

TOWN OF ANDOVER ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 28, 2023
Andover Elementary / Middle School

ARTICLES 1 – 4: By ballot vote during polling hours 11:00 AM to 7:00 PM on Tuesday March 28, 2023

ARTICLE 1: To choose all necessary town officers for the ensuing year

Town Officers

Budget Committee 3-year term: James Reed with 261 votes and Jessica Rand with 191 votes

Budget Committee 1-year term: Vacant

Cemetery Trustee 1-year term: Cheryl Swenson with 288 votes

Library Trustees 3-year term: Vacant

Select Board 3-year term: Roland Carter with 178 votes

Select Board 1-year term: Dana Swenson with 268 votes

Supervisor of the Checklist 6-year term: Victoria Mishcon with 246 votes

School District

School Board 3-year term: Vacant

School Moderator 1-year term: Vacant

School Treasure 1-year term: Vacant

School Clerk 1-year term: Vacant

ARTICLE 2: PASSED 198 / 121

To see if the Town will vote to make possible construction of brand-new workforce housing. Changes would make possible new construction of two-family dwellings in the Rural Residential District, multi-family dwelling in the Village District, the creation of single private driveways to access these homes, and multi-use buildings (e.g., dwelling / office / retail) in the Village District. The Planning Board recommends a “yes” vote

ARTICLE 3 – PASSED 258 / 62

To see if the Town will vote to clarify the ambiguous language of Zoning Ordinance Article 6 – “Non-conforming Structures or Use”. The new language makes a clear distinction between a change of land use and a change to structure, and provides future guidance to landowners and the Zoning Board. The Planning Board recommends a “yes” vote.

ARTICLE 4 – PASSED 166 / 156

Are you in favor of increasing the Board of Selectman to 5 members? (Majority ballot vote required)

Moderator Stuart Green opened the Town Meeting at 7:00 p.m. and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Article 5 – Bond for Construction of Highway Garage

Passage of this article shall override the 10 percent limitation imposed on this appropriation due to the non-recommendation of the Budget Committee. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of

\$1,963,959 (One Million, Nine Hundred Sixty-Three Thousand, Nine Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars) gross budget for the purpose of construction and furnishing a highway garage on town land, up to \$400,000 (Four Hundred Thousand Dollars) of which will come from unassigned fund balance and \$250,000 (Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) of which will be raised through taxation: and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,313,959 (One Million, Three Hundred Thirteen Thousand, Nine Hundred Fifty-Nine Dollars) of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Select Board to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; and to authorize the Select Board to apply for and accept any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to use toward the Project, reduce the amount that must be bonded, or to pay debt service on such bonds or notes. (Recommended by the Board of Selectman, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee 3-4) (3/5 ballot vote required).

Moderator Green read the article which was moved and – names not caught for the second. Town Administrator Edelmann presented a slide show which includes a conceptual drawing of the building and photos on the current facility along with a hand-out to the public. Edelmann included a brief history of the project and explained the bond procedure. The bid package is out on the Dubois & King website. Eleven companies have pulled bids to date. The date to open bids is April 5, 2023; the Bond Bank will set the maximum interest rate on May 5, 2023; the town will find out on May 16, 2023 if we are approved for the bond; if approved, the bond agreement will be signed on June 19, 2023 or the board can state we are not interested in going for the bond. The actual amount of the bond will be determined July 12, 2023; money will be put into our bank on August 9, 2023; payments will start in 2024. Ken Wells asked if there will be a public hearing at the end of May and the response was yes. Greg Stetson asked if there is a bigger unreserved fund balance than since budget season and the response was no. Greg Stetson made a motion to amend the unreserved fund balance amount to \$813,969 for the bond. Mark Stetson seconded the motion. Edelmann stated that the only document to trust is the document through DRA and the town cannot spend more than that amount. Mark Stetson stated that the 2021 audit was completed. The vote for the amendment did not pass. Steve Barton stated that the town asked for \$650,000 last year to cover the building then it was indicated that this amount was not enough and now the town is asking for \$2,200,000 which is a far-fetched amount and the town should explore a cheaper version. Barton also stated that there is \$558,000 left from 2022. Barton asked what happens if the bond is denied and Town Administrator Edelmann replied that the town would not go for the bond; however, there is still another article for \$650,000. Barton stated that with the \$558,000 we currently have and the additional \$650,000 in the following article, the town should go for a building based on that amount. James Danforth stated that he has built a lot of these and is concerned with the lack of information provided; i.e., how long will the building serve the town; what are the warranty specifications; are we building a 10-year slab, a 20-year slab, a 100-year slab. He stated that all this information should be in the proposal. Charlie Stewart stated that he is a practicing architect and the town should go back to the architect and ask for something within our budget. Karen Brule asked if the bond rate was fixed and the response was that the bond bank uses a high number, there would be a bond sale and then we would get the final rate. Roland Carter stated that he had contacted Construx in Plymouth regarding a steel building and the cost was \$657,000 without the system for the salt water, the sanding and steam bay. Carter stated the Select Board would look at all bids and hold a special meeting to review them. John Thompson stated that should this article fail to pass; the town should start over. Greg Stetson replied that he disagrees with starting over and the town is not at ground zero if this article is denied tonight as there is another article coming up for vote and would be more progress. Herbie Barton stated that the town voters should deny this article as the town can put up a building and start using it immediately with the \$657,000. Leighton Terwilliger asked why the Budget Committee does not recommend this article and Budget Committee Chair Donna Duclos replied that the same concerns the town voters have is why the Budget Committee does not recommend it. Budget Committee member Mark Cowdrey stated that yes, the Highway Department needs a building; however, was unsure if this is the right time and the right way for the town to go and believes the amount is too expensive. Budget Committee member Jessica Rand stated that the implications of the decisions made the Committee believe that now is not the time and the future of other town buildings is uncertain. Duclos stated that the Highway Department does need a building;

however, the town cannot afford this one. Charlie Stewart made a call to question. Moderator Green asked Steve Barton to continue as he was cut off. Barton stated that at a Select Board meeting, he had asked Board member Delaney about the building he had proposed. Delaney responded that he had gone to LaValley Building Supply and received a quote for a 50' x 100' building and the cost was \$997,300 but this did not include the \$25,000 for the separation tank and the board decided to go with the plan proposed tonight.

Moderator Green opened the voting up for one hour at 8:00 p.m. and closed the voting at 9:00p.m. The article **did not pass** by a vote of 144 against and 22 for.

Article 6 – Enter 6-Year Lease of Dump Truck To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a six-year lease/purchase agreement in the amount of \$167,791 (One Hundred Sixty-Seven Thousand, Nine Hundred Seventy-One Dollars) for the purpose of leasing a 6-wheel dump truck and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$31,794 (Thirty-one Thousand, Seven Hundred Ninety-Four Dollars) for the first year's payment for that purpose. This lease agreement contains an escape clause. (Recommended by the Board of Selectman; Recommended by the Budget Committee 4-3) (Majority Vote Required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Andy Guptill and seconded by James Delaney. Selectman Guptill gave a brief background of this article. Price is for a 2023 International CB 515 6-wheel dump truck, flat-body dump, front plow, wing, full warranty road-side assistance to replace the current 550 which has now exceeded its life expectancy. We have gotten seven years out of it. The Board looked at another 550; however, no dealership they spoke to could meet the specs they requested and even to get a basic F550 with front plow and wing they were looking at another eighteen months if ordered before January. Herbie Barton asked if this would be a light-weight truck or heavy-duty truck. Selectman Guptill responded that it is a medium-duty truck. Moderator Green asked for all those in favor to say aye and then all those against to say nay. The article **passed** unanimously by a voice vote.

Article 7 – Operating Budget To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,338,523 (Two Million, Three Hundred Thirty-Eight Thousand, Five Hundred Twenty-Three Dollars) for the general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required).

Moderator Green stated he would go through the Budget section by section. Moderator Green explained that there is a 10% increase limitation and he also explained that line-item amendments were advisory only for the Selectman to act or not act upon. Moderator Green read the Article, which was moved by Andrew Frankel and seconded by Paul Currier and opened discussion on the Executive section. James Danforth asked if these numbers in the budget were just bottom-line numbers that the town is voting on and the Select Board determines the weekly amount that is paid out in salaries within that number. The response was yes, that is correct. Danforth also asked if the Town Clerk / Tax Collector is an hourly or a salaried position. The response was it is hourly. Bill Keyser stated the Select Board is getting a raise and if they are doing this for the money, they do not belong in that position. Selectman Guptill responded that the board believes that future boards should be compensated for the time they put in as there were not a lot of people that signed up to run for town positions. Herbie Barton stated that he did not feel that the Town Administrator nor the Road Agent have earned the salaries that are put forth in the budget as they

have been here a year or less. Selectman Dudek stated that the board took a considerable amount of time looking at comparable salaries with towns similar in size in order to retain the great folks that the town has. Andover has consistently paid employees less than those in comparable jobs in the area and are working on getting the salaries for employees a little closer to the middle. Salaries were looked at on a position-by-position basis and not an employee basis. Mark Stetson stated that our new Town Administrator is doing an excellent job and a lot of things are being done now that have not been done in the previous several years and the Town Administrator is on the low end of the salary scale for this position. Greg Stetson stated that the common theme of the Budget Committee was recruitment and retention and paying a competitive wage and getting people into the retirement system is important. Pecco Beufays stated that he would like to thank every single town worker and that they deserve every single penny that the town allows them to spend in this budget. Selectman Guptill made a motion to amend the Personnel Administration section to \$167,808. Selectman Dudek seconded the motion. Dudek explained that this difference is for an additional position that the Select Board wants which would be a full-time position split between the Highway Department and the Transfer Station. The Transfer Station position would be a Supervisory position. Greg Stetson spoke as a Budget Committee member and explained that recruitment and retaining employees is important; however, an additional position is not needed. He spoke with the Transfer Station employees and was advised that another worker is not necessary. Selectman Guptill responded that a big part of this is highways and Andover currently has 47.75 miles of roads they maintain with 3 full-time employees. Boscawen has 23 miles of roads they maintain with 8 employees; Danbury has 48.2 miles of roads they maintain and 4 full time and 1 part-time employee; Hebron has 13.4 miles with 4 full-time employees; Sutton has 60 miles of roads maintained by 7 full-time employees; Wilmot has 46 miles of roads they maintain with 4 full-time employees. This would help our limited staff. Paula Higgins asked if this section of the budget should address what the Auditors have pointed out that the town is not doing relative to recoding the long-term costs of retirement, healthcare costs and obligations for other postemployment benefits for the single employer plan in the governmental activities. Selectman Dudek responded that the board is unsure what to add monetarily to the budget to address this as this is not a monetary item. Herbie Barton stated that he does not believe the town needs as many people plowing roads as we currently have as another town plows 35 miles of roads with 2 employees. Jim Hersey stated that he has spoken with the Transfer Station employees and one employee is willing to be the Supervisor and Hersey does not believe they need any extra help – what they do need is to be paid well. He agrees with the Budget Committee's budget. Greg Stetson stated that if the town votes in the affirmative for the amendment Selectman Guptill is looking at, it will affect wages in other areas of the budget. It was asked to hear from the Budget Committee. Budget Committee Chair Donna Duclos responded that the Budget Committee felt strongly that an additional person was not necessary. This would also include an increase in benefits for full-time employees. Aimee Raciti asked the Select Board for a breakdown for 2022 / 2023 as the retirement is doubling, but only one additional employee is proposed. Selectman Guptill responded that this would be enrollment in the NH Retirement System for the employees which is a huge factor in recruitment and retention. Selectman Dudek stated that the Select Board was directed last year by Town Meeting to do this. Steve Barton stated that he is in favor of an additional employee for the Highway Department and in doing so, we would utilize all our equipment and it would be more cost effective. The town wants to move the Highway Department forward and this would be the most cost-effective way to do that. Ben Braggins asked what the total package would be and Moderator Green responded that the motion on the floor is to increase this line item by \$9,693. Jon Champagne stated that it became town policy that no single highway worker would be out on the road at a time by themselves and the town

cannot afford to not do this. Selectman Dudek responded that the entire package including benefits, retirement is a total of \$87,346. Greg Stetson asked if the board could foresee reducing somewhere else and Selectman Dudek responded that there is a potential for this but have not done the math yet; however, having an additional person would allow for a town employee to plow our roads and this absolutely makes sense. John Thompson stated that a third person would be able to cover one of the plow routes which would eliminate one route being put out to bid. Greg Stetson asked if we were keeping the truck that is being replaced. Highway Supervisor Frank Bryson stated he would like to keep the 550. Steve Barton asked why they were going with a live-body truck and Highway Supervisor Frank Bryson replied that this truck was chosen prior to him being on board as they want to keep the fleet that same. Moderator Green stated that there is a motion on the floor to amend this particular line item and stated that if we go through this with the intention of adding another person, we will have to go through it piecemeal through the rest of the budget to do this and it would be much more efficient to withdraw this motion and instead add in whatever the total figure is and asked Guptill if he would like to withdraw the motion or keep going in this direction. Selectman Guptill responded that he will make a motion as there is another difference that is separate from this position and he would like to lump them all together and yes, he will withdraw his first motion. Selectman Guptill made a motion to amend the budget as moved on the floor to a total amount of \$2,427,368. Selectman Dudek seconded the motion. Moderator Green stated that there was a motion and second to amend the budget amount to \$2,427,368 and asked for any discussion. Budget Committee member Mark Cowdrey stated speaking as a member of the Budget Committee and not strictly for the amendment, in looking at the Highway Department budget in its entirety and looking for areas that the committee could possibly dial things back knowing full well that it would come to this meeting and go to the floor and if the town's people decided it was in the town interest to support this position, that was why they took the more conservative route and say they do not recommend the selectmen's request. Bill Keyser and Paul Currier both asked what they were spending in the Transfer Station budget and Selectman Guptill responded that the difference is the position they are requesting, they have broken it down as half from Transfer Station budget and half from Highway Department budget. Megan Coll asked why split the budget between Transfer Station and Highway Department if everyone says help is not needed at the Transfer Station. Selectman Guptill responded that the board felt there were some efficiencies at the Transfer Station that could be found by having a dedicated supervisor. Leighton Terwilliger asked if even if we vote on the total that Selectman Guptill stated, would they still go line item by line item and the response was yes. Moderator Green read the motion to amend the budget to \$2,427,368. A voice vote was taken but did not clearly state the results. Moderator Green asked for a raised card vote, all in favor, then all opposed. Those in favor prevailed.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Election, Registration, and Vital Statics section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Tax section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Finance Administration section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Revaluation of Property section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Legal Expenses section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Personnel Administration section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Planning and Zoning Section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total General Government Buildings section. Toby Locke asked why it was budgeted last year for custodian in the amount of \$18,000 and only utilized \$685.85 and are now again asking for \$12,500. Selectman Dudek responded that the cleaning company hired the prior year did not work out and they are looking to hire a new cleaning company.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Cemetery section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Insurance Not Otherwise Allocated section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Advertising and Regional Association section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Budget Committee section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Information Technology section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Public Safety: Police section. Steve Barton made a motion to increase the police department wages by 3%. It was seconded; however, it was hard to hear by whom. Duclos stated that the wages were increased this year by 3% and felt that was very reasonable and unsure if another 3% is needed. Moderator Green asked Steve Barton to clarify what he would like to see increased and Barton stated the wages for the full-time and part-time police officers and the police secretary. The total increase in wages would be \$6,299. Jeff Miller asked how many full time and part time officers this includes. Chief Mahoney explained that this would include another full-time police officer. Herbie Barton asked if the crime rate has gone up and the response was the types of crimes have changed and are more time-consuming in resolving. Charlie Stewart stated that this year's budget has increased 25% over last years and wants to know where the additional money is going to come from. Moderator Green stated that this question will be answered at the end and the focus right now is on the motion to increase the police department salary. Karen Brule asked for clarification on what the actual amendment is to be voted on. Moderator Green responded that the actual amendment is to increase the salary for the full-time and part-time police officers and the police secretary wages by 3%. Aimee Raciti asked what the expected cost for three full-time police officers would be next year. Budget Committee member Jessica Rand responded it would be \$56,000. The motion to amend the police department wages by 3% was voted on and passed.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Ambulance section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Emergency Management section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Other Public Safety section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion under the Total Highway and Streets section. James Danforth asked who is maintaining the Class VI roads and Guptill responded that unless the town declares a Class VI Road as an emergency lane, by law, no town money can be spent to maintain a Class VI Road.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Street Lights section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Solid Waste Disposal section. Bill Keyser asked for the difference in Transfer Station wages including the additional full-time person and Selectman Dudek responded that it would be a \$22,880 difference. Leighton Terwilliger asked why \$7,500 for a compactor and Selectman Dudek responded the board would like to purchase a pusher. Roland Carter asked how much money the Transfer Station made off recyclables in 2022 and Selectman Dudek responded \$20,900.15 prior to deducting transportation and handling costs.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Solid Waste Cleanup section. There was no discussion. Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Pest Control section. There was no discussion. Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Health Agencies and Hospitals section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Vendor Payments section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Parks and Recreation section. Janet Eklund asked how much money was spent on maintenance at Highland Lake. Selectman Dudek responded that as the Highway Department maintains it, there is no separate breakdown. Eklund made a motion to allocate \$500 to manage the geese population on the town beach and Chaffee Park and several people seconded the motion. Moderator Green clarified that as the Highway Department maintains the beach, this would increase the total budget by \$500 with that money specifically to the Highway Department budget to specifically manage the geese population through fencing, scare devices and sand. Bill Keyser stated this is something for the Fish & Game. Heather Wood responded that she is part of the Andover Fish & Game and this could be brought up at one of their meetings. Janet Eklund stated that she believes this is a town wildlife management problem and as this property is one of the most highly assessed properties in town and where the beach and park have become unusable, and as it belongs to the town, and whether the money comes from \$500 the first year to purchase those items or whether it comes from somewhere else, it is a town problem and she would like to see it considered that. Moderator Green called for a vote and the motion did not pass.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Library section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Patriotic Purposes section. Leighton Terwilliger asked why the increase from \$10,000 to \$15,000 and Doug Phelps, Chairman of the 4th of July Committee, responded that there are not a lot of vendors and he could not find anyone to put on fireworks on the 4th of July itself and that is when Andover has their celebration. He was able to find someone to do it on July 6; however, it was \$13,000. Doug stated he was able to get in contact with our current vendor and the cost is set at \$15,000. The Committee will continue to look for a better price; however, \$15,000 is what is available at this time. Herbie Barton asked who is mowing the old landfill and why there is \$1,200 allocated for it. Andy Guptill responded that the mowing is covered by the landowner and the money allocated is for the monitoring that is required by the State.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Other Culture and Recreation section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Conservation section. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green opened discussion on the Total Interest on TAN and Revenue Anticipation Notes. There was no discussion.

Moderator Green indicated that the total figure for the operating budget to be voted on is \$2,433,666 and asked for a vote. Charlie Stewart reiterated his question asking where the additional 25% was going to come from and Leighton Terwilliger stated "he has lived in Andover for thirty years and it is coming straight out of your pocket". Selectman Dudek responded that it will come from taxes. Jim Danforth asked if there are any grants available and is the town looking in to any other sources for funding. Town Administrator Edelman responded that the town does try to look for grants and they do get notifications about grants as they become available. Moderator Green asked all those in favor of the budget as amended to say AYE and all those opposed to amending the budget and the AYES have it. Greg Stetson made a motion to restrict reconsideration. Paul Currier seconded the motion and the motion PASSED. Les Fenton stated that for twenty years the town people have been asking for the budget to be presented as the old-style report with details in the line items and is pleased to see that the town people have been heard and would like to thank whomever is responsible for this. The article **PASSED** as amended by a voice vote.

Article 08 - Forest Fire Labor ETF To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 (Five Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Forest Fire Labor ETF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation.) (Majority Vote required.)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved Greg Stetson and seconded by Jeff Miller. Selectman Guptill stated that this Article is normally in the budget and is asked for every year and the fund is to cover cost for mutual aid should we have a large forest fire. There is currently \$41,779.42 in this fund. There was no discussion. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 09 – Highway Garage Construction To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$650,000 (Six Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of construction of a Highway Department garage. \$400,000 (Four Hundred Thousand Dollars) of which will come from unassigned fund balance and \$250,000 (Two Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) of which will be raised through

taxation. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the garage is completed or by 2025, whichever is sooner. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation.) Majority vote required.

Moderator Green read the article which was moved; but unsure by whom, and seconded by Steve Barton. Town Administrator Edelmann explained that the bond article was voted down and this article is the same article as last year which will put more money towards building a highway garage. Mark Stetson made a motion to amend the article to read "To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$875,000 for the purpose of construction of a Highway Department garage. \$625,000 of which will come from unassigned fund balance and \$250,000 of which will be raised through taxation" and the remainder of the wording would remain the same. This would give the Select Board approximately \$1,400,000 including what was approved last year and what has already been spent to build a garage and would wish the town people vote yes to the amendment and yes to the article. Moderator Green clarified with Stetson that the only thing changing is the amounts and the rest of the article would stay the same and Stetson responded yes. Wendy Pinkham seconded the motion to amend the article. Herbie Barton stated that if the bid comes in less than the amount of money in the fund, he would like the remaining money turned back in. Leighton Terwilliger stated he is in favor of this; however, he is not seeing when it would be built. Selectman Delaney responded that should this be approved; it would go out to bid and then be started. It was asked what happens if the project is not completed by the end of 2025 and Selectman Guptill responded that the remaining money would go back into the general fund. Greg Stetson asked if the project were not completed by the end of 2025, could it be completed without encumbering funds. Selectman Dudek responded that these funds cannot be encumbered; therefore, the project must be completed by the end of 2025. Les Fenton commented that as a member of the Highway Advisory Committee, they were tasked with trying to provide a basic framework for this building. There are several requirements – not options – that must go into having this building constructed and if we are going to approve this amendment, we are going to have \$1,400,000 and there is no guarantee that we can meet the State's requirements for a municipal building with only \$1,400,000 and that is why they have to go back to the beginning to establish design criteria. Moderator Green called for a vote on the amendment and the amendment PASSED. Moderator Green called for a vote on the article as amended. The article PASSED as amended by a voice vote. Greg Stetson called for a motion to restrict reconsideration. Leighton Terwilliger seconded the motion to restrict reconsideration and the motion passed by a voice vote.

Article 10 – Town Buildings ETF To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 (Twenty Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Town Buildings ETF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation). Majority vote required.

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Paul Currier and seconded but was unable to distinguish by whom. Selectman Dudek stated that as of March 23, 2023 there is \$63,168.46 in the fund. Greg Stetson asked if there is a cost for the radon mitigation and Dudek responded that as it is a new issue there is not a concrete cost for it. It was asked what the \$20,000 from 2022 was spent on and Dudek responded that nothing was spent in 2022. Delaney made a motion to amend the article to \$30,000. Wendy Pinkham seconded the motion. Moderator Green asked for a vote on amending the article to \$30,000 and the amendment was not approved. Moderator Green called for a vote on the original article. The article passed by a voice vote.

Article 11 – Transfer Station Projects ETF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Transfer Station Projects ETF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Mark Stetson and seconded by Steve Barton. Selectman Delaney stated that this money would replace some of the money that will be used in 2023. A new trailer has been installed which was paid for through a grant. The septic system needs to be replaced along with adding a bathroom and a shower which the State requires. It was asked what the current balance is and the response was \$37,159. Herbie Barton stated that he has no concerns with a bathroom; however, he has a concern with potential eye issues. Selectman Delaney responded that there is an eye station there already as this is required by the State. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote on the article. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 12 – Revaluation CRF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,300 (Eleven Thousand Three Hundred Dollars) to be added to the Revaluation CRF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation.) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Mark Stetson and seconded by Greg Stetson. Selectman Dudek explained that this is a Capital Reserve Fund the town has had for a while and is part of our contract for the revaluation. There being no discussion Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 13 – Road Equipment CRF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000 (Fifteen Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Road Equipment CRF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Paul Currier and seconded by Misty Sava. Selectman Guptill explained that this is the article most people refer to as the “grader fund;” however, according to the Department of Revenue Administration it is named the “Road Equipment Capital Reserve Fund” and can be expended for the purpose of purchasing highway equipment but was initially done for the grader. There is currently \$203,496.98 in the fund. Donna Duclos asked what a new grader would cost and Selectman Guptill responded that we have approximately half of the cost of what a grader would cost today. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 14 – Highway Projects CRF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$150,000 (One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Highway Projects CRF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation). (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Paul Carrier and seconded by Mark Stetson. Selectman Dudek explained that this fund is typically utilized for paving projects and this is the standard amount that has been put in the last four years. The current balance is \$179,562.23. There was no money expended from this fund in 2022 as it was recommended to the board to wait a year due to pricing for paving were so drastically high that they would not be able to accomplish what our RSMS Plan dictates. Charlie Stewart requested a copy of the RSMS. Selectman Dudek responded it is available at Town Hall. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 15 – Police Cruiser CRF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$13,500 (Thirteen Thousand Five Hundred Dollars) to be added to the Police Cruiser CRF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Jacob Otis and seconded by Mark Stetson. Selectman Dudek explained that there is currently \$29,440.33 in the fund which we set up specifically for cruiser replacement. It was asked how many cruisers we currently have and Chief Mahoney responded that we have two for patrol and one that does detail. The oldest cruiser is kept for detail. It was asked what the cost of a new cruiser is and the response was \$36,000 was paid for the one a year and a half ago. It was asked what they would come up with for a replacement and Chief Mahoney responded another Ford Explorer if they get the funds this year and in 2024, they would get a new cruiser in 2024. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 16 – Bridge Rehabilitation CRF To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 (Fifty Thousand Dollars) to be added to the Bridge Rehabilitation CRF previously established. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Mark Stetson by Misty Sava and seconded. Selectman Dudek explained this is an article that is before the Town each year and there is currently a balance of \$311,402.72 and as Andover has a lot of bridges and a lot of work needs to be done, it is imperative to continue funding this Capital Reserve Fund. Herbie Barton asked if the Town has investigated any infrastructure funds. Selectman Dudek responded that she is unsure which funds he means; however, the town works with DOT for grants and funds. Barton recommended looking further into this. Karen Brule asked if the Lawrence Street bridge will be 100% covered and the response was that is the latest word. Brule asked when this would happen and Selectman Dudek responded the last the board heard, it will be in 2026. Brule asked how many bridges Andover has and how many may be on the red list. Selectman Dudek responded we have seventeen bridges and three are on the red list. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 17 – Bridge Evaluation Project To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$26,000 (Twenty-Six Thousand Dollars) for the purpose of entering a contract with Hoyle Tanner for a town-wide Bridge Evaluation and Bridge Capital Improvement Plan. Said amount to come from the unreserved fund balance. (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by James Delaney and seconded by Michelle Dudek. Selectman Dudek explained this is to be funded by the unreserved fund balance which will not affect taxes, and the board would like to contract with Hoyle & Tanner, whom the town has worked with for multiple years. Hoyle & Tanner will put together a Capital Improvement Plan for our bridges so the town will have a plan moving forward and to know which bridges we need to fix when, and how much it is going to cost the town as bridge repairs are incredibly expensive. There being no discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote. The article passed by a voice vote.

Article 18 – Town Clerk / Tax Collector Move to Full Time To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$44,641 (Forty-Four Thousand Six Hundred Forty-One Dollars) consisting of additional wages of \$20,565 (Twenty Thousand Five Hundred Sixty-Five Dollars), health insurance of \$13,053 (Thirteen Thousand Fifty-Three Dollars), payroll taxes of \$3,672 (Three Thousand Six Hundred Seventy-Two Dollars), supplemental insurance for \$856 (Eight Hundred Fifty-Six Dollars), and retirement of \$6,495 (Six Thousand Four Hundred Ninety-Five Dollars) for the purpose of additional compensation for the Town Clerk / Tax Collector. (Recommended by the Board of Selectman, Not Recommended by the Budget Committee) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Michelle Dudek and seconded by James Delaney. Selectman Dudek stated that the reason this is a separate Warrant Article is for transparency. Town Clerk / Tax Collector Lisa Meier explained that this is not a 20-hour a week – the office is open to the public 20 hours a week; however, there are reports before and after the work day which cannot be done while waiting on customers. She averages 35 – 37 hours per week and her Deputy works 15 – 20 hours per week. The population has increased, the reporting has increased. Heather Wood asked why this was not included in the regular budget rather than as a Warrant Article. Selectman Dudek explained that they must go article by article as the Warrant is written and the reason it is a separate Warrant Article is for transparency. Town Administrator Edelmann explained that as a separate Warrant Article it would be easier to discuss without trying to figure out how much it will increase the budget. Wood asked if the hours would be expanded and Meier stated yes, they would expand; however, it would still be four days per week with late hours on Tuesday and Thursday. Doug Phelps stated the Meier works an unbelievable number of hours behind the scenes and the town should approve this. Town Administrator Edelmann stated that she has observed the amount of traffic in the Town Clerk / Tax Collectors office and the number of hours put in by the Town Clerk / Tax Collector. Edelmann also stated that the town needs to create a Records Retention Committee as the records have not been taken care of and this is usually handled by the Town Clerk which will utilize a lot of her time as well. Bill Keyser asked what the two full-time town employees receive for benefits. Town Administrator Edelmann responded that the question is not related to this article; however, she does not receive benefits from the town. It was asked for the Budget Committee to comment on this article. Budget Committee Chair Donna Duclos stated that since there is now a Deputy Town Clerk / Tax Collector they viewed the office as being covered at forty hours a week between the two people in the office. Greg Stetson, as a member of the Budget Committee, stated that in the Town Report it was mentioned that the Deputy position was vacant for maybe half of the year and that was part of the discussion of the Budget Committee and they wanted to see how the office functions with two people on board. Selectman Delaney stated that even though there is a Deputy Town Clerk / Tax Collector now who is putting in twenty hours a week, the Town Clerk / Tax Collector is still putting in thirty to forty hours per

week which is over-time per State full-time laws so it is only fair that they pay her for it. Pecco Beufays stated that any person in this town that does not want to increase the pay for the Town Clerk / Tax Collector should stop their services in Andover and they can drive to Concord for their services. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote on the article. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

Article 19 – Readopt Optional Veterans’ Tax Credit Shall the Town READOPT the OPTIONAL VETERANS TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28, II for an annual tax credit on residential property of \$500 (Five Hundred Dollars)? (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Article 20 – Readopt all Veterans’ Tax Credits Shall the Town READOPT THE ALL-VETERANS TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28-b, for an annual tax credit on residential property which shall be equal to the same amount as the standard or optional veterans credit voted by the Town under RSA 72:28? (The Board of Selectman and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation) (Majority vote required)

Moderator Green read both articles which were moved by James Delaney and seconded by Michelle Dudek and the town voted on both articles at the same time. Town Administrator Edelmann explained that the town previously voted to adopt two RSA’s that allowed veterans to receive tax credits and the State has expanded the that program to include veterans that are currently active. Leighton Terwilliger stated that he recommends this. Toby Locke asked if the articles were going to be voted on at the same time and Moderator Green responded that they would be done sequentially. There being no further discussion, Moderator Green called for a vote on Article 19 and on Article 20. Both articles **passed** unanimously.

Article 21 – Petition To see if the Town will vote to place the town-owned 6.3-acre lot #15-582- 198 (also referred to as the McDonough parcel or the Dyer’s Crossing parcel) into a non-lapsing Conservation Easement.

Moderator Green read the article which was moved by Leighton Terwilliger and seconded by Jeff Miller. Jesse Schust, Co-Chair of the Conservation Commission gave a read-out of why the town should vote in favor of this article. The parcel was donated to the town by Mrs. McDonough in 1990 with the expectation that the land would be conserved and remain undeveloped. The Commission checked with several people that were involved at the time and prior Town Administrator Bill Bardsley and Peter Zak’s wife (Peter was on the Conservation Commission at that time) and they both confirmed this to be the case. The Commissioner believed that the property was already under conservation; however, when researched they found there to be no formal protection for this land and gave a list of reasons why they believe this land should be protected. It is not well suited for a dwelling as most of the land falls within a FEMA Flood Risk Zone and there are extensive wetlands. The section of Route 11 that has a speed limit of 45 miles per hour and the nearby highway is due to be straightened which could make the traffic even faster. The driveway coming up will be coming up to the road and there is not great visibility there which would increase the potential for collision especially in the winter. From an ecological standpoint, the property has plenty of value with extensive forested wetland and Sucker Brook which runs from Highland Lake into Webster Lake in Franklin. The Commission hired a wetlands scientist to evaluate the property and he stated that the property does not seem well suited for development but it does have a lot of ecological merits.

There are many state restrictions which are tied to this land such as potential issues with a driveway permit onto a state road; highway setback rules; FEMA Flood Zone; steep slopes and wetlands. Any buyer would have no way of knowing whether their building plans would pass State laws and selling a lot that proved unviable could open the town up to liability if the buyer took legal action against the town. The property is zoned for Forest & Agriculture so any proposed dwelling would also require a Special Exception from the Zoning Board of Adjustment. The Commission feels the property is ideally suited to its current role as a beautiful stretch of forested highway creating an entry point to the town and provides a great habitat for wildlife and a buffer for the stream and a valuable wetland habitat. The Commissioner recommends voting for this article as it was originally intended when it was donated to the town. This will not cost the taxpayers money as the Commission will use the funds in their budget to make sure this happens. There being no further discussion. Moderator Green called for a vote. The article **passed** by a voice vote.

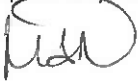
Article 22 – Transact any other business

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

Mark Stetson stated he would like to applaud the Town Administrator, if she is responsible - which he assumes she is, for the town website being up-to-date and he appreciates the transparency. Selectman Guptill stated he would like to remind everyone that after 49 years of service to the community, Chief Rene Lefebvre has retired from the Fire Department and the entire community invited to the East Andover Fire Station on Saturday, April 1, 2023 from 1-4 p.m.

Toby Locke made a motion to adjourn at 10:50 p.m. Herbie Barton seconded the motion and the motion passed.

Respectfully submitted,



Lisa Meier
Town Clerk