

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-THIRD  
NORTHFIELD TOWN MEETING  
2013**

Polls were opened at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and thirteen at 10:00 a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at 7:03 p.m. with 453 votes cast.

**ARTICLE 1** To choose all necessary Town Officers, Tilton-Northfield Fire District Officers and Winnisquam Regional School District Officers for the ensuing year.

**Election results for Town offices:**

<b>For Selectman:</b>	<b>Kevin Waldron</b>	<b>256</b>
	<b>Debra Shepard</b>	<b>188</b>
<b>For Trustee of Trust Funds:</b>	<b>Christine Raffaely</b>	<b>414</b>
<b>For Library Trustee:</b>	<b>Tom Fulweiler</b>	<b>402</b>

The 2013 Town Meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of March, in the year of our lord two thousand and thirteen at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield by Moderator Scott McGuffin to act upon the following subjects. Before presenting the Articles, the Moderator asked for a moment of silence to honor those serving in the military. He introduced officials present including State Representative Leigh Webb, Merrimack County Sheriff Scott Hilliard, Selectmen Geoffrey Ziminsky, Steve Bluhm and Peg Shepard; Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cindy Caveney, Budget Committee Chairman George Corliss, Jr., and members Gretchen Wilder, Keith Murray and Dennis Allen.

**ARTICLE 2** To hear a report from the Planning Board concerning responses to the 2012 master plan survey.

Planning Board Chairman Wayne Crowley gave a presentation to highlight results of a survey taken in June 2012, relative to the Northfield Master Plan. The Master Plan was developed in 2003, and per NH RSA's it must be updated periodically. Northfield's plan is updated every ten years. Part of the update process is to survey residents and compare results to the previous survey. Mr. Crowley directed the body to review a handout containing the results of the survey. About 260 responses were returned online and a few responded in writing. Answers on the survey are ranked in order of volume of response to each question. Questions 1 and 2 surveyed what residents like about Northfield, and what areas they feel need improvement. Responses to questions 3 and 4 indicated the majority think growth is being managed properly. The purpose of the survey is to modify the Master Plan to accommodate the results. The Board found that 99 percent of what was said in 2003 was also true in 2012. Question 5 asked what residents thought the most serious problems were, top answers were taxes, road conditions, and junk on private property. The latter is difficult to address but they will be looking at it. Responses to Question 6 showed environmental issues are very important to residents. Part (e) of that question indicated many residents favor imposing impact fees for new developments to compensate for increased expenses caused by the development. We have not implemented any but will take a look at whether this makes sense. Question 7 asked residents to rate facilities and services within the Town. Those items with a primarily good to excellent rating include: the library, trash pickup, recycling center, police, fire and rescue services. Economic development efforts received the lowest rating. Chairman Crowley stated there is a recently established Northfield Economic Development Corporation that should be addressing that. Question 8 asked for opinions whether Exit 19 of I-93 should be expanded. There was a nearly even split with 124 in favor of an additional ramp, and 136 not in favor. Chairman Crowley noted the entire survey is posted online on the town website, and that includes additional individual comments by respondents not included on the handout. Item 11 was not in the 2003 survey, and asked if Surette Park should be left as is, or developed for other uses. A majority of responses said it should be developed to include picnic facilities, a playground, an outdoor performance venue or used for sports activities. This will be for the Selectboard or various boards to take a look at.

Question 12 was relative to conservation efforts in Northfield and gave high marks for efforts to conserve Northfield land and water resources. Question 13 regarding development showed the majority support both residential and commercial development beneficial to the town if reasonably regulated. Question 14 responses indicate residents prefer development of small business or light industry, with few in favor of heavy manufacturing. These responses will be used by the Planning and Zoning boards. The final questions were demographic in nature and showed 254 of the 263 respondents were year round homeowners, the median age group was 41-55 years of age, and 120 have lived in Northfield for more than 20 years. The next step is to look at how we update the Master Plan by the end of the year, to have it available around the first of next year. David Court asked what percentage of households returned the survey. Chairman Crowley said he thought for a survey of this type there was a good response and he felt it was representative. David Coulter commented he liked the fact that actual numbers of respondents for each item were listed, rather than just percentages.

**ARTICLE 3** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Thousand dollars (\$75,000) to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of replacing Highway and Sanitation Department equipment as needed. *This Article is recommended by the Selectboard and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article 3 was moved by Kent Finemore, seconded by Steve Randall. Bob Southworth, Highway Supt. spoke to the Article. This fund was created several years ago to even out the impact on the tax rate. \$75,000 was put in the fund each year to purchase equipment as needed. Catherine Ferreira asked if there is any remaining balance in the fund. Bob stated the beginning balance is \$88,589. If we add this \$75,000, the new balance would be \$163,589. Catherine asked if there is any suggested amount that we have to keep in the fund. Bob stated there is not. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 4** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Thirty Thousand dollars (\$130,000) to replace an International 4900 8 yard dump truck with plow and wing with funding to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. *Article is recommended by the Selectboard and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article 4 was moved by Scott Hilliard, seconded by Steve Randall. Article was presented by Bob Southworth. This is to replace a 1992 International 8-yard dump truck. The plow and wing will go with the old truck and the sander currently on it will stay with the new truck. Catherine Ferreira wanted to make sure that if we pull the \$130,000 from the \$166,000 in the Fund, the balance would be \$36,000. Bob stated that is correct. Catherine asked if between now and next year, if something happens that is above that amount, how would we get the funding for it? Bob asked her to clarify if she was questioning something happening to the new truck, or another piece of equipment. Catherine clarified if something needs to be replaced above and beyond the \$36,000 we have saved due to unforeseen circumstances, where will the money come from? Steve Bluhm stated this is the same \$75,000 as we have asked for every other year for the last seven years, to keep it level funded, so we don't see spikes in the tax rate. Next year if voters approve, we will add \$75,000 again to bring the fund back up to \$100,000 to buy any other equipment we need. Catherine said she understood that but her question is that if between now and next year something happens to equipment and we have a large expense, where does that revenue come from to accommodate, or do we have to lower the \$75,000 next year to make up for what we overspent? Steve Bluhm answered we cannot expend money from this account until the body approves it. Between now and then we would have to take the money out of the maintenance budget or not purchase it.

**ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 5** To see if the town will vote to change the purpose of the Road Reconstruction Fund created in 2011 from 'for the purpose of funding major road reconstruction projects' to 'for the purpose of funding road and bridge reconstruction and repair projects.' (2/3 vote required)

Article 5 moved by Steve Randall, seconded by George Corliss Jr.

Glenn Smith, Town Administrator, explained the action proposed is authorized under RSA 35:16 (specifies 2/3 vote is required). When the fund was created in 2011 it was for road reconstruction projects only. There was talk of a separate fund for major road repair projects, and a separate one for bridge reconstruction. The Capital Improvement Program Committee thought three funds with three purposes could be a problem if an unexpected expense came up during a project and funds could not be moved from one fund to another, so three funds were not created. The intent of this Article is to create one fund that would cover all types of projects, and to make it easier to manage in the future. Dave Coulter asked if this is directed to a specific road that needs work, or is it to cover all roads. Glenn Smith said under this article, the funds would be available for any bridge or road. Articles 6 and 8 will be for specific projects being proposed for this year. Catherine Ferreira asked aren't these projects for infrastructure automatically part of our regular budget that we pay for in property taxes, and if so, isn't it separating what is supposed to be done by our local government? Glenn said it is separating it but it is still done by the local government. This was set in place to get away from major spikes in the tax rate in years when we have large reconstruction projects, and to level off the impact of those projects on the tax rate from year to year, so it is separating it for that purpose. Catherine said our taxes are supposed to be implemented specifically for running our local government and our infrastructure. These are the main reasons for our taxes. So, even though that is the main reason, we now want to separate it to do the work. Glenn said yes, we do want to separate it to do the work. Don Stevens added that the Highway Department does get a certain amount of money for general maintenance, this is not part of that. Glenn Smith added any project with a cost under five thousand dollars is part of the operating budget and does not come out of this fund. Dave Coulter asked if there was any state funding available for these projects. Glenn said the Town receives a highway block grant for road reconstruction projects from the state every year like other towns in New Hampshire, but it does not come close to meeting the need, hence the raising of money through taxes. As with the Bean Hill Road project, we from time to time get grants from the state for major projects.

Moderator ruled that 2/3 majority vote was achieved by voice vote. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 6** To see if the town will vote to appoint the Selectmen as agents to expend funds from Road Reconstruction Fund previously established in 2010. (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by George Corliss Jr., seconded by Steve Randall.

Glenn Smith explained this is authorized by RSA 35:15. By appointing the Selectmen as agents to the fund, it allows them to move money within projects or, if needed, to go back for additional money when over-budget on a project. It does not give the Selectmen authority to go back to the Road Reconstruction Fund for other expenses (such as police, legal fees, etc.). They are still bound by the purpose of the fund that was voted. Karen Wilcox asked how we are doing it currently. Glenn said we can only authorize spending these funds once at year, at this meeting. Dave Court asked if the body meeting will still need to authorize to initiate the project, or does this also give the selectmen the authority to initiate the project? Steve Bluhm said Article 8 is how we'll ask for the money every year. On page 80 of the town report we give you the breakdown or what the Capital Improvement Program Committee has recommended to the Selectmen and the Budget Committee. Dave Court said so these are primarily emergency funding for projects. Steve Bluhm said yes, if a particular project goes over budget, we may have to take from funds planned for one road to finish another. Any unexpended funds go back into the same fund, not to the general fund. So next year there would be a fund balance. Catherine Ferreira asked if this is just for Class 5 roads in town. Class 2 and 3 we get grants for, and extra money we get from the state. She asked you want to set up a fund that is specific for the repair of town only roads, therefore our tax rate should come down? Steve Bluhm responded no, the CIP Committee did a review of the whole town for road needs. At the time of the project, Zion Hill was a state road. The last state road in Northfield now is Sandogardy Pond Road. The block grant we get from the state is for our town roads. Catherine stated we do get money from our registration fees. Our infrastructure and government should automatically be taken care of by our taxes. I'm trying to figure out while I'm paying property taxes that is for something automatically taken care of, that we've already paid for, now you want to separate it into a fund. I don't know about this committee, I just don't want to lose the right afforded under my taxes for the government and the infrastructure. Steve Bluhm said he would leave it for the CIP Committee chair to address this in Article 8. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 7** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Thirty Five Thousand dollars (\$235,000) to the Road Reconstruction Fund for the purpose of funding major road reconstruction projects as needed. *This Article is recommended by the Selectboard and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article moved by George Corliss, Jr., seconded by Steve Randall.

Ed Weingartner, Chair of CIP Committee, spoke to the Article. In May 2012 we began the process of assessing all roads in town and created a priority list by ranking on condition, rolling response network, traffic volume, and annual operating cost. Page 81 of the Town Report lists how the CIP committee used a weighted ranking system for the roads to prioritize and give credence to what we are asking for. Our roads are estimated to be a \$50 million asset, allowing for their various conditions. Bob Southworth began assessing the cost to reconstruct them, with the exception of Sandogardy Pond Road, the cost is about \$12.6 million. Including our portion of Sandogardy Pond Road it increases to \$13.5 million. The estimated cost of Sandogardy Pond Road at this time is \$2.5 million, with a 1/3 town and 2/3 state split. We looked at splitting the funding over various time periods to get all roads up to good condition. Over 20 years the annual cost would be \$678,000; over 25 years it would be \$543,000, over 30 years - \$452,000, and over 40 years - \$340,000. With current funding at \$200,000 per year we recognized it is not adequate to get them all done; then by the time they were done it would need to be started over. The committee recommended funding at \$450,000 with \$108,000 annually coming from the state Aid Block Grant. Projects for this year are on page 80 of the town report. Listed roads for this year are Fellows Hill Road, Fiske Road, Shedd Road, and Susan Lane. We also recommend to start setting money aside for our portion of Sandogardy Pond Road, for which state funding should be available in 2018. Dave Court asked what they consider "good condition" when we are upgrading a road. He has seen us rebuild roads, then in ten to twelve years we need to spend money there again. Ed responded good condition would be smooth with good drainage. The biggest problems are frost and moving water out of the sub-base. Projects include digging out material, putting in better materials, installing drainage, culverts, etc. to improve water flow. Charles Beckley asked where on the list Sandogardy Pond Road is. Ed answered it is not on the list because we do not own it at this time. After the repairs are completed in 2018 we would own it. Kevin Waldron asked if there is a possibility of doing more roads sooner if we bonded. Ed said the only project we are considering bonding is Sandogardy Pond Road. Our portion is far beyond what the tax base could handle. Catherine Ferreira asked for explanation of why our tax base is paying for government and infrastructure year after year. Where is that money going that has allowed our roads to deteriorate? Why do we need a committee to advise us what needs to be done for something our tax dollars are supposed to be taking care of. Ed responded our tax money has gone to maintain and repair our roads. We have not been doing that at a funding level high enough to keep up. It is part of your taxes, we just separate out regular maintenance and major reconstruction projects. There will always be a balance because we are building reserve to do larger projects that cannot be done in one year. Dave Court said he is empathetic to Catherine's point of view. We need the roads for people to accomplish their goals and help them pay their taxes. We need roads in good condition and perhaps need to limit the size of vehicles allowed. Dave Coulter asked how this affects roads shared with other towns? Glenn Smith responded the cost would be shared between towns. Don Stevens noted when the CIP committee started, the Selectmen asked them to plan out 5-10 years. A lot of roads have not been fixed because they were not on the long range plan. Lee French asked about Sandogardy Pond Road which is not scheduled for work until 2018. Ed explained the town is only responsible for winter maintenance at this time. Repairs, potholes, etc. are the responsibility of the state. Bob Southworth said if residents call him, he will provide contact information. Lee French asked if the local police, in their travels, can make recommendations as well. Bob said whenever he is made aware of a situation he will advise the state. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 8** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Three Hundred and Thirty Four Thousand Two Hundred Thirty Nine dollars (\$334,239) to fund road reconstruction and repair projects with funding to come from the Road Reconstruction Fund. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2014. *This Article is recommended by the Selectboard and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Scott Hilliard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Steve Bluhm pointed to page 80 of the Town Report which lists the road repair projects for 2013 including dollar amounts projected for each. Valerie Kehr asked how much this would leave in the fund after these projects. Glenn Smith advised the balance would be \$129,698, also noted on the bottom of page 80. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 9** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to replace a police cruiser in the Police Department and to raise and appropriate Thirty One Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty dollars (\$31,830) for this purpose. *This Article is recommended by the Selectboard and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by George Corliss Jr., seconded by Steve Randall.

Steve Adams explained for the past twenty years (with the exception of two years in which we replaced two) we have replaced a cruiser. This year we are asking to replace a 2004 with 140,000 miles on it and which is rusting through. The department currently has two vehicles with over 100,000 miles on them. Steve Randall asked if they were planning on buying another Ford, and if so, have the issues with the Fords been resolved? Steve Adams responded yes, we plan to buy a Ford and we've had no issues with the newest cruiser. Sally Robert asked if the price includes everything. Steve Adams explained the price of the car is \$26830. We don't have the equipment to outfit it. The cost is about \$5000 which is included in the Article. Don Stevens asked if this means the department will have another car. Steve Adams said no, the cruiser being retired will be used as a town vehicle to replace the older one. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 10** To see if the Town will vote to establish a Police Station Roof Replacement Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA35:1 for the purpose of replacing the roof of the Police Station and to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand dollars (\$5,000) to be deposited in this fund. (Majority vote required) *The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend approval of this article.*

Article was moved by Steve Randall, seconded by George Corliss Jr.

Steve Adams explained this will set up a fund to put \$5000 aside. We had bids last year, all of which were \$18,000 - \$20,000. We had some leaks in the roof with damage that was repaired. The current shingles should be good until 2017. We would like to put aside \$5,000 per year so the funds will be there when we need to replace in 2017. Wes DeSousa asked what type of roof is planned. Steve Adams said we are planning on a shingled roof at this time. A metal roof would cause snow to dump on the ramp and in front of the garage doors. Steve Randall said \$18,000 would not make a big difference in the tax rate if done in one year. He saw no reason to set aside this small amount of money. It's a small expenditure. Kevin Waldron said he agrees with Steve Randall that we should not set up this fund. We could wait until 2015 and set up a two year fund, or review the reserve fund balance at that time to see what is needed. Moderator could not determine result of a voice vote so called for division of the house. Assistant Moderators Kent Finemore and Scott Hilliard reported the votes, with a result of those voting "yes": 27, voting "no": 45. **ARTICLE FAILED.**

**ARTICLE 11** To see if the Town will vote to discontinue the Underground Storage Tank Replacement Fund established by Town meeting vote in 2011 for the purpose of reconstruction or replacement of the underground storage tank at the Highway Garage said sum of One Thousand Six Hundred and Ninety dollars (\$1,690) are to be transferred into the general fund and further to raise and appropriate \$1,690 from the general fund for the purpose of adding to the Underground Storage Tank special bank account established and maintained by the Winnisquam Regional School District pursuant to the intergovernmental agreement between the Town, the Winnisquam Regional School District, the Town of Tilton, Tilton/Northfield Fire District and the Tilton/Northfield Water District ratified on March 24, 2012. This is a special warrant article.

(Majority vote required) *The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend approval of this article.*

Article was moved by George Corliss, Jr., seconded by Steve Bluhm.

Glenn Smith provided background on the storage tank. In 2011, the Underground Storage Tank Replacement Fund was established for the gasoline tax being collected. Since then there have been a number of meetings, and the responsibility for buying gas for all the entities has switched to the Winnisquam Regional School District, which had already been buying the diesel fuel. This has been more efficient, but left the question as to what to do with the monies already collected and in the fund. The only way to take money out of the fund is by vote here at town meeting. The projected replacement date of the tank is in 2029. This Article is to take money (collected from the surcharge) from the fund, put into the general fund, then transfer to the account being managed by the school district. This is the only way to get the money to that account. Catherine Ferreira asked for confirmation that this money does not go into the WRSD general fund. Glenn Smith confirmed that was correct. **ARTICLE PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 12** To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72:69 through RSA 72:72 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with **Woodheating Energy System** intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes. *Submitted by Petition*

Article was moved by George Corliss, Jr., seconded by Rick Perreault.

Scott Haskins asked if this pertains to existing systems as well as new. No one offered a response to his question. Steve Randall made a motion to table the Article. Motion was seconded by Lee French. **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED.**

Mary Lee moved to protect her vote, seconded by Keith Murray. **MOTION PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 13** To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72:69 through RSA 72:72 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with **Wind-Powered Energy Systems** intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes. *Submitted by Petition*

Article was moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by George Corliss Jr.

Steve Randall made a motion to table the Article, seconded by Robert Ivon.

Kent Finemore raised a point of Order stating there was no opportunity for discussion prior to the motion to table. The Moderator ruled the motion on the floor must be voted on.

The voice vote to table was not definitive. Moderator called for a division of the house.

Vote on the Motion to table: Yes 43 No 27. **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED.**

Motion to protect the vote was made by Mike Murphy, seconded by Mary Lee. **MOTION PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 14** To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of NH RSA 72:69 through RSA 72:72 inclusively, which provide for an optional property tax exemption from the property's assessed value, for property tax purposes, for persons owning real property, which is equipped with **solar energy systems** intended for use at the immediate site. Such property tax exemption shall be in the amount equal to 100% of the assessed value of qualifying equipment under these statutes. *Submitted by Petition*

Article moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Kent Finemore.

Kent Finemore said while he is an advocate of renewable energy, he is not in favor of a tax break. Kevin Waldron asked if we are currently being taxed on these items. Glenn Smith said the item is noted on the

assessment card but is not valued. Mary Lee asked what the connection is to the RSA's. Steve Bluhm explained this is a petitioned article. Neither the Selectboard nor the Budget Committee had anything to do with it. The person who submitted this is not here to explain it. The Board looked into it but there is a lot involved. Steve Randall made a motion to table the Article. Kevin Waldron was recognized to speak prior to the motion being seconded. Kevin offered that we are voting not to tax ourselves for something we are not currently being taxed on. Steve Bluhm confirmed that was correct.

Motion to table was seconded by Kevin Waldron. **MOTION TO TABLE PASSED.**

Motion to protect the vote was made by Mary Lee, seconded by Wayne Crowley. **MOTION PASSED.**

**ARTICLE 15** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the budget committee recommended sum of \$3,040,298.56 for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles listed above. (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Steve Bluhm, seconded by Keith Murray.

Geoff Ziminsky made a motion to amend the Article. Amendment #1 reads "I move to amend Article 15 to add \$44091.92 to provide for payments associated with Winnepesaukee River Basin Project capital cost invoices, with funding to come from the unexpended fund balance. Approval if this article will bring the total recommended sum for Article 15 to \$3,079,390.48".

Motion was seconded by Steve Bluhm. Glenn Smith gave background information. The Sewer District is connected to the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project, which treats the sewage and charges fees for the service. The Basin Project sends out four types of invoices per year. Over the years the Sewer District has assumed responsibility for paying three of them: administration, operations and maintenance, and replacement. In 2008 the Board of Selectmen advised the Sewer District that the town would no longer pay the capital cost invoices we had previously been paying. In 2009 this town meeting rejected an effort to amend the town budget to pay those capital expense invoices. The District did not pay those capital costs and a case was referred to the Attorney General's Office. The AG office ruled that the Town share the cost of capital expenses. The Board determined that due to prior vote at the 2009 Town Meeting, we could not pay those expenses, so the state and town ended up in litigation. The court order came in after the budget was finalized. This amendment will allow us to fulfill the court order. Don Stevens asked if we will be paying this going forward. Glenn Smith said we will be sitting down with the District to determine the arrangement going forward. Don said many years ago the board voted to join the Winnepesaukee River Basin Project which made the town liable for that bill, then later someone decided it should be switched over to being paid just by the users, is that correct. Glenn Smith said that is what has been under discussion for the last few years. Steve Randall said at the time the budget committee vote was taken we felt the responsibility was for those people who got the benefit from the Sewer District, not the responsibility of the entire town. Don Stevens said he didn't know the budget committee would overrule the body. Steve Randall said we did put this to a vote. Elaine Nichols said it appears we are court-ordered to pay this. Steve Bluhm said \$5,000 is court ordered, it is a fine from DES as part of going through the court process. The balance is a deal the Selectmen and the sewer district were working on in 2009 before DES shut it down. We are hoping the district and the town can work out a deal that can be implemented. Valerie Kehr asked for clarification, we have gone to court, have a court order, and we're still in negotiations; what is being done at this time so those who have private wells & septic don't have to subsidize this. Steve Bluhm said the court order from DES is against both the town and the district. Valerie asked on what basis they made this decision, what is the stated reason? Steve Bluhm said we must pay the \$5,000 in 30 days to DES. The balance is still being negotiated with the district as to who pays how much. Matt Boissonault asked if we can pay just the \$5,000 now and wait on the balance.

Steve Bluhm said that is what we will do. This does not change the bottom line of the budget. Catherine Ferreira asked because she has a private septic, does this mean she won't have an extra charge for emptying it over there. Steve Bluhm said that is what we have been fighting for these years. The Court has said that since Northfield signed off on this from the beginning, we must share the costs. Eliza Conde said we should not forget that even though she has a private well & septic, she has the privilege of using these rivers, which are now clean because of this project. She thinks we have benefited greatly and should be paying the basin project fees. Wes DeSousa said he agreed there is a benefit to society to support the River Basin project. Kevin

Waldron pointed out if we support this amendment it will not affect the tax rate as it comes from the fund balance, however if we don't reach a settlement and come under a court order to pay, our tax rate may be affected greatly. **AMENDMENT #1 PASSED**

Eliza Conde proposed Amendment #2: "I move to amend Article 15 by increasing the Hall Memorial Library budget by \$2,950 to \$121,150 as requested." Seconded by Donald Stevens.

Eliza said Northfield has previously plowed and done other outside maintenance, and paid less in taxes. Three years ago the Northfield selectmen advised the Library Trustees they would no longer be providing those services for the library. The library hired the School District to plow at a cost of \$1500, and also hired a maintenance person for lawns, etc. Northfield has recommended \$2950 less than the town of Tilton. We have 1500 more residents than Tilton, we use the library and should pay an equal share. Steve Randall wanted to hear from the budget committee as to why they did not put this in the budget. Gretchen Wilder said her recollection was that it was level funded when they reviewed the budget. Keith Murray said many other outside agencies were either level funded or decreased when reviewing the budget requests. Valerie Kehr asked why we stopped plowing since it is a Northfield property. Gretchen said her recollection was that the Tilton selectmen came to a Northfield selectmen meeting, pointed out that the NH Constitution does not allow us to do that. In the past we had a gentlemen's agreement for years. We traded off plowing the Pines and Library, however, it was pointed out that was illegal. Jennifer Moulton introduced herself as a new resident and our new librarian. She said they have done a lot with their budget, have tried to cut back and still offer great programs with a tight budget. She asked that the funds be restored. Steve Bluhm offered a clarification, that there was an informal agreement with Tilton that we plowed and maintained the Library and Pines Community Center, and Tilton maintained the Island. This has changed per RSA's. Leif Martinson, member of the Budget Committee and Library Trustee spoke in support of the amendment, and said they are grateful for any funds they receive. The property is not a town property, it is owned by a trust with oversight by the trustees. Steve Randall said he supports raising the amount for the library, it is very important to the townspeople and vital to our town and town history. Glenn Smith stated the new amended bottom line will be \$3,082,340.48. We are voting on the total of the budget. The selectmen pay close attention to the recommendation of the body as to where they want the money to go. **AMENDMENT #2 PASSED.**

Catherine Ferreira asked if the additional money just approved would go to pay plowing. Steve Bluhm said we are not currently plowing the library, they now have an outside company for plowing which comes out of the library budget. **ARTICLE PASSED AS AMENDED.**

**ARTICLE 16** To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

The Moderator recognized the service of outgoing Selectman Geoffrey Ziminsky, a certificate of appreciation was presented to him by Selectmen Stephen Bluhm and Peg Shepard.

Retiring Chief Stephen Adams was recognized for his twenty-one years of selfless service to the Northfield Police Department and the Town of Northfield. He was presented a certificate of gratitude for his service.

The Moderator noted a letter from Senator Ayotte and John O'Brien regarding a Welcome Home Vietnam Veterans Day to be held at the Veterans' cemetery on March 30, 2013. He encouraged all to attend to honor our veterans.

Greg Peverly was available to invite new members to the Northfield Economic Development Corporation. The Moderator thanked the body for attending and said our meeting is a testament to how we conduct the business of the town.

Lee French asked if there has been any increase in voluntary recycling after the discussion of last year's town meeting. Selectman Peg Shepard responded that we have actually had a decrease in participation, and said that

they hope to bring something back in next year to put us in a money making direction. Lee suggested lawn signs that residents can post if they wish to show their support for recycling.

Roland Cullen addressed Article 4 and said that he would like to come back next year and see that we spent less money than was approved on the piece of construction equipment perhaps by getting one with fewer extras. Kent Finemore added that that was the case with a pickup purchased last year, the truck was bought for less than appropriated.

Motion to adjourn made by Steve Randall, seconded by Kent Finemore.

Meeting adjourned at 11:07 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy L. Caveney

Town Clerk