Town of Belmont

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Budget Committee Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 8, 2026, 6:00 pm
Belmont Mill - Tioga Meeting Room

Present were Chairman Tracey LeClair, Vice Chair Jessi Fleck, Selectmen's Representative Ruth P. Mooney, Members Ron Mitchell, Marsha Campbell, Mark Roberts, Rachel French, Don Hurd, Lee Cheshire, Paul Maggioli, and Brian Gardiner; TA Alicia Jipson, and Executive Assistant Colleen Akerman. Also present was Norm Duval of the Sunray Shores Water District.

Absent: Members Don House and Susan Roache.

Chairman Tracey LeClair opened the meeting at 6:00 pm and those present joined in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Minutes Approval – 12/11/2025:

Ron Mitchell moved to approve the minutes of the 12/11/2025 meeting as presented; seconded by Jessica Fleck. Motion passed unopposed (11-0).

TA Update:

TA Jipson informed the Committee that everything has been entered into the state portal for the default budget. Sunray Shores is presenting their budget tonight. January 13th is the last day for petitioned warrant articles, and we will need to hold another hearing if there are any with a monetary value.

Remaining Outstanding Items: None

Public Hearing – 2026 Proposed Budget for Town of Belmont and Sunray Shores Water District:

The Chairman opened the public hearing at 6:05 pm.

Mr. Norm Duval of the Sunray Shores Water District explained there are 98 homes on their water system, which was originally installed in the 1960s. There were new pumps installed in 1974, but the system has not been well maintained and it is aging. They are using some funding from the state and other resources. They have $1.9 million approved and $1.65 million pending. They have started on the work, and the new pump house is being built. They have put some piping in the road. They are self-sufficient and fully funded with no funds from taxpayers.

R. Mitchell asked when the project will be completed. They hope it will be done by the end of 2026 but there may be some carryover into 2027. The Water District owns several parcels of property and much of it is within wetlands. A lot of it is on Elaine Drive and on the other side of the railroad tracks. Their wells require no treatment and are in good shape. They are having an issue because of the state's placement of above-ground sewer.

There was no additional public comment for the proposed 2026 Sunray Shores Water District.

Jessica Fleck moved to approve the proposed 2026 Sunray Shores Water District budget of $46,254 plus $32,000 in special warrant articles, for total appropriations of $78,254 with the amount of taxes to be raised of $0; seconded by R. Mitchell.

The Chairman closed the hearing at 6:10 pm for Sunray Shores Water District.

The Chairman opened the public hearing for the proposed 2026 Town of Belmont Budget at 6:11 pm.

Chairman LeClair reviewed the 2026 MS-737 for the 2026 Town of Belmont proposed budget:

Estimated Appropriations:

General Government $2,581,669
Public Safety $6,152,040
Highways and Streets $1,432,335
Sanitation $794,395
Health Agencies $69,339
Welfare $274,519
Culture & Recreation $471,861
Conservation $20,201
Debt Service $254,924
Capital Outlay $20,000

Total Operating Budget Appropriations $12,071,283.

Special Warrant Articles for the Fire Department, Police Department, Heritage Fund, Sewer, Water, Highway Reconstruction, Mill Renovations, Municipal Facilities, Property Revaluation, Heavy Equipment, Information Technology, Bridges, Library, Durrell Mountain Road, CRSWC, Accrued Liability, Cemeteries and Election Equipment are proposed at $3,389,191.

Individual Warrant Articles include creation of a Contingency Fund $20,000, Public Safety Employees Unions for Police $24,319, Fire $162,346, DPW $41,575 and the Highway Block Grant $203,905 totaling $552,145.

Estimated Revenues include:

Taxes $200,938
Licenses, Permits & Fees $1,965,000
State Sources $960,587
Charges for Services $320,000
Miscellaneous Revenue $280,000
Interfund Transfers In $1,609,203
Other Financing Sources $125,821

Total Estimated Revenues & Credits $5,461,549.

The operating budget of $12,071,283, special warrant articles $3,389,191, and individual warrant articles $552,145, means total appropriations of $16,012,619; less estimated revenue and credits of $5,461,549 leaves $10,551,070 to be raised by taxation.

There was no comment from the public.

The Chairman closed the public hearing at 6:22 pm.

R. Mitchell moved to send the 2026 budget to the ballot as presented; seconded by J. Fleck. Motion passed unopposed (11-0).

2026 Default Budget:

The 2026 Default Budget includes:

General Government $2,378,991
Public Safety $5,713,909
Highways and Streets $1,408,372
Sanitation $797,503
Health Agencies $68,891
Welfare $181,635
Culture & Recreation $422,069
Conservation $17,214
Debt Service $254,924
Capital Outlay $20,000

Total Default Budget Appropriations $11,263,508.

Candidacy:

Don Hurd, Marsha Campbell, Rachel French and Brian Gardiner are up for re-election.

Candidate signups start January 21st and end January 30th.

Signatures for Budget Paperwork:

Members should watch for an email after January 13th to come sign all of the copies of the official budget paperwork at Town Hall and to return their binders.

R. Mooney expressed concerns that each default budget puts us back 5 years, which means we are back 10 years right now. A lot of time went into the union contract negotiations, and all three public safety unions work together to provide services to our residents. We scrounged to keep employees whole and we will lose people if we can't do that. The vacancies in our police and fire departments allowed us to maintain our default budget but we are overextending our current staff. If anyone has questions about the budget they should reach out to Tracey LeClair by email or TA Jipson at Town Hall. There will be a voters' guide to share with everyone.

Chairman LeClair spent time with the school board learning about their budget process, which is different than ours. Their hearing is next Thursday, January 15th. They did a lot of work and there are cuts to help save the taxpayers some money. There is still an increase, but the default budget is higher than the proposed. They have worked to save money with little impact to the students. Saying no to this school budget won't save taxpayers money because the default budget is higher than the proposed budget.

Vice Chair Fleck stated it is important that everyone knows when voting day is and to get voters' guides ahead of time so everyone can ask questions.

Deliberative Session:

The Deliberative Session will be held on Saturday, January 31st at 10 am at Belmont High School. Snow date is Saturday, February 7, 2026 at 2:00 pm. It is not mandatory, but it is great to have all of our budget members in attendance to support their budget.

Adjournment:

R. Mitchell moved to adjourn at 6:39 pm; seconded by Brian Gardiner. Motion passed unopposed (11-0).

Respectfully Submitted By:

Colleen Akerman

Colleen Akerman, Executive Assistant

Tracey LeClair

Chairman Tracey LeClair

Vice Chair Jessica Fleck

Selectman Ruth P. Mooney

Mark Roberts

Marsha Campbell

Ron Mitchell

Paul Maggioli

Don Hurd

Don House

Rachel French

Lee Cheshire

Brian Gardiner

Susan Roache