

TOWN OF ANDOVER ANNUAL MEETING 2021

There were two sessions. . .

The first was an informational meeting held on March 9,2021 at 7:00 PM.

Slides were shown via a ZOOM meeting. The members of the Selectboard (John Kinney, Todd Goings and Michele Dudek) and the Road Agent (Jon Champagne) gave the presentations.

The week between the sessions was for residents to submit their questions, comments and/or concerns via email, voice mail or a note left in the Towns drop box.

The second meeting was held on March 16,2021 at 7:00 PM. This session was also a ZOOM meeting and re-showed the presentations. All questions/concerns were addressed for each article. Selectboard member Michele Dudek was the presenter for all warrants except highway questions.

Voting took place by ballot vote

11:00am – 7:00pm on Tuesday, April 13,2021

At the Andover Elementary/Middle School

SPECIAL WARRANT

To see if the town will vote to approve optional meeting procedures as outlined in HB1129 with Voting on warrant articles by ballot without further debate or opportunity to amend following the 2nd virtual meeting to be held March 16,2021 7:00 PM.

Voting will take place by ballot vote

11:00 – 7:00pm on Tuesday, April 13,2021

At the Andover Elementary/Middle School

The Zoom Meeting web address:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/341846220>

TOWN OF ANDOVER ANNUAL MEETINGS
March 9, 2021 & March 16, 2021

The following comments were received between the first and second Zoom meeting of the Town Meeting and read by Selectperson Michelle Dudek at the beginning of the March 16, 2021 meeting:

William Bardsley stated that for a new board, new moderator and a totally new system, everyone has done very well.

Victoria Mishcon indicated that everyone has done a great job and it is wonderful to go through the Warrants without interruption. She stated she has enjoyed this format and would be thrilled to do it permanently and is looking forward to the session next week.

Ken Hackmann stated that everything on the budget discussion was clearly displayed and made sense to him. He also asked if during the March 16 Zoom Town Meeting would town residents be able to speak or will they remain muted. He also asked if the email comments on the Warrant Articles be read in full or summarized or if something else will transpire. The response was the emails will be gone through and not summarized.

Jacob Gilman asked how the Selectboard determined that the use of a Gmail account, on which official town business is being conducted, complies with RSA 91-A ets seq. He also stated that the ownership, retention of records, and operation of the andovernh2021@gmail.com is unclear. He also stated that no explanation was provided at the March 9th meeting nor within written correspondence as to why the board had elected to use another email service rather than the existing emailing service and domain address used by town officials. RSA 91-A allows the town to create an email address. The tow created andovernh2021@gmail.com to avoid using a private account and to avoid the risk of losing feedback.

Jeff Newcomb asked why town meeting wasn't held at a later date in May when everyone could safely social distance as more senior would be vaccinated and the meeting could be held in person to deliberate and ask questions on Warrant Articles and budget items. The response was that there is a time-line which is dictated by the State for the 2nd Tuesday in April for voting and people can attend via phone. Electronic recordings are available and there are copies of presented material.

Jeff Newcomb stated that another reason to recess this meeting to a later date in May when everyone can meet and hold the meeting in public is that you had the format laid out on March 9th via Zoom; the board would not allow any questions to budget items or to any articles. He stated he did not understand the reasoning behind that. He stated that the Zoom meeting format seems to work for the Planning and Zoning Boards where questions were taken and people made presentations this way – that's what Zoom meetings are for, yet the board chose to have a closed session and voters do not seem to be very impressed with this format. He also asked how voters can amend or change budget line items and / or Warrant Articles. The response was that feedback occurs during public budget hearings.

Jeffery Dickinson asked why the town is using a Zoom account for Town Meeting that shows and individuals name and does not reference the Town of Andover in any way. **The response was this account was created a year ago under the Town Administrators name and is the towns account.**

Scott Kidder stated he was unable to watch the first Zoom town meeting live; however, indicated he did take the time to watch the recording of the meeting. He disagrees with doing this entire meeting via a platform that excludes people that do not have access to technology and thinks a hybrid meeting or one where participants have the ability to have a discussion with the Selectboard over a particular article is very important. He thinks that at the end of the second session, the Board should open up the ability for anyone who is on the platform watching live to make comments or ask follow up questions. He does not agree with Ms. Dudek's assessment that if we don't vote in favor of the special Warrant Articles to hold the meeting remotely that we will just go back to last year budget. He also believes that also means that none of the other Warrant Articles pass and the Selectboard would have to come up with a plan to hold the meeting at a later date; however, because the town cannot vote to have this meeting until several weeks after it has happened, it seems like the towns people do not have much of a say in the matter.

Glenn Haley suggested that for the March 16th zoom meeting and future meetings to have two computers, one for the moderator and one for the Selectboard member that is speaking as this would avoid delays of waiting for people getting up and down when switching speakers.

Nancy Teach said thank you to all who spoke and presented information during the first Town Meeting; everyone was well prepared, articulate, organized, brief and came across very clearly; it was obvious that all spent a lot of time preparing for the meeting and with help from the staff at Town Hall and the Budget Committee and asked the board to pass her appreciation on to everyone.

Special Warrant *Passed 184/63*

To see if the town will vote to approve optional meeting procedures as outlined in HB1129 with voting on warrant articles by ballot without further debate or opportunity to amend following the 2nd virtual meeting to be held March 16, 2021 at 7:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Voting will take place by ballot vote 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Tuesday, April 13, 2021 at the Andover Elementary / Middle School

Jacob Gilman asked what process is afforded Andover voters to propose amendments and actions regarding warrants and other business under this years' virtual meeting construct. He stated that reference was made to HB1129 as the authority under which the town meeting process has been and seeks to be modified and that all microphones were muted during the March 9th meeting and no opportunity was presented for resident motions. The

response was that the first meeting was to introduce the Warrant Articles; the week in between the two meetings was for feedback; and the second meeting was to share responses and feedback.

Andrew Guptill stated that whereas the online format of town meeting resulted in members of the legislative body losing their connection and not being allowed back in to the meeting as well as members of the body not being allowed to join and further whereas articles were brought to the floor without any motions on said articles, he hereby moved that this meeting be recessed until such time as the board deem appropriate to safely conduct the meeting in person. The response was that all of these topics have been covered earlier.

ARTICLE 1: To choose all necessary town officers for the ensuing year. (By ballot vote during polling hours 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Tuesday April 13, 2021) **No comments or questions were received.**

Town Officers

Budget Committee: Aimee Raciti with 203 votes

Cemetery Trustee: Elizabeth Frost with 253 votes

Library Trustee: Caroline Moulton with 230 votes and Tina Nussbaum Wagler with 43 votes

Selectboard 3 year term: Michelle Dudek with 160 votes

Selectboard 1 year term: John Kinney with 183 votes

Trustee of the Trust Funds: Jeffery Dickinson with 205 votes

Moderator: Stuart Alexander Green with 225 votes

School District

School Board Members: Aimee Menard with 172 votes and Dan Newton with 144 votes

School Moderator: Donna Duclos with 229 votes

School Treasurer: Donna Duclos with 229 votes. Duclos subsequently resigned as she won the School Moderator position; therefore, Shirley Currier accepted the position with 55 votes.

School Clerk: Undetermined as of April 15, 2021

ARTICLE 2: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,930,821 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

William Bardsley asked why were the 2020 expenditures under Financial Administration about \$18,000 under budget and why do they have to go back up in 2021. **The response was that one position was unfilled; however, it has been filled and budgeted for.**

Jacob Gilman asked for clarification on why the Welfare Accounts (4445-4449) line-item appropriation for 2021, a proposed increase for unknown and unforeseen costs related to COVID-19 as articulated by John Kinney on March 9th is not to be sourced from the Unreserved Fund. **The response was that there is a limit in the Unreserved Fund and what way the money can be used.**

Kent Hackman asked about the expected revenue on line 3352 regarding the Meals and Rooms tax distribution stating he believed the bills before the General Court aim at reducing the tax and if that is correct, will there be a shortfall in the expected revenue. **The response was there is not a shortfall; they justify it through the DRA and its always adjusted.**

Tina Cotton asked how much is Andover receiving from Comcast and TDS for their cable tv franchise. **The response was \$0 from the tv and on MS-737 it was reported as \$0 due to the fact that we did not have the figure. We do now and line 3503 – 09 is \$30,089.**

Dudek reiterated that the operating budget of \$1,930,821 is 2.47% below the 2020 budget of \$1,986,296. The total appropriations of \$2,322,271, less the warrant articles to be funded by the unreserved fund balance is \$2,271,271. This is a 0.47% increase over the 2020 budget plus warrant articles raised through taxation of \$2,260,797.

Mary Anne Broshek stated pertaining to the amendment to the budget – given that the Transfer Station staff worked throughout the pandemic in a work environment that required public interaction, she proposes that they each be given a one-time payment of at least \$1,500 in appreciation of their work. The response was that as all town employees are valued and appreciated, bonuses are not town policy. Broshek also stated that in the past 10-15 years, the State has downshifted many costs to towns and cities – for example – retirement cost for police and fire personnel, less state educational reimbursement and less revenue sharing of the Room and Meals Tax. The NH Municipal Association has done a great deal of research in this area. Legislatures are now voting on bills and budgets that will either return funds to towns and cities, reduce funding for public education or reduce revenue so that funding to towns cannot be restored. She asked if the Town will work with Andover's State Reps and Senator to make sure action taken at the State level reduces the previous downshifting and does not increase property taxes due to less funding for public education. **The response was yes, less funding for public schools.** Broshek gave some background information – a recent example is HB 274 which would have restored a portion (5%) of the state share of retirement costs for teachers, police and fire. The State percent was originally 35% in 1077 and began decreasing in 2010 until it reached 0% in 2013. This bill was voted inexpedient to legislate (killed) by both of Andover's reps. Another example is SB 130 which would create a voucher system for education. From the analysis of the Governor's budget by the NH Fiscal Policy Institute: "Local public education would see significantly fewer funds than under the State Budget, reflecting both reduced enrollment and the decision to not repeat one-time grants to communities with less taxable property wealth per student and more children from under the Governor's proposal, leading

to an aggregate decline in general revenue to cities and towns relative to the current State Budget. Proposed tax policy changes would also significantly reduce revenue for services during the budget biennium, and the most significant revenue losses would occur in subsequent years.

Article 3 – To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$40,000 to be added to the following Expendable Trust Funds previously established. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

- Forest Fire Labor ETF \$5,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$31,709)
- Town Building ETF \$20,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$29,417)
- Transfer Station Projects ETF \$15,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$9,931)

Bill Bardsley stated that for funds and capital reserves, it would be good to note in the presentations the amounts already in those accounts.

Article 4 – To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$251,326 to be added to the following Capital Reserve Funds previously established. The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

- Revaluation \$12,826 (12/31/20 Bal. \$13,905)
- Highway Equipment – Grader \$15,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$173,104)
- Highway Projects \$150,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$59,388)
- Police Cruiser Replacement \$13,500 (12/31/20 Bal. \$44,034)
- Transfer Station Equipment \$10,000 (12/31/20 Bal. 22,730)
- Bridge Rehabilitation \$50,000 (12/31/20 Bal. \$238,256)
- Plus Lawrence Street Bridge \$107,696

Jeffrey Newcomb stated that given this day and age of 0% financing for manufacturers, automobile manufacturers, construction equipment manufacturers, why do we need to continue on with the Capital Reserve allotments that were brought forth years ago when the interest rates were higher at 7, 8, 9 percent when municipalities could only get 4 and 5 percent financing. Now-a-days, everybody can get 0% financing from automobile manufacturers to construction equipment to suppliers, everything. So, his question is why do we continue operating this way? He believes this is no longer needed given the current economic times and circumstances. He thanked the board for their consideration on this. **The response was that the establishment of the Capital Reserve Funds was to lessen the 1-time impact on taxes.**

Karen Brule asked the board to provide an update on the Lawrence Street bridge and an estimate of when it will affect property taxes. **The response was the bridge will be paid in part by the State Bridge Aid Project. In 2026 the town will need to bond an estimated \$3,000,000 and the town will be responsible for 20%.**

Article 5 – To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,000 to be added to the Solar Energy Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

The funds for this article to come from the Unreserved Fund Balance

Jacob Gilman asked what the present and projected balances of the Unreserved Fund are given the proposed expenditures from the fund by Articles 5, 6, and 7. **The response was that as of October 2020 the balance was \$795,308. \$150,000 was used to offset taxes, leaving a balance of \$645,308. Articles 5, 6, and 7 total \$51,000 to become the remaining balance which would leave \$594,308 if all three articles pass. The State has minimum and maximum limits and Andover is exactly where they need to be.**

Jeffrey Dickinson stated that during the March 9th Town Meeting informational presentation on this article, it was stated that the Town of Andover must buy the solar pv system from the Revision Company. That is the private firm currently leasing roof space and selling electricity to the Town from the solar pv array mounted on the Town Hall. That statement is factually incorrect and mis-leading. The Town of Andover has the option to purchase, not the obligation. He asked that this question be corrected. It should be noted again that no formal feasibility study, nor competing bids were sought for the leasing of town property and entry into a multi-year agreement. Likewise, he is not aware of planning for a professional review of the systems performance and relative commercial value – something that would seem common sense given the cost and maintenance implications the town is being asked to reserve funds for. Further, the note recently posted on the Town website regarding the solar pv system makes similar misstatements and perhaps should be vetted for technical and financial accuracy. The statement, seemingly endorsed by the town, misrepresents costs (e.g. neglects to include tax credits Revision received and excludes costs of the air-source heat pumps, among other oversights) and presents an optimistic view of expenses related to the Town taking over and operating the system for its remaining financially viable lifespan of 19 years at 2023. Significantly the cost to remove and dispose of the solar pv panels, which are considered a hazardous e-waste, is not addressed. Please clarify how, if a future Town Meeting were to execute the purchase of the solar pv systems, the town would evaluate the condition, performance, and future cost implications of owning a used solar pv array and the balance of system equipment. **The response by Vicky Mishcon was that the Andover Town Meeting in 2017 approved solar panels for the Town Offices building to save energy and lower costs for the Town. The solar system was acquired through a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Revision Energy, the system installer. Under the PPA, the Town pays Revision for power generated by the solar panels for six years at a below-market rate, and then purchase the system at a discount. The Town therefore is slated to purchase the system in October 2023. The March 2017 Town Meeting approval provided that the Town would set aside 1/6th of the purchase price (or \$2,954) every year for six years from the Unassigned Fund Balance into a dedicated Solar Energy Capital Reserve Fund to fund the purchase. Because the reserve funds come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, there is no additional tax impact, and this accrual approach minimizes the financial impact to the Town year by year. We are asking**

for \$6,000 this year, which covers two years, as last year's contribution was not on the warrant. In 2020, the energy upgrades and solar panels together saved the Town approximately \$1,033 in electricity and oil costs. With the annual savings upon ownership, added to the savings the system has provided to date, the system purchase is expected to pay for itself in just a few years, while the system is forecast to have a total service life, with minimal maintenance, in excess of 25 years. A full report on the system will be in the April 2021 Beacon which is almost two weeks prior to the April 13, 2021 voting.

Article 6 – To see if the Town will vote to establish a Boiler Replacement Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for replacement of the boiler at the Town Office and Andover Public Library and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in this fund. Further to name the Selectboard as agents to expend from said fund. The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

The funds from this article to come from the Unreserved Fund Balance.

Glenn Haley stated that while explaining Article 3, board member Dudek stated that the town buildings ETF was to be used to do repairs on town buildings. **Explaining Article 6, board member Kinney states that we need a boiler capital reserve fund.** Haley subsequently asked why can't the boiler be purchased with the funds from the town building ETF?

Jeffrey Newcomb asked why we have Articles 5 and 6 when we already have Article 3 that covers town building that we are already adding \$20,000 to and what is the current amount of this balance? **The response was so that the town can fund the boiler separately.**

Article 7 – To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$40,000 for an engineering study and site plan for a highway department garage to be built on the Town property at 41 Salisbury Highway. The Selectboard and Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

The funds for this article to come from the Unreserved Fund Balance.

Jeffrey Newcomb asked can't we wait until we have a full-time road agent to create the engineering study and site plan for a highway department garage saving an estimated \$30,000 over the proposed \$40,000? **The response was a full-time Road Agent would not be able to do a study and this is the Highway Committee's recommendation.**

Andover Highway Department – Maintaining the quality of established roads

Allison Ribera asked if there is a copy of the breakdown of all the roads in Andover according to the condition of each one and perhaps a timeline for attention to the roads needing help and what attention that would be and asked if she would be able to obtain a copy of such breakdown. **The response was the town is working on the road inventory.** She also asked what the criteria for determining that a road be paved is. She is curious

because she had driven down Old College Road and didn't really see any problems yet it was paved last year and she asked why. She stated there are roads that have never been paved such as Tucker Mountain Road and when it rains the mud tracks can be 6" deep and you can hear the mud scraping the bottom of the car and the holes could damage a front end. It constantly has to be graded and rocks and sandy soil added. If you continue to do that, the road is going to be higher than the houses and it doesn't last long. She is not sure in the long run if it costs more than just paving it. She asked if the board had added up the cost of constantly just putting on a band-aid to a wound that requires surgery and what can the residents do – make a petition? Encourage them to all submit car repairs to the township caused by the holes, ruts or sliding into the woods or someone else and what does the board suggest? **The response was that Tucker Mountain Road is a scenic road and cannot be paved. Old College Road has drainage issues.** She also stated that she believes the Mission is to maintain public roads to ensure safety, comfort and ease of travel for citizens and businesses and asked if the town is honestly doing this as she did not believe so. **Champagne responded that the Highway Department does their best - they do the school bus routes first and should there be ice, please call and the crew can bet there within ten minutes.** She stated she agrees with the town on purchasing the fully equipped pick-up and renting the backhoe and changing the pay policy of the road agent though he still needs to prove he can do the job correctly such as sanding early before an accident happens. She understands that the town wants to build a maintenance building to house the workers and equipment; however, should, as the Mission states, giving the citizens a better quality of roads come first? She thanked the board for their time.

Karen Brule asked what the plan is for setting up a budget for maintenance should the town purchase the recommended equipment in the warrant articles. **The response was that the proposed 2021 budget for maintenance is \$15,000. This figure is based on inventory that is in better condition than seen in past years. As equipment ages, this line item will need to be increased until it no longer makes sense to maintain and replacement is a better option.**

Scott Kidder stated that he always commends the idea of saving the town money; however, first complaining that a huge amount of the budget is spent before the new road agent started then to come in well under budget tell him that work on the town roads was not done. He hates the idea of "use it or lose it"; but it seems like we are delaying preventative maintenance that could save the town multiples of the funds spend in the future. He wonders if the Selectboard can stand up and say that all the town roads are in the best possible shape with the equipment and manpower that we have. **The response was that the savings were made in more than one area, not just on road projects. The prior 3 years each had \$60,000 budgeted for road projects (above any projects covered by the Highway Block Grant). The expenses for this category were: 2018 \$28,292; 2019 \$32,632; 2020 \$38,538. More could have been accomplished in 2020 but the department had only one full-time worker for six months of the year. No more projects were left uncompleted than in past years.** Scott also stated that he wanted to hear from the Selectboard why they feel that they can go out and buy a brand-new truck without a warrant article. He understands that the board took it out of the highway budget; but that money was not allocated for the purchase of a pickup truck. That money was

allocated for the maintenance of the town roads. He sees that it has a plow and a sander; however, when he was looking at the map of the plow routes, he did not see where this truck was to be utilized. Therefore, the Board spent monies that were not assigned to that purpose, for a truck that may or may not have a purpose, and has zero capacity to haul dirt or crushed stone like a one-ton. All that this truck will be able to do when it's not plowing is haul mowers around. He thinks the money spent on this truck should have been - first asked for and explained why you needed them and - second better spent on a truck that has a dump body. **The response was that the town was spending more money for the old truck than what it was worth and the F250 is a heavy-duty-truck and the town will see a lot of savings over the years. The Selectboard does not need a Warrant Article to spend the money – it is voted on as a bottom line.** Scott stated that his last point is questioning the wisdom behind buying an International dump truck that is the same approximate weight rating as an F600; but a significant increase in price over the F600. The GVWR is approximately the same as the International and he found a brand-new F600 4x4 with a dump body for \$65,870. You can put a plow and sander on it for around \$8,000 to \$10,000 and you are still way under the International. He provided the website for the truck <https://www.commercialtrucktrader.com/listing/2021-Ford-F-600-5015215595>). When it comes to servicing the International, you are going to have to go all the way over to Reed's in Newport rather than just going to the local Ford dealer in Tilton. He thinks buying this truck at the premium price of a CDL vehicle and the capacity of a non-CDL truck is a mistake. He does not think the lifespan is going to be twice that of an F600 and he knows the payload capacity won't be double the Ford. He would get behind a larger truck that can actually do some work, but only if we get the employee's licensed to drive a CDL vehicle, but to spend big truck money on a light-duty truck is not a good use of town money in his opinion. He thanked everyone for all their hard work and realizes it is a thankless job to be appointed to. **The Road Agent replied that all employees have CDL licenses and the sander with the plow was more than \$8,000 to \$10,000 as the State has better specs on a truck.**

Bill Bardsley asked how much of the snow plowing will the town be able to do with its own trucks? Maybe at least one whole section? **The response was that the town crew does one complete route. With the new truck, the town crew can do the complete East end of town saving \$15,000.**

Jesse Schust stated that the Conservation Commission supports the proposed Highway Budget appropriation of \$2,500 for Beaver Deceiver Maintenance as this is the same level as in previous years and represents an excellent value for money. The town has six sites with Beaver Deceivers and regular maintenance is vital to ensure these flow devices function as intended.

Article 8 – To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a five (5) year lease-purchase agreement in the amount of \$123,400 for the purpose of leasing a backhoe, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,180 for the first year's payment for that purpose. No lease agreement will be entered into without an escape clause. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

Scott Kidder stated that as for the backhoe, he commends the board for securing an awesome deal to get 80% of the rental fees applied to the purchase price and asked how much we have paid in rental fees for the backhoe and how will that affect the purchase price and are we paying the standard rental rate or are we paying a higher rate knowing that the money will be going towards the purchase price as he feels like this was a little bit of an end run around the vote to table the purchase of a backhoe for one year, but since we usually rent a backhoe anyway, he just wants to know how the rental rates are compare to other rentals we have used in the past. **The response was \$24,500 total rental fees; approximately \$20,00 will be applied towards the purchase, leaving \$4,500 as the total unreimbursed rental fee over a 5-month period.**

Article 9 – To see if the town will vote to authorize the Selectboard to enter into a six (6) year lease-purchase agreement in the amount of \$128,500 for the leasing of a dump truck, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$22,944 for the first year's payment for that purpose. No lease agreement will be entered into without an escape clause. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this article. Majority vote required.

Mary Anne Broshek stated that it is difficult to vote on highway department expenditures without more information. She asked why does the town prefer the lease to buy option over a bond and why does Herbie Barton think a bond is a better way to go (see petition warrant article 12). More funding is being requested to build up the Town Highway Department. When the highway department was created a number of years ago, it was promised that documentation would be submitted on a regular basis to show that a town highway department was less costly and more effective than always contracting their work. She asked if the town could provide a cost-effectiveness analysis that shows a town highway department is still the most cost-effective and efficient way to go. **The response was that the highway advisory committee – meeting over 20 times – did studies and the entire proposal was on the town website and there were multiple articles in the Beacon. There is also less of a tax impact by having a lease.**

Article 10 – To see if the town will vote to designate the Selectboard as Agents to expend from the Transfer Station Expendable Trust established in 2019. This is a housekeeping article.

There was no feedback on this article.

Article 11 – To see if the Town will vote to designate the Selectboard as Agents to expend from the Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund. This is a housekeeping article.

There was no feedback on this article.

Article 12 - I, Herbie Barton, propose to the Town of Andover, NH to purchase all equipment and tools for a full-time highway department and to build a highway garage. I propose we get a bond to pay for this. The money will come from the existing highway department budget from the rental and lease section to make the payments. We will only

need to spend \$170,000 a year of the \$300,000 in this section. The program for 10 years will have to have a bond not to exceed \$1,500,000. This article is submitted by petition.

William Bardsley stated that traditionally petitioners have been invited to speak for their proposals and this time, apparently, they were not and maybe they should be. **The response was that Herbie was present at the Budget Committee meetings / hearings.**

Jeffrey Newcomb stated that with no long-term capital outlay budget for the next ten years or longer from the Capital Improvement Committee, not knowing what our cost that the Lawrence Street bridge will entail and other bridges in town as well as our asphalt roads he strongly does not recommend this at this time because the town does not know what the long-term tax impact would be and we don't want to become tax poor such as the town of Pittsfield has done.

Article 13 - Whereas, the Medicare-for-All Act of 2019 (H.R. 1384/S. 1120) would provide national health insurance for every person in the United States for all necessary medical care including prescription drugs; hospital, surgical and outpatient services; primary and preventative care; emergency services; reproductive care; dental and vision care; and WHEREAS the health and quality of life for the resident of Andover will improve with Medicare-for-All because they would be able to get the ongoing care they need, without limited networks and without co-pays and deductibles; and WHEREAS the Medicare-for-All Act of 2019 would result in the elimination of town and school districts insurance costs and result in lower property taxes for the residents of Andover.

FY 2021 Budgeted Health costs (information available Dec. 7, 2020): Town of Andover: \$106,762;

Andover School District: \$501,460 (approximately 8.6% of school budget)

Be it resolved that the voters of Andover, New Hampshire support the Medicare-for-All Act of 2019, and instruct for Andover's congressional representatives to work toward its immediate enactment, assuring appropriate and efficient health care for all residents of the United States. If a majority of voters support the question, the Selectboard shall immediately send a written notice to Andover's US congressional delegation informing them of the instructions of their constituents within 30 days of the vote. This article is submitted by petition.

Kent Hackmann: Town Moderator and Selectboard

I write on behalf of the 36 Andover residents, including myself, who signed the petition for Warrant Article 13. Their reasons for supporting are detailed in the petition. In addition, I submit for the record my specific reasons for supporting it, as detailed in my letter to the Beacon in the March 1st issue. In the letter I wrote:

- All would have tangible, positive results:
- Freedom the worrying expenses of increased deductible and premiums that have risen annually

- Freedom from being uninsured. In 2017 and 2018 about 77,000 New Hampshire residents, or 6% of the state's population, didn't have health insurance. Nationally, because of COVID, nearly 3 in 10 Americans lost health insurance coverage last year.
- Better health outcomes for everyone. Annual routine checkups help head off chronic illnesses, especially obesity, diabetes, and hypertension. These become progressively expensive to treat.
- Better outcomes at lower overall costs: America spends more than any other industrial nation for health care yet has lower outcomes in many categories, especially life expectancy. Currently 1/3 of medical expenses goes to administration expenses.
- Lower local property taxes due to the elimination of insurance premiums for town and school employees.
- Cost management. Reputable cost estimates, including one from the conservative free market think tank, the Mercatus Center at George Mason University, predict that MAAIL will save money.

This is not a surprise. Other industrial nations, from Canada to Germany, have had universal coverage for years without creating an economic crisis. Also, they spend much less than the United States on health care. In 2019 America spent \$3.8 trillion (about 18% of GNP, \$11,000 per person). This is twice the average of other advanced nations.

The bottom line: Spent wisely, the \$3,8 trillion we devote to an administratively inefficient and expensive health care system is more than enough to provide comprehensive coverage for all.

William Bardsley state that Article 13 suggests Medicare for all would eliminate deductibles and co-pays. This is not true; both remain applicable under current Medicare coverage.

Jacob Gilman asked for clarification on who sponsored Article 13 (Medicare for All Act of 2019) and what due diligence the Selectboard took regarding assertions made within the article text regarding future tax rates and savings. Additionally, which Selectboard members hold a position or opinion regarding this article? It was responded that the Selectboard has no position on this article. Gilman further stated that he would motion to table Article 13 for at least one year and until such time as a board can be appointed by the Selectboard to study the financial impact to the Town of Andover and to the residents of the Town of Andover and to present to the same, final findings and recommendations of the appointed board prior to reintroduction of this article or another article on the same subject matter.

The appointed board, along with the Budget Committee, should examine present and future alternatives for sourcing effective healthcare for the Town to control cost growth in the future. Article 13 text does not state who submitted the article and no board members spoke to the article unlike all other articles presented at the March 9th meeting. Without a presentation demonstrating analysis, it remains unclear to voters as to the true cost or

savings Article 13 affords all Andover residents prior to asserting a particular position to our Congressional delegation. The language and figures within the article text present a limited analysis and unsubstantiated outcomes regarding tax rates and sourcing of healthcare for the town and school district. Furthermore, the article purports to extrapolate the position as being applicable and beneficial to “all residents” of the United States of America and falls beyond the scope of business before this town.

Article 14 – To transact any other business that may come legally before this meeting.

Donna Baker-Hartwell stated that she would like to propose the following correction to the minutes of Town Meeting 2020 – Under Article 13 – the article passed by a vote of 77/48. **The response was that the Selectboard cannot change the minutes.**

Jeffrey Newcomb stated given the fact, under Article 14 a motion is made by Jeffrey S Newcomb of 28 Chase Hill Road for the town of Andover to return to the elected road agent system, reversing the town decision from the March 2019 vote. Reasons for this being that the Town Administration underspent our highway budget by \$80,796, thus leaving our asphalt roads – Maple Street, Flaghole Road, Boston Hill Road, Cilleyville Road, Depot Street and Channel Road which is main access route for our EMS vehicles, in grave disrepair. Also, it should be duly noted that the current Selectboard as well as the previous Selectboard appointed private contractors to the position of road agent, yet the towns intent was to have its own independent hired person for the position of road agent representing the town unbiased. This motion is seconded by Patricia Connors. **The response was that it was an independent contractor; however, everyone quit after town meeting and Jon Champagne stepped in as Road Agent on short notice.**

Paul Currier adjourned the meeting at 8:32 PM.

Bonnie J. Wesley
Andover Town Clerk