

**MINUTES OF THE TWO HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVENTH
NORTHFIELD TOWN MEETING
2017**

Polls were opened at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, on the 14th day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and seventeen at seven o'clock a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at 7:00 p.m. with 210 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
Wayne Crowley118
Lisa Swancott90
Town Clerk/Tax Collector: 3 Years
Cindy L. Caveney203
Trustee of Trust Funds: 3 Years
Michael J. Murphy187

ARTICLE 2: To amend the Northfield Zoning Ordinance provide for Accessory Dwelling Units as required under RSA 674:71 et. al. as follows: Amend the “Definitions” section to include a definition of ‘Accessory Dwelling Unit”, add Section 6.3 consisting of criteria for Accessory Dwelling Units, amend Article 7, Table 1, (Uses by District) to include Accessory Dwelling Units. *Recommended by the Planning Board*

ARTICLE PASSED Yes 139 No 49

At 9:00 a.m. on the 18th day of March, in the year of our Lord two thousand and seventeen at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield, Moderator Scott McGuffin called the Annual Meeting to order. A moment of silence was observed to honor those serving in the military, and in remembrance of Tom Wooten, a Highway Department employee that passed away last year.

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 Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).*

Motion made by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Bob Southworth, to move consideration of Article 3 to after consideration of Article 17. Decision on Article 3 may be dependent upon results of other Articles that will be discussed.

MOTION PASSED

ARTICLE 4: 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 the Budget Committee (5-0-1).*

Moved by Bob Southworth, seconded by Bob Ivon.

Bob Southworth advised this is our portion of the 80/20 split with the State to pay for this project, for which money is set aside every year. It is the second to last payment.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 5: 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 by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by George Corliss, seconded by Steve Randall.

Wayne Crowley explained the intent of this Article is to put a similar amount in the fund as we do each year, to go with the block grant from the State for Road and Bridge construction. A later Article requests funds for specific projects. The CIP Committee and the Selectboard planned for \$350,000 to be added to the fund each year, including the block grant from the State. \$241,400 was our portion the first year. The requested amount was left unchanged even though the block grant may change each year.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand dollars (\$5,000) to the Computer Replacement Fund for the purpose of funding replacement of computers as needed. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Steve Randall, seconded by Linda Luedke.

Wayne Crowley said this fund currently has \$3,000 in it. Due to Microsoft upgrades, we were forced to upgrade all computers last year, or we would have lost support from Microsoft. This Article is to set money aside over time so we don't have a similar spike again. It costs about \$30,000 to replace all computers, including servers.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Four Hundred Eighteen Thousand One Hundred Eighty One Dollars (\$418,181) to fund road and bridge reconstruction and repair projects with Two Hundred Ninety One Thousand Seven Hundred Fifteen Dollars (\$291,715) to come from the Road Reconstruction Fund and the remaining One Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Four Hundred Sixty-six thousand Dollars (\$126,466) to come from Highway Block Grant Monies. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2018. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by George Corliss, seconded by Steve Randall.

Andy Buteau referred to page 75 of Town Report for list of projects for which these funds would be used, including resurfacing Bay Hill Road from the crest of the hill down to and including Woodlawn Ave. Wayne Crowley advised there is about \$500K in the fund. We will be taking some out, but also adding additional funds.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Seven Thousand Dollars (\$7,000) from the Revaluation Fund to partially offset the cost of reevaluating town property. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2018. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Bob Southworth.

Wayne Crowley referred to page 67 of the Town Report. This fund was created in 1986 and currently has \$7057 in it. The intent of this Article is to close out the fund and use it for the revaluation scheduled for this summer. The State requires us to perform a town wide revaluation at least every five years, 2017 is the fifth year of our cycle.

Wayne Crowley proposed Amendment #1, seconded by Steve Randall, to read as follows:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Seven Thousand Dollars (\$7,000) plus accrued interest to date from the Revaluation Fund to partially offset the cost of reevaluating town property. This shall be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2018. This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1). (Majority vote required)”

Wayne Crowley advised the current interest is about \$65, and the amendment will allow the fund to be closed. Monies will be applied to the cost of this year’s revaluation (approximately \$106,000). Funds are in another fund to offset and the balance needed is in this year’s budget. **AMENDMENT #1 PASSED**

Wayne Crowley explained the revaluation cost is spread over five years as the Assessing Company reviews a portion of the properties each year. Changes are not implemented until the full revaluation. The values are used for tax purposes and the School District formula. **ARTICLE AS AMENDED PASSED**

ARTICLE 9: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to fund engineering services for the Sandogardy Pond Road Reconstruction project. This is a non-lapsing appropriation as per RSA 32:7 VI and will not lapse until December 31, 2018. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Steve Randall, seconded by Bob Ivon.

Wayne Crowley explained the town has to front monies for the entire road, then we will be reimbursed by the State after the work is done. Per the corresponding revenue line in the budget, there will ultimately not be any tax impact, but it is a timing issue. We have been adding \$100,000 per year since 2014, with a current balance of \$245,000. We expect to add \$100,000 each of the next two years. This \$150,000 is above that.

David Court asked what we do with the large payment when received from the state. Wayne explained it is a fluid situation, as money is spent out, it is reimbursed in stages. **ARTICLE PASSED**

ARTICLE 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand dollars (\$50,000) for the purpose of purchasing a used backhoe with funding to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund with no amount to come from taxation. (Majority vote required) *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-1-0).*

Bob Southworth made a motion to table the Article. Motion seconded by Lisa Swancott. **ARTICLE TABLED**

Motion to restrict consideration of Article 10 made by Jim Swancott, seconded by Lisa Swancott. **MOTION PASSED**

ARTICLE 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Thirty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$37,000) to purchase a police cruiser in the Police Department. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Glenn Brown, seconded by Bob Southworth.

Bob Southworth explained this is to replace a 2011 Ford Crown Victoria with 100,000 miles. The car is used as a spare car and for special details, and has some electrical maintenance issues. **ARTICLE PASSED**

ARTICLE 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Six Thousand Dollars (\$6,000) to replace the telephone system in town hall and highway department. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Linda Luedke.

Wayne Crowley explained this is for total replacement of phones at Town Hall and expansion of phones in the Police Department. We currently use Fairpoint. This will change the system to internet based (voice over internet protocol lines) through Metrocast. Our cost should be reduced from \$575 per month through Fairpoint, to about \$300 per month with Metrocast. We will still need fax lines with Fairpoint. The Winnisquam Regional School District recently converted similarly.

Mike Witzgall expressed concern about recent storm outages with Metrocast.

Wayne said additional protocols can be added to go around problems, as well as a few copper lines through Fairpoint in case of an emergency. Metrocast has added safeguards in case the cable goes down and there is beneficial cost savings.

Catherine Ferreira asked how we can be assured the cost won't increase like the recent drastic increases to our cable services. Wayne responded there is no additional charge from Metrocast because we already have the cable. The additional cost is for a company that takes the calls and routes them to us. We pay the other provider for that service. Jon Cilley said he works with Rescue in a nearby town and they utilize this system. He is not aware of any issues with it.

Wayne said we have been guaranteed there would be no loss of communications. We have an RFP from the same company that the school district uses, and they have back-up companies that will pick up service if they go down.

Greg Hill asked if we will be getting quotes from other companies. Wayne said we would. Mark Hebert asked if we have looked at bundling services through Fairpoint. Wayne said yes, we did, but they could not touch the price. Mark said his experience is that phones go down when the cable goes down, so we are still dependent on Metrocast.

Wayne said the Selectboard will review the matter and get additional quotes to be Sure there will be no loss of service.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Eighty Five Thousand Dollars (\$85,000) for the purpose of enacting a salary market adjustment for town employees as determined by Benchmark Total Compensation Survey. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Scott Hilliard, seconded by Bob Southworth

Wayne Crowley explained the Board plans to review salaries of all town employees and compare to a recent fifteen community salary study of towns similar in size and close proximity to us. The study was conducted and paid for by the town of Sanbornton. We participated, so received the study at no cost. We have found that some employees are receiving offers and moving to other towns. It is extremely difficult and expensive to replace police officers, in particular, due to training and academy requirements. We do not know how much of this will be needed to put us better in line with other towns.

Kevin Waldron said he felt the survey is flawed in the choice of towns and the types of police departments they have (none or part-time only in some cases). He didn't think it should apply to all departments and should have been done in the budget process.

Kevin proposed Amendment #1 to Article 13 to read as follows:

"To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate fifty five thousand dollars (\$55,000) for a two dollar (\$2.00) per hour salary increase for all full-time Police Department employees." Motion was seconded by Greg Hill.

Kevin stated the \$55,000 would include the increase to salary and benefits.

Steve Randall questioned if this amendment would be legal and if it would pass DRA review. Wayne Crowley said the Board was told it could not be modified for content, only the dollar amount. Greg Hill said he thought the Article should be voted down and the money should be added to the budget. Wayne Crowley said he felt the change would not be fair to all town employees, and we want to review all departments and compare the numbers to be fair. Steve Randall of the Budget Committee said they found other departments had more turnover and training costs to consider. It was felt it was unfair to single out one department for review. They started discussing from a Police Department perspective but felt other departments also warranted review.

Kent Finemore referred to the Moderators' Handbook and advised that the proposed Amendment changes the substance of the Article which cannot be done. He thinks we should defeat the Amendment and address the original Article.

David Court added any review should be done in fairness to other town employees and that regardless of salary you can't stop someone from leaving if they so choose. Scott Hilliard reminded everyone that this is the body that speaks to and instructs the Board of Selectmen what we want them to do. He encouraged that the money be put into the operating budget.

AMENDMENT #1 FAILED

Continued discussion on original Article 13:

Wayne further explained that the Board will determine with department heads how much and where it will be spent. The survey gives us a baseline as to how we compare to other towns. We have set aside approximately \$25,000 in the past three to four years to cover salaries, taxes and benefit increases. It probably has not been enough to keep pace with supply and demand. This Article gives us the ability to do a market adjustment if it is warranted.

ARTICLE PASSED: YES 64 NO 36

Motion to limit reconsideration made by Gretchen Wilder, seconded by Bob Ivon.

MOTION PASSED

ARTICLE 14: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the All Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b) granting a \$500 tax credit to all veterans who served not less than 90 days on active service in the armed forces of the United States and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from service; or the spouse or surviving spouse of such resident, provided that Title 10 training for active duty by a member of a national guard or reserve shall be included as service provided however that the person is not eligible for and is not receiving a credit under RSA 72:28 or RSA 72:35. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Glen Brown, seconded by Bob Southworth.

Catherine Ferreira proposed Amendment #1 to the Article to read as follows:

"To see if the Town will vote to adopt the All Veteran's Tax Credit (RSA 72:28-b) granting a \$700 tax credit to all veterans who served not less than 90 days on active service in the armed forces of the United States and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from service; or the spouse or surviving spouse of such resident, provided that Title 10 training for active duty by a member of a national guard or reserve shall be included as service provided however that the person is not eligible for and is not receiving a credit under RSA 72:28 or RSA 72:35. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)". Amendment was seconded by Bob Southworth.

Greg Hill advised he believed the RSA limits the amount of credit allowed to a maximum of \$500. Moderator Scott McGuffin confirmed with Town Administrator Glenn Smith that the limit is \$500, therefore, he ruled the Amendment to be out of order.

Continued discussion on original Article 14:

Kevin Waldron asked how this proposed Article differs from the current policy.

Wayne Crowley advised we already allow a \$500 veteran exemption but it is limited to those with active service during specific time periods of active conflict. The NH State Legislature recently revised the statute to allow the credit to all veterans who

meet the minimum service requirement. The wording of the Article is per the RSA. Greg Hill asked if numbers were available as to how many more people would now qualify for the credit. Town Administrator Glenn Smith said he thought it would be a minimal number of additional people. He added many other towns are also considering this change at their meetings. Wayne Crowley added the additional time period being added is quite small and he did not expect a large impact.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 15: To see if the Town will vote to terminate its membership with the Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid Association effective December 31, 2017, conditional upon the Town of Tilton also terminating its membership in Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid Association on the same date and the Tilton/Northfield Fire & EMS District becoming a member of the Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid Association effective January 1, 2018. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Bob Southworth

Wayne Crowley explained that both Northfield and Tilton are members of the Lakes Region Fire Mutual Aid Association, but the Tilton-Northfield Fire District is not. Northfield is one of thirty-five entities that each pay dues. Northfield would pay a little less, and Tilton would pay a little more if both towns adopt similar Articles being considered today, and if the Fire District joins the Association.

Kevin Waldron proposed Amendment #1 to Article 15 to read as follows:

“To see if the Town will vote to terminate its membership with the Lakes Region Mutual Fire Aid Association effective December 31, 2017”. Seconded by Greg Hill.

Wayne Crowley said if we pass the Amendment we would not be part of Mutual Aid, and they say per their by-laws they cannot provide services. We currently pay \$37,000 per year for mutual aid and dispatching services. Jon Cilley said if we pass this, dispatch would terminate immediately. We would have to have our own dispatch. Wayne stated Tilton pays 60% of the TNFD budget, and Northfield pays 40%. Additionally there would only be 34 members of the Association, so cost would be split between 34, rather than 35 members. Greg Hill asked about the cost difference. Wayne said it would probably reduce our cost to about \$33,000 per year, paid as part of the Fire District budget, not directly by the Town.

AMENDMENT #1 FAILED

Continued discussion on original Article 15:

Wayne stated the Fire District would be considered one member of the Association, so all other members would pay slightly more. Any member is allowed to pull out at any time.

Bob Petrin, a former fire chief, asked if there is any assurance no-one would be hurt if the Town withdraws. Wayne Crowley said the opinion of the Association is that the District should be the member, not the individual towns. Kevin Waldron said he expected to place an amendment on the Fire District warrant to have the District join as a member. Kent Finemore said we should act upon this on our own, regardless of what Tilton decides.

ARTICLE PASSED

ARTICLE 16: To see if the Town will vote to amend the development program previously adopted for the Rt. 140 Corridor Development District in accordance with RSA 162-K:6; and,

adopt the tax increment-financing plan in accordance with RSA 162-K:9. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required). (Majority Vote required for adoption).

Moved by Wayne Crowley, seconded by Glen Brown

Wayne Crowley stated the TIF was set up in 2005, intended for tax incentive funding towards a bond for economic development along Route 140. It has since been determined there is a sewer system there that is connectable to businesses. We want to modify the TIF to change from “install” to “maintain” the sewer systems to encourage economic development. Kevin Waldron asked why the Northfield Sewer District is not responsible for this. Wayne responded the District doesn’t have the front-end money needed to get it up and running until enough users are added to pay for itself. There is about 360 acres along Route 140 that could be developed.

Greg Hill said he was involved with writing the original TIF. It was a way to improve infrastructure without a cost to the town. There is also a factor regarding roads and whether the town would accept them at some point. He feels the town taxpayers would not benefit from picking up additional roads. Wayne Crowley said developers are reluctant to invest without being able to say we would accept the road later. You limit the economic development potential if we don’t pick up the road once we get to a certain level of taxable property.

Mike Witzgall asked about the condition of the sewer system, and if it would be Capital improvement or maintenance. Wayne responded the current systems are installed and operational. They are connected to 6” main to North and South Park. The road in North Park was already accepted by Town Meeting years ago. South Park road is up to town specs and ready to be accepted. David Court commented that it is a very complex issue to use public money to entice private money to come. Catherine Ferreira asked if there has been much business interest in Route 140. Wayne Crowley reminded everyone that in 2007 and 2008 the real estate market collapsed. There are now developers wanting to open their properties up to development. Jon Cilley said he is concerned with the wetlands and watersheds in the area that have to be considered. Wayne said there are about twenty lots ready to be sold. Christina Beadle asked if this had anything to do with the possible proposal by Spaulding Youth Center for their nearby land. Wayne Crowley said it is not related to Spaulding, and that they would have to connect to the interceptor in Tilton. They would not be accessing the sewer lines on Route 140.

Greg Hill asked if we know what the ‘break even’ point would be. Wayne said the annual cost will be \$39,000 for the first ten years, then \$34,000 after that. It would be capped at the twenty or twenty first year point. Kevin Waldron asked who actually owns the sewer lines. Wayne said the developer owns the lines, but eventually they will be owned by the Sewer District. Greg Hill put forth a Motion to Table, seconded by Jon Cilley.

**MOTION TO TABLE FAILED: YES 38 NO 46
ARTICLE PASSED: YES 62 NO 28**

ARTICLE 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of three million one hundred sixty five thousand eighty one dollars (\$3,165,081) for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles listed above. *This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).* (Majority vote required)

Moved by Linda Luedke, seconded by Steve Randall

Wayne Crowley proposed Amendment #1, seconded by Robert Southworth, to read as follows:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of three million one hundred sixty five thousand eighty one dollars (\$3,165,081) plus \$75,000 added to the Highway New Equipment line, for a total of three million two hundred forty thousand eighty one dollars (\$3,240,081), for general municipal operations. This article does not include special or individual articles listed above. This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1). (Majority vote required)”

Valerie Kehr asked if this amendment would meet DRA requirements.

Wayne Crowley explained that we are modifying the bottom line of the budget and expanding the New Equipment line from \$1,000 to \$76,000. DRA requires us to indicate which line of the budget the increase will be added to. Lisa Swancott asked why we moved Article 3 to be considered later, then added to the budget in this Article. Wayne explained we cannot modify an Article for content. We could not change Article 3 from a backhoe to the truck repairs needed. By proposing this way we will not add \$75,000 to the fund, but we can pay for what is needed through the operating budget.

**AMENDMENT #1 PASSED
ARTICLE AS AMENDED PASSED**

CONSIDERTION OF ARTICLE 3 OUT OF ORDER AS VOTED IN EARLIER DISCUSSION.

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 Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee (5-0-1).*

Motion to Table made by Bob Southworth, seconded by Lisa Swancott.

MOTION TO TABLE: PASSED

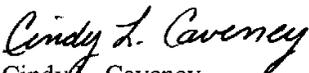
ARTICLE 18: To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Peter Saliba, Headmaster of Tilton School, spoke regarding the property being considered by the Tilton-Northfield Fire District at its upcoming meeting. He said they have a Master Plan for the future of the school, and there are many considerations which will be answered by the geological study they are asking for on the Fire District warrant. Depending on results of the study, the school may be willing to donate a portion of the land for the fire station. Results of the study would be available in four to six months if approved.

The Moderator recognized Stephanie Giovannucci for her contributions to the operation of Town Hall and production of the Annual Town Report.

Meeting was adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Cindy L. Caveney
Town Clerk/Tax Collector