

Carriage Road to top of Benton's Mt. Moosilauke built in 1870. The summit house first opened in 1860 as the Prospect House. Telephone lines to top added before 1910.

Benton, NH

Annual Report

2019



Vintage post cards from past times in Benton on cover and throughout Report provided by William Darcy

Town of Benton, New Hampshire
Annual Report of Town Officers and Benton School District
Year Ending December 31, 2019

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Town of Benton, NH Website: <https://www.tobentonnh.org>

Benton Town Officers

		<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>
Board of Selectmen	William Darcy	3 yrs.	2020
	Regina Elliott	3 yrs.	2022
	Carol Vincelette	3 yrs.	2021
Moderator	Gilbert Richardson	2 yrs.	2020
Treasurer	Dwight Swauger	1 yr.	2020
Tax Collector	Michael Stiebitz	1 yr.	2020
Town Clerk	Michael Stiebitz	1 yr.	2020
Supervisor of the Checklist	Marguerite Christopher	3 yrs.	2022
	Stephanie Saffo	3 yrs.	2021
	Elena Chevalier	3 yrs.	2020
Ballot Clerk	Frances Hadden	1 yr.	2020
Ballot Inspector	Maxine Tyler	1 yr.	2020
Surveyor of Wood and Lumber	Joseph Boutin, Jr	1 yr.	2020
Trustees of the Trust Funds	Laura Richardson	3 yrs.	2020
	Mark Elliott	3 yrs.	2021
	Martin Noble	3 yrs.	2022
Planning Board	Kenneth Kealey	3 yrs.	2022
	Richard Saffo, Sr.	3 yrs.	2020
	Martin Noble	3 yrs.	2021
	Sam Gregory	3 yrs.	2020
	William Darcy	3 yrs.	2020

Selectmen's Report

Your Select Board had a busy year making property improvements, enhancing current and future finances and planning for the future. We'll start with the 2019 accomplishments and then tell you our plans for the future which will require your support at the Town Meeting.

Sand and Salt Shed. Since at least the 2014 Town Meeting the need for our community sand and salt supply to be covered in winter has been discussed. Finally, this year it was done. The Town supplied the materials and the intrepid trio of Mike Stiebitz, Joe Boutin, Jr. and Cameron Bennett supplied the volunteer labor to build the structure next to Town Hall. Thanks to them all.



Winter Barrier and Sign on Tunnel Stream Road. Another need discussed at the 2014 Town Meeting was a barrier and signage to stop vehicular traffic on the portion of Tunnel Stream Road we do not maintain in the winter. The concern was that an accident on this portion of the road in winter would subject the town to liability for lack of warning and attempts to bar entry. Now an appropriate barrier and signage are in place (pictured below).



Snowplow Turnaround Area on Long Pond Road. The Town’s vote to take over maintenance of the Northern end of Long Pond Road created a need to have a good place for snowplows to turnaround without having to drive up to the United States Forest Service’s gate. We worked with USFS and all their experts to secure approval to use their land for this purpose (no small feat) and were able to build the area last fall (pictured below). We also added a “No Parking Sign” to help assure the snowplows would not have any obstructions.



Mountain View Cemetery Improvements. This year we removed some trees, bushes, and stumps to make cemetery maintenance easier. We also moved some of the granite posts dividing the old from new cemetery areas (some were hidden in bushes) for use to replace the wooden posts separating the parking area from the grave sites. Old granite posts are classier and more solid as a face of the cemetery (pictured below).



Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan One of the things the two 2017 storms highlighted is the need to make improvements to undersized and misplaced culverts that cause washouts of our roads during heavy rains. To be eligible for financial help from the federal government for that task required us to develop a Multi-Hazard Mitigation Plan and get it approved by the New Hampshire Homeland Security and Emergency Management agency (HSEM) and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). In 99% of cases the task of developing municipal plans is the work of paid consultants, but the Select Board and Emergency Management Director Scott Matz were able to do the yeomen work inhouse and secured the HSEM and FEMA approvals of our Plan on August 1, 2019.

Environmental Permits for Tunnel Steam Road Culvert Near Davis Brook. Our first priority for hazard mitigation projects is to upgrade and move the culvert on Tunnel Stream Road near Davis Brook which has caused road washouts twice in 2017 and in 2011. To get ready for applying for federal grants we needed first to secure environmental permits for the project and get a firm project cost estimate from an engineering firm. In 2019 we secured permits from the NH Department of Environmental Services and the Army Corps of Engineers with a duration of five years and we now have a project cost estimate of \$131,000. Warrant Article 6 asks the Town to appropriate the money for the project with \$98,250 to come from federal funds and the remaining 25% (\$32,750) from the unassigned fund balance.

Lawsuit Against USFS for Underpaying PILOT We all have received notices in the mail from law firms entreating us to join class action lawsuits over various consumer complaints and most of us throw them in the trash. We received such an entreaty concerning a legal action against the US Department of Interior concerning underpayments to towns and counties throughout the United States for payments in lieu of taxes for U.S. government property. It looked like it was worth taking a chance given the large amount of federal land in Benton, so we joined the lawsuit as a party and this year we received a settlement check of \$1,638.

The Future

Cemetery Improvements: The Cemetery still needs a lot of work. The stone retaining wall facing Route 116 is falling down and there are many gravestones fallen and in need of repair. We would also like to expand the number of burial sites in the newly surveyed area by tree and stump removal and survey of burial plots to get them ready for sale. An attractive Mountain View Cemetery sign would also add to the appeal of the property. Warrant Article 8 authorizes us to spend the money for these tasks over the next two years.

Town Hall Improvements At the 2014 Town Meeting citizens expressed a desire to add a fence to the side lawn (right side of the building) for scenic reasons to shield the propane tank and generator from view and for the practical purpose of protecting the septic system from vehicular

damage. We think it's time to get that job done. Included on our list is a roof over the kitchen door and a lighted sign and notice board. Warrant Article 10 provides the funds to accomplish those tasks.

Broadband Internet. The generally accepted minimum standards for internet broadband is 25 MPS download speed and 5 MPS upload speed. Because of our topography and population density, almost no residences or businesses in Benton meet those minimum standards. The generally poor cell phone reception in Benton also increases the importance of a good fixed internet connection. Most people who have the Consolidated Communications DSL internet service complain of its lack of reliability and download speed. The result is that our property values suffer because many people will not move to a location with poor internet and/or cell phone service. Moreover, a whole range of useful telecommunications services and functions are denied our residents. Our citizens also pay more for the combination of television, telephone and computer access to email and web services because those services can be more economically provided through one broadband connection.

There are a multitude of state and federal programs for financial assistance to extend broadband internet services to underserved rural areas like Benton. But it takes a lot of time, effort, expertise and money to navigate what is available, secure the necessary funding, develop requests for proposals and get cable, DSL and other telecommunications providers to extend their services. Warrant Article 11 will provide the Select Board with the authorization and resources to start the effort to *Bring Broadband to Benton*.

Budgets and Taxes

Our taxes and budgets have been remarkably low and stable for many years. Our tax rate is the lowest in the area and there are almost no other municipalities in the United States that can say that taxes are substantially the same as five years ago (\$17.68 in 2015 and \$17.67 in 2019) and that the expenditures in their new budget are lower than the average of the last ten years. Moreover, that tax and budget stability was achieved while growing both our trust funds and fund balances to the highest levels in town history!

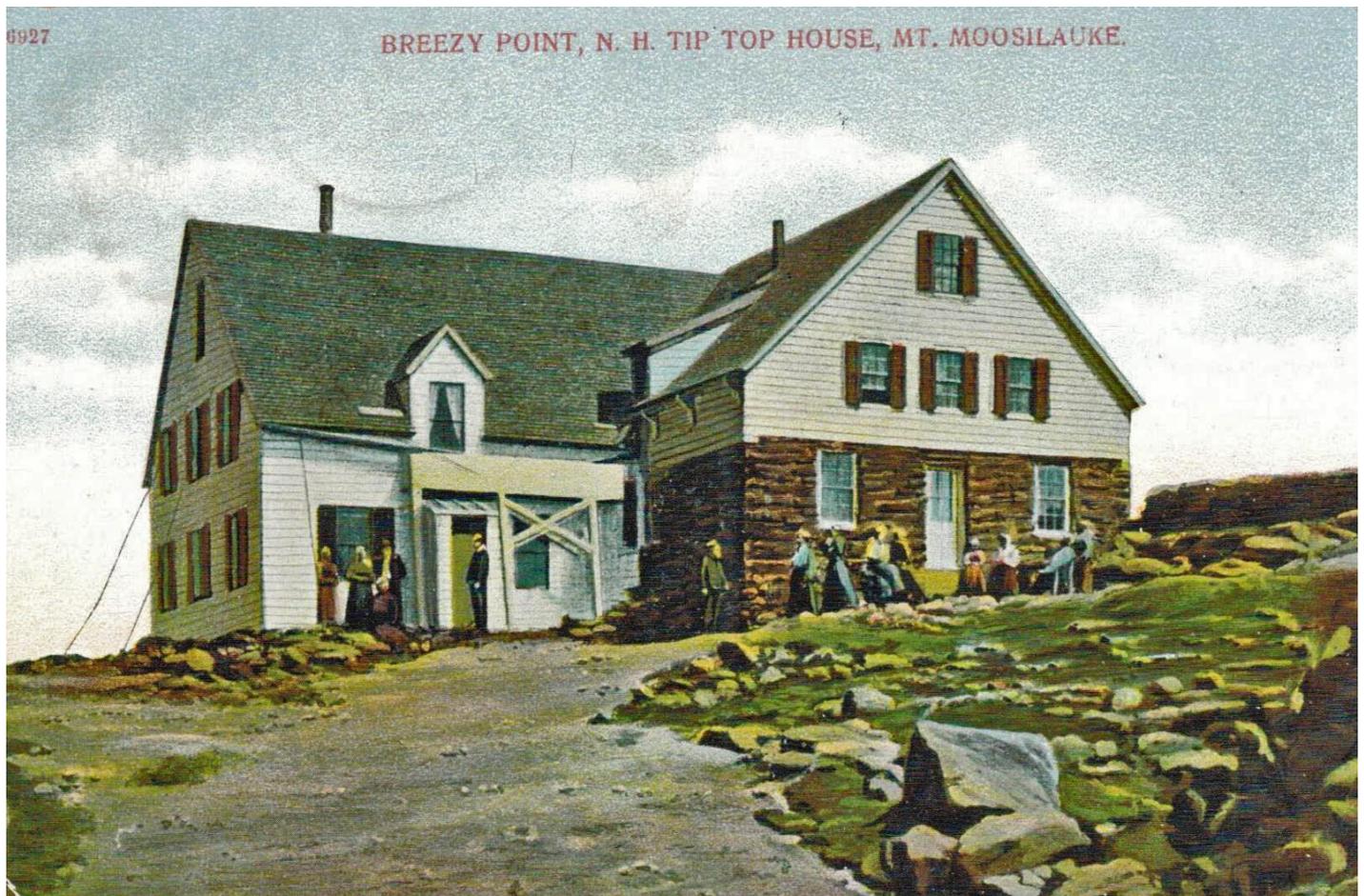
This year the Benton municipal budget and tax stability will continue. The operating budget continues the trend of the last ten years and even with sizeable increases in warrant article capital expenditures, the tax impact will be to reduce property taxes. That is because all the warrant articles are going to be funded with our unassigned fund balance, not property taxes, and our estimated non-property tax revenues will exceed our operating budget. Another way of saying that is that the Benton municipal government is self-funded and reduces the overall property tax burden on our citizens by about \$1.43 per \$1,000 of property value. The other components of your property taxes are the taxes for local education (the largest component, proposed to be \$17.17 this year), state education (\$2.08) and Grafton county (\$1.93 last year, not yet set this year).

Two things are noteworthy in our 2020 Proposed Appropriations. First, the 2020 spending is allocated in different budget categories than in previous years. That is because there is a statutory chart of accounts in New Hampshire for municipal budgets and this is the first year we are using the statutory account categories. Secondly the budget includes \$2,600 of employee pay raises which, along with the \$500 dollar pay raises for the Town Clerk and Tax Collector in Warrant Articles 12 and 13, should bring our employees close to getting paid the minimum wage for their services in running the Town. We hope you agree that our stewardship of town finances and progress in making physical improvements deserves that small increase.

We are making progress in improving the Town, we did in 2019 and we hope to in the future. With your help we can make Benton an even better place to live.

Respectfully submitted,

William Darcy, Chairman
Regina Elliott
Carol Vincelette



The Tip Top House on Mt. Moosilauke was held down by wires so it wouldn't blow down. Many postcards identified the location as Breezy Point in Warren, rather than the true location of Benton.

2020 TOWN WARRANT
Town of Benton, March 10, 2020

To the inhabitants of the Town of Benton qualified to vote in Town affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Benton Community Building (Town Hall) in said Benton on the Second Tuesday of March next, the 10th, at seven o'clock in the evening.

When the town meeting opens, qualified voters will be asked to vote and act upon the following subjects:

ARTICLE 1. To choose persons for the following positions and terms of service: (Majority vote required)

<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>	<u>Incumbent</u>
Moderator	2 years	2022	Gilbert Richardson
Selectman	3 years	2023	William Darcy
Treasurer	1 year	2021	Dwight Swauger
Town Clerk	1 year	2021	Michael Stiebitz
Tax Collector	1 year	2021	Michael Stiebitz
Supervisor of the Checklist	3 years	2023	Elena Chevalier
Ballot Clerk	1 year	2021	Frances Hadden
Ballot Inspector	1 year	2021	Maxine Tyler
Surveyor of Wood & Lumber	1 year	2021	Joseph Boutin, Jr.
Planning Board Member	3 years	2023	Sam Gregory
Planning Board Member	3 years	2023	Richard Saffo, Sr.
Trustee of the Trust Funds	3 years	2023	Laura Richardson

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of the officers and agents as printed. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$131,500 for General Municipal Operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$3,000 to be added to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund, previously established, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$35,000 to repave 500 feet of Tunnel Steam Road with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$131,000 for the Tunnel Stream Road culvert project near Davis Brook, with \$98,250 to come from federal/state grants and \$32,750 to come from the unassigned fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the Tunnel Stream culvert project is completed or by December 31, 2024, whichever is sooner. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$30,000 to be added to the Capital Reserve Fund-Highways/Roads, previously established, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 for cemetery improvements, including repair of the retaining wall and gravestones, tree clearing, stump removal, a survey of new grave sites, and a sign, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the cemetery improvements are completed or by December 31, 2021, whichever is sooner. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$1,000 for new tax maps with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$15,000 for Town Hall improvements, including a fence on the side yard, a roof over the side door and lighted sign and notice board, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 for the purpose bringing higher speed internet service to Benton, with the funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the internet service project is completed or by December 31, 2022, whichever is sooner. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 12. To see if the Town will vote to set the annual compensation of the Tax Collector at \$2,000 plus statutory fees, with the net increase of \$500 to be funded this year from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 13. To see if the Town will vote to set the annual compensation for Town Clerk at \$2,000 plus statutory fees, with the net increase of \$500 to be funded this year from the unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

ARTICLE 14. To see if the Town will vote to modify the provisions of RSA 72:39-a for elderly exemption from property tax, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$10,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$15,000, for a person 80 years of age or older \$20,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person’s spouse, they must have been married to each other for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$20,000 or, if married, a combined net income of less than \$30,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$50,000, excluding the value of the person’s residence. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Signed and Attested, February 24, 2020,

Board of Selectmen,

William Darcy, Chairman
Regina Elliott
Carol Vincelette



With rocky soil unsuitable for farming in much of the town, sheep raising used to be popular in Benton.

2020 PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS

Account	Charge Point	Budget 2019	Spent	Balance	Proposed 2020
4130	Executive	\$10,000	\$8,238	\$1,762	\$9,000
4140	Election & Town Clerk	\$250	\$59	\$191	\$4,750
4150	Financial Administration	\$8,000	\$5,726	\$2,274	\$10,800
4152	Property Revaluation	\$6,300	\$5,222	\$1,078	\$5,500
4153	Legal Expenses	\$250	\$0	\$250	\$250
4155	Personnel Admin	\$1,600	\$1,330	\$270	\$2,000
4193	Planning & Zoning	\$250	\$77	\$173	\$250
4194	Gov't Buildings	\$6,000	\$3,815	\$2,185	\$5,000
4195	Cemeteries	\$4,000	\$2,161	\$1,839	\$4,000
4196	Insurance	\$1,100	\$1,081	\$19	\$1,100
4197	Ads & Regional Assoc.	\$2,500	\$538	\$1,962	\$2,500
4199	Avitar Software Support	\$2,400	\$2,297	\$103	\$2,400
4210	Police	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
4215	Ambulance	\$5,200	\$5,012	\$189	\$6,200
4220	Fire	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0	\$10,000
4240	Building Inspection	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$200
4299	Other Public Safety	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4312	Highways & Streets	\$63,000	\$52,043	\$10,957	\$63,000
4313	Bridges	\$250	\$0	\$250	\$250
4316	Street Lighting	\$300	\$276	\$24	\$300
4319	Other Streets	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
4414	Pest Control	\$250	\$162	\$88	\$250
4442	Direct Assistance Welfare	0	0	0	\$250
4444	Intergovernmental Welfare	\$2,000	\$1,500	\$500	\$2,000
4445	Vendor Payments & other	\$1,300	\$1,133	\$167	\$0
	TOTALS	\$126,450	\$102,170	\$24,280	\$131,500

2020 Estimated Revenues

Source	Estimated 2019	Received 2019	Estimated 2020
Property Taxes (3110)	\$444,000.00	\$414,999.97	\$450,000.00
Timber Taxes (3185)	\$5,000.00	\$17,137.88	\$3,000.00
Payment in Lieu of Taxes (3186)	\$62,897.00	\$64,210.00	\$65,600.00
Excavation Tax (3187)	\$0.00	\$27.86	\$0.00
Other Taxes and Fees (3189)	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
Vital Records Searches (3189)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Int./ Penalties/ Taxes (3190)	\$2,000.00	\$6,024.43	\$4,000.00
Tax Lien Dep from Collector (3191)	\$0.00	\$13,378.03	\$0.00
Motor Vehicle Permit Fees (3220)	\$50,000.00	\$64,530.50	\$60,000.00
Building Permits (3230)	\$330.00	\$440.00	\$400.00
Pistol Permits (3290)	\$100.00	\$10.00	\$0.00
Dog Licenses (3291)	\$400.00	\$379.50	\$350.00
Rental of Town Hall (3292)	\$100.00	\$100.00	\$100.00
Shared Revenues (3311)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Meals and Rooms Tax Dist. (3352)	\$19,278.00	\$19,266.31	\$19,000.00
Highway Block Grant (3353)	\$12,900.00	\$15,306.54	\$15,400.00
Other State Grants (3359)	\$0.00	\$395.00	\$0.00
Sale of Municipal Property (3501)	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Interest on Investment (3502)	\$190.00	\$48.55	\$120.00
Ins Dividends & Reimb. (3506)	\$0.00	\$78,724.47	\$0.00
Totals	\$597,195.00	\$695,029.04	\$618,020.00

TREASURER'S REPORT:**REVENUES RECEIVED 2019**

Received from Town Clerk	
Motor Vehicle Permits/Transfers/Titles/Fees	\$62,783.00
Vital Statistics - State of NH	\$45.00
Marriage Licenses Issued	\$50.00
Dog Licenses Issued	\$361.00
Returned check (plus \$ 10 fee)	\$0.00
Reimbursed check (plus fee and penalty)	\$0.00
Total Received from Town Clerk	\$63,239.00
Received from Tax Collector	
Property Taxes (Liens, Interest & Penalties)	\$448,014.03
Timber Taxes-Timber Bonds	\$31,738.45
Timber Bond Refund	-\$6,330.18
Returned check (plus \$10 fee)	\$3,684.24
Reimbursed check (plus fee and penalty)	\$3,709.24
Excavation Tax	\$0.00
Total Received from Tax Collector	\$480,815.78
Received from Selectmen	
Building Permits	\$605.00
Total Received from Selectmen	\$605.00
Received from State and Federal Sources	
State of NH - Highway Block Grant	\$15,484.79
State of NH Rooms and Meals Tax	\$19,072.24
U.S. Dept. of Interior (Payment in Lieu of Taxes)	\$65,635.00
State of NH-Checklist Reimbursement	\$250.00
State of NH-UCC Share	\$180.00
Total from State and Federal Sources	\$100,622.03
Miscellaneous	
Land Use Change	\$0.00
Interest on Investments	\$349.60
FEMA Reimbursements	\$0.00
Trust Fund Transfers (Expendable Road Trust)	\$2,541.78
Transfer from General Fund	\$0.00
Total	\$2,891.38
Grand Total for 2019	\$686,161.22

Payments by the Select Board-2019

Executive Expenses and Salaries	\$8,237.80
Election Expenses, Census, Vital Statistics	\$59.00
Financial Administration	\$5,726.42
Revaluation of Property	\$5,221.75
Personnel Administration	\$1,330.00
Planning & Zoning	\$76.70
Government Buildings	\$3,814.95
Cemeteries	\$2,161.09
Insurance	\$1,080.92
Ads & Regional Associations	\$538.41
Avitar Software & Annual Support	\$2,297.33
Police	\$1,500.00
Ambulance	\$5,011.50
Fire	\$10,000.00
Highways & Streets	\$49,266.73
Highways & Streets Materials	\$2,776.86
Street Lighting	\$276.28
Welfare Admin. Costs	\$1,500.00
Pest Control	\$162.29
Vendor Payments & Other	\$1,132.58
Purchase of Tax Liens	\$11,822.75
Grafton County Taxes	\$49,136.00
Local School Taxes	\$371,117.00
Article 4 (Tunnel Stream Rd. Paving)	\$29,411.47
Article 5(Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund)	\$3,000.00
Article 6(Capital Repair & Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund)	\$30,000.00
Total	\$596,657.83
Account Balances-2019 Operating Account	
Balance forward from 2018	\$327,068.21
Deposits	\$702,715.14
Checks Written	-\$596,657.83
Transfer to ICS-General Fund	-\$150,000.00
Interest	\$120.06
Balance forward to 2020	\$283,245.58
ICS-General Fund	
Balance forward from 2018	\$220,408.19
Roads & Bridges Expendable Trust (Closed-Article 7)	\$12,470.57
Transfer from Operating Account	\$150,000.00
Interest	\$229.54
Balance forward to 2020	\$383,108.30

Respectfully submitted,
Dwight A. Swauger, Treasurer

Town of Benton
2019 Tax Collector's Report

2020	Credit	Debit
Unassigned Credits at beginning of 2020	\$39,079.01	
Interest/penalties on 2019 Tax payment	\$29.38	\$29.38
Overpayments/Refunds	\$0.00	\$0.00
2019	Credit	Debit
Taxes Committed This Year:		\$447,162.70
Yield Taxes & Gravel Tax Committed This Year		\$14,465.99
Total Unassigned Credits at beginning of year	(\$20,755.12)	(\$20,755.12)
Taxes Collected & Sent to Treasurer:		
Property Taxes Collected in 2019	\$407,186.11	
Prior year credits assigned	\$13,444.77	
Yield Taxes & Gravel Tax Collected in 2019	\$1,123.64	
Subtotal	\$400,999.40	
Property & Yield Taxes Uncollected at year's end	\$39,874.17	
Refunds issued	\$6,330.18	\$6,330.18
2019 Tax Year Totals	\$447,233.13	\$447,233.13
2018	Credit	Debit
Taxes Uncollected at Beginning of 2019		\$48,501.58
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$2,451.91
Property & Yield Taxes Collected In 2019	\$37,889.46	
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees/Penalties	\$2,451.91	
Conversion to Lien (principle only)	\$10,602.12	
Refund Abatements	\$0.00	
Abatements Granted	\$10.00	
2018 Tax Year Totals	\$50,953.49	\$50,953.49
2018 Liens	Credit	Debit
Liens Executed During 2019		\$11,822.75
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$73.47
Redemptions	\$4,197.92	
Interest & Fees	\$73.47	
Liens Deeded to Town	\$0.00	
Unredeemed Lien Balance at end of 2019	\$7,624.83	
2018 Liens Totals	\$11,896.22	\$11,896.22
2017 Liens	Credit	Debit
Unredeemed Liens Balance at Beginning of 2019		\$18,711.21
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$1,943.71
Redemptions	\$17,574.67	
Interest & Fees	\$1,943.71	
Liens Deeded to Town		
Unredeemed Lien Balance at end of 2019	\$1,136.54	
2017 Liens Totals	\$20,654.92	\$20,654.92
2016 Liens	Credit	Debit
Unredeemed Liens Balance at Beginning of 2019		\$10,496.02
Interest on Delinquent Taxes & Fees		\$2,965.52
Redemptions	\$10,496.02	
Interest & Fees	\$2,965.52	
Liens Deeded to Town		
Unredeemed Lien Balance at end of 2019	\$0.00	
2016 Lien Totals	\$13,461.54	\$13,461.54
Net funds delivered to Treasurer in 2019	\$496,533.93	
Unassigned Credits Received in 2019	\$38,098.84	
Gross funds delivered to Treasurer in 2019	\$534,632.77	

Respectfully submitted,
Michael P. Stiebitz - Benton Tax Collector

Notes from the Town Clerk's Office

In past years, the Town Clerk would chronicle various improvements and additions to the Town infrastructure in this space. This year, the Selectmen have done a splendid job describing the various initiatives and accomplishments which took place in 2019. I, therefore, would just like to thank the Townspeople of Benton for the opportunity they have given me to serve them as Town Clerk and as Tax Collector.

I would also like to thank the Select board for its ongoing attention to the important issues which face our Town.

I'd also like to thank the Beautify Benton ladies who keep our Town Building clean and presentable. Their hard work shows and is certainly appreciated!

One last note on dogs: all owners of dogs over 4 months old must license them each year before April 30th. After May 30th, any license fee which remains unpaid can be increased by \$1.00 per month. After June 15, the Selectmen can proceed with legal action if the dogs remain unregistered which can result in fines and civil forfeiture. Please make every effort this year to get your dogs licensed before April 30th.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael P. Stiebitz,

Benton Town Clerk



Upper Yards, Tunnel Br. Benton N.H.

Early logging operations on Tunnel Brook Road with North and South Kinsman Mountains looming above.

Report of Clerk to Treasurer Totals for 2019

Motor Vehicle Permits Issued (469):	\$62,783.00
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (67/0):	\$361.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (1):	\$50.00
Vital Record Searches (3):	\$45.00
Reimbursement from State for Checklist:	\$0.00
Returned Check (incl \$10 fee+\$15 penalty)	\$0.00
<u>Total Collected by Town Clerk for 2019</u>	<u>\$63,239.00</u>

Motor Vehicle Permits Issued (469):	\$62,783.00
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (67/0):	\$361.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (1):	\$50.00
Vital Record Searches (3):	\$45.00
Reimbursement from State for Checklist:	\$0.00
Returned Check (incl \$10 fee+\$15 penalty)	\$0.00
<u>Total Submitted to Treasurer by Town Clerk</u>	<u>\$63,239.00</u>

Motor Vehicles:	\$1,330.00
Dog Licenses Issued and Fines Collected (67/0):	\$29.00
Marriage Licenses Issued (1):	\$7.00
Vital Record Searches (1):	\$8.00
<u>Total Billed to Town by Town Clerk for 2019 (12/18-11/19)</u>	<u>\$1,374.00</u>

Michael P. Stiebitz, Town Clerk - 02/03/2020

Road Contractor's Report-2019

The winter of 2019 saw a lot of temperature fluctuations with mixed precipitation which resulted in some icy conditions to contend with. The spring thaw came and went without any issues.

We were able to take a culvert maintenance class that allows us to repair or replace most of the culverts on our town roads without securing an environmental permit from DES.

We started the summer season moving some jersey barriers and preparing for the new sand shed, added gravel and shaped the town roads. In July we rebuilt 500' of Tunnel Stream Road, installed a drain behind the town building eliminating the need for a sump pump, reset a 30" culvert on Tunnel Stream Road and widened the ditch to accommodate more water.

In the fall we were able to do some roadside mowing and brush cutting, put the winter sand up, filled the new sand shed and finally able to build a turning area for the plow truck on Long Pond Road.

Winter weather started early in November. Signs were put up closing Tunnel Stream Road to through traffic in the winter and spring. The section closed was also cabled off to keep vehicles off the road.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joe Boutin Jr. & Son

2019 TOWN WARRANT
Town of Benton March 12, 2019

The Town Meeting was called to order at 7:00PM by the Moderator, Gil Richardson.

He asked that we recognize any members, past or present, of the Armed Forces, as well as any First Responders and thank them for their service to our community and country. A round of applause was given to those members. We were then led through the Pledge of Allegiance. At 7:04PM a motion was made to recess to the School District meeting. The motion was seconded, and by voice vote, the Town Meeting was recessed to the School District meeting.

At 7:22PM, the Moderator reconvened the Town Meeting.

ARTICLE 1. To choose persons for the following positions and terms of service:
(Majority vote required)

The following Town Officers were elected after a voice vote:

<u>Position</u>	<u>Term</u>	<u>Expires</u>	
Selectman	3 years	2022	Regina Elliott
Treasurer	1 year	2020	Dwight Swauger
Town Clerk	1 year	2020	Michael Stiebitz
Tax Collector	1 year	2020	Michael Stiebitz
Supervisor of the Checklist	3 years	2022	Marguerite Christopher
Ballot Clerk	1 year	2020	Frances Hadden
Ballot Inspector	1 year	2020	Maxine Tyler
Surveyor of Wood and Lumber	1 year	2020	Joseph Boutin, Jr.
Planning Board Member	3 years	2022	Kenneth Kealey
Trustee of the Trust Funds	3 years	2022	Martin Noble

ARTICLE 2. To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of the officers and agents as printed. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

No discussion was forthcoming and article passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 3. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$126,450 for General Municipal Operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that because the taxes were projected to increase to \$26 per thousand as a direct result of the proposed School Budget, the Select board opted to use reserve funds and unassigned fund balances instead of tax dollars to fund road improvements and additions to off-budget funds. Doing so increased the Town Budget's contribution to reducing the tax increase.

The article then was passed with a unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 4. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 for paving 500 feet of Tunnel Stream Road with funds to come from the Capital Reserve – Highways/Roads. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Selectman Darcy explained that because of the financial situation this year, this project will refurbish and repave the section of Tunnel Stream Road from the Davis Brook Bridge up the west slope only to the top of the hill. This will leave approximately \$30,000 in the Fund.

The article then was passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 5. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to add to the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund with the funds to come from the Town's unassigned fund balance. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Selectman Darcy explained that NH law specifies that the Town shall reassess property values every 5 years. It makes sense to put some money away every year to avoid a big charge during the reassessment year.

The article was then passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 6. To see if the Town will vote to create the Capital Repair and Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, for the purpose of paying for unanticipated capital repair and maintenance expenses to Town property, including roads and bridges, cemeteries and Town Hall, and to raise and appropriate \$30,000 to add to the fund, with this amount to come from unassigned fund balance; further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. Selectmen recommend this article. (Majority vote required)

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that last year we had put \$15,000 into the Capital Reserve Fund – Highways/Roads. The Town wants to collapse that fund into the new Capital Repair and Maintenance Fund. The \$30,000 will come from the \$78,000 FEMA grants, with the remainder of those monies to be made available to reduce the 2019 tax rate to \$20/thousand from the previously estimated \$26/thousand. The new Expendable Trust fund will allow the Town to use the proceeds for any unexpected capital repair or maintenance expense that comes up, rather than requiring a warrant article to appropriate the funds from a conventional Capital Reserve fund.

The article was then passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 7. To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the Roads and Bridges Expendable Trust Fund. Said funds, with accumulated interest to date of withdrawal, are to be transferred to the municipality's general fund. (Majority vote required).

Motion was made and seconded to accept article as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that at the end of the fiscal year, any monies remaining in the General Fund get transferred into the Unassigned Fund Balance.

The article was passed by unanimous voice vote.

ARTICLE 8. Are you in favor of the adoption of the zoning ordinance amendments stated below as proposed by the planning board? The full text of the amendments and a comparison to existing language is available from the Town Clerk during business hours and posted on the Town website. Each Amendment is to be voted on separately:

The article was motioned, seconded and it was voted unanimously to accept as written.

Chairman Darcy stated that the Planning Board member who was to discuss the amendments was unable to attend so he read and explained each amendment.

Amendment No. 1: Are you in favor of updating statutory references to current law and clarifying the meaning of language with no substantive changes in Sections 101, 102, 103, 105, 401-A, 505, 507, 801, 802, 803 and 804?

The amendment was motioned, seconded and it was voted unanimously to accept as written.

A paper ballot was distributed and when collected and tallied the final votes were:

30 – Yes

0 – No

The amendment passed by a majority vote.

Amendment No. 2: Are you in favor of changing Section 401-C 6 to have the Planning Board rather than Board of Adjustment determine whether to permit a specific commercial or small business use?

The amendment was motioned, seconded and it was voted unanimously to accept as written.

This amendment simplifies the permit process for business applications by eliminating the Zoning Board of Adjustment as the first step. Chairman Darcy explained that this makes sense for our situation as we do not have a standing Board of Adjustment and to constitute one if such an application came in would unduly lengthen the permit process. Existing businesses would only be affected by this Section when applying for a building permit.

A paper ballot was distributed and when collected and tallied the final votes were:

28 – Yes

2 – No

The amendment passed by a majority vote.

Amendment No. 3: Are you in favor of changing Section 703 to add requirements to the building permit application and authorizing all land use boards to set fees for applications and professional assistance?

The amendment was motioned, seconded and it was voted unanimously to accept as written.

Chairman Darcy explained that the need for this amendment came up last year when a landowner applied for a lot line adjustment and we realized that we didn't have a fee schedule for such procedures. This will also allow the Town to pass on any professional services fees incurred during the permitting process.

A paper ballot was distributed and when collected and tallied the final votes were:

30 – Yes

0 – No

The amendment passed by a majority vote.

The Moderator asked for and received a motion and a second to adjourn the meeting. The meeting was adjourned by unanimous voice vote at 8:00PM.

Selectman Darcy administered the oath of office to all the newly elected present.

A true copy, Attest

Michael P. Stiebitz – Town Clerk of Benton

2019 SPECIAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT
Town of Benton May 6, 2019

The Town Meeting was called to order at 6:00PM by the Moderator, Gil Richardson.

He read the single question to be voted on: “To see if the Town will vote to ratify the results of the March 12, 2019 Annual Meeting even though the posting requirements were not met.”

Laura Richardson moved to accept the question as written. It was then seconded and accepted by unanimous voice vote.

The Moderator asked for and received a motion to close the meeting. It was so motioned, seconded and then passed by unanimous voice vote. The Moderator then adjourned the meeting at 6:03PM.

A true copy, Attest

Michael P. Stiebitz – Town Clerk of Benton



Noxon's Lodge was on Tunnel Stream Road, near where the winter maintenance of the road now ends.

Report of the Trustees of the Trust Funds
For the Year Ending December 31, 2019

Funds donated to the Town of Benton are in the custody of the Trustees. Donations are distributed as specified by the donors. Woodsville Guaranty Savings Bank in Woodsville, NH holds all funds.

Status of the Funds is as follows:

Trust Fund Savings	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 617453	\$ 1,497.50
Cemetery/Common Trust Fund	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 662141	\$14,593.34
Capital Reserve Fund - Highways/Roads	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 655898	\$58,969.24
Capital Reserve Fund – Fires	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings # 617456	\$10,865.29
Revaluation Trust Fund	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #655901	\$3,029.47
Expendable Trust – Schools	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #659291	\$88,208.01
Expendable Trust – Town Maintenance	
Woodsville Guaranty Savings #682180	\$30,023.29
TOTAL HELD IN TRUST	
BY THE TRUSTEES OF THE TRUST FUND	\$207,186.14

Respectfully submitted,

Trustees of the Trust Fund
Laura Richardson, Chair
Martin Noble
Mark Elliot

ANNUAL REPORT
of the
BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019

DISTRICT OFFICERS

SCHOOL BOARD

Joseph Boutin III, CHAIR
Kristina Harris
Timothy Hickey

Term Expires 2020
Term Expires 2021
Term Expires 2022

OTHER DISTRICT OFFICERS

Gilbert Richardson..... Moderator
Penny Chicoine..... Treasurer
Michael Stiebitz Clerk

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Laurie Melanson

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
2020 SCHOOL WARRANT
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

To the inhabitants of the School District of Benton in the County of Grafton, State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in district affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet at the Town Hall in said district on the 10th day of March 2020, at 7:00 o'clock in the evening to act upon the following subjects:

ARTICLE 1: To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 2: To choose a School District Clerk for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 3: To choose one School Board Member for a term of three years to expire in 2023.

ARTICLE 4: To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.

ARTICLE 5: To hear reports of Agents, Committees, or Officers chosen and pass any vote related thereto.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate Six Hundred Eighty-Six Thousand, Four Hundred Twenty-Eight Dollars (\$686,428.00) for the support of schools, the payment of salaries of school district officials and agents, and the payments of statutory obligations of the district. This article is exclusive of any other article on the warrant. (The school board recommends this article.)

ARTICLE 7: To see if the district will raise and appropriate up to One Hundred Thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) to be added to the previously established Tuition and Education Expendable Trust Fund, such amount to be funded from the year-end unassigned fund balance available on June 30, 2019. (The school board recommends this article).

Given under our hands at said Benton this _____ day of February, 2020

A True Copy of Warrant – Attest:

Joseph Boutin III, Chairman

Timothy Hickey

Kristina Harris

BENTON SCHOOL BOARD

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT MEETING
SCHOOL WARRANT
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
MARCH 12, 2019**

The meeting opened at 7:05 PM.

Article 1

To choose a Moderator for the ensuing year.

Gilbert W. Richardson was elected by voice vote.

Article 2

To choose a School Clerk for the ensuing year.

Michael P. Stiebitz was elected by voice vote.

Article 3

To choose one School Board Member for a term of three years expiring in 2022.

Tim Hickey was elected by voice vote.

Article 4

To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing year.

Penny Chicoine was elected by voice vote.

Article 5

To hear reports of Agents, Committees, or Officers chosen and pass any vote relating thereto.

Motion made to accept article as written, and seconded.

Joe Boutin 111 explained that when the School Board was apprised of the School Budget request, they had agreed to remove a reservation for three unanticipated students. He said that the major increase in the budget was due to Special Education expenses.

The article then passed on voice vote.

Article 6

To see if the school district will vote to raise and appropriate Seven Hundred Thirty-Four Thousand, Eight Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$734,825.00) for the support of schools, the payment of salaries of school district officials and agents, and the payments of statutory obligations of the district. This article is exclusive of any other article on the warrant. (The school board recommends this article.)

Motion to accept the article as written, and seconded

Laura Richardson proposed an amendment to reduce the budget to \$684,825.00. She explained that the Education Trust Fund (ETF) currently has approximately \$88,000 so if the SAU really does need extra funds at the end of the school year, the funds can be distributed from the fund.

A motion was made to accept the amendment as proposed, seconded and the amendment to reduce the school budget by \$50,000 to \$684,825.00 passed on a unanimous voice vote.

A question was posed concerning the loss of the per student discount that the SAU had been providing because we send 100% of our students. Joe explained that we still indeed receive the 10% per student discount. We had received a 30% discount on 7th and 8th graders for a duration of 5 years, but that has expired.

The article as amended then passed by voice vote. The vote was approximately 75% YES and 25% NO.

Article 7

To see if the district will raise and appropriate up to One Hundred Thousand dollars (\$100,000.00) to be added to the previously established Tuition and Education Expendable Trust Fund, such amount to be funded from the year-end unassigned fund balance available on June 30, 2019. (The school board does not recommend this article)

Motion to accept article as written, seconded and discussion ensued.

Joe Boutin explained that the School Board would have liked to put more of the \$198,000 surplus into the Expendable Fund that the SAU reported at the end of last year, but the information did not come in time for the Town Meeting. He admitted that in a normal year, we would have liked to put a good amount into the Expendable Fund for unexpected school expenses. This year they recommend against it. Selectman Darcy amplified the point by explaining that the 72% school tax increase from last year's final budget made it impossible for the Town to allocate any funds to the ETF this year.

The article then was not passed unanimously by voice vote.

Motion was made to close the meeting and the meeting was adjourned at 7:22 PM.

A True Copy
Attest:

Michael Stiebitz, Benton District Clerk, Benton, New Hampshire

**SCHOOL ADMINISTRATIVE UNIT #23
REPORT OF THE SUPERINTENDENT'S AND
BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR'S SALARIES**

One-half of the School Administrative Unit expenses are prorated among the school districts on the basis of equalized valuation. One-half is prorated on the basis of average daily membership in the schools for the previous school year ending June 30th. Below is a breakdown of each district's cost share for the Superintendent's salary of \$119,646 and the Business Administrator's salary of \$98,838 for fiscal year 2019.

SUPERINTENDENT SALARY		
BATH	16,056	13.42%
BENTON	2,704	2.26%
HAVERTHILL COOPERATIVE	76,633	64.05%
PIERMONT	13,065	10.92%
WARREN	11,187	9.35%
TOTAL	\$ 119,646	100.00%

BUSINESS ADMINISTRATOR SALARY		
BATH	13,264	13.42%
BENTON	2,234	2.26%
HAVERTHILL COOPERATIVE	63,306	64.05%
PIERMONT	10,793	10.92%
WARREN	9,241	9.35%
TOTAL	\$ 98,838	100.00%

BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT SUPERINTENDENT'S REPORT

Benton receives a significant discount for sending all students to Haverhill Schools. This has been a wonderful year for Benton students at Woodsville Elementary School (WES), Haverhill Cooperative Middle School (HCMS) and Woodsville High School. Each school is implementing exciting innovations.

Woodsville Elementary School received NH Infrastructure grant funds for safety and security improvements. Many areas of the school were freshly painted to improve the overall esthetic. In academics, teachers were trained and implemented a new writing program as our literacy scores, although improved, aren't where we want them to be. WES will also be selecting an evidence-based reading program to train on and implement next year. Lego robotics teams are alive and well at WES.

Early literacy skills development has been identified in all our districts as a strategic step in improving academic performance. We will be investing in the Ready for Kindergarten program for families with children ages newborn to five. Ready for K recognizes parents as a child's first teacher and identifies important learning targets for each age and stage leading to solid kindergarten readiness. Our plans include offering workshops and materials three times per year for families, outreach to local libraries, churches, physicians, private and home-based childcare centers.

HCMS has been working on improving student engagement and personalizing learning in all areas, with an emphasis on mathematics. More complex robotics content is being taught and students are thriving with computer coding. Student led conferences are in their second year and parents report the conferences are interesting and students are excited to explain their learning goals, strengths, areas to work on and show samples of their work. HCMS also received NH Infrastructure grant funds for safety and security improvements.

The WHS renovation and construction project is very exciting. Many classrooms and office areas were renovated and a new addition was constructed to connect the 1911 Main Building to the 1950's Bagonzi Community Building. A new, secure vestibule and foyer make an attractive entry to the school and safer for students who can now access the Gym, Cafeteria, Tech Ed and Family and Consumer Science classrooms without going outside and leaving the main secure campus building. We applied for and received a NH State School Building Aid award of \$3,277,940 to keep the cost and tax impact down. WHS has a high-tech robotics course as well as a Cisco Academy for programming, networking and IT job skills, which can be applied to training after graduation.

We have worked with the Benton School Board to develop a conservative budget to address tuition, special education and transportation for Benton students. The FY 2021 budget is \$686,428, which is an overall increase in the budget of \$1,603, representing a .23% increase from the FY2020 budget.

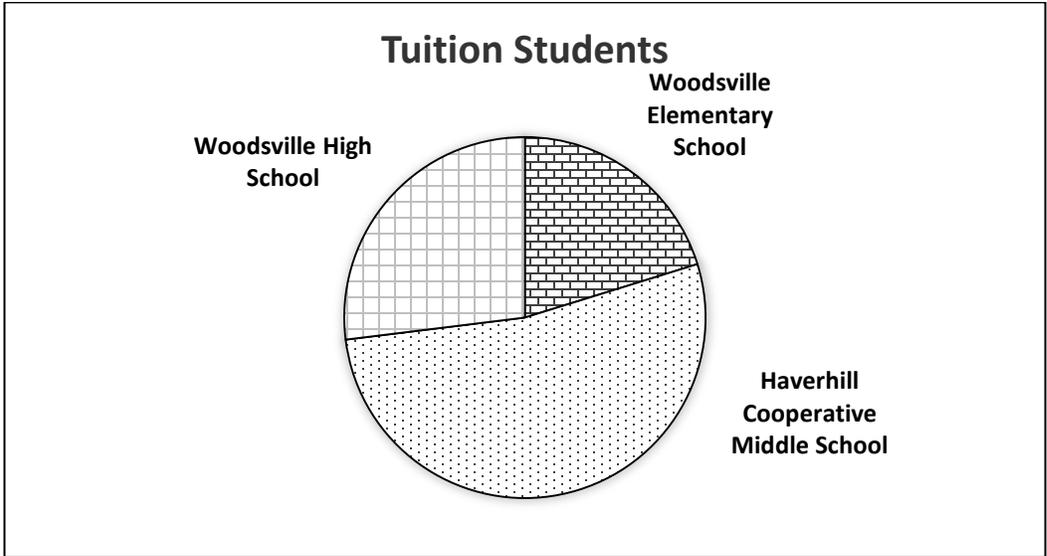
We will be watching the Benton budget carefully and will provide the best estimate on any fund balance for your consideration in March for your Trust Fund warrant article. A healthy balance in your trust fund will help the school board keep the tax rate from fluctuation as much as possible.

Respectfully,

Laurie Melanson
Superintendent of Schools

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
TUITION STUDENTS
2018-2019**

	<u>FTE Total Students</u>	<u>Total Tuition Costs Per School</u>
Woodsville Elementary School	6	\$64,143.58
Haverhill Cooperative Middle School	15.68	\$196,342.32
Woodsville High School	8	\$121,998.60
		<u>\$382,484.50</u>
Less Discount		<u>(\$30,743.51)</u>
TOTAL	29	\$351,740.99



**REPORT OF THE BENTON SCHOOL
DISTRICT TREASURER
FISCAL YEAR JULY 1, 2018 TO JUNE 30, 2019**

Cash on Hand, July 1, 2018	\$ 206,770.92
Total Revenues Received	\$ 774,908.95
Total School Board Orders Paid	\$ (897,735.69)
Cash on Hand June 30, 2019	\$ 83,944.18

Dianne Norton
SAU Accounts Receivable Clerk

AUDIT REPORT

The Benton School District has been audited by the Plodzick & Sanderson Professional Association. Copies of the audit are available for public review at the Superintendent's Office at the James R. Morrill Building, 2975 Dartmouth College Highway, No. Haverhill, NH.

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS
PREVIOUS TWO FISCAL YEARS
PER RSA 32:11-a**

		2017-2018	2018-2019
<u>Special Education Expenses</u>			
1200	INSTRUCTION	100,864	129,721
1230	FRENCH POND SCHOOL	0	0
1231	KING STREET SCHOOL	0	0
1430	SUMMER SCHOOL	2,605	0
2150	SPEECH/LANGUAGE	16,448	22,589
2159	SUMMER SCHOOL SPEECH/LANG	44	239
2162	PHYSICAL THERAPY	5,633	9,522
2163	OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	12,878	13,040
2722	TRANSPORTATION	10,007	12,800
Total District Expenses		\$148,479	\$187,911

<u>Special Education Revenues</u>			
3110	SPED Portion State Adequacy Funds	12,773	13,660
3230	Catastrophic Aid	0	0
4580	Medicaid	32,213	45,384
Total District Revenues		\$44,986	\$59,044

BENTON TAX RATE CALCULATIONS

CALENDAR/TAX YEAR	2017	2018	2019	2020	2019	
	FY2018 ACTUAL	FY2019 ACTUAL	FY2020 ACTUAL	FY2021 PROJECTED	CURRENT VALUATION	
Local Property Tax Rate	15.40	11.57	15.18	17.17	25,484,534.00	Per \$1,000
State Property Tax Rate	2.36	2.48	2.30	2.08	24,458,834.00	Per \$1,000
Total School Tax Rate	\$17.76	\$14.05	\$17.48	\$19.25		
INCREASE (DECREASE) FROM PY YEAR \$\$	(\$2.51)	(\$3.71)	\$3.43	\$1.77		
INCREASE (DECREASE) FROM PY YEAR %	-2.51%	-20.89%	24.41%	10.12%		

**BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT
BALANCE SHEET**

<u>ASSETS</u>		<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	<u>TRUST/AGENCY FUND</u>
Current Assets			
CASH	100	83,944	0
INVESTMENTS	110	0	88,163
INTERFUND RECEIVABLE	130	0	0
INTERGOV'T REC	140	0	0
OTHER RECEIVABLES	150	1,983	0
PREPAID EXPENSES	180	0	0
OTHER CURRENT ASSETS	190	0	0
Total Current Assets		\$85,927	\$88,163
<u>LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY</u>			
Current Liabilities			
INTERFUND PAYABLES	400	0	0
INTERGOV'T PAYABLES	410	0	0
OTHER PAYABLES	420	5,559	0
ACCRUED EXPENSES	460	0	0
DEFERRED REVENUES	480	0	0
OTHER CURRENT LIAB	490	0	0
Total Current Liabilities		\$5,559	0
Fund Equity			
Non-spendable:			
RESERVE FOR PREPAID EXPENSES	752	0	0
Restricted:			
Committed:			
RESERVE OR CONTINUING APPROPRIATIONS	754	0	0
RESERVE FOR AMTS VOTED	755	0	0
RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCES (non-lapsing)	753	0	0
UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE RETAINED		8,902	0
Assigned:			
RESERVED FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES	760	0	88,163
RESERVE FOR ENCUMBRANCES	753	0	0
UNASSIGNED FUND BALANCE	770	71,466	0
Total Fund Equity		\$80,368	\$88,163
TOTAL LIABILITIES & FUND EQUITY		\$85,927	\$88,163

BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT REVENUES AND PROPOSED BUDGET 2020-2021

DESCRIPTION	FY2020 BUDGET	PROPOSED FY2021 BUDGET	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
CURRENT APPROPRIATION	386,929.67	437,644.45	50,714.78
INTEREST ON INVESTMENT	20.00	25.00	5.00
PRIOR YEAR REFUND	0.00	0.00	0.00
ADEQUACY AID (GRANT)	143,243.00	156,841.00	13,598.00
ADEQUACY AID (STATE TAX)	56,310.00	50,784.00	(5,526.00)
OTHER STATE AID	0.00	0.00	0.00
KINDERGARTEN AID	0.00	0.00	0.00
VOCATIONAL ED TUITION	0.00	3,877.50	3,877.50
VOC ED TRANSPORTATION	0.00	400.00	400.00
MEDICAID REIMBURSEMENT	15,000.00	25,000.00	10,000.00
NATIONAL FOREST RESERVE	11,856.00	11,856.00	0.00
TRANSFER FROM EXPENDABLE TRUST	0.00	0.00	0.00
USE OF FUND BALANCE	71,466.00	0.00	(71,466.00)
TOTAL REVENUES	\$684,824.67	\$686,427.95	\$1,603.28
REGULAR EDUCATION	337,188.72	350,095.00	12,906.28
SPECIAL EDUCATION	214,763.00	175,650.00	(39,113.00)
FRENCH POND TUITION	0.00	23,106.00	23,106.00
KING STREET TUITION	0.00	0.00	0.00
VOC ED TUITION	0.00	9,682.00	9,682.00
SUMMER SCHOOL	4,800.00	5,300.00	500.00
SPEECH/LANGUAGE SERVICES	22,440.00	20,406.00	(2,034.00)
SUMMER SPEECH SERVICES	1,375.00	1,140.00	(235.00)
PHYSICAL THERAPY SERVICES	9,638.00	6,458.00	(3,180.00)
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY SERVICES	10,584.00	7,224.00	(3,360.00)
SCHOOL BOARD	4,945.90	4,945.90	(0.01)
TREASURER	359.30	359.30	(0.00)
DISTRICT MEETING	93.75	93.75	(0.00)
AUDIT SERVICES	800.00	800.00	0.00
LEGAL SERVICES	750.00	750.00	0.00
OFFICE OF SUPERINTENDENT	26,701.00	25,638.00	(1,063.00)
REGULAR TRANSPORTATION	31,586.00	32,850.00	1,264.00
SPECIAL TRANSPORTATION	18,800.00	9,150.00	(9,650.00)
VOCATIONAL TRANSPORTATION	0.00	550.00	550.00
TRANSFER TO EXPEND TRUST FUND	0.00	0.00	0.00
TUITION TO CHARTER SCHOOLS	0.00	12,230.00	12,230.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$684,824.67	\$686,427.95	\$1,603.27

BENTON SCHOOL DISTRICT BUDGET SUMMARY

The FY2021 budget is \$686,428 which is an overall increase in the budget of \$1,603. This represents a .23% increase from the FY2020 budget.

EXPENDITURES:

- Regular education tuition (including vocational and charter schools) is **\$35,000** more than the current budget.
 - Haverhill set the tuition rate at a 1% increase for next year.
 - There are two (2) contingency spots for additional students.
 - FY2021 budget includes 29 students (FY2020 budget is 30 and actual is 26 at this moment in time). FY2020 budget also included a \$50,000 budget reduction by voters.

- Special education costs, including instruction, tuition, transportation, speech services, summer school, etc. have decreased approx. **\$34,000**.

REVENUE:

- As a result of a surplus in FY2019, we were able to use \$71,500 to offset taxes for the year 2019.

- Adequacy Aid (estimated) increased \$8,100 for FY2021. Includes one-time funds from the State of \$4,450.

SCHOOL TAX RATE:

- This will result in a tax rate increase from \$17.48 to \$19.25.

- The original tax rate voted and approved last year was \$20.62, so this is a decrease of \$1.37 from the original budget.

TRUST FUND:

Balance is approximately \$88,164

SAU #23 APPROVED BUDGET SUMMARY

DEPARTMENT NUMBER / DESCRIPTION	2019-2020 APPROVED BUDGET	2020-2021 APPROVED BUDGET	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
ASSESSMENT	1,256,765	1,238,863	-17,902
FPS TUITION	210,500	196,930	-13,570
KING STREET SCHOOL TUITION	354,339	437,316	82,977
SUMMER TRIP TUITION	12,706	11,040	-1,666
SUMMER SCHOOL TUITION	0	1,670	1,670
INTEREST ON INVESTMENTS	35	60	25
SERVICES TO LEA'S	326,334	353,857	27,523
SPEECH SERVICES	324,500	322,183	-2,317
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY REVENUE	113,155	107,000	-6,155
OTHER LOCAL REVENUE	6,500	6,132	-368
USE OF FUND BALANCE	0	48,000	48,000
TOTAL GENERAL FUND REVENUES	\$2,604,834	\$2,723,051	\$118,217
1100 ITINERANT TEACHERS	186,642	208,919	22,277
1230 FRENCH POND PROGRAM	276,137	238,883	-37,254
1231 KING STREET PROGRAM	331,377	383,134	51,757
1430 SUMMER SCHOOL	11,037	11,040	3
1431 SUMMER TUTORING PROGRAM	1,669	1,670	1
2120 GUIDANCE	73,117	77,525	4,408
2125 DATA MANAGEMENT	54,125	55,701	1,576
2140 PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES	8,300	8,300	0
2150 SPEECH & LANGUAGE SERVICES	314,587	318,290	3,703
2159 SPEECH SUMMER SERVICES	7,408	7,893	485
2163 OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY	113,155	107,000	-6,155
2213 STAFF DEVELOPMENT	4,000	4,000	0
2220 TECHNOLOGY SUPERVISION	168,366	235,787	67,421
2311 SCHOOL BOARD	6,778	7,235	457
2312 SCHOOL BOARD CLERK	903	721	-182
2313 DISTRICT TREASURER	2,905	2,796	-109
2317 AUDIT	7,800	7,100	-700
2318 LEGAL COUNSEL	800	800	0
2321 OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT	603,451	604,956	1,505
2330 SPECIAL PROGRAMS ADMIN.	259,314	266,521	7,207
2334 OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE PROGRAMS	5,765	5,767	2
2540 SAU-WIDE PUBLIC RELATIONS	1,000	1,000	0
2620 BUILDING & RENT	129,500	132,506	3,006
2640 EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE	4,702	4,707	5
2810 RESEARCH, PLANNING, DEVELPMT	4,800	4,800	0
2820 COMPUTER NETWORK	26,396	25,200	-1,196
2832 RECRUITMENT ADVERTISING	800	800	0
TOTAL GENERAL FUND EXPENDITURES	2,604,834	2,723,051	118,217
IDEA GRANTS	250,000	250,000	0
TOTAL BUDGET	\$2,854,834	\$2,973,051	\$118,217
INCREASE FROM PRIOR YEAR (GENERAL FUND)		0	\$118,217

DISTRICT ASSESSMENT SHARES AS DETERMINED BY NH RSA 194-C:9

DISTRICT	2019- 2020 BUDGET	2020- 2021 BUDGET	INCREASE/ (DECREASE)
BATH	169,967	159,648	(10,319)
BENTON	26,701	25,638	(1,063)
HAVERHILL	797,360	791,526	(5,834)
PIERMONT	142,502	136,990	(5,512)
WARREN	120,235	125,061	4,826
TOTAL DISTRICT ASSESSMENTS	\$1,256,765	\$1,238,863	(\$17,902)



1904 Benton School Souvenir with many familiar Benton names

Vital Statistics for 2019

Benton, NH

Deaths

Died

Frank Hayes	Lebanon	01/10/2019
Raymond Reed	(Glenclyff Home)	02/11/2019
Kristopher Kessler	(Glenclyff Home)	02/16/2019
Daniel Duguay	Woodsville	03/31/2019
Douglas Dion	Woodsville	04/12/2019
Brenda Deming	(Glenclyff Home)	05/18/2019
Betty Renault	(Glenclyff Home)	07/02/2019
Norma Dimick	Woodsville	08/07/2019
Larry Blair	(Glenclyff Home)	08/17/2019
Deborah Wetherbee	Benton	08/29/2019
Pearl Palmer	Woodsville	09/16/2019
Constance Loiselle	(Glenclyff Home)	09/26/2019
Philip Crockett	(Glenclyff Home)	10/28/2019
Walter Leon Bardwell, Jr.	(Glenclyff Home)	11/17/2019
Clyde Edward Noyes IV	(Glenclyff Home)	11/26/2019
Ronald Boutin	Benton	11/28/2019
Samantha Cruger	Haverhill	12/11/2019

Marriages

September 14, 2019 Philip A. McDanolds and Andrea M. Elliott in Benton

