

**MINUTES FOR THE TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-FIFTH  
NORTHFIELD TOWN MEETING  
2015**

Polls were opened at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and fifteen at seven o'clock a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at 7:00 p.m. with 320 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.

**TOWN ELECTION RESULTS**

**Selectman: 3 Years**

Robert Southworth .....164  
Top write-in: Dennis Allen .....135

**Treasurer: 3 Years**

Roland C. Seymour .....158  
Lisa Swancott .....151

**Trustee of Trust Funds: 3 Years**

Top write-in: Calvin Finemore .....6 (accepted position)

The 2015 Town Meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. on the 14<sup>th</sup> day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and fifteen at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield, by Moderator Scott McGuffin to act upon the following subjects. The Moderator asked for a moment of silence to honor those serving in the military, then read Article 1 and results of the election for Town and School District offices. As an item of interest, the Moderator read a news release regarding the Southwick Farm Preservation Program establishing the Southwick Farm Trust after the recent passing of Bert Southwick, well known as “The Egg Man”. The Trust was established with the purpose of rehabilitation of the farm and to assure it is kept in agricultural use.

**ARTICLE 2** Polling hours in the town of Northfield are now 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM. Shall we place a question on the state election ballot of November 2016 to change polling hours so that polls shall open at 7:00 AM and close at 7:00 PM for all regular state elections beginning November 2018?

Article 2 was moved by Leif Martinson, seconded by Steve Randall.

Town Clerk Cindy Caveney explained that while Selectmen may change the poll hours for town elections, a change to poll hours for state elections must be presented to voters on the ballot of a state election for approval. Passage of this Article authorizes the Selectmen to request the Secretary of State’s office to place the question on the next state ballot for consideration.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

Greg Hill made a motion, seconded by Susan Collins, to change the order of the warrant, to have ARTICLE 13 considered prior to ARTICLE 3.

**MOTION PASSED**

**ARTICLE 13** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Seventy Two Thousand One Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$272,160) for the purpose of providing financial support to agencies and organizations providing services to the residents of Northfield. *This article is not recommended by the Board of*

*Selectmen and is recommended by the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required).

Article was moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Steve Randall.

Selectman Wayne Crowley explained why this Article was being presented. These items have traditionally been within the Budget. The Board chose to give full transparency and have these requests presented separately to the voters due to the size of the requests. He pointed out that the Selectboard recommended amount is lower than the Budget Committee's, the Article is the amount the Budget Committee recommended. Budget Committee member Lisa Swancott said they did increase some amounts as they reviewed the budget requests and included things we have always done. Peg Shepard said the Selectboard worked very hard on this and they understand some areas need additional funds, but the agencies also have to watch their budgets. Nancy Court asked why they chose to pull out these particular items from the budget, rather than any other town department, the implication is that they don't support it. Wayne Crowley responded these are usually scattered throughout the budget so they decided to pull them out for visibility, but they fully support these organizations. Scott Hilliard, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Youth Assistance agrees these agencies are part of the fabric of the community. Youth Assistance was started in 1975 by Dick Smart, and many parents whose children are served do not even participate. They did not request additional funds and he asked for support for all the programs. Dave Court had no problem with what the Selectmen have done, and thinks it is appropriate. Leif Martinson, Budget Committee member said they could not remove funds all in one year, agencies can't find other funding on short notice. Derek Lacourciere asked why these specific groups were picked. Wayne Crowley said it is the prerogative of the Selectboard what appears in the budget, and what goes into separate Articles. The Board has no direct control over how these funds are used, so they wanted to have the voters decide. Lee French asked if money will be moved from other places. Catherine Ferreira asked why we are giving the Northfield Economic Development Committee money. Wayne Crowley said NEDC has been receiving \$5,000 per year. They are trying to bring business into Northfield to relieve the tax base. Catherine said an earlier Selectboard tried to bring business on to Route 140. Why do we have a special group to do this, why are they getting money to do what we have already given money for. Leif Martinson said their current charge is to attract business. The investment is to advertise, help current businesses grow and offer small business loans. They would like an updated study of Route 140. Kent Finemore said he is in favor of this Article, but is not in favor of it being presented this way in the future. Scott Tedford, a worker at the Library, said the patronage and programs at the Library are growing all the time. He thinks it is wrong for them to be put in this Article. Joe DeMello said he is against the way this is being presented.

Greg Hill proposed Amendment #1 which read:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred EIGHTY-TWO thousand one hundred sixty dollars (\$282,160) for the purpose of providing financial support to agencies and organizations providing services to the residents of Northfield. Ten thousand dollars of this fund will provide a donation to the Northfield Scholarship Fund to be administered by the Network for Educational Opportunity a 501c3 organization organized under the laws of NH. The money donated will provide scholarships for Northfield residents only. Any dollars not used for scholarships by September 1<sup>st</sup> each year will be returned to the Town of Northfield unless the majority of Selectmen decide otherwise.”

Amendment #1 was seconded by Dave Court. Greg Hill explained he was presenting this as it may give an opportunity to reduce our tax burden. He worked with Lance Turgeon, a member of the Winnisquam Regional School District Budget Committee and accountant. This does not reduce the School District Budget. He said every child that does not go to Winnisquam Regional School District schools would save Northfield \$2200. This \$10,000 can be used for scholarships so children can choose alternative schools, thus reducing our enrollment in the District.

Joyce Fulweiler raised a Point of Order: that this constitutes a new purpose not listed on the warrant, and had not been noticed or warned to the voters. David Court said he has been aware of this for some time and it appeals to him on several levels. It gives opportunity and creativity, giving education a wider berth, allowing better opportunities for families and power to individuals. Steve Randall asked if this was the first time this was being put forward. Wayne Crowley responded this is the first time the Selectboard has heard about this request. We have not vetted the group or seen any financial information. He recommends not doing it this year and give the Board a chance to review the matter.

Joe DeMello made a Motion to Table Amendment #1, seconded by Steve Randall.

**Amendment #1 TABLED**

Jennifer Haskins proposed Amendment #2 which read:

“To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Seventy Six thousand nine hundred ten dollars (\$276,910) for the purposes of providing financial support to agencies and organizations providing services to the residents of Northfield to include a four thousand seven hundred fifty dollar (\$4750) increase for the T/N Recreation Council”.

Amendment #2 was seconded by Leif Martinson. Jennifer Haskins (Chair of T-N Recreation Council) said while they greatly appreciate the support and recommended increase that is proposed, part of their implementation cannot happen without this additional increase. They have received limited or no increases over the last several years and work hard to ensure fiscal responsibility. Nate Bragdon asked the Boards why they reduced the amount requested. Wayne Crowley answered for the Selectboard, stating they looked at the financials and where the Council was spending the money. The Pines has a problem in capital, refurbishment, and taking care of the building. This is the operating budget. We agreed to an increase. Leif Martinson for the Budget Committee said they did recommend the same amount as the Selectboard but it was not unanimous. Mark Seavey said the community supports this building, as demonstrated by the work completed by volunteers recently, and said it was irresponsible to cut their budget after three years with no increase. A point of order was made that this is not a cut, the budget includes an increase over what they received previously. Heather Durgin asked for specifics as to what the requested increase would be used for. Jennifer Haskins said the total \$7250 increase requested was to add part-time maintenance, allow them to be open five days a week, and salary increases.

**Amendment #2 PASSED:** Yes 83 No 39

**ARTICLE AS AMENDED TO \$276,910 PASSED**

Motion to protect the vote on Article 13 made by Peg LaBrecque, seconded by Scott Hilliard.

**MOTION PASSED**

**ARTICLE 3** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Northfield Solid Waste Ordinance so that commercial haulers are required to reimburse the town for tipping fee expense as per the conditions set forth on the invoice.

Article was moved by Judy Stewart, seconded by Lance Turgeon.

Peg Shepard explained this Article is to add wording to the Ordinance to match the invoice to state payment is due within thirty days.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 4** 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 Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.*

Article was moved by Scott Hilliard, seconded by Lee French.

Peg Shepard explained this Article appears every year to set money aside for large equipment Purchases, though no equipment will be purchased this year. This amount would bring the account to \$127,223 to be used for a truck in 2016. Scott McGuffin added that a capital reserve fund is like a savings account for large purchases to be made at a later time with Town Meeting approval.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 5** To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand dollars (\$100,000) to be deposited in the Sandogardy Pond Road State Aid Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund. (Majority vote required) *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.*

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall

Greg Hill asked how much is in this fund now. Peg Shepard answered \$100,663 in a thirty-three month CD. The amount being asked for will go into a money market account so we can access it for engineering costs. Town Administrator Glenn Smith said the project date is 2018, on an 80/20 split with the State, but the Engineering would be done next year. Joe DeMello asked how much would be state funds? Glenn Smith said 80% of \$2.5 million. Lisa Martin said it is very important to get your engineering done or you could be bumped by the State for another town who has a project ready to go. Greg Hill, our State Representative, said that it was reported this week that the Department of Transportation had a \$40 million shortfall. They may be looking at the funding split on projects.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 6** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Forty One Thousand Four Hundred dollars (\$241,400) to the Road Reconstruction Fund for the purpose of funding major road and bridge repair and reconstruction projects as needed. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Catherine Ferreira asked what happens if we put together funds for our local class 4, 5, and 6 roads and then the formula changes for the state road project, increasing the town's portion. Peg Shepard explained the Road Reconstruction Fund is for town roads only, and the Sandogardy Pond Road project is under a separate fund. Glenn Smith said our commitment for the Sandogardy Pond Road project is \$500,000 under the current formula (20% of \$2.5 million). If we had to come up with \$800,000 because the State changes the formula, there would be hard decisions to be made.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 7** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Two Hundred and Seventy Thousand Eight Hundred Dollars (\$270,800) to fund road and bridge reconstruction and repair projects, to be offset by the Highway Block Grant and the remaining amount to come from the Road Reconstruction Fund (not to exceed the \$270,800) and no amount to come from taxation. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2016. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Ed Weingartner, Chairman of the Capital Improvement Program Committee said work continues on our road projects. The Committee recommends Reservoir Road and Oak Hill Road receive their topcoat. Going forward, they recommend \$10,000 be used for Engineering Services to help assess road problems, develop a plan and come up with reasonable solutions to maintain.

Steve Bluhm asked if there isn't a separate line item elsewhere in the budget for engineering costs. Wayne Crowley responded that this Article does not include engineering costs, which are elsewhere in the budget. Jared Hebert said Oak Hill was re-done seven or eight years ago but the wearing coat was never put on it. Hopefully doing that will protect the money previously spent, and the same will be done on Reservoir Road. Lisa Martin asked if this is a housekeeping Article only, with funds offset from the Highway block grant, it does not add anything to the taxes. Glenn Smith said the Selectmen are the authorized agents of the Road Reconstruction Fund. They could spend the funds but for this amount of money want to make sure this body approves of the purchase. Every year, Northfield, like most towns, receive a block grant which, by law, must be used for road repairs and reconstruction. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 8** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred and Forty-five Thousand Dollars (\$145,000) to fund Cannon Bridge Deck Repair and Reconstruction 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, 2016. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Ed Weingartner, CIP Committee, advised Cannon Bridge is in good condition except for the deck. He recommended the project move forward to extend its service life and push the total rehabilitation project off about twenty years. Peg Shepard added Tilton had a matching Article to consider for their half of the repairs. Joyce Fulweiler, Tilton Town Administrator, said Tilton has their appropriation and has signed a contract with a Contractor for the work.

Lisa Martin said she has no problem putting money aside for Cannon Bridge, but thought the process was flawed. It has been put out to bid twice with few responses. This price represents our half of the bid which is a total of \$290,000 for repairs. We could put in a new bridge deck for \$330,000 if you use state pricing. And if you go through the DOT process, they will reimburse 80% of engineering costs, then you put the project out to bid and may get more response. Arnold Graton said with the condition of the bridge we probably shouldn't wait for the State Aid fund. Lisa said we get back 80% of our engineering costs back as soon as the engineering work is done, we should take advantage of that program. Joe DeMello said the surface needs to be replaced, rather than wait for the state funds, the money is already in there. Steve Bluhm asked if the money is coming out of the Road Reconstruction Fund, Peg Shepard confirmed that it is. Glenn Smith pointed out that for the request for bids, contractors were referred to the old plans from 1977. Ed Weingartner said the funding is only available once. We put the Request for Proposals out twice. It is a small project to increase the service life. We do have to replace the expansion joint on the Northfield side, which is damaged and leaking, and also will replace the sidewalk in its entirety. Some of the bridge rail may also need to be replaced. Greg Hill was concerned there were only two bids. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 9** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) to fund engineering services for the Sandogardy Pond Road Reconstruction project with funding to come from the Sandogardy Pond Road Reconstruction Fund. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2016. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

No one offered discussion on the Article.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 10** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to purchase a police cruiser in the Police Department and to raise and appropriate Forty Four Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$44,280) for this purpose. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Scott Hilliard.

Kevin Waldron explained this is a recurring warrant article to replace a police cruiser. The amount is higher than in the past as Ford has discontinued the Crown Victoria model. With this change we have no current equipment from the car going out of service to put into the new car. Next year there should be a smaller expense due to the ability to re-use equipment. The radio and camera account for more than half of the up-fit cost. We currently have four front-line cruisers (marked and equipped patrol units), one detective vehicle and one motorcycle. Judy Stewart asked what the expected life of a cruiser is. Chief John Raffaely said they generally last three years. Greg Hill asked if the waste oil from cruiser maintenance is able to be burned by the town. Peg Shepard confirmed we do burn it, as well as oil from other town vehicles. We used to be able to accept waste oil from other sources, which allowed us to heat the recycle center office and half the highway building. Due to DES rule changes, we can no longer accept outside oil, resulting in a heating cost for those buildings. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 11** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand One Hundred Twenty Nine Dollars (\$1,129.00) for the purpose of providing a 2.0% salary increase for the Town Clerk/Tax Collector. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Scott Hilliard, seconded by Bob Ivon.

Steve Bluhm asked what percent has been budgeted for the pool for employee raises this year. Wayne Crowley said the amount in the budget as a “merit pool” is \$25,000 which is 3% spread over the remaining three quarters of the year for the other town employees by performance measurements. Leif Martinson explained the Town Clerk/Tax Collector and Treasurer (salary increase request in the next Article) are elected positions and therefore they will not be coming out of the pool. The amount stated here is the Department request, approximately 2%. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 12** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Hundred Sixty Eight Dollars (\$968.00) for the purpose of increasing the stipend provided to the Town Treasurer from \$2,000 per year to \$2,900 per year. *This article is not recommended by the Board of Selectmen and is recommended by the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Leif Martinson explained this is to increase funding for an elected official. The Selectboard recommended level funding, but the Budget Committee wanted to reinstate the salary to where it was several years ago. Gretchen Wilder asked if the Treasurer has increased the amount of work or attendance at meetings, and whether he does deposits for town receipts. Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cindy Caveney explained she was given authority many years ago to deposit cash receipts on behalf of the Treasurer, because he is not in the office on a daily basis.

Steve Randall disagrees with the 30% increase being presented, when other town employees and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector are only receiving two to three percent.

Roland Seymour, Treasurer, said the average remuneration for Treasurers for towns of our size is \$4300.00. There has been no increase in the salary since 2011. He has delegated some duties to the full time town employees, as he is allowed to do, however, the job of Treasurer is being done

and he has not had any complaints from Auditors or anyone else. Greg Hill pointed out that since there were two qualified candidates for the position in the recent election, there does not seem to be a lack of people who would do the job for the current salary. Joe DeMello said he felt we should give him back to money that he had in the past. **ARTICLE PASSED Yes 78 No 33**

**(ARTICLE 13** was acted on earlier after a motion to consider Articles out of order)

**ARTICLE 14** To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand dollars (\$10,000.00) to be deposited in the Facilities Emergency Repair and Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund with funding coming from the town Unreserved Fund Balance. (Majority vote required) *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.*

Article was moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Steve Randall.

Kevin Waldron explained this fund was established last year with the goal to set aside funds to be used in the event of a failure such as heating systems, etc. in town buildings. Passage of this Article would bring the fund to \$20,000, which should be adequate to take care of any needs. Joe DeMello asked if we are raising this from taxes. Leif Martinson said the funds will come from any money left over from taxes that might have been used to reduce next year's taxes if not designated for this purpose. **ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 15** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell parcel R09-9 (Union Church) and parcel R09-72-B (vacant land adjacent to Union Church) at fair market value.

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Peg Shepard said the church needs some repair. We have estimates of \$40,000 for just the well and septic which would need to be done if anyone is to use the church. There is also some structural damage around the belfry. It is a historic building. It was last used about ten years ago. We bring this to you to decide what direction we should take. Mike Witzgall asked if there were any plans to use it for any town business or community activity. Peg Shepard responded it cannot be used at this time without repairs. Ken Gorrell pointed out the deed specifies it must be used for religious purposes. Lee French asked if we sell the property, would the buyer be bound by that deed restriction. Scott McGuffin advised that Town Counsel is investigating the limitations on use. Dave Court asked how we can make a decision if the limitations on use have not been fully determined. Peg Shepard said there is a lot of town owned land not being used, and the Selectboard is looking at those parcels. We want to know what direction they should take. Josephine Nichols asked what stipulations were on it when it was given to the Town.

The Moderator referred to page 22 of the 2014 Town Report which provides the deed stipulation "...shall be held by said Town forever in trust as church property..." to be "...used by all religious denominations on equal terms and in equal proportion as to time of occupation...".

Catherine Ferreira asked why this does not fall under the State Historical Society to help restore it. Peg said that could be looked into later once the board knows what direction they should take. Jeff Stevens, Reverend of the United Church of Christ, said his congregation had the opportunity to use the church several years ago. They had offered to do some of the repairs and would have interest in purchase of the property, and could comply with the deed restrictions. He also said if the Town repaired the building his group would work with them. Derek Lacourciere asked why this is being presented if we don't yet know the legalities of the situation. Leif Martinson pointed out this Article just gives the Selectmen the authority to sell, after the deed research is complete. Nadine Stevens said if the Article is tabled, we would have to wait another year before anything can be done with it. Steve Randall pointed out we need to consider this Article separately from the next one. Joe DeMello said if we have a possible buyer he suggests selling it rather than

putting a lot of money into it. Walter Hall is an abutter to the church and said in talking with older residents in that area, and he was told that if the town no longer wants the church it should revert back to the family of Charles Tilton. Scott McGuffin said currently Town Counsel is checking on the Right of Reverter.

Motion to Table made by Steve Randall, seconded by Bonnie Descoteaux.

**MOTION TO TABLE PASSED Yes 57 No 51**

**ARTICLE 16** To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Board of Selectmen to develop a plan for the restoration of Union Church to be presented to the voters at 2016 Town Meeting and to raise and appropriate Two Thousand (\$2,000.00) for this purpose. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Peg Shepard, seconded by Steve Randall.

Greg Hill asked if this includes the legal investigation of the deed questions.

Ken Gorrell said it seems it is not in the Town's best interest to put money into repairs or engineering of a septic system until the legal questions are answered.

Motion to Table made by Laurie Hill, seconded by Ken Gorrell. A question on the condition of the building was ruled out of order as it did not address the motion on the floor.

**MOTION TO TABLE PASSED Yes 69 No 37**

**ARTICLE 17** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Two Million, Six Hundred Eighty Four Thousand, Eight Hundred Sixty Four Dollars (\$2,684,864) for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles listed above. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen (2-1) and the Budget Committee.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Steve Randall, seconded by Peg Shepard.

Catherine Ferreira asked if the earlier voted increase of \$4,000 was included in the listed amount. Scott McGuffin said it did not.

**ARTICLE PASSED**

**ARTICLE 18** To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell parcel R18-2 in consideration of equal donations to the endowment funds of the Daniel Webster Council of the Boy Scouts of America, and the Girls Scouts of the Green and White Mountains, total amount of such donations to be no less than the fair market value of the parcel.

Article was moved Wayne Crowley, seconded by Steve Randall.

Wayne Crowley directed attention to a map display and pointed out the parcel in question that is a landlocked parcel of about ten acres, with no access and no easements allowing access. In 1993 the parcel was given to the Town by the Belle Peabody Foundation with the caveat "this land is conveyed to the Town of Northfield under the condition that it be used for the youth of the Tilton-Northfield area for scouting activities", per the deed. The Board is looking for authority to sell the property and still meet the deed restrictions. They approached two abutters, Highland Mountain Bike Park and Meadowsend Timberlands. Meadowsend Timberlands was not interested in the parcel. The Boy & Girl Scouts and the Town are in discussion with Highland Mountain to see what kind of a financial scenario and a program development scenario could be worked out going forward. A market analysis came in with value about \$5,000. The Board has negotiated offers in about the \$10,000 range with money to go to the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts endowments, and additional \$1,000 to \$2,000 donations to the scouts for the next five years on an annual basis. This is all still in negotiations, however this is the type of agreement the Board

is looking to make. There is also a scholarship program under consideration. The Scouts have not used the land for at least ten years, it is not conducive to their use with the lack of access. Laurie Hill asked if we sell it, will we start collecting taxes on it. Wayne answered yes, the acreage will be added to the buyer's taxable land. Walter Hall said he is very familiar with the parcel. Belle Peabody Brown Foundation, through the work of Dick Pucci, structured it this way because he wanted it for the local youth and scouting of this area. He felt it should not go to the two groups listed in the Article, as that was not the original intent. He added scouting goes through cycles of activity. He would like to keep it as. Leif Martinson spoke in favor of the Article. He is a neighbor of the property and uses the Bike Park. Acquiring this property would allow Highlands to expand trails for beginner terrain and cater to more youth of Tilton and Northfield. The land is currently not being used at all. Highlands brings exposure and revenue to Northfield. Catherine wanted to clarify there was no access. When this was brought up a few years ago the request to use the parcel for biking was denied, she just wanted to make sure there would be some benefit for the youth. Derek Lacourciere asked why we are discussing something that is contrary to what the donor wanted. Wayne Crowley explained the Board has to follow what is specified in the deed. Derek asked why we should give the money to a national organization, how will that benefit our local youth. Wayne said Highland Mountain Bike Park has agreed to run annual bike programs for local scouts from Tilton, Northfield, Sanbornton, and possibly Belmont, with jamborees, etc. Scott Hilliard said he could see two good purposes to this. Highland has benefitted all of us with tax revenue, and the scouts will have access to it. Kevin Mansur asked why we couldn't grant just a right-of-way to Highlands. Wayne Crowley said the deed specifies "scouting purposes", and with an easement we would be liable in case of an injury on the property. Carl Bartlett spoke as a prior and current Scout leader. He said it was given to the town to be a steward for the youth. It is not being used today, but that doesn't mean it won't be used in the future. We should not look just at the short term. **ARTICLE PASSED**

Joe DeMello questioned the Moderator's call on the vote. Mr. DeMello made a motion to overturn the call, seconded by Mary Lee. Motion to recall the vote was defeated. Motion to protect the vote on Article 18 was made by Laurie Hill, seconded by Gretchen Wilder. **MOTION PASSED**

**ARTICLE 19** To see if the Town will vote to continue and preserve all interest therein, a Class V road known as "Spaulding Road" located between Shedd Road and Bay Hill Road so as to remain a right of way for the citizens of Northfield. *Submitted by petition.* (Majority vote required)

Article was moved by Chris Hunt, seconded by Dave Court.

Motion to table was made by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Steve Randall.

**MOTION TO TABLE FAILED YES 42 NO 43**

Discussion on the Article continued.

Chris Hunt (petitioner of Article) reviewed his research regarding the history of this road, saying it is the duty of this assembly to accept or discontinue a town road; that decision does not lie with the Selectmen. He believes Spaulding Road, formerly known as Memorial Drive, is an original town road dating before 1893. In 1995 with application of a site plan, Spaulding Youth Center noted Spaulding Road as a private road without documentation. In 2009 the Northfield Selectboard discontinued winter maintenance and declared it as a private road. The statute is quite clear, a town road is defined as a road that has been used for public travel for twenty years prior to Jan.1, 1968. It would be prudent to not allow the taking of the public's right to access Spaulding Road. Town Administrator Glenn Smith said he researched the deeds, and it is the Town's position that we respectfully disagree with Mr. Hunt's position. Glenn went back through town records back to when this was the Shedd estate, and there is no reference to this as

a public road. There was a survey of town roads in 1980, in which Spaulding Road (Memorial Drive) was identified as a private road and there is no reference to it ever being a public road. Likewise there is no deed evidence that this is a public road, having looked through deeds from the dissolution of the Shedd estate, to Golden Rule, to Spaulding Youth. Both the Town and Spaulding have long agreed that is a private road, and Spaulding has been maintaining the road for some time. There was a time when the town did do winter maintenance on this road and many other private roads in town. RSA 229:1 allows for a private road being used for public purposes for twenty years prior to 1968 to be declared a public road, by “prescription”. However it is questionable if it would be appropriate to now apply that RSA after it has been well documented that it is private. If this passes it could be interpreted as an unauthorized taking of private land. Mark Seavey asked if we spent money on reconstruction of the road. Glenn stated money was spent on Shedd Road only, not on Spaulding Road. Dave Court asked if there was any historical reference to the road. Glenn said on the map of the Shedd estate on file at the Registry of Deeds, there are no names on the roads within the estate. They do refer to two public roads, those being Shaker and “the road leading to Tilton village”, now called Shedd road. There are a number of roads, paths, etc. on the plan which appear to be internal roads to the Shedd estate. Joe DeMello asked if Spaulding pays taxes. Glenn said they make payments under a “Payment in lieu of taxes” agreement. Joe said for the safety of the youth and fire protection we should maintain the road in the winter. Dave Court asked for clarification as to what the purpose of this was, and why was it brought forward at this time. Chris Hunt responded the townspeople may no longer have the right to travel it and access to the north end or Shedd Road. Peg Shepard disagreed and stated we still have and will always have access through Bay Hill Road and a right of way access that continues through class V and class VI portions all the way to Shaker Road. Nancy Court asked what the legal issues are if this remains a private road. Glenn said our belief is this has always been and is now a private road, they have the right to barricade if they so choose. Valerie Kehr asked if anyone has ever been prohibited from using the road. No one was aware of any. Kevin Waldron noted no one from the Town nor Spaulding Youth Center has spoken in favor of this Article. **ARTICLE FAILED**

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

A Certificate of Appreciation was presented to Peg Shepard for her three years of service on the Board of Selectmen from 2012 to 2015.

Jared Hebert was thanked for his years of service on the Budget Committee.

The Moderator thanked the Highway crew, Police Department and Recycling Center staff for jobs well done this year. Bill Dawson asked for someone to replace Harry Anderson and serve with him on the Upper Merrimack River Local Advisory Committee which monitors the river in this area.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy L. Caveney  
Town Clerk/Tax Collector