

**MINUTES OF THE 2011 TOWN MEETING
NORTHFIELD, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Polls were opened at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, on the 8th day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and eleven at 10:00 a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at 7:00 p.m. with 434 ballots cast.

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

Results of voting for Town Offices:

For Selectman:	Sally L. Robert	207
	Stephen Bluhm	220
For Town Clerk/Tax Collector:	Cindy Caveney	411
For Trustee of Trust Funds:	To be appointed	

The 2011 Annual Town Meeting was called to order at 9:04 a.m., Saturday, March 12, 2011 at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield by Moderator Scott McGuffin. Moderator opened the meeting with a moment of silence to honor those serving in the military. He noted dignitaries present including Representative Gregory Hill, and Selectmen Steven Bluhm and Geoffrey Ziminsky. Moderator asked for rounds of applause for Linnia Riley of the Friendship Grange who provides meals to the poll workers and the public on Election Day; and Stephanie Giovannucci, Account Clerk for the Town of Northfield, for producing the Annual Town Report. Moderator read election results under Article 1.

ARTICLE 2: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$120,000 to be deposited in the SAR (State Aid Highway Reconstruction Fund) Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of making improvements to Bean Hill Road. (Majority vote is required for adoption) *The Budget Committee and the Selectmen recommend approval of this article...*

Article moved by Glen Brown, seconded by Dave Liberatore.

The Board of Selectmen requested Jim Bouchard, Senior Project Manager of Quantum Construction Consultants, LLC to speak to the substance of the Article. Mr. Bouchard explained the overall process: the State of New Hampshire first completes a rough estimate of cost for the improvements; after the Town sets aside our portion of the cost, the State will schedule funds for their portion. The Town hired Quantum as consultants, who studied the roadway and the survey done by DOT, met with the Board of Selectmen and revised options. Cost has gone up since the start of the project so more funds are needed to meet the State requirements. The Plan covers 1.1 miles from the intersection of Route 132 to approximately the culvert at Williams Brook. Mr. Bouchard gave specifics how the road will be rebuilt and drainage problems addressed. The plan is to leave the current 6' culvert at Williams Brook, slip-lining with another pipe to reinforce it. This should add another 75 years to the life of the culvert. He also stated the intersection of Route 132 and Bean Hill Road will be changed to a 90 degree "T".

Charles Beckley asked what would happen to the fire hydrant that currently sits in the island at the intersection of Route 132. Mr. Bouchard said he is working with the T-N Fire Department and other utilities to relocate anything that needs to be moved.

Donald Stevens asked if this road is still State owned. Mr. Bouchard answered yes; this is being built under the DOT Program for Road Aid. The split for funding is two-thirds State and one-third Town. The State will give us the improved road after completion.

Miles Clark asked how much of the cost has already been funded by appropriations in prior years.

Glenn Smith, Town Administrator, responded that there is \$265,626 in the fund, including interest, as of 2010, as shown on page 63 of the 2010 Town Report. The total project is estimated to cost \$1.2 million for the 1.1 miles.

Kevin Waldron inquired what would be the expected life of the roadway. Mr. Bouchard indicated that repaving will last 10-15 years and the infrastructure and drainage work should last 75 years.

Bill Dawson asked if we would complete both phases this year? Mr. Bouchard responded that we will put the entire project out to bid this year. If the funding goes through it might all be completed this year, depending on the funding

schedule. If not funded they would complete as much as they can with the funds currently available. Progress is also subject to State review of all stages, wetlands permits, public meetings, etc. Once we have all approvals the project goes out to bid.

Catherine Ferreira asked since the 1.2 million is an estimate of cost, what about any overage or under funding if costs come in differently? Mr. Bouchard explained that about 90 percent of the time bids come in lower than the projected cost. Should economic conditions escalate radically, the project would be scaled back to stay within the funding.

David Coulter asked him to explain how the project would be scaled back if necessary. Mr. Bouchard explained probably the slip-lining of the culvert at Williams Brook would have to be put off for now.

ARTICLE 2 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA35 :1 for the purpose of replacing Highway and Sanitation Department equipment as needed and to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-five Thousand dollars (\$75,000) to be deposited in this fund. (Majority vote required) *The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend approval of this article.*

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Stephen Bluhm.

Lisa Swancott, member of the Budget and Capital Improvement Program Committees explained that the goal is to keep the Highway Department large equipment purchases level funded so we do not have large spikes when there is a big expenditure. This year, as in the next Article, they only need to spend \$34,000, but the excess would stay in the fund for future needs.

Catherine Ferreira asked what happens to the extra money that sits in the account. Ms. Swancott advised this will be held in the account in anticipation of future needs, and any proposed expenditures from this account must be voted on at Town Meeting. The goal is to put \$75,000 in the fund every year.

Donnie Stevens stated he believed if we have it we'll spend it.

Kevin Waldron said this Article represents forward thinking and responsible spending. We currently have reliable equipment but this gives us the opportunity to be prepared. Otherwise we might end up borrowing money later which he is not in favor of.

Steve Bluhm advised our next likely purchase would be to replace a 1990 six-wheeled dump truck. If we set this fund up now it will set us up to finance less at that time.

ARTICLE 3 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Thirty-Four Thousand dollars (\$34,000) to replace a 1977 Bombardier Sidewalk Plow with funding to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. If Article 3 fails this Article will be passed over. (Majority vote is required for adoption).

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Kevin Waldron.

Bob Southworth, Road Agent, explained they are looking at an S130 Bobcat Skid steer with 60-inch snowblower, 60 inch v-plow, bucket and sander. It is wheel propelled.

Joe Newton asked if there were any plans to trade in the Gehl. Bob responded it is an option to trade it or sell it, but they were not planning to at this time.

Kevin Waldron asked what we would do with the 1977 Bombardier. Bob stated funds from any sale would go back to the general fund.

Richard Maher asked why we don't just get a snowblower for the Gehl. Bob responded it is too wide (69") and it rides off the edge of the sidewalk in some areas. Richard said he recommends trading one in and getting one that can be used for everything.

Charles Beckley said the one we have has been used and does get stuck, but felt it could be used with the right attachments.

Dennis Allen asked if we have checked the trade in value. Bob replied we could get around \$10,000.

Bob Haskins asked if the new one would be used strictly for sidewalks. Bob Southworth responded we could get a sweeper & other attachments later.

Dennis Allen asked about the usage of the skid steer currently used at the transfer station. Bob advised it is used to remove & fill baler, moving large furniture, etc.

Dennis said since the transfer station employees also help with storms, that we only need one machine, not two, as they could not be used at the same time.

Steve Bluhm asked since this unit is considerably smaller than the one we have, can it safely pick up 500 lb. bales at the transfer station? While this unit is smaller and fits the sidewalks to better scrape off snow and ice, it may be too small to do the work at the transfer station.

Jared Hebert asked if we had forks for the loader. Bob Southworth replied, yes.

Jared asked if that could then be used for the bales. Bob replied yes.

Laurie Jordan asked if a thorough search was completed to see if another model would work for both functions. Bob Southworth replied they have looked at four other models and this was the best fit.

Dennis Allen asked what the lifting capacity is. Bob replied 2200 lbs.

Dennis asked if we don't have other equipment that can do the job.

Laurie Hill asked how many miles of sidewalks are in Northfield. Bob Southworth responded 2.8 miles.

Laurie Hill asked if they could use the big wing to clear both sidewalk and road together instead of having the huge snow bank in between the road and sidewalk which often seem to be pushed back and forth.

Bob Southworth replied that cannot be done in all areas.

Dave Coulter asked if this is the best use of equipment or just wishful thinking.

Bob said he thought this was the best choice for the money.

Dick Maher said the big snowplow would tear up lawns. He thought we should try the Bobcat and add a snowblower for now and keep the larger Bobcat at the transfer station. Worker safety is also a priority.

Jack Ivester asked if we have considered subcontracting this out.

Kevin Waldron said he thought we have to do something. Said his experience is that if the Selectmen don't need to spend the \$34,000, they won't. Originally he was against this expenditure, but now thinks it is a good idea. We should keep the other unit at the transfer station, it is more valuable to keep than trade.

Kevin Fife stated he can attest to and fully support purchase of a smaller Bobcat. He has a large one and a small one for that reason, each is better in different situations, especially near the river. He thinks it would be cost effective to have the snowblower.

Kent Finemore spoke in favor of the Article and said he has faith in the Selectmen and Highway Department to manage the equipment.

Motion to move the question offered by Dave Curdie, seconded by Dave Liberatore. Motion failed .

Further discussion on Article:

Donnie Stevens said he agrees with Dennis Allen, that we have enough equipment sitting around.

Dennis Allen said he is totally in favor of the purchase of a new skid steer with attachments, but we don't need to have two pieces of equipment when you can do the job with one.

Charles Beckley said the skid steer at the recycling center is worth its weight in gold. He thinks we can do the job with what we have.

Catherine Ferreira asked how would we know what is ultimately spent?

Steve Bluhm responded that we are authorizing up to \$34,000. This is the maximum that could be pulled from the fund and if it is not all needed it won't be spent.

Robert Carr asked clarification on the model being considered, said he was familiar with it and it should do the job.

David Coulter asked what the possibility of adding more sidewalks is. Steve Bluhm answered that would be up to the body.

Kevin Waldron said it is important to recognize the Article is to authorize replacement of machine, not to buy a snowblower.

Dennis Allen offered Amendment #1 to read as follows:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$24,000 to replace a 1977 Bombardier sidewalk plow with funding to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.”

Amendment was seconded by Donald Stevens.

Discussion on Amendment #1:

Bill Dawson stated the Amendment does not state what you are buying with the money or that there would be a trade in.

Kent Finemore pointed out the proposed Amendment changes the amount only, it does not direct how the purchase will be made.

David Court said he is not in favor of the Amendment as it does not guarantee how the money will be spent.

Peg Shepard said we need the current machine at the transfer station. It is a workhorse and worth many more times the trade in value.

Kevin Waldron said he is not in favor of the amendment. He had faith the Selectmen would not spend any money they don't need to.

Amendment #1 failed by voice vote.

Additional discussion on Article 4 as written:

David Court asked for width specifications on the machines: Bob Southworth responded the current machine is 60", the new bobcat would be 54", and snowblower attachment would be 60". David stated that seems reasonable.

Laurie Jordan wanted clarification if we would be trading in the other machine. Bob Southworth responded it was just an option we are reviewing.

Joe Newton said he is not in favor of this Article. Thinks we should buy one piece of equipment that can do multiple tasks.

Jared Hebert expressed his agreement with Mr. Newton.

ARTICLE 4 PASSED BY SHOW OF HANDS. In favor 73 Opposed 28

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to replace a 1977 Bombardier Sidewalk Plow and to raise and appropriate Thirty-Four Thousand dollars (\$34,000) for this purpose. (Majority vote required for adoption). To be considered only if Article 4 fails.

ARTICLE 5 NOT CONSIDERED DUE TO PASSAGE OF ARTICLE 4.

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 31:95 c to restrict 100% of each year's revenue from a gasoline surcharge to expenditures for the purpose of reconstruction or replacement of the underground storage tank at the Highway Garage.

4

Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the Underground Storage Tank Replacement Fund, separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulate surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of revenue. (Majority ballot vote required).

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Steve Bluhm.

Glenn Smith, Town Administrator gave background information on the tank. He explained this is a 1998 underground 12,000 gallon storage tank on Fire Department property, which is split between gasoline (4,000 gallons) and diesel fuel (8,000 gallons). The fuel is used by Tilton, Northfield, the T-N Fire District, T-N Water District, and Winnisquam Regional School District. The tank was purchased and is jointly owned by all those entities except the Water District who joined later. Through an informal agreement in 1999, the School District purchases the diesel fuel and the Town of Northfield goes out to bid and purchases the gasoline. There has been a two cent per gallon surcharge on the diesel fuel for some time with funds set aside for replacement of the tank. It is expected the tank will need to be replaced between 2019 and 2029, at a replacement cost of approximately \$60-80,000. The Article is to establish a fund to plan for the eventual cost of replacement. The Selectmen voted to charge a five cent per gallon surcharge on gasoline several months ago, this Article sets up the fund to place money into and designate it for a specific purpose.

Kevin Waldron asked if we are right to impose the surcharge when the tank does not sit on Town property. Kevin is concerned this will put the Town in the gasoline business and thinks we should go with an above ground tank in the future.

Catherine Ferreira asked if this will cost the Town anything.

Glenn Smith responded we have to pay the five cents per gallon like the other users do. He added that the informal agreement is in the process of being formalized between the parties. Said this does not put us in the gasoline business and does not require us to keep the underground tank.

Dennis Allen asked what the total usage is and split between gas and diesel.

Glenn Smith said on average total annual usage is 53,000 gallons diesel and 29,000 gallons gasoline.

Dave Liberatore asked what we pay for gas. Peg Shepard responded that the price fluctuates monthly.

Dave Court pointed out that in effect we are taxing ourselves.

Steve Bluhm said the Board did not want to come back to the body and ask for \$40,000 when the tank needs to be replaced. The Fire Department and Schools are being taxed heavily because they are heavy users. The Town is about

even between gas and diesel. We are buying large quantities so we save there and also are not required to pay State tax on it.

Arnold Graton asked for clarification that we are already collecting the surcharge, this is just to establish the fund to put it in so it will be targeted for the specific purpose? Glenn Smith confirmed that is correct.

Gretchen Wilder stated she works for DES in the department that oversees & tracks underground storage tanks. She said it is an environmental issue, we have to be aware and take care of these items. Tanks must often be changed to get funding from the State for cleanup issues. She asked if there was a projection of funds to be raised.

Glenn Smith responded that with current usage, adding the five cents on gas and raising the diesel to five cents as well, by 2025 we would have \$80,200 for the tank.

Gretchen stated she supported the Article and thinks it is money well spent.

Leif Martinson reiterated we are just debating if we want to restrict the use of the money already being collected.

Motion to call the question made by Greg Hill, seconded by David Liberatore. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 6 PASSED BY BALLOT VOTE. Yes 99 No 4

ARTICLE 7: To see if the town will vote to establish a Road Reconstruction Fund under the provisions of RSA35:1 for the purpose of funding major road reconstruction projects as needed and to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty Six Thousand Nine Hundred and Fifty dollars (\$66,950) to be deposited in this fund. (Majority vote required) *The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend approval of this article.*

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Glen Brown.

Lisa Swancott explained that the Capital Improvement Program Committee works with the Highway Department to develop a list of roads in need of repair. The list then goes to the Selectboard, then to the Budget Committee. They feel it is more beneficial to save the money for road reconstruction, rather than resurfacing only as it does not last and the same road would have to be done a few years later.

David Coulter questioned that this is not for a specific road at this time? Lisa responded that was correct.

Donald Bartenstein questioned if this is in addition to road repairs already listed in the budget?

Lisa Swancott pointed out that on page 19 of the Town Report is what is planned for 2011.

John Ivester asked at what point money-wise is it considered major reconstruction.

Steve Bluhm responded anytime it is replacing more than overlay.

Kevin Waldron asked if Jared Hebert, who works in the paving industry, would explain the benefits of road reconstruction versus shim and overlay.

Jared Hebert stated the shim and overlay process only gives you five to seven years of possible life.

He thought it better to put aside the money and be able to do a better fix of the problem.

ARTICLE 7 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 8: 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 Twenty-four thousand six hundred and forty-five dollars (\$24,645) for this purpose. (Majority vote is required for adoption).

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Kevin Waldron.

Chief Steve Adams explained this is to replace one of the 2008 cruisers. The one they are asking to replace has 104,000 miles on it.

ARTICLE 8 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Two-Hundred Twenty-Three Dollars (\$7,223.00) for the purpose of assisting the Tilton-Northfield Recreation Council with the funding and operation of the Pines Community Center in order to benefit the local community and its residents both young and young at heart. (By petition) *The Selectboard and Budget Committee do not recommend approval of this article.*

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Glen Brown.

Polly Fife read a statement in support of the Article. Said she is a conscientious taxpayer and understands budget constraints. Affordable childcare offered allows her to go to work and support her family's needs. She asked everyone to review the handout of activities that take place at the Pines Community Center and in support of the community. On page 18 in the budget under "recreation" it shows they received \$54,500 last year, and requested the same amount for 2011. She feels it is in the best interest of the community, they have a fantastic building, excellent staff, and should receive the funding.

Leif Martinson explained the Budget Committee has asked them for several years to procure other funds that are available in the form of grants.

Jennifer Haskins said she is a Board Member of the Recreation Council. This cut could mean job cuts to part time positions and a cut in programs. What would happen if we had to start charging groups such as the girl scouts, boy scouts, etc. to use the building. The Town Meeting and elections are held here.

Charles Beckley said they provide such a service to the town, keeping kids off the streets. They've had unforeseen expenses this year such as plowing.

Janice Lindbloom state she is a Board Member for the Preston Center which operates out of the Pines and provides free clothing and toys to those in need. There is a new Director at the Pines and we need to give him time to come up with other funds.

Kevin Waldron stated there is no question as to the value of the Center, but thought we should follow the Selectmen's lead.

Roland Seymour said this is a Community Center that is widely used, and with what the State and Federal Governments are doing we can't be sure there is money out there. We should support the Center.

Geoffrey Ziminsky said there were a number of years where they were asked to reduce healthcare and other costs.

Louisa Dell' Amico spoke in favor of the Article. It is necessary for kids to have a safe place to go. The Center serves the elderly, disabled and many others. We should give the new Director an opportunity to procure funds.

Don Bartenstein asked why the Pines was being singled out.

Catherine Ferreira asked how much the Town of Tilton cut or funded.

Leif Martinson responded that the Recreation Council asks for the same amount from both Towns. The Budget Committee is working with those in Tilton.

Charles Beckley said it sounds like we are punishing the new Director for what happened in the past.

Question was called by Dave Liberatore, seconded by Jonathan DuPuis.

ARTICLE 9 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE.

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the budget committee recommended sum of \$3,010,359 for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles listed above. (Majority vote required).

Article moved by David Liberatore, seconded by Kevin Waldron.

Kevin Waldron asked what the total would be with the expenditures from other approved Articles added in? Glenn Smith responded \$3,304,177.

ARTICLE 10 PASSED BY VOICE VOTE

ARTICLE 11: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting

The Moderator thanked the Supervisors of the Checklist for their work at the election and town meeting; and those who serve as volunteers on Town Boards and Committees.

Cindy Caveney expressed thanks to all the poll workers that assist at the elections and counting of ballots.

Stephen Bluhm asked for input from the residents regarding their preference on Amnesty Week at the Transfer Station.

The Board is considering splitting Amnesty Week into two three-day events, one in the spring and another in the fall.

Final dates will be decided at the next meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Many expressed support for the change.

Gregory Hill, State Representative and member of the Education of the New Hampshire Legislature spoke regarding Standards of Education. He explained the NH Department of Education has adopted national standards that he feels do not provide adequate information on how our schools are performing.

He added New Hampshire is working on legislation to raise the standards.

Motion to Adjourn by David Liberatore, seconded by Kevin Waldron. Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy L. Caveney
Town Clerk