

Town of Milton  
Annual Town Meeting  
2024 Warrant  
State of New Hampshire



First Session (the Deliberative Session)  
Saturday, February 3rd  
12:30pm  
Nute High School Cafeteria

Draft Minutes

Mike Beaulieu, Town moderator started the meeting in session at 12:40pm

The moderator led all present in the Pledge of Allegiance and requested all present observe moment of silence in honor of Bob Bridges Lynette McDougall, Patty Page, Bob McKinley Judy Kimble

The moderator reminded all present to silence their cell phones and that there is no smoking permitted in the building.

The moderator led introductions and introduced himself as M. Beaulieu and introduced the following:

Board of Selectmen (BOS) Chair Humphrey Williams, Vice Chair Claudine Burnham, and Vice Chair and Selectman Andy Rawson.

Appointed Town Clerk Brian Leclerc

Town Administrator Chris Jacobs,

Legal Council C. Christine Johnston,

Budget Committee (BC) Chair Laura Turgeon, Selectmen's Representative Claudine Burnham, School

Board Representative Margaret Peg Hurd, Renata Gamache, Robert Carrier, Mike Beaulieu, Stephanie Mills, and Vice Chair Kimberly Wischnowski,

Supervisors of the Checklist Karen Brown, Brittney Leach-Campbell, and Betsy Baker

The Board of Selectmen called their meeting to order at 12:51pm am. Motion made H. Williams, Seconded by C. Burnham.

The Budget committee called their meeting to order at 12:53pm Motion made by L Turgeon, Seconded by S. Mills.

There were 72 registered voters present as confirmed by the Supervisors of the Checklist.

The moderator noted that there will be a candidates forum for all candidates running for School District and Town Offices on Sunday February 18, 2024 in the Selectmen's Meeting Room located at Town Hall on 55 Industrial Way beginning at 3:00 pm.

The Moderator explained the rules of an SB-2 meeting and read the rules of the deliberative session.

The moderator opened for a written motion to vote by secret ballot signed by no less than 5 registered voters. There was no motion for a secret ballot.

The moderator recognized those in the room who are not residents but may need to speak to a particular article. Those that we need to recognize are Chief Richard Krauss and Atty. C. Christine Johnston.

### **The motion carried.**

At this time The Town Moderator turned the meeting over to the Assistant Town Moderator, Chris Jacobs who then explained the "point of order" and "conflict of interest" voting.

# **TOWN WARRANT STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

## **First Session of Annual Meeting (Deliberative)**

You are hereby notified that the first session (the deliberative session) of the Annual Town Meeting will be held on Saturday, February 3rd, 2024 beginning at 11:30 (started at 12:40 pm) at the Nute High School Cafeteria. The first session will consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of each of the following warrant articles and will also afford voters who are present the opportunity to propose, debate and adopt amendments to warrant articles, except articles whose wording is prescribed by State law.

## **Second Session of Annual Meeting (Official Ballot Voting)**

The second session of the Annual Town Meeting, to elect Town officers by official ballot and to vote on all warrant articles as they may have been amended at the first session, will be held on Tuesday, March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 at Nute High School. Polls for voting by official ballot will open at 8:00 am and close at 7:00 pm.

## **Article 1: Election of Officers**

### **Board of Selectmen – 1 for 3 years**

CLAUDINE BURNHAM

MATT MORRILL

### **Budget Committee – 2 for 3 years**

JAMES (MIKE) BEAULIEU

ROBERT (BOB) CARRIER

### **Library Trustee – 1 for 3 years**

MARY CURRENT

### **Moderator – 1 for 2 years**

CHRIS JACOBS

### **Planning Board - 2 for 3 years**

DON DIAMANT

NICHOLAS HADIARIS

PAUL STEER

### **Public Works Director – 1 for 3 years**

ROBERT GAY

BILLY WALDEN

### **Supervisors of Checklist - 1 for 6 years**

KATHERINE AYERS

BRITTNEY LEACH-CAMPBELL

### **Town Clerk/Tax Collector – 1 for 3 years**

VICTORIA FINLAYSON

BRIAN LECLERC

### **Treasurer - 1 for 1 year**

MACKENZIE CAMPBELL

### **Trustee of Trust Funds - 1 for 3 years**

MARION TRAFTON

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 1 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

## **Article 2: Zoning**

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the existing Town Zoning Ordinance as follows: revising Article VIII-Wetland Conservation Ordinance by clarifying the process for development applications, defining new terms wetland setbacks and buffers, clarifying the definition of wetland conservation district, clarifying the meaning of isolated wetland areas, adding concise procedural requirements for developers to determine presence of wetland conservation district, clarifying the requirements for plans, manuals, and professionals to be used, laying out specific permitted uses and conditional uses in the district, and clarifying the process to be used to obtain conditional use permits, correcting errors in certain terms, and adding clarifying language to the restoration of violations and the responsibilities of landowners? Copies of the proposed amendment are available for review at the Town Office and will be available the day of the election.

**Recommended by the Planning Board (7,0,0)**

Motion made to open article 2 for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by T. McDougall.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Humphrey Williams to speak to the article: Addresses amendments definitions and more focused on the Wetlands, procedural to clarify and give definitive answers.

Motion made to close article 2 for discussion by S. Mills and seconded by P. Hurd.

**The motion passes.**

Motion made to restrict reconsideration for article 2 for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by N. Marique.

**The motion passes.**

**The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 2 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.**

## **Article 3: Zoning**

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the existing Town Zoning Ordinance as follows: Adding a new section to Article VIII- Wetland Conservation Ordinance entitled "Priority Wetlands" that identifies four priority wetland areas from the fifteen significant Milton wetlands of the 2005 Blue Moon Significant Wetlands Study and increases the wetland buffer from 25-ft. to 50-ft. around the perimeter of the said four priority wetland areas, and authorizing a new zoning map entitled Priority Wetland Areas Map are available for review at the Town Hall and will be available the day of the election.

**Recommended by the Planning Board (5,2,0)**

Virginia Long Chair of the Conservation Committee speaks to this article and the importance of additional preservation. These reasons are listed as maintaining water quality in the 3 Ponds, providing habitat and preservation for wildlife, flood and erosion control, and recreational and historical interest.

The 4 of our 15 areas that this would apply to are:

- #4-Lyman Brook “Heron Rookery”
- #7-Fish Pond
- #8-Miller Brook and Salmon Falls River confluence area
- #13-Miller Pond

D. Diamant spoke; This article should fail, it should be considered stealing from the property owners and having them pay taxes.

S. Hemeon spoke; This additional 25 ft buffer would move the line well into his basement and it's not right to take what little land he has. He doesn't get a tax break and hopes that residents agree.

R. Gamache spoke; The MCC (Milton Conservation Committee) is using conservation as a guise to interfere hindering, the development of the resident's properties, suggesting that the MCC enter into private negotiations with the property owners. Reviewing minutes from an October MCC meeting the MCC chair stated that these 4 areas were picked based on their higher risk of development. Ms. Gamache also stated that this is a land grab and is a violation of RSA -A:4 section I.

V. Long mentioned that the buffer would still fall in the easement area of the wetlands.

Legal confirmed property owner would need to go through the proper permitting process to develop.

B. Woodruff stated conditional use permits can be obtained from the planning board. Driveways buildings, garages and additions would be allowed if asking to develop. This article is only there to clarify.

G. Burnham spoke; Lot 24 is his brothers property and should be considered a “land grab” and the potential to develop should not be a reason for an increase in the buffer.

T. Shevelin spoke; He heard that there were plans to develop a trail by his property and the only part that the town owns is surrounded by water would not support a trail and could not be accessed without trespassing on private property.

R. Gamache spoke; November 21 Planning board meeting questions the notification of the property owners that this article would effect. RSA 36-A:4 II, III, and IV all refer to the notification and acquisition of permission from the property owners.

B. Woodruff stated that the board did not reach out to individual property owners but met all state requirements for posting and notification of the public meeting. Legal confirmed that it is not required.

S. Panish spoke; These are propriety wetlands not Prime. Priority is up to the town and these 4 areas deserve the attention. Heron Circle has a conservation easement already built into the properties. The state requires feet, the town only requires 25 feet, this is not much land.

D. Diamant spoke; Increasing the tax base is done through development, this clearly prohibits properties from developing and is wrong.

J. Johnson spoke; When he purchased his land 100 ft from the river up was an untouchable piece of land.

The MCC made the changes to deeds after the properties sold, the moderator advised that the town, or MCC is not able to make changes to deeds.

L.Brown spoke; His driveway has been washed out 5 times due to the overflow of water stemming from Northeast Pond Rd. The water runs down he has added a 15-inch culvert is helping. He also stated that to his understanding the zoning districts do not need to notify the owners individually. (Legal confirmed this to be true, property owners can request that the board notify them individually.) Brown states that the weather is changing, and these extreme weather events are occurring more often. We need to plan what the best protection for the town would be.

N. Hunter spoke; Clarification regarding State vs. town requirements for the buffer zones.

The moderator stated; Logging is set at 100 feet Shoreline Protection act are withing 50-75 feet.

The state regulates the buffer zone major bodies of water but these small wetlands do not have mandates for the buffers around the smaller wetlands.

Motion made to close article for discussion by A. Rawson and seconded by L. Brown.

**The motion passes**

Motion made to restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by M. Steer and seconded by L. Turgeon

**The motion passes**

**The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 3 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.**

#### **Article 4: Operating Budget**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein totaling Five Million, Five Hundred Forty-Nine Thousand, Seven Hundred and Sixty-One Dollars (\$5,549,761) Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Five Million, Six Hundred Fifteen Thousand, Three Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars (\$5,615,352) which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the Town or by law; or the governing body may hold one (1) special meeting, in accordance with NH RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated Tax Impact Town Proposed Operating Budget: \$7.83 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Estimated Tax Impact Town Proposed Default Budget: \$7.96 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

Motion made to open article 4 for discussion by T. McDougall And seconded by N. Marique.

**The motion passes**

The moderator recognizes Humphrey Williams to speak to the article.

H. Williams spoke: The version posted on the Town website reads Fifty-One dollars and yet the number reads 362, this error was due to an excel rounding down the .21 (twenty one cents) An amendment from the floor was not required to correct the typographical error.

This budget sits below the default 68% is for employee payroll and related expenses, 10% came from things that are mandated such as cemetery sewer and contracted services.

G.Bailey spoke: Town tax cap would be useless when it comes to the County Tax cap , City tax caps are more comprehensive.

H.Williams: 1/3 of our taxes come from the School, State and County these are out of our control.

There was a commotion regarding the accuracy of the numbers and a member of the meeting was asked to refrain from commenting or leave the meeting, he chose to leave, conversation continued.

K. Ayres spoke: Her appreciation to the residents that volunteer their time to these positions for all of the towns boards and committees.

H. Williams spoke: clarifying the issue causing confusion was due to the way that the numbers were provided to and from the DRA and not the fault of the Budget Committee.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration article 4 for discussion by M. Steer, seconded by L. Brown

**The motion passes**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 4 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as discussed.

**Article 5: Highway and Road Reconstruction Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Sixty Thousand Dollars (\$360,000) for the purpose of Highway and Road Reconstruction, maintenance, repairs, repaving, and reconstruction of Class IV and V Highways, as recommended in the 2024- 2029 Capital Improvements Program. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per NH RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the road work is completed for the 2024/2025 period as determined by Public Works Director or his/her designee, or by December 31, 2025, whichever occurs first. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.72 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

Motion made to open article for discussion by P. Hurd and seconded by M. Steer.  
**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Andrew Rawson and Pat Smith to speak to the article.

A. Rawson spoke: There is over 55 miles of road that need to be maintained and this money would help with some of these repairs, the article has failed before and hopes that this time it will be approved.

P. Smith spoke: With the previous funds the washout of miles of the road have consumed most of the funds that were in the account. There were areas of the roads that needed to be repaired multiple times due to the massive amounts of rain that we experienced in the spring. There were not enough remaining funds to repair or build other new roads. Winding Rd temporary Bridge Nuts, Park Place, and Thurston are the priorities with the funds that would be raised by the passing of this article.

K. Ayres questioned: Are there engineering plans to fix these areas that are being repaired over and over?

P. Smith responded: The engineering study would need to be hired to perform a study which cost around \$40,000 per area that would need a water study and design before the purchasing and construction.

K. Ayres spoke: Her particular street could benefit from a culvert being dug deeper and wider. Would there be more areas like this that would not involve such in depth studies?

The moderator responded that there was an equipment purchased to do projects like this. It would still need a study performed so that the problem isn't corrected in one area creating another in a different corner.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by P. Hurd and seconded by M. Steer.

**The motion passes.**

I instruct the clerk to place the warrant article 5 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read

## **Article 6: Bridge Capital Reserve Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as recommended in the 2024- 2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote



Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.30 per thousand dollars of valuation.  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0) Recommended by the  
Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$165,414 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023.*

Motion made to open article for discussion by T. McDougall and seconded by M. Steer.

**The motion passes**

The moderator recognizes Claudine Burnham to speak to the article.

C. Burnham spoke: This reserve funding went to the immediate need to replace the Winding Road bridge with a temporary bridge that will need to be replaced in the next three years.

K. Ayres asked: Do we have an estimate of the cost associated with a new Winding Road bridge?

P. Smith responded: The estimate is 1.5 million need 20% (300,000) to put in the new bridge.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article 6 for discussion by A. Rawson and seconded by M. Steer

**The motion passes**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place the warrant article 6 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read.

**Article 7: Lease/Purchase Two Highway 6 Wheel Dump Trucks**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of Five Hundred and Forty Thousand dollars (\$540,000.00) payable over a term of ten (10) years for two (2) Highway Department 6 Wheel Dump Trucks with snowplow equipment and sanders, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$68,000.00) for the First year payment for that purpose. The remaining payments are to be raised by general taxation. This Lease Agreement contains an escape clause. (Majority Vote Required)

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.136 per thousand dollars of valuation in year 2024.  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)  
Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$112,569 dollars in the Highway Trucks CRF as of 12-31-2023.*

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by J. Duprat.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Andrew Rawson to speak to the article.

A. Rawson spoke: The town is currently down to 3 Trucks after one had caught on fire and out of those 3, one of them is down to its last leg. They are currently using pickup trucks to plow the roads and the repair lines in the budget has been increased to \$70,000 just to keep them running and on the road so it's just putting good money to a really bad piece of equipment so you know moving forward these two lease purchases on trucks is a much needed necessity for the guys to be able to do their job so that's where we're at with these two trucks.

P. Smith spoke: just a little bit more information on this article I did call A M Municipal Leasing Company the interest rate for um a 10year loan is 4.95% I called it's obviously going to change if this passes and we go in wait till March or April to get a new number but the number that they gave me for budgeting purposes right now was 4 95% um and again to just back up what Andy said we did have a truck burn on January 11th um caught on fire about 2o'clock in the morning uh we saw that on video it's a total loss um so we're down that one truck and the other truck that we want to replace it's a 2011 and it's close to the end of its life and we'd like to uh move that along if the voters would allow us to do that um the interest looks like it's about \$140,000 over a 10-year period but if you purchase a brand new truck one brand new truck if you outright purchase that truck and raise the money in one year you're going to raise \$260-270,000 for one purchase of one truck in one year makes sense to me that we put this money out over a 10year period at 68,000 you have four trucks that the town uses that's a million it'd be kind of hard to raise that kind of money all at one time to replace trucks.

K. Ayres asked: What is an escape clause?

C. Johnston (legal) responded: The term means that if the town does not appropriate the money in any future year for the payment that the town can get out of the lease return the truck get out of the lease no penalties no Financial penalties at all and the reason that those are put in that it's not treated as long-term debt if it treated as long-term debt without an escape Clause this will be locked in having to pay that payment every year for the life of the lease regardless of whether we want to or not and it would have to pass with a two-thirds vote instead of a majority.

T. McDougall asks: If the town puts this payment into the default budget how would we not appropriate the funds?

H. Williams responded: It would go into the default budget but the clause allows the future BOS to back out of the lease without penalties if they see it necessary to make budget changes to the following years budget.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article 7 for discussion by A. Rawson and seconded by M. Granger.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 7 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

### **Article 08: Purchase Police Department Taser 10 Less Lethal Weapons**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of Forty Three Thousand Eight Hundred Thirty Four dollars (\$43,834.00) payable over a term of five (5) years for eight (8) Taser 10 less lethal weapons and all necessary accessories, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty Seven Dollars (\$8,767.00) for the First year payment for that purpose. This lease/purchase agreement contains an escape clause. (Majority Vote Required)

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.017 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$3,534 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023*

Motion made to open article for discussion by S. Mills and seconded by M. Steer.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Chief Richard Krauss to speak to the article.

Chief Krauss spoke: This warrant article is to replace the X2 tasers that we currently carry axon has notified us that as of May they're no longer selling the X2'ss and as of 2028 they're no longer maintaining the X2s at all so unfortunately that gives us two options for our Lal equipment it gives us the taser 10 or the taser \$200 difference between the two weapons. I understand that's a big number, the \$43,000 is because the taser tens are a brand new type of less Lethal Weapon under the ATF which the ATF just tagged them as same as a firearm because they have 10 individual cartridges so for current tasers which lien has two of them in his hand they have two cartridges that the officers have available to them the taser 10 has 10 so the prices get VAR as well the other part of it is and the part of that cost is the training. With the new taser 10s every single night the battery comes out of them battery is plugged into a dock and does all downloads for any usage or any type of update and it downloads. We are looking to purchase 8 because it is easier to have a taser per officer because the officers can take their Duty belts home with them if officers are on details they need to have their full duty belt with them and with less usage the equipment will last longer.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by M. Steer and seconded by L. Brown.

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place the warrant article 8 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read.

## **Article 09: Purchase Police Department Axon Body 4 Body Cameras**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a long-term lease/purchase agreement in the amount of Forty-Six Thousand Nine Hundred Eight dollars (\$46,908.00) payable over a term of five (5) years for 8 Axon Body 4 Camera and all necessary accessories, software, download ports, and mounting items and to raise and appropriate the sum of Nine Thousand Three Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$9,381.00) for the First year payment for that purpose. This lease/purchase agreement contains an escape clause. (Majority Vote Required)

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.02 per thousand dollars of valuation.  
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0) Recommended by the  
Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by S. Mills.  
**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Chief Richard Krauss to speak to the article.

Chief Krauss spoke: We were the first police agency in the state of New Hampshire to wear and roll out body cameras back in 2012 we've had the same style of body camera since 2012 it's the axon Flex. It is my expectation that taser is going to start going away from the flex model and steer towards the Body 4. The body 4 had a backup system in place if the camera was to get wet The flex module has a battery in it and the model has a battery this is the camera this is a significant price difference the body 4's are \$1,150 a piece just to buy the camera that doesn't count purchasing the mounting equipment the downloading equipment items that were required to switch. The flex 2's are \$700.00 each. We can stay with the flex 2's but we don't know how much longer axon is going to update and support them we know what most companies do when they make an item that's better and does the same thing as their current technology, they get that technology and they push it forward to the new product.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by L. Brown and seconded by N. Marique.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 9 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

## **Article 10: Public Safety Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) to be placed in the Public Safety Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as described in the recommended 2024-2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.06 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$312.65 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023*

Motion made to open article for discussion by T. McDougall and seconded by L. Brown

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognized Chief Richard Krauss to speak to the article.

Chief Krauss spoke: This is a capital reserve fund that we created for the radio infrastructure for the entire town the emergency radio infrastructure um it was funded two years ago uh we used it to purchase new radio for the fire department as moderator stated there's only \$312 left in that account that won't even buy us a shoulder for our portable radios portable radios with everything else electronic increase dramatically and with the within just the police department we have 10 radios that are considered Portables which are this style so I have this style Lieutenant Hebert has smaller style they range from 4,800 to about \$6,000 a piece at eight of them the \$30,000 isn't even going to replace the police department the last time the police department replaced all of ours was 2012 and we got those to a Federal grant so the town didn't pay for them those federal grants have dried up so we don't have that ability any longer we also have five mobiles just in the police department um that's not counting the fire department or the highway department the mobile run 6,000-8,000 a piece right now so the problem that we're running into is if we have a failure of all of our radios or a large number of our radios we don't have the money in our budget to replace these.

K. Ayers questioned: Can the Fire radios communicate with the Police Department through the radios?

Chief Krauss responded: yes the Strafford County just redid the large radio infrastructure through all of the county. Strafford County is all on the same channel and yes we can all communicate with each other through police fire and Highway through all of these radios. When the fund was first started we took care of the fire station radios is because the fire station radios were the highest in need.

Chief Marique spoke: Like Chief Krauss said our mobiles were replaced last year mobile sorry portable radios in 2017, we can expect that they will need to be replaced again in 2027.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by H. Williams and seconded by L. Brown.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 10 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

## **Article 11: Fire Department Equipment and Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be placed in the Milton Fire Department Equipment and Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as described in the recommended 2024-2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.03 per thousand dollars of valuation.**  
**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0) Recommended by the**  
**Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$77,007 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023*

Motion made to open article for discussion by J. Duprat and seconded by M. Steer.  
**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Chief Nick Marique to speak to the article.

Chief Marique spoke: The CIP presentation this year there were two projects to be replaced the vehicle extraction device (the jaws of life) we're replacing from 1999, the second project is our breathing air system. Our breathing bottles were last replaced in 2006, that's \$100,000 substantially more than this but because we have 77,000 funded for that.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by M. Steer and seconded by A. Rose Johnson.  
**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 11 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

## **Article 12: Technology Upgrade Capital Reserve Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Dollars (\$8,000) to be placed in the Technology Upgrade Capital Reserve Fund, previously established for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures, as recommended in the 2024- 2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.016 per thousand dollars of valuation.**  
**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**  
**Recommended by the Budget Committee (8-0-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$24,986 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023.*

Motion made to open article for discussion by M. Granger and seconded by D. Diamant.

The moderator recognizes Claudine Burnham to speak to the article.

C. Burnham spoke: As you know technology can be very expensive and it's helpful to have that reserve should an emergency happen um as you may know we're in our new office so we have um we haven't really bought computer so to speak so I'm not sure how out of date we might be or soon but it's good to have that so that's what this \$8,000 is for.

The moderator Asked Chief Krauss to speak to the technology updates needed.

Chief Krauss responded with: The last time that the server was replaced in Town Hall was 2018, the server is coming up on end of life as well as the one at the Police Station. The last time it was replaced at the station it cost between \$6-8,000 to downsize. This CRF is for ALL the computers/technology in the town.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by L. Brown and seconded by L. Turgeon.

**The motion passes**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 12 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read.

### Article 13: Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund previously established for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as described in the recommended 2024-2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.05 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (7-1-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$99,200 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023.*

Motion made to open article for discussion by J. Duprat and seconded by M. Granger.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Andy Rawson to speak to the article.

A. Rawson spoke: We need to save money um towards all the buildings in Milton so this is for repairs to all the buildings, and we all know that a new roof um would chew a lot of this right up so it's putting money uh you know aside, saving for our for our buildings future repairs. Rawson also addressed that we are going to be talking about what we're going to do with the Old Town Hall so if you're interested in hearing what we're going to do with it when we start talking about it feel free to come to selectmen's meetings, we would love your input.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by L. Brown and seconded by J. Duprat.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 13 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as it was read.

### **Article 14: Invasive Plant Species**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$7,500) to be placed in the "2023 Invasive Plants" Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as recommended in the 2024- 2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.015 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0) Recommended by the Budget Committee (4-3-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$7,899 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023.*

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by A. Rose Johnson.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator recognizes Humphrey Williams to speak to the article.

H. Williams spoke: You'll notice in this article that it doesn't say eradicate invasive plant species which is said in the past due to the fact that we are 3=unable to to do that, we are working to keep it under control with the Dash chemical treatments that we are currently using. This is a joint venture between Lebanon Maine Milton and the three Pawns protective Association to try to fight this a Wayne informed me that this current year it's projected to cost around \$90,000 We have been getting grants over the years that have helped offset this but those grants are starting to dry up just like Chief gross talked to you about other grants in general federal government is dropping a lot of the programs that we've had as well as state programs are the same type of thing so it's imperative of that if we don't want to lose this Lake which is the most vital resource we have in the center of the community basically and along the borders for both us and Lebanon that we make sure that we keep invasive plant species out of the waters that's why I highly recommended this as a \$7,500 towards that capital reserve fund we're going to use that and then some in the coming years we need to stay ahead of this.



R. Gamache spoke: I hear what everybody is saying about our Lake and how it is the center of our community and according to all the warrant articles we've been hearing for this going through 13 there's a lot of money coming up that we are going to be responsible for and there's a revaluation coming up this year which is going to raise our taxes according to this warrant article the estimated tax impact is 015 cents per thousand some might think this is not a lot but it's time to stop nickel and diming the taxpayers every election cycle and put the responsibility where it belongs. The management be subsidized by the people who use the water not by the taxpayers of the entire town as a people we already have fees as subsidized services in our electric bills our phone bills our cable bills and now you are asking us to subsidize the wealthy who recreate in Milton people here cannot afford the property taxes people are struggling to feed their families Milton has a huge tax for the school and this year they are asking for over \$1.1 million in teacher contracts which will affect property taxes going forward and also happening this year is again the revaluation as a town we need to think outside the box and start looking at other ways to generate income. Raise the cost of boat passes, beach, the daily gate entrance fee by one or pass the cost of the ad management onto the people that use the water maybe it's time for the TPPA to raise its membership dues this would truly be saving the town and taxpayers money while protecting Milton Three Ponds for future generations to enjoy.

Gamache then made a motion to amend Article 14 as follows: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) to be placed in the "2023 Invasive Plants" Capital Reserve Fund, previously established. for the purpose of funding future capital expenditures as recommended in the 2024- 2029 Capital Improvements Program. (Majority Vote Required).

The remaining \$4,500 should be raised through user fees or by increasing TPPA membership dues. If you take the \$4,500..... / by approx. 500 waterfront households = \$9 per household

W. Sylvester spoke: I find it very disconcerting that the budget committee came up with a four to three vote I do spend the money I to recreate on the lakes I live in the channel and my taxes are over \$11,000. At the TPPA we have several membership levels \$25 is the basic level and then the is 100 you're right there are over 500 homes around Milton we have about 180 people who are members right now. The best way to protect the investments that people on the lake have is to control, to manage the invasive species that we have. We've been fighting this for now this year nine years we will have spent approximately half a million dollars. The federal funding has helped us out now for nine years this year they have already began to drastically cut funding beginning to dry up this is not just TPPA this is we're in a partnership with Lebanon. I get that times are tough the time they're tough for all of us but the towns greatest resource is Milton Three Ponds and if those ponds degrade so doesn't Milton.

J. Duprat spoke: I think we can argue that everyone benefits from the economic viability of the lake not just those who directly use it. Property taxes on properties such as Wayne's and others values would decline should the lake become overly infested with the plant and that would obviously have a negative impact on all those, not just the Lake Properties. Invasive species that infects Our Lake would also, if it was allowed to go unmitigated reduce everyone's ability to enjoy the lake and the positive economics associated with it um our Recreation program utilizes the lake, every summer and certainly if the lake was deemed to be you know unusable or would be overly infested with the plant the recreation programs ability to utilize it would also be negatively impacted.

M. Beaulieu questioned: What does Lebanon contribute to the project?

W. Sylvester responded: They contribute equal to what Milton does, one third of the cost.

D. Blair spoke: the TPPA is working very hard and has for several years to keep us from being overrun by this invasive plant and if we don't and even step up our efforts you will not have lakes you'll be just weed infested uh bodies of water.

L.Brown spoke: If we reduce the level necessary to continue to treat at the same level of control that you currently are you will be worse off.

C. Burnham commented: The Campground has boat ramp access as well and I know that they've donated in the past that is a very um large network of boats that do go on the lake and I think we need to really address if they're doing the boat checks and inspections and perhaps they need to contribute a little bit more with the amount of boats that they have coming through.

Motion to move Amendment 1 of Article 14 to a vote:

Made By: M. Granger 2<sup>nd</sup> by: S. Mills

Yea: 15 Nea:22

**The amendment fails**

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article 14 for discussion by P. Smith and seconded by N. Marique.

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 14 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as initially read.

### **Article 15: Appoint Public Works Director**

To see if the Town, in accordance with RSA 231:62 will change the form of organization of the Milton Public Works Department from an elected public works director to one where the public works director is appointed by the Board of Selectmen. If approved, the change from elected to appointed public works director would become effective as of one (1) year following this vote, per RSA 669:17-b.

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (2-1-0)**

Motion made to open article for discussion by M. Granger and seconded by L. Turgeon.

The moderator recognized Humphrey Williams to speak to the article.

H. Williams spoke: This article and the next one that kind of go they coincide with one another I want to say that as a town we've been very fortunate that we've had Pat Smith as a public works director with the skill set and everything else that Pat's brought forward and the experience he's brought forward for a number of years. We don't know what kind of experience we may receive The Police chief used to be the position used to be an elected position as well we've gotten a lot more over the years uh in service from the police department and with the appointed position because you're vetting the individuals to ensure that they have the right skill set to run a department this is isn't to condemn any Vote or anything else it's just that as we move forward it's tougher and tougher to find people wanting to do some of these jobs when you're electing someone you're restricting it only to the community. The intent behind this one is the fact that we need to be able to make sure that we do have the right skill set for the people being put in these positions.

K. Ayers spoke: I've always thought it odd that the police chief was appointed and other officials are elected and then I learned that no matter if you're appointed or elected you all get benefit packages which like so I'm not sure I understand are the are the elected officials paid with a 1099 or are they paid with a W2 they're paid weekly like everyone else what do they get for their payment W2 then that would be that would be like an employee a 1099 is an independent contract.

Legal C. Johnston responded: Anybody who gets paid by the town pretty much is an employee which is why they mostly would get W2s whether they're elected or appointed as far as the state of New Hampshire is concerned, anyone who is an elected official is not technically an employee for purposes of workers comp and other um wage and hour requirements under New Hampshire law under federal fair labor standards act this it's the division is a little bit different but for this article the only difference is changing the way that that person is chosen. The major difference is that they do not have to be a resident of Milton to be put in that position but the tax situation doesn't change and benefits can be offered to anyone, that's a Town decision.

K. Ayers questioned: If someone is elected, I understand that they serve their term of election and they cannot be terminated is that correct? Even if they're doing what is considered to be unsatisfactory performance?

Legal C. Johnston responded: Despite having particular protection in the law whether they're elected or appointed and the same thing for a fire chief same thing for a police chief because there's a special law that deals with the process of removal.

C. Jacobs spoke: As a former former public works director you have to be knowledgeable in Human Resources what you can say what you can't say you have to know you have to know the purchasing policy all 60 pages of it line by line you have to know the Personnel policy all 80 Pages line by line Pat has to deal with the MS-4 permit which stands for municipal small storm water systems and it's entirety, the point is it's no longer a job where you just plow roads clean ditches. A 20-year-old kid who has a lawnmowing business could technically sign up and get elected as Public Works director just because they live in the town, is that really what we want from a liability perspective and safety perspective? This kind of article has come up before and residents would say they didn't vote for that article because they don't want to give the power or the authority to the BOS. You have to evaluate the risk of electing someone who is a nice person but has no experience in Road repair managing people using a spreadsheet plowing snow, public speaking, or a host of skills that are make for a well-rounded Public Works director what needs to occur is an interview process run by the New Hampshire Municipal Association and then affirmed by the BOS.

M. Beaulieu requested to hear from the Selectman that voted against this Article.

A. Rawson spoke: Starting pay for our public works department is \$60,000, you'll never get anybody in this town to come work for us to run the public works department for \$60,000. I've worked Public Works I know how hard it is you're, away from your families for days I mean there's guys down there that are going to make more money than the boss so that's one of the reasons why I said no this. My second reason is selectman change every year there's no consistency you get two selectmen in there they don't like them, they possibly could get rid of them that's not right. Those are the main reasons that I voted against this.

C. Burnham responded: For clarification as selectman Rawson stated his reason that's not the reason I understood it to be. The reason was we had too many warrant articles and the voters don't want to vote on so many warrant articles the reason why you are here today is because you have the opportunity to not only learn and process the warrant articles and not let them slide through with unassigned fund balances as they have in the past because you have the right to know what you would like to choose to vote for. I just wanted to make that clear because I never heard selectman Rawson say that when we discussed this the last time.

L. Turgeon spoke: We are very lucky to have Pat and Nick but the fact of the matter is that we're not always going to be so lucky um when we have elected officials I could run and God forbid if I got elected because nobody ran against me you've got totally somebody unskilled that is clueless I work in IT and I could earn \$60,000 a year to do Pat's job without a clue because hey it's a popularity contest nobody ran against me guess what I was elected. We've got to start looking at changing the way that we do things to get people in here and maybe we're not going to be able to hire somebody at 27 years experience at \$60,000 but you know what we'll be able to hire somebody that's got some good experience at \$60,000 that's willing to work with the town and grow with the town the way that Pat did.

M. Racic spoke: He came from a town that runs like a city and suggests that the town could hire the Road Agent under a contract to offer stability but not comfortability.

M. Granger spoke: I think that an important part of this is uh the people who are not 100% engaged in local issues who do not follow every town meeting uh they may not know who they are voting for and they might just vote for someone arbitrarily. If you have a limited number of people at the town level that you're voting for it is much easier for them to get to know those people understand where their positions are whether they agree or disagree with their opinions whereas if uh if they have too many elected officials to actually make a decision on they're much less likely to do the research and think they through.

P. Smith spoke: It's a job that you're married to it's a lifestyle that's not a job you are on the clock 365 days a year 24 hours a day you are work when it's snowing on Christmas day you're at work if it's flooding out on Fourth of July. I've been on both sides of this issue I've been elected eight terms every three years it's stressful because you don't know if your job is going to be there or not. I did speak with this selectman and I did say that we're coming to the point that this job may need to be appointed and for the reasons that Chris Jacobs had said there's a lot of different things that have changed over the years there's a lot more rules and regulations. I'm not going to say I'm for or against this article what I'm going to say here today is that you are the people that need to decide if you want to keep the power of

this position in your hands then you keep the power in your hands if you want to give the power to this position to a board that appoints it.

Pat makes a motion to close and restrict reconsideration for article 15 for discussion and it is seconded by L. Brown.

**The motion passed.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 15 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read.

### **Article 16: Elected to Appointed Fire Chief**

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with RSA 154:1, IV to change the organization of the fire department from RSA 154:1(c) where the Fire Chief is elected by the legislative body to RSA 154:1(a) where the Fire Chief is appointed by the Board of Selectmen and with the firefighters being appointed by the Fire Chief. If approved, the change from elected to appointed fire chief would become effective as of one (1) year following this vote, per RSA 669:17-b. (Majority Vote Required).

#### **Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (2- 1-0)**

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by R. Gamache

**The motion passed**

The moderator recognized C. Burnham to speak to the Article.

C. Burnham addressed confusion regarding the tax impact as there is not going to be a change in the position this year, Chief Marique will continue to serve as Chief until his term is over.

Legal advised to remove the tax impact line from the article as we are just voting on changing the position from elected to appointed.

J. Duprat stated that if the position went to full time the voters should be made aware of the change before we vote.

H. Williams said that if and when the position goes full time it will be voted on by the residents.

D. Diamant spoke: With lives being on the line in emergency situations that the Chief is responsible for, we

need to make sure that the person in charge is sufficiently qualified.

R. Gamache spoke: to the pros and cons of having an appointed Chief verses an elected Chief.

**Pros:** With an appointed Fire Chief, the Town will get a person that is qualified for the job. An appointed Fire Chief is here for the duration. Another important fact is that an appointed Fire Chief is dedicated to the Town of Milton as a first priority. And to go into this further, not only does the Fire Chief run the department, he is the Emergency Management Director and plays a critical role in the Hazard Mitigation Plan during a crisis. An appointed Fire Chief will be with us throughout the entire crisis or emergency. We have seen some major storms come through Milton just this past year.

**Cons:** An elected Fire Chief position, anyone can run for the job. And they don't need any qualifications to run for it. An elected Fire Chief needs to be voted in every three years. So every 3 years the Town takes the risk that someone with no experience or qualifications could be voted in. An elected Fire Chief might hold another job which would be their priority over the elected Milton position. An elected Fire Chief, as mentioned before, might hold another job that will not allow him to perform the Emergency Management Director roll for the Town that is required in a crisis or emergency.

Chief Marique clarified that the position of Emergency Management Director is an appointed position and although he agrees with the merit of this article, he would like to see more discussion behind it.

J. Dupret clarified that she was

Milton is at a Crossroads since covid-19 shook the country a number of people have moved into the town from Oregon, California, New York, and Massachusetts. They come to have expectations of the town that they are moving to. We don't want to risk electing someone who has no experience in fire prevention, fire fighting, or public speaking. National Fire Protection code and commonly known as the NFPA offers extensive training that most fire fighters have never had the chance to fully go through the NFPA It talks about I know how to fight fires, how to prevent fires, codes for buildings etc. etc. The position needs to be selected from an interview process run by the New Hampshire fire academy the New Hampshire Municipal Association or other qualified group and then affirmed by the BOS when I have discussed this with other voters they said they were reluctant to give the authority to the BOS because the BOS will appoint one of their friends it's the same argument for them that's why I'm recommending an outside board or group to solicit the resumes conduct the interviews and make their recommendation to the board, we did this when we appointed a police chief so I know we can do it for the public works and the fire chief.

J. Palmatier spoke: I am one of those people who traditionally has been nervous about changing over to an appointment position for both positions. These statements that been made have absolutely won me over but I still have that concern it says in it says being appointed by the board of Selectmen I'm being told well in the past we have had a third party board recommend people to us and we approve it yeah but there's nothing formalizing that if we elect the wrong Selectmen we're screwed should we and I'm scared. Should be having an amendment where the fire chief.

is uh appointed by the board of Selectmen from a pool determined by a third party.

L. Brown recommended: What we need is a warrant which specifies that all professional appointments involving health safety Department of Public Works shall not proceed except they are vetted by the appropriate Professional Organization.

A. Lock questioned : What happens if something happens to the elected official, who fills the vacancy?

Legal advised the policy of appointment until the next election.

M. Beaulieu requested to hear from the selectman that was against this article.

A. Rawson stated the same reasons as the previous article and ultimately it was up to the voters to decide if they want to continue to elect the Chief or not.

S. McCormack spoke: She has several family members that are firefighters and wonders if they would have worked so hard to be promoted if when it came time to run for a position as Chief it was up to voters and could potentially not be awarded through merit and qualifications.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by M. Granger and seconded by J. Palmatier.

**The motion passed**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 17 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read, noting that we will remove the tax impact line.

### **Article 17: Conservation Commission Legal Defense Capital Reserve Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) to be placed in the Conservation Commission Legal Defense Capital Reserve Fund, previously established in 2022. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.001 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (5-2-0)**

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$2,124 dollars in this CRF as of 12-31-2023*

Motion made to open article for discussion by S. Panish and seconded by K. Diamant.

**The motion passed**

The moderator recognizes Steve Panish to speak to the article.

S. Panish spoke: I would like to not that the tax impact should be .001. So the idea here is that on the average according to the pros a Conservation Commission or a land trust will be sued once every 20 years. Rather than shock the budget by having a significant legal bill come in all at once this fund gradually builds at the rate of \$1,000 per year.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by L. Brown and seconded by M. Granger.

**The motion passed**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 17 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as corrected with the tax impact being .001.

### **Article 18: Elderly Exemptions**

To see if the Town will vote to modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Milton based on assessed value, for qualified tax payers to be as follows: for a person 65 to 74 years of age Sixty-Three Thousand Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$63,750), for a person 75 to 79 years of age Ninety-Six Thousand Dollars (\$96,000), for a person 80 years or older One Hundred Twenty-Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$127,500). To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least three (3) years, own the real estate individually or jointly or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least five (5) years. In addition, the taxpayer must have an income of not more than Forty Thousand Dollars (\$40,000) or if married, a combined net income of not more than Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000); and own assets not in excess of Seventy-Five Thousand Dollars (\$75,000), excluding the value of the persons residence. (Majority Vote Required).

**Estimated tax impact is \$0.09 per thousand dollars of valuation.**

**Recommended by the Board of Selectmen (3-0-0)**

**Recommended by the Budget Committee (7-0-0)**

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Brown and seconded by S. Mills

The moderator recognizes Humphrey Williams to speak to the article.

H. Williams spoke: article I'm very happy to speak to this article because this has been something that has been uh has come before us in the past and we didn't have the opportunity to move forward with trying to help our senior citizens that fall into the uh the category of the lower you know income levels um currently there's only 37 seniors that qualify for this this hasn't been looked at since 2009 and as everyone in this room knows cost of living has gone up considerably the income levels that were identified on this were from 14 years ago. so we elevated the income levels for the you know for the maximum income not minimum income some people thought to help some additional people. It doesn't cost the town that much more money residents that much more to try to help the senior citizens themselves to me that nine cents per thousand is a lot more benefit to keeping the people here than losing the people that we currently have and if we don't do



something to help that's where it's headed so I highly recommend that we move forward with this because I think it's high time we help bring the levels where they needed to be.

K. Diamant questioned where the rates were before.

H. Williams reviewed and stated that they were all given a 50% increase above the previous rates and clarified for the room how the rates are calculated.

K. Ayers stated that the Town Website says that you have to be a resident for 5 years but should say 3.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article for discussion by A. Rawson and seconded by M. Granger.

**The motion passes.**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 18 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as read.

### **Article 19: School House Donation**

To see if the Town will vote to donate the School House, located on Town owned property Map#**22**, Lot #**117**, at no cost to the New Hampshire Farm Museum, for preservation of the building and public education usage. (Majority Vote Require)

Motion made to open article for discussion by P. Hurd and seconded by S. Mills.

**The motion passed.**

Amendment was proposed:

To see if the Town will vote to donate the School House, located on Town owned property Map#**22**, Lot #**117**, at no cost to the New Hampshire Farm Museum, for preservation of the building and public education usage. (Majority Vote Require)

**The article as posted on the Town's website did not reflect a map and lot number.**

Motion made By: H. Williams and seconded by: L. Brown

**The Amendment passed with a unanimous vote.**

The moderator recognizes Andy Rawson to speak to the article.

A. Rawson spoke: this is a really great opportunity for Milton and NH Farm Museum. The plan is to move the schoolhouse that's located on Route 125 just uh before Bolan Road on the property of the NH Farm Museum, I hope this uh one will pass.

Jon Hotchkiss clarified that the wording could be interpreted incorrectly, and an amendment is being rewritten. He also spoke of the Farm Museums History.

Janet Hotchkiss spoke of the multiple schools that came to visit from all around Maine, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts. Janet also spoke of the educational programs that they currently use as well as their plans to expand in the future.

A second amendment was proposed:

To see if the town will vote to donate to the New Hampshire Farm Museum the School House, located on Town property Map #22, Lot #117, at no cost to the taxpayer, for the preservation of the building and public education usage.

The motion was made by M. Granger and seconded by L. Brown.

J. McCormack questioned if we should add the word building to the article to avoid confusion that the property wasn't included in this agreement.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article 19 for discussion by S. Mills and seconded by L. Turgeon.

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 19 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as rewritten and amended.

## **Article 20: Town House Rd Bridge**

To see if the Town wishes to continue with the design and build process of the Townhouse Road Bridge, with a current clearance height of 5.5 feet above the water for boats to pass under the designed bridge, and a cost of \$2.7 million dollars. If this project continues, the Town of Milton, NH would be required in the future to raise up to an additional \$200,000 for its portion of the cost.

(Majority Vote Required) *Yes-vote is to continue project, No-vote is to drop out of project.*

*The MS9 report reads that there is \$119,728.76 dollars in this CRF as of 1-31-2023*

The moderator recognizes Humphrey Williams to speak to the article.

Motion made to open article for discussion by L. Turgeon and seconded by Tom McDougall.

**The motion passes.**

H. Williams spoke: his has been a very long ongoing proc process from the from the time this first started when we first tore down this bridge and we held the public hearing back in December

involving Lebanon as well. A lot changed in the design aspect of this. It is definitely going to be an additional cost it's also a matter of disruption to the residents that live in that area including a new business that's on the other side of the lake and over at the new Bridge Marina. I can attest to the fact that this lake is running about a foot higher than it has in past years. We can not control the weather but we can control if we put in a bridge that will block off access to half of the lake. They are talking about raising the bridge about 5 and 1/2 ft up above the original high water marker. This would not allow us to pass a lot of the boats that are currently on the lake and have been since the bridge was torn down. At a very minimum it will impact our police chief to be able to have the boat go from one end to the other.

B. Woodruff questioned how much we have invested in the project thus far?

C. Jacobs responded approximately \$67,000 and stated that if we back out it would be highly unlikely that any money would be refunded to us.

B; Woodruff: This is fiscally irresponsible to prematurely back out and we should continue to fund the project but take a stand with the DOT and tell them that we do not want a 2.7-million-dollar bridge, but one that works with how our traffic flow is.

H. Williams stated that Lebanon has capped what they will spend causing the remaining balance to fall as our responsibility. That we don't have funding for this money that we have that's already put aside would help us with the Church Street bridge if it's not used in the townhouse Bridge so it's not that we're taking the money and not putting it wouldn't put it someplace else where it's needed but I do agree we need to go back after the state I will also say it's the same thing with the Winding Road bridge we are in a situation we're at with the winding road bridge why because New Hampshire dot sprung in on us at the last minute after inspecting that bridge for years needs to be closed today and so they've left us high and dry on a few things and that's the reason why I'm pushing for no until such time as we've got a better plan so I mean other than that we'll keep pouring money at this and continue spinning our wheels trying to get something so but we can definitely look push for

N. Hadiaris questioned the difference in response time for emergencies with or without the bridge.

Chief Krauss responded that it was hard to answer as the PD would be coming from all around the town unlike the PD that would be leaving the station.

N. Hadiaris wondered if the towns had considered a pedestrian bridge to connect the communities, the cost could be significantly less.

C. Jacobs said that the grant funding would come from a TIGER grant that would only be allowed to use the funds for that which would put limitations on the build but require the same height limitations.

C. Burnham spoke: We did meet with Executive Councilman Joe Kenny unfortunately things take a very long time at the state level. We are trying and as a State Rep I will not stop.

N. Hunter: Have we considered if we just stopped the project what would that say to the residents that have been expecting a bridge for the 10 years. My second question is have there been any studies about what the economic impact of putting in that bridge in would be and would it help boost business in Milton? Have we

thought about what it would be like after investing 10 years and \$67,000 into a project and just backing out?  
I think it would be of interest to the town to have that data.

M. Racic: \$67,000 is a significant investment but is it worth continuing to invest in a project that wouldn't meet the needs. If the bridge doesn't have the height and two lanes it doesn't seem like it's worth the time.

C. Jacobs spoke: That there is a line of bridges so backing out now would put us to the end of the line as far as funding.

B. Woodruff: over 10 years the thing that I worked on was the municipal agreement and the the municipal agreement drafts went back and forth for a long time and the money went on and the commitment change. At the time the BOS signed it there was a there was a bottom line dollar amount and there was a clause that said the cost rises we can raise the price of the bridge for the town for its local match by up to 10%. It went to the Governor and council they ratified that Municipal agreement, it is still a legal document in force despite all of the stuff that the engineering firm tried to force, that is our leverage. Let the voters decide.

L. Brown stated: We have other bridges that need repairs that we can use the CFP for.

Motion made to close and restrict reconsideration for article 20 for discussion by P. Hurd and seconded by M. Granger.

**The motion passed**

The moderator instructed the Clerk to place warrant article 20 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Ballot as written.

The BOS closed their meeting

The Budget Committee closed their meeting

The Moderator adjourned the first session at 6:01pm

Respectfully submitted,

Brian Leclerc

Appointed Town Clerk

Board of Selectman,

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Humphrey Williams  
Chairman

---

Claudine Burnham  
Vice Chairman

---

Andrew Rawson

**END OF 2024 WARRANT**

DRAFT