

- STRAFFORD TOWN MEETING -
March 14, 2015

The meeting was called to order at 8:00 am on Tuesday, March 10, 2015 at the Strafford Town Hall, in the Town of Strafford, by Moderator William Lord to act on Articles 1 through 7 of the 2015 Town Warrant by ballot vote.

The ballots were cast and the meeting recessed at 7:00 pm for the purpose of tallying the votes.

The meeting was called to order again at 8:30 am on Saturday, March 14, 2015 at the Strafford School gymnasium by Moderator William Lord to act on articles 8 through 21.

The Moderator welcomed all to the meeting and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Moderator read the results of the March 10, 2015 vote:

1. To choose all necessary Town Officers for the year ensuing.

Library Trustee – Three Years	
Susan E. Rizzi.....	280
Library Trustee – One Year	
Donna Franklin (write-in)	8
Selectman – Three Years	
Bryant Scott	187
Planning Board – Three Years	
R Stephen Leighton	261
Planning Board – One Year	
Don Clifford	238
Road Agent – One Year	
Greg Messenger	312
Trustee of the Trust Funds – Three Years	
Michelle T. Bengner	282

2. Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendment to the existing Town of Strafford Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, as proposed by the Planning Board:

“To add a proposed Article 1.4.1 A (2) SUPPLEMENTARY LOT to allow existing lots of record to be subdivided to allow one lot with reduced frontage where the existing lot is greater than 20 acres in area and has between 250 and 400 feet of frontage. The supplementary lot must have at least fifty (50) feet of frontage on an existing Class V or better road.”

YES – 145 NO - 106

3. Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendment to the existing Town of Strafford Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, as proposed by the Planning Board:

“To add a proposed Article 1.4.2 I SMALL WIND ENERGY SYSTEMS to accommodate small wind energy systems in appropriate locations and to establish a permitting process for the construction of small wind energy systems generating up to 100 kW.”

4. Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendment to the existing Town of Strafford Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, as proposed by the Planning Board:

“To add a paragraph to Article 1.9 BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT to establish a time limit for the vesting of Special Exceptions and Variances granted by the Board of Adjustment which matches the time frame set by regulations for the vesting of Planning Board approvals.”

YES – 176

NO - 63

5. Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendment to the existing Town of Strafford Zoning and Land Use Ordinances, as proposed by the Planning Board:

“To add a proposed definition 1.14.24 IN-LAW APARTMENT to clarify what constitutes an in-law apartment. In-law apartments shall share a wall or floor with the residence, must share utilities, and shall not have a full kitchen.”

YES – 125

NO - 126

6. Are you in favor of the adoption of the following amendment to the existing Town of Strafford Building Regulations, as proposed by the Planning Board:

“To add a proposed Building Regulation 4.1.12 FENCES to establish regulations regarding the construction and placement of fences and to require fencing or safety covers for in-ground pools.”

YES – 150

NO - 103

7. “Shall we permit the public library to retain all money it receives from its income-generating equipment to be used for general repairs and upgrading and for the purchase of books, supplies and income-generating equipment?”

YES – 278

NO – 38

The Moderator introduced the officials at the head table.

Moderator Lord discussed the rules of the meeting.

Selectman Lynn Sweet gave a presentation of appreciation to Selectman Steve Leighton, thanking him for his many years of service to the Town.

Lynn Sweet then gave a PowerPoint presentation to review the accomplishments of the past year (2014), the current state of the Town, and plans for 2015.

8. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$355,000. for Capital Improvements (Drainage work, culverts, gravel and paving) of roads within the Town boundaries at the discretion of the Road Agent, as funding permits.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Don Clifford made a motion to amend the article to read:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$300,000.00** for Capital improvements of roads within the Town boundaries at the discretion of the Road Agent, as funding permits.”

Motion made and seconded. Moderator Lord read the amendment. A vote was taken on the amendment and failed.

After brief discussion Moderator Lord re-read the original article. A vote was taken on the original article and carried.

9. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$539,911. for the operation and maintenance of the Strafford Police Department.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Chief Scott Young addressed the article and the reasons for the increase in the budget this year.

After brief discussion, Moderator Lord re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

10. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000. to be placed in the Capital Reserve Fund previously established by Article 13 at the March 2011 Town Meeting for the purpose of purchasing future police vehicles and associated equipment. The Selectmen recommend this article.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After lengthy discussion regarding the number of police cruisers and other cruiser equipment, Moderator Lord re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

11. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$322,333. for the operation and maintenance of the Strafford Fire Department and Rescue Squad.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Fire Chief Scott Whitehouse addressed the article. After lengthy discussion regarding reasons for increases in the budget, Chris Bane made a motion to move the question. Motion seconded. A vote was taken to cease debate and carried. The Moderator re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

12. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000. for the installation, replacement and repair of dry hydrants in the Town of Strafford.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After brief discussion regarding the number of hydrants in Town, Moderator Lord re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

13. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$9,218. for the purpose of purchasing of rescue equipment for the first responder vehicle, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$9,218. From the special revenue fund known as the Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Fund established by Article 8 at the March 14, 2000 Town Meeting to be used for this purpose. No funding to come from general taxation. The Selectmen recommend this article.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After brief discussion, Moderator Lord re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

14. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,344. for the purpose of purchasing six new tires to replace the current tires on 25 Ambulance 1, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$1,344. from the special revenue fund known as the Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Fund established by Article 8 at the March 14, 2000 Town Meeting to be used for this purpose. No funding to come from general taxation. The Selectmen recommend this article.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Chief Scott Whitehouse proposed the following amendment:

“To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,862.00 for the purpose of purchasing six new tires to replace the current tires on 25 Ambulance 1, and to authorize the withdrawal of \$1,862.00 from the special revenue fund known as the Rescue Vehicle and Equipment Fund established by Article 8 at the March 14, 2000 Town meeting to be used for this purpose. No funding to come from general taxation. The Selectmen recommend this article.”

The intent of the amendment is to increase the article by \$518.00, based on anticipated cost of the tires. No funding to come from general taxation.

After brief discussion, Moderator Lord re-read the amendment. A vote was taken on the amendment and carried.

Steve Bulger then made a motion to table the article and seconded. Moderator Lord read the description of tabling the article. A vote was taken to table the article and failed.

After further discussion, a motion was made to move the question and seconded. A vote was taken to move the question and carried.

Moderator Lord re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$6,000. for the purchase of a voting machine (scanner/tabulator) and associated services.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After lengthy discussion a motion was made to move the question and seconded. Vote taken and carried.

The Moderator re-read the article. A vote was taken. The Moderator asked for a count.
Votes counted YES - 46 NO – 31

Article carried.

16. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000. to be placed in the Non-Capital Reserve Fund previously established by Article 9 at the March 2004 Town Meeting to be used for the purpose of funding any future bridge repairs/construction. The Selectmen recommend this article.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After brief discussion the Moderator re-read the article. A vote was taken on the article and carried.

17. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$500. to help defray expenses associated with Strafford’s Bicentennial Celebration in 2020. Funds will be placed in the Bicentennial Fund under the care and custody of the Treasurer of the Strafford Historical Society.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Selectman Lynn Sweet and JoAnn Brown, President of the Strafford Historical Society addressed the article. There was no discussion. The Moderator re-read the article. Vote taken and carried

18. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,246,677. for general Town operations.

Executive.....	\$ 71,802.
Election & Registration.....	30,770.
Financial Administration.....	90,490.
Appraisal of Property & Tax Maps.....	38,089.
Legal Expenses.....	10,000.
Employee Benefits, FICA, Medi & Unemp. Comp.....	36,299.
Planning and Zoning.....	7,484.
General Government Building.....	29,400.
Auto Permits/Town Clerk Fees.....	30,250.
Insurance.....	45,024.
Advertising and Regional Association.....	3,800.
Strafford Regional Planning Comm. Dues.....	4,627.
Contingency Fund.....	15,000.
Annual CPA Audit.....	10,890.
Ambulance.....	1,000.
Emergency Management.....	2,700.
Building Inspection.....	17,129.
General Highway Expenses and Town Maintenance.....	423,500.
Street Lighting.....	4,500.
Solid Waste Disposal.....	232,482.
Animal Control.....	3,800.

Health Inspector.....	400.
Cornerstone VNA (formerly Roch Dstr VNA).....	3,991.
General Assistance and Welfare.....	28,180.
Community Action.....	2,250.
Sexual Assault Support Services.....	992.
My Friend's Place.....	200.

The Homemakers Health Services.....	3,426.
Ready Rides.....	1,500.
Parks and Recreation.....	16,722.
Library.....	72,910.
Patriotic Purposes and Fire Works.....	4,800.
Conservation Commission.....	270.
Interest Expense & Tax Anticipation Notes.....	2,000.

TOTAL..... \$ 1,246,677.

(The intent of this article is to raise the sum of \$1,246,677. exclusive of all other Articles addressed.)

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

After brief discussion, the Moderator re-read the article. Vote taken on the article and carried.

19. "Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the town of Strafford, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$30,000.; for a person 75 years up to 80 years, \$40,000.; for a person 80 years of age or older \$50,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such a person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than **\$25,000.** or if married, a combined net income of less than \$30,000.; and own assets not in excess of \$75,000. excluding the value of the person's actual residence and up to 2 acres or the minimum single family residential lot size specified in the local zoning ordinance."

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Lynn Sweet and Linda Pape addressed the article. After lengthy discussion Kurt Wuelper made a motion to amend the article to read:

"Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from property tax in the town of Strafford, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$30,000.; for a person 75 years up to 80 years, \$40,000.; for a person 80 years of age or older \$50,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 5 years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such a person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than **\$30,000.** or if married, a combined net income of less than **\$40,000.**; and own assets not in excess of

\$75,000. excluding the value of the person's actual residence and up to 2 acres or the minimum single family residential lot size specified in the local zoning ordinance.”

After lengthy discussion on the amendment, Moderator Lord read the amendment. A vote was taken on the amendment and carried.

Moderator Lord then read the article as amended. A vote was taken on the article as amended and carried.

20. “Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000) for the purpose of supplementing the existing Capital Reserve Fund for expansion and improvements to the Hill Library **and to designate the Library Trustees as agents for expenditure from the fund for this purpose.**” By petition. The Selectmen do not recommend this article.

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Kristen Woodman addressed the article and did a power-point presentation.

There was lengthy discussion regarding the wording of article 20. A motion was made by Kristen Woodman to table the article, but discussion continued.

After more discussion, Kurt Wuelper made a motion to reconsider Article 18 to add \$5,000 to the Library line and was seconded.

Due to the level of confusion in the room, Moderator Lord determined it was best to re-read Article 20 in an effort to clarify. He re-read the article. A motion was made to table article 20 and was seconded. A vote was taken to table and carried.

Kurt Wuelper again made a motion to reconsider Article 18 to add \$5,000 to the Library line and was seconded.

After brief discussion, Bill took a vote on reconsidering article 18. A vote count was taken
YES - 39 NO - 31

Bill read the amendment to the Hill Library line on the budget and the total budget amount.

There was lengthy discussion regarding what the money would be used for, and whether or not we should change Article 18 at this time.

Moderator Lord read the amendment to add \$5,000 to Article 18. A vote was taken on the amendment and failed.

A vote was taken again on article 18 as originally written and carried.

Steve Bulger made a motion to limit reconsideration on Article 18 and was seconded. A vote was taken and carried.

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

Moderator Lord read the article. Motion made and seconded.

Don Clifford proposed that we do a study on putting a Quonset Hut to store a first responder/emergency vehicle at the fire station.

Selectman Steve Leighton addressed the proposal. After much discussion on this Steve Bulger made a motion to table the proposal and was seconded. A vote was taken to table and carried.

A motion was made to restrict reconsideration on all previously voted articles and was seconded. A vote was taken to restrict reconsideration and carried.

A motion was made to adjourn and was seconded. A vote to adjourn at 11:38 am carried.

Given under my hand and seal, this 14th day of March, in the year of our Lord Two Thousand and Fifteen.

Respectfully Submitted,
Diane Waldron
Strafford Town Clerk