424 E-Waste. Ms. Dole asked what is included in this new line. Mr. Frye responded that the electronic waste is being tracked now.

43240-4410 Solid Waste Disposal & **43240-4820** Transportation/Mileage. Mr. Royce asked about the numbers on these lines. Mr. Frye stated this is an accounting error.

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44140 Animal Control. Mr. Jobin noted there is nothing expended in this section. Mr. Frye stated there has not been an animal control officer in many years; the funds need to be there if an animal case happens requiring vet or other care.

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Ms. Dole expressed her concern that the expenditures from warrant articles are still included in the report (previously requested) and she would like to have the expenditure report not include these items. She added that this information will be included in the treasurer's report and the trustee of trust funds report. Mr. Frye stated he will pass this along.

Mr. Frye provided an overview of his concerns regarding the ability to fund necessary expenses in the future. Additional discussion was held on what information will be provided for 2027 budget deliberations.

Treasurer's Report

Mr. Royce stated his concern regarding the lack of investing in available funds.

Current Concerns: Mr. Frye stated his concerns include winter maintenance costs, and being able to keep up with the current job market to retain employees. Mr. Brown asked what may be on the horizon for large expenses. Mr. Frye stated infrastructure issues, safety facilities, and the closing of the lagoon. He stated his preference for a large bond to catch up.

Mr. Brown asked for an update on the solar project at the library. Ms. Smith gave an overview of the status of the solar project and Mr. Winslow provided a status on the school solar project.

SCHOOL – FOURTH QUARTER REPORT/Monthly Report

August 3 Memorandum

Mr. Winslow provided an overview of the memo and added that school is open and fully staffed (including with contracted services). He stated that Ms. Cassandra Micucci has been hired as the new SAU Business Administrator. He added that 2025-2026 fiscal budget has been closed out and the DOE-25 form has been completed. It includes a retained fund balance of approximately \$80,000 and a return of surplus to the community of \$375,000. Discussion was held on two pieces of legislation (state) that were proposed. Discussion was held on whether the committee will review the fourth quarter or the more recent monthly report. Ms. Dole recommends waiting on the fiscal year report until it is provided with all changes completed and suggests reviewing the monthly report, which the committee agreed to. Mr. Winslow explained the year end bottom line has changed from the report previously provided; he added that some encumbrances were turned back, which resulted in the change.

Mr. Royce asked how to find the SAU expenses. Mr. Winslow explained that there is only Northwood in the SAU, so the expenses are interwoven in the budget. Further discussion was held on how to determine the cost of administrative costs and pending state legislation.

Chair Kreider asked about Coe-Brown tuition relating to the number of new students. Mr. Winslow stated that it has not reached a point of concern at this time. Chair Kreider asked about the formula for receiving revenue for special education students. Mr. Winslow responded there is a formula for state aid, but it is not a specific amount and added that the amount is shown in the revenue report. Additional discussion was held on how the revenue is received/applied and Mr. Winslow suggested that Ms. Micucci can better explain if needed.

Monthly review (July 2026)

Pg. 1.

1100.5110. Teacher Salaries. Mr. Chase asked about changeover of teaching staff for the new school year and stated the importance of continuity.

Pg.3

1200 Special Ed Total. Discussion is held on what is included in this total.

Pg.4

2140.5110 Psychologist Salary. Chair Kreider asked about this line. Mr. Winslow responded that it is a shared (Coe-Brown) contracted service.

Revenue Report

Mr. Winslow gave an overview of the revenue received for '25-'26 year, noting that several areas fell short of anticipated revenue including special education aid. Chair Kreider asked about what was voted from fund balance to rec and voted from fund balance \$100,000. Mr. Winslow will come back with an answer.

1 Mr. Brown asked if the school board has looked at areas for potential savings, specifically percentage cost
2 reductions. Mr. Winslow gave an overview of the school board's review of the budget and noted that the
3 board looks at areas where there can be cost savings on an ongoing basis. Discussion was held on pending
4 and approved state legislation and how it affects local budgets. Mr. Winslow noted that the board's policy
5 committee reviews the information. Lengthy discussion was held on additional costs/services that are
6 mandated. Chair Kreider stated that when the budget deliberations take place, he will expect members of
7 the committee to be willing to speak to and address any numbers they do not agree with that are proposed
8 by the town and school officials. Discussion was held on student enrollment; Mr. Winslow stated it has been
9 consistent. Additional discussion was held on special education funding, noting the reserve fund should be
10 higher than it is now. Mr. Brown asked if the cost for the rental of the SAU office can be broken out
11 separately. Mr. Winslow noted that the cost of continuing with the separate location has been addressed in
12 the past and provided reasons for the decision to stay, noting that may change in the future.

13
14 **Internal Business**

15 Discussion was held on the proposed rules for remote policy draft, including how many times per year that a
16 person could participate remotely. Additional discussion was held on whether participation and voting can
17 take place remotely during budget deliberations. The policy will be addressed at the October meeting.
18 Lengthy discussion was held on the calendar for budget deliberations and how the town department heads
19 will participate in the process and how questions will be addressed. Mr. Winslow suggested that for
20 efficiency the BOS representative ask that the department heads provide information at the BOS meetings
21 with the intent of members to listen to the meetings. The school board already holds a public forum prior to
22 the budget hearings. Questions can then be based on these earlier discussions.

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24 **Motion was made by Mr. Winslow, seconded by Ms. Dole to adjourn the meeting at 9:30 pm. Vote: 11/0.**

25
26 Respectfully submitted,
27 Linda Smith

Linda Smith

