

Minutes  
Annual Town Meeting  
Lancaster, NH  
March 8, 2016

At 7:30 pm Moderator John L Riff IV opened the Annual Meeting.

Moderator Riff asked the WMRHS JROTC to bring the colors forward and lead all in the Pledge of Allegiance. He introduced Isabella Gaetjens-Oleson who sang the National Anthem.

Moderator Riff explained the rules of procedure for this evenings meeting as follows:

Handling the Articles:

1. Moderator will read the article.
  - a. A Selectman will move and second the article.
  - b. Moderator will call for discussion.
  - c. After discussion Moderator will call for a vote by show of voter cards.
  - d. If the vote is close, then there will be a card count, if really close a division of the house.

Regarding Article 2 (solar arrays), Moderator Riff stated that the article will be voted on by written ballot after discussion and the polls will remain open for 1 hour for that purpose.

2. Dealing with Motions
  - a. When a motion is amended – the main motion will be held in abeyance and the motion to amend will be addressed.
  - b. If motion to amend passes, the main motion must be moved and seconded as amended.
  - c. Any objections must be made immediately. If not they are lost.
3. Debate
  - a. If a person wishes to speak – they must stand, identify themselves and state as specifically as they can their point.
  - b. Goal tonight is to keep the meeting moving.
  - c. Try to keep comments to 1 minute or less
  - f. Be civil to each other.

Reminder: Non residents must have a majority vote to speak.

Article 1 results, voted on by written ballot during the day, are attached.

Article 2 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$320,000.00)** for the purpose of installing solar PV arrays at the Transfer Station, Wastewater Treatment Lagoons and Wastewater Treatment Chlorinator Building; **Three Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$320,000.00)** of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes under and in compliance with the Municipal Finance Act, RSA 33:1 et seq., as amended; to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; to authorize the Selectmen to issue, negotiate, sell and deliver said bonds and notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. (Voted on by written ballot after discussion – 2/3rds ballot vote required) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Town Planner Benjamin Oleson, explained that he and others had been working on this project for approximately 1 year. He said the Town partnered with Tom Southworth who is very knowledgeable about solar energy. Mr. Oleson said they also worked with the Plymouth Area Renewable Energy Initiative (PAREI). He said three locations for the solar arrays were identified; transfer station – 16 kw ground mounted, aerators at lagoons (arrays will not supply full amount of energy needed) - 96 kw ground mounted, and chlorinator building 6 kw – roof mounted. Mr. Oleson said all sites were identified as being 100% perfect (full sun and no shade) for the Town's needs. He said the full cost of the project is estimated at \$320,000. Mr. Oleson said the Town will apply for incentives from PUC which could bring the costs down. He also said that there is a possibility that the Town could receive renewable energy credits which may make it possible to pay back the loan faster. Mr. Oleson said that the transfer station may produce more energy than needed and the excess could be bought by the lagoons.

The pay back time if the full amount is borrowed was questioned. Mr. Oleson said it will begin to pay for itself within the first year of production. He said the loan payment would be less than the payment to Eversource.

Bill McCarten asked how many years it will take to cover the investment. Mr. Oleson said approximately 15 years. He said the Town already has quotes from banks. Mr. Oleson said the loan will be like a construction loan and will be amortized base on the maximum amount of the loan needed.

It was asked if the arrays are adjustable. Mr Oleson said they are fixed. He said they have 180% southern exposure.

Discussion ended at 7:43 pm and Moderator Riff opened the polls for voting on Article 2 and they remained open for 1 hour.

Article 2 carried by the 2/3rds required. 113 yes, 8 no with one blank ballot.

Article 3 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Million Five Hundred Twenty Eight Thousand Four Hundred Forty Eight Dollars (\$5,528,448.00)** which represents the operating budget. Said sum does not include any other Warrant Articles.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Selectman Enos explained that this article has traditionally been at the end of the warrant but this year DRA (Department of Revenue Administration) recommended that it be placed after the bond/notes article. He said that if this article and all the other articles pass the Town's portion of the tax bill will go down \$.32 per \$1000.

Bill McCarten asked if the Selectmen have any sense on how the school budget will effect the tax rate. It was stated that if the school budget passes the school portion of the tax rate will increase. It was also stated that the cost of education is not getting any less so it impacts the tax rate.

Moderator Riff explained that after the tax bills came out he and others had met with the Superintendent of Schools regarding the tax rate and the drastic increase in Lancaster. He said it all goes back to when the regional school district was formed and the formula for town funding of the schools. Mr Riff said the Superintendent is working on cutting things but there were items in the budget that could not be adjusted.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 3 by show of voter cards. Article 3 carried.

Article 4 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00)** to be added to the following Capital Reserve Fund accounts previously established for the purpose and in the amounts indicated:

Highway	\$40,000
Fire Department	\$20,000
Library	\$ 5,000
Cemetery	<u>\$ 5,000</u>
Total	\$70,000

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Selectman Rideout explained that these are the usual amounts placed into the capital reserve accounts (“savings accounts”) to be used for large expenses/major purchases so that the tax rate will not spike. Example: fire truck, grader etc.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 4 by show of voter cards. Article 4 carried.

Article 5 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ninety Three Thousand Five Hundred Seventy Dollars (\$93,570.00)** for the second payment on the three year lease/purchase agreement entered into in 2015 for a new grader with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Selectman Stickney explained that last year the voters approved this lease/purchase and this article is to pay the second year payment on the grader.

It was asked what the unassigned fund balance it. Mr. Stickney said that it is the surplus fund balance.

It was asked what the expected live of the grader is. The reply was 20 years.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 5 by show of voter cards. Article 5 carried.

Article 6 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Seventy Seven Thousand Dollars (\$177,000.00)** for the purchase of a Dump Truck and to authorize the withdrawal and expenditure of said sum from the Highway Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Selectman Enos explained that the plan is to replace the year 2000 sand truck with the 2005 dump truck and replace the 2005 truck with the new one.

Selectman Enos recognized Dennis Donnelly, Highway Foreman, who is retiring this year after 42 years of service to the town.

Mr. Enos said the selectman have 3 quotes on trucks already (including plow, sander and stainless steel body). He said that if this article passes they will check back with the bidders

to get firm quotes.

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Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 6 by show of voter cards. Article 6 carried.

Article 7 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Ninety Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$97,500.00)** for the purchase of a new ambulance with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance.

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Selectman Rideout stated that this continues the regular rotation to replace ambulances. He said that the EMS is more than paying for the cost of service and it is vital to keep the ambulances on the road and the revenue coming in.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 7 by show of voter cards. Article 7 carried.

Article 8 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Hundred Forty Thousand Dollars (\$140,000.00)** for the purchase of a new sidewalk plow with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Selectman Stickney explained that the existing sidewalk plow is 11 years old, parts are expensive and it is requiring a lot of repairs. He said \$1600 has been spent for repairs so far this year.

The plow make was questioned. Mr. Enos said a Holden which is the only brand that fits the towns needs.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 8 by show of voter cards. Article 8 carried.

Article 9 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000.00)** for the purchase of a new police cruiser with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Moderator Rideout.

Selectman Enos explained that the plan is to purchase an SUV style cruiser. He said that there is a 2 year rotation plan for the cruisers.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 9 by show of voter cards. Article 9 carried.

Article 10 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00)** for the purchase of a Fire Department forestry support vehicle and to authorize the withdrawal and expenditure of said sum from the Fire/EMS Capital Reserve Fund. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Selectman Rideout explained that the Fire/EMS try to update and keep their equipment up to

date. They have raised other monies for this purpose. He said the Fire/EMS wants to keep fire protection services the best they can be.

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Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 10 by show of voter cards. Article 10 carried.

Article 11 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to sell certain Town owned property (land/building) shown on tax map P05, Lot 023 approx .26 acres located at 59 Depot Street, (land/building) shown on tax map P11, Lot 005 approx. .295 acres located at 22 Mechanic Street and (building only – mobile home) shown on tax map R17, Lot 043 – PM – 087, 87 Rogers Campground Road. Said property will be sold by the Town on such terms and conditions as the Selectmen deem prudent with cost of survey and land transfer to be borne by the purchaser.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Selectman Stickney explained that the property identified in this article was taken by tax lien. He said selling it will get it back on the tax roles.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 11 by show of voter cards. Article 11 carried.

Article 12 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00)** for the support of CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) of New Hampshire.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Ben Oleson spoke to Article 12. He said that he is a member of the CASA board. Mr Oleson explained that CASA is made up of volunteers whose purpose is to be the voice of children. He urged support of the article. Mr Oleson said that there is a strong push for a greater presence for CASA in the north country. He said there are 8 volunteers in training at this time.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 12 by show of voter cards. Article 12 carried.

Article 13 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Thousand Five Hundred Thirty Three Dollars (\$1,533.00)**, for the support of the American Red Cross.

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Fire Chief Flynn spoke in favor of the article. He said that the Lancaster Fire Dept uses the American Red Cross frequently. Chief Flynn noted that the Red Cross responded to the tent collapse last summer. He said it is money well spent.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 13 by show of voter cards. Article 13 carried.

Article 14 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00)** for the support of the Lancaster-Whitefield-Littleton Tri-Town Public Transit route.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

There was no one present to speak to the article.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 14 by show of voter cards. Article 14 carried.

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Article 15 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00)** for the support of Senior Wheels Demand Response Program.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

There was no one present to speak to the article.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 15 by show of voter cards. Article 15 carried.

Article 16 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Five Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty One Dollars (\$5,921.00)** for the support of Northern Human Services/White Mountain Mental Health.

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Mark Vincent, Stevens Terrace resident, offered some statistics on what White Mountain Mental Health provides for services in Lancaster. He thanked the voters for their continual support.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 16 by show of voter cards. Article 16 carried.

Article 17 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Three Thousand Two Hundred Eighty Dollars (\$3,280.00)** for the support of the Child Advocacy Center of Coos County.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Police Chief Colborn spoke in favor of the article. He said that the center is located in Groveton and is a place where all involved in the investigation of crimes against children come together to interview the children. Chief Colborn said that it allows for the children to be interviewed only once. He noted that it is well worth the money.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 17 by show of voter cards. Article 17 carried.

Article 18 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$4,500.00)** for the support of the North Country Senior Meals Program.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Amy Goyette, a non resident, was granted permission by the voters to speak to the article. She offered some statistics regarding the Senior Meals Program in Lancaster.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 18 by show of voter cards. Article 18 carried.

Article 19 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Thousand Six Hundred Forty Dollars (\$1,640.00)**, \$.50 per capita, for the support of Northern Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce.

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

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Linda Hutchins spoke to the article and thanked all for the continuing support of the work of the chamber. She advised that the Chamber is working on a new effort with the Fair Association and the Grand Prix Committee. They will be applying for grant money to do a broad promotion of the two events as well as other happenings in the north country.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 19 by show of voter cards. Article 19 carried.

Article 20 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00)** to help support the Center for New Beginnings in Littleton, which provides counseling and mental health services to individuals throughout the North Country.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Susan Bouchard, a non resident, was granted permission to speak to the article. She explained that the Center for New Beginnings is a counseling center located in Littleton, NH. She said in the past year it served 34 Lancaster residents. Ms Bouchard said that the money is used to help people with high deductibles or co-pays or who have lost their insurance during treatment.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 20 by show of voter cards. Article 20 carried.

Article 21 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Thousand Six Hundred Ninety One Dollars (\$4,691.00)** for the Town's share of the operating budget for the Mt Washington Regional Airport for the current fiscal year.

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Jim Gregory, a non resident, was granted permission to speak by the voters.

Mr Gregory said that several improvements have been made to the airport. He said safety has been improved and the airport receives FFA funding. Mr. Gregory said the same amount is being requested as last year. He said the the amount requested is the town's share of the operating budgeting. Mr. Gregory said there are plans to resurface and repaint the runway which will be funded by the FFA as well. He also advised that the National Guard is interested in putting a facility at the airport (base of operations) for airport helicopter mountain training and to use it in conjunction with the armory in Lancaster as a barracks.

It was asked why there was not any report in Lancaster's annual town report. The reply was that the report came in too late to include it.

Mr. Gregory advised that there is a resident in Lancaster who is interested on being on the airport commission.

It was asked where the money appropriated goes. The reply was to the operating budget. Mr Gregory said that they are seeing an increase in activity of people coming in to the area for recreational use.

It was asked what the budget amount is. Mr. Gregory said \$90,000-\$100,000 a year which is used for fuel, keeping the runway plowed and keeping the lights on etc.

Fire Chief Randy Flynn stated that he would like to see a budget for the airport. He said he

did not feel that the town got enough of a benefit out of the airport. Mr. Flynn suggested that an article be placed on the warrant for next year to see if the voters wanted to continue to  
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participate in the airport funding.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 21 by show of voter cards. Article 21 carried.

Article 22 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$4,260.00)** for the support of the Caleb Caregivers.

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Beth Vincent, Stevens Terrace resident, urged voters to approve the article.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 22 by show of voter cards. Article 22 carried.

Article 23 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Four Thousand Six Hundred Dollars (\$4,600.00)** for the support of the Tri-County Community Contact programs.

Moved by Selectman Rideout and seconded by Selectman Enos.

Amy Goyette, non resident, was granted permission to speak to the article. She explained that the money from this article is for fuel assistance. She said there were 600 applications submitted and over 500 people were enrolled in the program. She said it grows every year. Ms Goyette thanked the voters for their continual support.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 23 by show of voter cards. Article 23 carried.

Article 24 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000)** for the purpose of completing the engineering and construction of a new dam at the outlet of Martin Meadow Pond. This appropriation will only be used if necessary to complete the project (last money in). Any unused portion (or all) will be returned to the Town. (By Petition) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Stickney and seconded by Selectman Rideout.

Roger Trembly, a non resident, was granted permission to speak to the article. He explained that the project began last year and it is hoped that it will be finished this year. Mr Trembly said the project turned out to be more expensive than was expected. He said 92% of the cost has come from the property owners around the pond and other town residents. Mr. Trembly said the money in this article is for a "safety net" - a contingency fund. He said it is hoped that it will not have to be used.

It was asked what the cost of the project is. Mr. Trembly said \$330,000 with about \$336,000 raised through donations and pledges. He said there is a 10% contingency fund for unknowns that may come in.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 24 by show of voter cards. Article 24 carried.

Article 25 – Read by Moderator Riff.

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **Eight Hundred Dollars (\$800)**

to assist with the cost of the weekend "Backpack" feeding program for twenty five (25) Lancaster Elementary School students which St Paul's Episcopal Church, 113 Main Street,  
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Lancaster, NH, currently funds. This figure represents 10% of the cost of the food, and is operated by an all-volunteer group. (By Petition) (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen and Budget Committee)

Moved by Selectman Enos and seconded by Selectman Stickney.

Mike Kopp, a member of the vestry at St Paul's, spoke to the article. He explained that the "backpack" program is a feeding program designed to pick up where the school hot lunch program leaves off. Mr. Kopp said the program runs for 52 weeks.

It was questioned if the need is greater than what is supplied. Mr. Kopp replied yes. He said that there are 167 children who qualify for the free and reduced lunch program through the schools. Mr Kopp said the backpack program only gets a small handful of those that qualify. He said the food is delivered to the schools and the schools get it to the homes.

Mr. Kopp was asked if they use any nutritional guidelines. He said yes through the NH Food Bank where much of the food is purchased. He said they try to stay cost efficient.

Town government supporting a church was questioned and it was asked if there was any other way to raise money for the program. Mr. Kopp said the Tillotson Fund has donated funds as well as other congregations. He said the budget is \$36,000.

Discussion ended.

Moderator Riff called for a vote on Article 25 by show of voter cards. Article 25 carried.

Moderator Riff declared the polls closed for voting on Article 2 at 8:43 pm.

Results of the vote – 113 yes, 8 no, and 1 ballot blank.

Article 26 - To transact other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Donald Willaims thanked the town officials for a job well done preparing the budget.

Motion was made, seconded and carried to adjourn the meeting at 8:45 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Jean E Oleson