

2021 DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES
FEBRUARY 6, 2021

Moderator Eileen Meaney called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. and asked everyone to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Jack Meaney, Chairman, Board of Selectmen, introduced the Board of Selectman: Ricky Hippler, Vice Chairman, Jon Osborne, Sherry Burdick and John Van Loendersloot. He recognized Police Chief Chris Moore, Beth Rouse, Finance Administrator, Laura Spector-Morgan, Town Counsel, Fire Chief Bob Vezina, Benji Knapp, Department of Public Works Director, and Naomi Bolton, Town Administrator.

Moderator Meaney recognized Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, Supervisors of the Checklist, Tom Downing, Chairman, Finance Committee along with members of the Finance Committee.

Moderator Meaney recognized those residents of Weare who passed away in 2020.

Moderator Meaney explained the rules of order for the deliberative session – right to speak: all eligible residents in attendance have the right to speak to the articles or amendments on the floor. Without objection, the moderator may also permit non-residents, town officials, staff or their subject matter experts to provide information to this assembly regarding motions on the floor. All speakers and members of the assembly are expected to engage in civil debate and will refrain from personal attacks. Please be courteous while others are speaking, be respectful of others opinions and their right to express them. All discussions will be held through the moderator and if someone wishes to speak, they will approach the microphone and address the moderator; if someone is unable to approach the microphone, let the moderator know and one will be brought to that individual. After being recognized, please clearly state your full name and address for the minutes. Normal order of discussion: a motion to consider a warrant article must be made and seconded before any debate begins on the subject of the article. Both the mover and the seconder must provide their name and address. After the motion has been moved and seconded, the maker of the motion will be given the first opportunity to speak provided the motion is not ruled out of order. After the mover of the motion has spoken, other eligible members of the assembly will be provided an opportunity to speak. Appropriate proposals to amend the main motion may be offered by eligible residents during debate but may only be discussed if they are moved and seconded. Any amendment which changes the subject matter of the main motion or makes the change to contract warrant article or attempts to create a wholly new warrant will be ruled out of order. If any amendments to motions are adopted, debate will return to the main motion as amended; if any such amendments fail to be adopted, debate will return to the main motion without changes. The moderator requests that any member of the body proposing an amendment to make a motion provide a written copy to the moderator before they move it. Once debated completely, the moderator will read aloud the motion to be voted on before calling the question asking for a vote of the residents. After the vote, the moderator will announce the results to the assembly.

Moderator Meaney proceeded onto the Warrant Articles beginning with Article 9.

ARTICLE 9

Shall the Town 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 Seven Million One Hundred Fifty-Four Thousand One Hundred Forty Dollars (\$7,154,140)? Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Seven Million Nine Thousand Five Hundred Ninety-Two Dollars (\$7,009,592), 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 special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Meaney explained that, in 2020, the voters were informed that, by voting yes on the warrant, the articles that were listed below would be reoccurring costs in 2021. He pointed out that within Warrant Article 5 last year, the collective bargaining agreement, was 6.39 percent last year and this year is going to be 3 percent with the impact on the budget in 2021 of \$56,847; Warrant Article 6, raises for non-union employees; the impact on the 2021 budget would be \$69,768; Warrant Article 7, for full time employees the Highway Department alone would impact at \$63,749, two full time firefighter EMT's at \$178,314 and additional full time employees and additional part time employees impacting the budget of \$18,198. Selectman Meaney noted that this article added \$386,876 to the operating budget and was a decision made by the voters and not the Board of Selectmen last year.

Selectman Meaney highlighted additional items within the proposed budget: wages to keep the transfer station open one night per week during the Summer, a decision made by the residents and not the Board of Selectmen; additional costs due to the NH Retirement System that mandated contribution increases: Group 2 – Police from 24.43 percent to 33.88 percent (5.45 percent increase), Fire from 30.09 percent to 32.99 percent (2.90 percent increase) and Group 1 – employees from 11.17 percent to 14.06 percent (2.89 percent increase) which added an additional \$53,705 to the town operating expenses; in 2019 pay increases were given to the Public Works Director and Finance Administrator and in 2020 pay increases were given to the Police Chief, three police officers and the Forest Fire Warden which combined, including payroll taxes, total \$55,873; within the Police Department there was a \$78,000 contract that was opted out not to renew and the monies that were allocated to that contract are being proposed to be distributed to other areas of the departments' budget, especially the areas that were underfunded; and in 2020, the town office building staggered staff so that they were able to increase the hours that they may serve the public to fifty hours per week (Monday through Friday 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) with no overtime and no extra cost to the taxpayer.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee does not recommend this article. The proposed budget is 4.4 percent higher than the current operating budget. The default budget is 2.3 percent higher than the current operating budget. This is an unusual tax year. A likely reduction in revenue coupled with increased contributions for pensions and health care premiums in both school and town budgets is projected to have a higher-than-normal increase in property taxes. For these reasons, the committee has tried to focus on the level of funding needed to maintain the level of services we currently provide, while "pausing" proposed improvements. They also wanted to ensure there is no degradation in life-saving response services. The committee believes the default budget is adequate to meet those needs. Mr. Downing clarified

that the difference between last year's default and this proposed budget is that last year had an impact of \$4.45 whereas the estimated impact on taxes for this year on the proposed budget is \$4.62.

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, feels that it needs to be noted that they are starting out with a 25 cent increase in taxes added on to however the voters end up voting. This 25 cent increase is derived from \$227,540 made up of two items: the war service credit and the overlay, the amount of money used to abate taxes. He pointed out that these numbers don't appear until the selectmen set the tax rate. He is pleased that the Finance Committee indicated a 4.4 percent increase over last year's budget and requests that either the selectmen and/or the Finance Committee include in dollars what that 4.4 percent is. Mr. Campana came up with \$305,448 in budget surplus from last year's budget and would like them to include reference to the budget surplus. With that budget surplus, there are several areas of increases that the selectmen chose to issue themselves circumventing the taxpayers. He pointed out that Selectman Meaney had stated that another contributing factor to the increase in general government is pay increases that the Board of Selectmen approved in 2019. He noted that, with the default budget and surplus that the town was operating on in 2020, they were able to cover close to \$90,000 noting that he feels that last year's default budget satisfied what the selectmen needed to operate. He supports the Finance Committee's recommendation.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, in regards to line G, Finance Administrator's salary, questioned why it was a 25 percent increase.

Selectman Meaney responded that line G is not the salary clarifying that it's the operating expense for the Finance Administrator's office.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 9 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 10

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Three Dollars (\$59,953) to be used for raises for non-union Town and Library personnel? If approved, this addition would become part of the annual budget. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact = \$0.07

Selectman Burdick moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Burdick explained that this would give 98 town employees a three percent increase including highway, fire and rescue, town office and library employees.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article which would provide a three percent pay raise to non-union town employees; this would cover administrative, fire/rescue, library and highway positions. The majority of personnel affected by this are firefighting/EMT members. The committee felt it was important to recognize these first line responders with raises. Members in the minority, while supporting raises, felt a lower percentage raise would have been more appropriate noting the financial impacts of COVID on taxpayers.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, feels that a small increase to retain the employees is very important. He is unsure why the Finance Committee had members in the minority in regards to this item.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, explained that the committee chose to allow some representation for a counter-argument for articles that had close votes from members.

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, asked whether the selectmen knew the percentage increase slated this year for Social Security recipients.

Moderator Meaney relayed that the selectmen have responded with 1.3 percent.

Mr. Campana doesn't feel that anyone even considered what Social Security was. He noted that town employees get raises every year and only pay ten percent of their insurance noting that maybe it's time to increase this percentage with a three percent raise. He was at the meeting in which the selectmen decided upon a three percent raise stating that the rationale was that the police were getting a three percent raise and it would be unfair to not treat the non-union employees the same way. He feels that the rationale is flawed because the police bargain for a three percent raise; it's in their contract. He read some of the increase amounts that he received from the Finance office. Mr. Campana is concerned with the 1.3 percent Social Security recipients hurting and paying for these increases.

Chris Hague, Abijah Bridge Road, indicated that she is a member of the Finance Committee. She briefly discussed their procedures and noted that they did not hear any comments during the process. She stated that it is up to the voters now. She indicated that members discussed the fact that they could lose employees that they desperately need unless they stay competitive and that employees deserve what is in this article.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, noted that they had gone without a raise for six years at one point and when they did get a raise, they starting paying for an additional ten percent of their insurance. He pointed out that this raise would only average between 50 cents to 60 cents per hour for most of his employees. He stated that he did give up his own raise one year so his employees could receive a raise stressing the importance of non-union employees and that they need this to retain them.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, believes that they had the most transparent Finance Committee sessions and encouraged the public to watch those videos because they were very open discussions.

Tom Downing, Winterberry Lane, indicated that three percent is the norm in the private sector and doesn't feel it's unreasonable especially since there weren't raises handed out for a period of six years. In terms of individuals hurting, he noted that there may have been spouses out of work so a raise for the other spouse could make a difference.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 10 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 11

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Ninety-Nine Thousand Two Hundred Ninety-One Dollars (\$99,291) to hire two (2) full-time Firefighter/EMTs? This represents the wages, taxes, and benefits for six (6) months, and certain one-time expenses. If approved, the Fire Department Operating Budget will be reduced by Thirty-Seven Thousand Seven Hundred Eighty-Three Dollars (\$37,783); and this addition would become part of the annual operating budget with an estimated annual cost of One Hundred Eighty-Two Thousand Five Hundred Fifty-Seven Dollars (\$182,557).

(Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact = \$0.07

Selectman Hippler moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Hippler explained that the purpose of this article is to hire two more full-time employees for the Fire Department which is part of a four year plan to keep and put in place. He pointed out that the response times have gone down to serve the members of the community.

Fire Chief Bob Vezina stated that this article is the third year of a four year plan. He indicated that they have been successful in the personnel they've hired including two paramedics and two advanced EMTs all which are firefighters as well. He pointed out that the pandemic highlighted the fragility of their part-time staffing model through personnel being quarantined or otherwise prohibited from working in this community that caused disruption in scheduling. He explained that having the ability to require employees to remain on duty or return to duty at such time and such length of time as may be necessary is a useful tool afforded by full-time personnel.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article in a year impacted by COVID. The committee did not want to "pause" this program and potentially compromise life-saving services in town. Per-diem personnel, while important, cannot always be depended on to fill schedules. Their first priority is often full-time service in another jurisdiction. COVID quarantines can also impact their availability. This is year three of a four year program recommended by the Fire Chief to ramp up staffing to eight full-time FF/EMTs; four positions have been approved in the last two years. This has given the chief more flexibility and control in scheduling adequate coverage of shifts while ensuring consistency in department procedures.

Tom Clow, Concord Stage Road, spoke in support of this article stating that having 24/7 coverage for quick responses is going to save lives.

John Lawton, Oak Hill Road, questioned whether this article would bring staffing up to eight.

Moderator Meaney relayed the response that this article would bring the staffing to six.

Mr. Lawton asked what the coverage will be with these six employees.

Chief Vezina replied that staff works 24 hour shifts so this would bring coverage to 3/4 of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. With this hire, they would still use per diem in the call force to cover the remaining 1/4 of time.

Mr. Lawton questioned whether all staff is full-time or is there also per diem.

Chief Vezina responded that they still have per diem but they are half way to their goal.

Mr. Lawton asked what the hours were for the per diem.

Chief Vezina responded that it includes a lot of components involving a combination of two or three different classifications of individuals to cover.

Mr. Lawton questioned whether the town is covered 24/7.

Chief Vezina explained they are covered 24 hours per day if using the call force as well to work on gaps in staffing.

Mr. Lawton asked if the current full-time staff is working 24 hour shifts.

Chief Vezina responded yes.

Mr. Lawton inquired whether they are at the station.

Chief Vezina responded that they are on duty for 24 hours.

Mr. Lawton questioned the number of days staff works.

Chief Vezina replied that they work an average of 42 hours per week – 24 hour shift, off for three days, and come back for another 24 hour shift.

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, with the anticipation of all full-time and 24/7 coverage, feels that the Chief's plan appears to be good and well thought out but what concerns him is the physical capabilities of the building to house and provide for those 24 hour shifts such as kitchen, sleeping, and showers.

Chief Vezina indicated that the building was built in 2003 and had been intended for such staffing when they designed it; is meeting their needs as he foresees.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 11 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 12

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Five Thousand Three Hundred Eighty-Two Dollars (\$5,382) for the cost of increasing the hourly wages for the employees of Chase Park within the Parks and Recreation Department. This represents the wages and payroll taxes affiliated. If this Warrant Article is approved, this would become part of the annual operating budget.

(Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact = \$0.01

Selectman Van Loendersloot moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Van Loendersloot indicated that staff did an excellent job dealing with COVID restrictions as well as maintaining the park. The payroll budget, including taxes, is currently \$29,776 and they are looking to increase this by \$5,382 in order to stay competitive and retain employees.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The Parks and Rec has had difficulty filling summer positions at our recreational sites. The modest increase in pay has minimal tax impact and will make wages more competitive with other part-time seasonal employers and make it easier to fill park attendant and lifeguard positions.

Janice Mathews, Woodbury Road, asked why they are not increasing fees to cover this proposed increase.

Selectman Van Loendersloot explained that its currently set up that the fees from Chase Park go into the general fund and not directly into payroll taxes.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 12 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 13

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Six Thousand Four Hundred Dollars (\$36,400)

representing the cost of turning the Part Time Building Inspector into a Full Time employee. This would represent the wages and benefits for nine (9) months. If this Warrant Article is approved, this would become part of the annual operating budget with an annual cost of an additional Forty Two Thousand Four Hundred Seventy-Nine Dollars (\$42,479). (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact = \$0.04

Selectman Burdick moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Burdick explained that due to COVID there have been a lot more home projects occurring additionally, there has been a lot of new construction happening. She pointed out that there have been a lot of delays in inspections and completions to homeowners and builders with the inspector being part-time. This article proposes increasing the 24 hour position into 40 hours increasing the salary to a total of \$78,879 for the year.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. In a year impacted by COVID, more residents are at home. There has been a higher demand on the building inspector for "home project" renovations and new construction. This has caused some delays in project approvals. Timely processing of requests would potentially increase revenues to the town. While the demand may continue, committee members in the minority supported a delay this year to see if the trend continues post-COVID before committing to funding and benefits for a full-time position.

Selectman Hippler explained that they had a full-time inspector and when he retired, to further meet the demands of the town at that time, it was decided by the board to make that position part-time. He stated that they have come back to a point in which a full-time inspector is needed again to meet the adequate services of the town.

Selectman Jack Meaney, Ex Officio member of the Planning Board, indicated that the building trades and renovations in this town has skyrocketed; a lot of new homes are being built and along with other the renovations, the demand from the building department are extreme. He explained that the town has missed revenue due to the fact that they didn't have a building inspector available. By statute, if you don't have a get someone by a certain time to that inspection, they can basically go ahead and call for an inspection afterwards. He stated that due to this, they have missed out on inspection fees. He pointed out that this is basically a self-funding position because of the revenue that the town receives on permits and inspections and feels that this should be moved forward.

Jack Meaney, Quaker Street, stated that he would be unhappy as a homeowner if he had to wait a week to receive an inspection for a renovation project he needed to get completed.

Rochelle Kelley, Wildwood Road, wondered if this would make the inspector reachable noting that her husband and his co-worker avoid projects in Weare at all costs because they can't get a hold of the inspector. She stated that they leave messages and emails but never hear back and asked whether this will make the inspector reachable.

Selectman Meaney responded that this article would increase the hours to 40 hours per week which means the inspector would be in the office five days a week and more accessible to the public.

Gary Hopper, Buxton School Road, noted that this may be a temporary problem because of people being out of work and inquired whether any consideration had been given to hiring someone part-time to fill the gap until things are back to normal.

Selectman Meaney responded that it has been a part-time position since the previous inspector retired,. He stated that inspections were beginning to back up prior to COVID. He explained that mutual aid from other communities wasn't working because those inspectors had jobs to do in their towns. He pointed out that this proposed article proposes a full-time position as it was originally to keep up with the workload.

Leah Cushman, North Huntington Road, recalls discussion between the Fire Department and the Board of Selectmen about making this a cross training position instead of a new full-time position. She questioned how it came to be to consider making this a full-time position instead of cross training Fire Department staff. She feels cross training would have been a more economical way to go.

Fire Chief Vezina replied that there was a concept that the Fire Department had proposed but one of the issues they ran into early on was identifying those individuals that could perform those or had the professional qualifications; it became pretty clear soon that the best person for this was the part-time inspector that the town already had. He added that this is not a COVID issue stating that the building trades has been busy for several years. From the Fire Department's standpoint from doing mechanical inspections, which represents 1/3 of permits issued, he has been doing over 500 inspections a year.

Janice Mathews, Woodbury Road, questioned in regards to the approximate amount of revenue that was missed in 2020.

Selectman Meaney responded that he didn't have the exact amount missed but compared building code permit amounts over the past few years: 2018 - \$57,489, 2019 - \$71,190, 2020 – approximately \$65,000 (estimated revenue in 2020 were projected to be \$80,00). He indicated that they missed inspections and revised permitting fees because there were times when there were a lot of gaps in which they weren't getting the correct revenues for the permits.

Janice Mathews, Woodbury Road, inquired whether the building permits and inspections were two different fees.

Moderator Meaney relayed the answer that they are two different fees.

Bruce Fillmore, Planning Board Vice Chair, stated that one of the problems with the previous fee method was that it was based on estimated project value; the project value was written on the form by either the contractor or homeowner. He noted that a lot of them would deduct their labor and other costs from the value so they were missing out on potential fees because the values were not listed properly. Mr. Fillmore explained that they have since gone to a per square foot permit fee so it takes out that value and they are now collecting fees as they ought to be.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 13 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 14

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) for the purpose of replacing Fire apparatus pump components with said funds to come from the Fire Department Equipment and Vehicle Special Revenue Fund. This special warrant article is a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the replacement is completed on or by December 31, 2026. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact= \$0.00

Selectman Hippler moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Hippler explained that the seals in the pump area have degraded and if the pump seals are not replaced, it could render it useless. He pointed out that these repairs have zero tax impact.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The funding will provide necessary major repairs to a fire truck. The FD Special Revenue Fund, supported by ambulance reimbursements, is the appropriate source to use and avoids any tax impact this year. The fund will have a sufficient balance and projected revenue stream to plan for major ambulance and fire truck purchases in future years.

There being no discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 14 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 15

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty One Thousand Dollars (\$61,000) for the purchase of one (1) fully equipped front line police cruiser? (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact= \$0.07

Selectman Van Loendersloot moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Van Loendersloot stated that it's been a couple of years since the Police Department has been able to purchase a new patrol vehicle – last year both articles failed and the year prior it was decided that the new chief would address what their needs are. He indicated that, since then, they have retired the last Ford Crown Victoria and the Chief's Ford Taurus due to excessive rust and major mechanical failure which would have been too cost prohibitive to repair. He noted that the chief has a great plan in place for life cycling the fleet and keeping repair maintenance to a minimum.

Police Chief Chris Moore highlighted the high mileage on the vehicles due to driving and idling. He pointed out that if one vehicle is approved per year, the vehicles they currently have will have between 350,000 to 400,000 by the time they phase out through their life cycle. He indicated that if they don't start getting on a plan to replace vehicles, he will have to recommend a hiring freeze because he won't have the equipment to respond to calls for service. He'll be able to do that with the cars he needs by doubling up officers which means not as much proactive police work.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. There are currently five cruisers – four Chargers and a 2013 Explorer. Two other vehicles were no longer serviceable and were auctioned for scrap last year. Therefore, replacements are needed to support the mission of the department. The replacement cruiser more adequately meets the needs of the department.

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, referenced last year's mailer requesting two vehicles and pointed out that it indicated for both that it would be Chevy Tahoe 4x4 police pursuit vehicles. As a taxpayer, he likes to know what he's buying into and requests that the selectmen include that language in the mailer. He would like a commitment at this meeting for the language of the description of the vehicle.

Moderator Meaney explained that, procedurally, if the selectmen are going to have a discussion about making a decision in regards to the mailer, they'd have to be in a meeting to discuss transparently;

they would have to notice said meeting so other members of the town had an opportunity to attend. She believes that the discussion on the mailer is on the schedule for Monday.

Selectman Meaney confirmed that the discussions for the mailer is on board's Monday night agenda. He has made note of Mr. Campana's request.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, remembered a lot of discussion at last year's meeting as to whether the vehicles were going to be marked or not and inquired whether this would be marked or unmarked.

Moderator Meaney relayed the answer to be a marked vehicle.

Frank Campana, Quaker Street, questioned the change in procedure noting that a decision was made at last year's meeting in regards to the mailer.

Moderator Meaney clarified that the reason that the mailer is to be discussed at a separate meeting is so that people could see the agenda and that it was going to be discussed. She stated that this is so people have the opportunity to provide public comment explaining that the board does this so that it's in an appropriate format. For the record, she stated that Mr. Campana's request has been recorded.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 15 would be placed on the ballot as written..

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 16

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$230,000) to be added to the previously established Highway Truck and Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing a new fully equipped 10-wheel plow truck for the Highway Department? The purpose is to replace an existing plow truck. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen) Estimated tax impact= \$0.26

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Meaney stated that they are trying to play catch up for a rotation schedule. He pointed out that the Highway Department has a certain amount of responsibility as fire and police and when the roads don't get plowed or repaired, the fire and police can't get through. The Highway Department's responsibility is to maintain and take care of the roads because the roads are the town's biggest asset; that is where most of the money is spent. He pointed out that the truck that they are trying to replace is a 2004 Volvo with 130,000 miles and 11,045 hours. In the past year, this vehicle alone has cost approximately \$6,000 in repairs. He suggested keeping the rotation going so they have the tools that they need to do their jobs.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, highlighted the high hours on the trucks and stressed the importance of keeping a rotation on the vehicles.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, addressed a change of precedent in regards to this article and other articles. He explained that they changed and went against precedence in the way they start

their blurbs this year. In previous years, they were not technically correct and he wanted to state for taxpayers that when the committee says they are not recommending an article, the first number represents the number of people not recommending the article.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee does not recommend this article. While the committee supports a planned replacement program of one plow truck per year, it felt a "pause" was appropriate this year due to other higher priority needs and the potential for higher taxes impacted by reduced revenue streams. The committee anticipates resuming the replacement program next year, noting the fleet has eight trucks over twelve years old.

Mr. Knapp asked if the Finance Committee can put in the minority opinion on the committee's blurb as in years past.

Mr. Downing acknowledged the request and is committed to bring the topic as an agenda item to the committee to discuss Mr. Knapp's request.

Ricky Hippler, Quaker Street, has been a truck mechanic all his life and doesn't believe anyone would run a vehicle as long as the town does. He noted that the most severe service duty of a vehicle is a plow truck – they are in the salt every storm, the plows are beating on the frame rails, the engine hours are high. He is fully supportive of this article as a taxpayer and is disappointed that the Finance Committee did not recommend this.

Joe Sarno, Barnard Hill Road, indicated that he sees bills that come across his desk for these vehicle repairs which is ridiculous. He is saying this as a taxpayer because he's paying for this too. He strongly recommends keeping trucks in the rotation just to keep up; they don't have extra, only what they need.

Selectman Meaney pointed out that the truck is a Volvo and the only place that may work on it is the place where it was purchased, McDevitt's in Manchester, noting that they don't like to work on it. He noted that they sometimes can't get it repaired and have to go to private vendors which costs more money. He added that if something major goes on this truck, that will be it for it because they may not be able to get the parts to fix it.

Rochelle Kelley, Wildwood Road, inquired whether town vehicles are exempt from state inspections. Moderator Meaney responded that they are held to the same standards as other vehicles.

Ms. Kelley asked how the vehicle is still on the road in the condition it is in if they are supposed to be inspected.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, indicated that big trucks are exempt from emission standards as other vehicles adding that they need to have good brakes, tires and windshields.

Ms. Kelley asked if the actual frame being rusted prevents it from passing inspection.

Mr. Knapp replied that it will in a point of time when it breaks. They try to attempt to make as much repairs as they can but it can become very costly if this does happen.

Paul Gannon, Flanders Memorial Road, questioned whether there are any standards as to how many hours that a vehicle should be able to run. He further questioned whether any consideration had been given to purchasing used vehicles.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, doesn't believe there is an hour standard on a plow truck. He doesn't consider purchasing used because it may be buying someone else's problem. He noted that it's hard to convince taxpayers to buy a truck every eleven years and if they buy a truck half way through its life, they would have to come back in six years. He pointed out that a plow truck is specially ordered for a town's specific needs.

Selectman Hippler stated that the Public Works Director has a spec so to buy a used truck that has the same specs would be impossible.

Daniel Recuperero, Roosevelt Road, inquired as to where the vehicles go when the town retires them questioning whether they are auctioned off and whether money is collected for them to put towards the new vehicle.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, responded that when they replace a truck, with the exception of one time, they trade it; the value given for the trade in comes off the cost of the new truck. He noted that one time he opted to sell it outright and when doing so, the money goes into the general fund which didn't go to offset the truck. He stated that they are running \$200,000 trucks down to a \$3,000 value.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, stated that this was a challenging vote in which the members that did not vote for it really had a hard time with it. He stated for the taxpayers that they weren't saying they didn't need the truck they fully believe they do. In terms for the reason buying, he doesn't believe anyone can argue with that. In this instance, it was a matter of what they believed the appetite of the taxpayer was and the tax impact. The recommendation for them was more about doing it a little bit later.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 16 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 17

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$115,000) to be added to the previously established Transfer Station Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing a new trash trailer for the Transfer Station? The purpose is to replace an existing transfer trash trailer. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact= \$0.13

Selectman Osborne moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Osborne indicated that this would be replacing a fourteen year old trash trailer. Describing the poor condition, he noted that the vendor that they contract with to haul these trailers can refuse to haul them which would put the town in a real bind. Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, added that the new trailer would have three axles so that it can legally haul more weight.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The transfer station has two trash trailers and both are critical to operations. On any given Saturday, both are needed to meet demand. The trailer being replaced is fourteen years old and has extensive rusting, placing it at risk for catastrophic failure that would impact transfer station operations with no back up.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 17 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 18

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000) to be added to the previously established Bridge Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of erecting, repairing and/or replacing bridges? (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact= \$0.03

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded

Selectman Meaney stated that bridges are an important part of the infrastructure on the town's roads. He indicated that bridges are critical and take a lot of beating. He pointed out that they had a temporary replacement of one on River Road and it looks like this is going to get hit again. He indicated that there is currently \$422,078.94 in the capital reserve fund and they are asking for an additional \$25,000 to be added due to the costs. He explained that the town has an agreement with the State of NH to help with the bridge project, 80/20 split, and if the town doesn't have the twenty percent when the state comes forth, the state will go on to another town. He doesn't feel this an unreasonable request to keep the town's infrastructure going and bridges safe.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, stated that the money currently available was, at the time, the estimate for the town's twenty percent for the three red listed bridges but they are anticipating that there will be a little bit of inflation. He indicated that the River Road bridge is slated for 2026 dependent whether the state has their eighty percent. He explained that a few years ago, DES changed their rules on stream crossings so any stream that is ten feet or wider, bank to bank, requires a bridge not culverts. He added that there are other bridges in town that are not red listed that still need repairs such as guardrails, etc.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee does not recommend this article. Over the past four years, the taxpayers have approved warrant articles establishing an account of over \$420,000 to address three red-listed bridges in town. Towns must have 20 percent matching funds available to supplement 80 percent State funding when projects are scheduled by the State. The first major project (River Road Bridge) for funding is projected for 2026.

Even if that date is moved up, there should be sufficient matching funds to give it a “green light”. Existing funding can also be used for temporary repairs as needed until the major project is scheduled. As a firm date gets closer, there will be additional opportunities to supplement this fund as needed.

Selectman Hippler added that bridges are inspected to ensure they are safe for travel noting that the Department of Transportation makes a report on the bridges. He believes it was in 2015 that they did repairs to the River Road bridge in which they ended up putting more support on the rotted out members that go across – it was a temporary fix then and that’s when they began making this fund. He foresees repairs that will need to be done.

There being no discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 18 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 19

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand Dollars (\$525,000) to be added to the previously established Road Reconstruction Capital Reserve Fund for road reconstruction and resurfacing of roads with up to Two Hundred Seventy-Six Thousand, One Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$276,150) anticipated to be received from the State of New Hampshire Highway Block Grant (pursuant to RSA 235) and the estimated remaining balance of Two Hundred Forty-Eight Thousand Eight Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$248,850) to be raised by taxation?
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact= \$0.28

Selectman Osborne moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Osborne noted that this is an every year occurrence. He stated that a \$2.5 million bond was passed two or three years ago which helped the roads extremely; this article is just to keep the road reconstruction infrastructure up to standard.

Benji Knapp, Public Works Director, explained that more than half of it comes from the state. He stated that this mainly does “total” reconstruction however, so many other things come out of road reconstruction that it’s kind of a “slush” fund for any type of road work. His hope is to increase this a little bit every year until they get to the point where they can do total road reconstruction a couple miles a year as they do and also do a substantial amount of road preservation so they don’t have to come back for a bond.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The 2019 road reconstruction bond has “righted the ship” and set us on a path to keep up with road maintenance, provided we sustain annual funding. Failure to approve this article will start us on the road to playing catch up in the future. Approval will keep us on track. If this article fails, the town would still receive State funding up to the anticipated level cited in the article.

There being no discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 19 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 20

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the previously established Government Building and Maintenance Capital Reserve fund for the purpose of funding unanticipated failures to aging infrastructure?

(Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact= \$0.02

Selectman Burdick moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Burdick indicated that there is approximately \$50,000 in this fund currently and this article would add \$20,000 for any issues that requires repairs to town buildings.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. While the committee would prefer the article identified specific funding targets, it recognizes the age and condition of many of our town buildings. The fund has approximately \$49,000 on hand now; this small supplement will increase the funds available for unanticipated repairs.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, inquired whether this fund is only to be used for unanticipated (emergencies) spending or can it be used for a maintenance and repair plan.

Selectman Meaney responded that it can be applied to both project and emergencies.

Selectman Hippler added that it can be funded for planned projects or reactive projects such as emergencies noting that it can be used to help every town building they have.

Janice Mathews, Woodbury Road, asked what the approximate spending is out of this fund per year for unanticipated items.

Selectman Hippler replied that it varies year to year. He noted this year was \$1,800; the year before they put a furnace in the South Weare Fire Station; this past year there was a lot of issues with the town offices septic drain system due to the aged conditions of the pipes and those costs were between \$5,000 to \$7,000.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 20 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 21

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) for cemetery improvements and fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of said sum from Cemetery Trust Funds Cy Pres Account? (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact = \$ 0.00

Selectman Burdick moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Burdick stated that this is an annual article noting that funds come out of the Cy Pres Account. She indicated that \$7,434 was spent last year from the account.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The committee supports use of these funds to maintain the interior portion of town cemeteries. This is funded by a withdrawal from the Cemetery Trust Fund and has no tax impact.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, inquired as to the fund balance of this account.

Moderator Meaney relayed that the trustees did not list that information.

Mr. Flaherty commented that this is the third time that someone has asked for a fund balance suggesting that it may be helpful if there was a fund balance listing in the future.

Moderator Meaney asked if Mr. Flaherty is suggesting that the fund balance be included on the documents.

Mr. Flaherty responded that he is suggesting that the fund balance be included on the warrant article itself.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 21 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 22

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) to allow the Conservation Commission to secure contracted services with a Licensed Forester for forestry services including plan updates, harvest layout, harvest management, forest inventory, invasive species control and other related services, and fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of that sum from the Town Forest Account? (Recommended by Board of Selectmen)
Estimated tax impact = \$ 0.00

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Meaney explained that this article pays for a forester to see how the town is managing its land and checks things they have to do to keep the land fit and able to be used by the residents. He indicated that the forestry fund currently has \$157,992.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The committee supports having the professional services of a licensed forester to ensure wise use of resources to the benefit of the town. This is funded out of the Town Forest Account and has no tax impact.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, indicated that they raised \$25,000 last year for this fund noting that it has a pretty high balance in it. He questioned as to what the level point of this fund is. He feels there is a tax impact because they are raising money eventually to replenish the account.

Selectman Meaney responded that the money that goes into this fund comes from the current use taxes that are collected.

Mr. Flaherty asked if this means it is not raised by taxation.

Naomi Bolton, Town Administrator, explained that the forest fund they are asking to spend from is the dollars that gets put in there when the Conservation Commission has the harvest; the Conservation Fund is different – another fund the Conservation Commission has the right to use but which comes from 75 percent of the current use penalties that are paid. In regards to this article the balance is \$157,000 and, if adding this one and the next one, there is not enough money to do what they want. She stated that there is a planned harvest scheduled for this year so that would put dollars back into the town forest fund, allowing them to hire a forester as well as fund a purchase if something was to come up this year. She noted that they currently have a purchase and sale on a piece from last year's money.

Mr. Flaherty noted that it sounds like, to him, that the fund is filled up with penalties and not taxes.

Ms. Bolton clarified that the current use penalties go into a separate fund called the Conservation Fund and not what is spent out of here. She explained that this comes from the forest dollars that is collected from a harvest that the licensed forester oversees and which then goes into the town forest fund to be able to fund this article and the next one.

Mr. Flaherty asked if it was self-funding.

Ms. Bolton responded yes.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 22 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 23

Shall the Town raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Forty Thousand Dollars (\$140,000) for the Conservation Commission expenditure toward the purchase of new town forest land, and fund this appropriation by authorizing the withdrawal of that sum from the Town Forest Account?
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen)

Estimated tax impact = \$ 0.00

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Selectman Meaney noted that they are in the process of a purchase and sales agreement on land that is adjoining some of the town land on Colby Hill Road. He indicated that the dollars are raised from current use penalties.

Tom Downing, Finance Committee Chair, was recognized to speak. The Finance Committee recommends this article. The committee supports having funds available to purchase land to add to the town forest. This is consistent with maintaining the rural character of our community. This article has no tax impact.

Gary Hopper, Buxton School Road, asked what percentage of the land mass does the town already own in Weare.

Moderator Meaney indicated that they are working to find this information but did not have it readily available.

Moderator Meaney announced, for the record, that Selectman Hippler has been excused from the meeting.

Gary Hopper, Buxton School Road, noted that in 2003 or 2004, he heard that the state and federal governments already own 25 percent of the land mass in New Hampshire. He stated that it reaches a point in which this has a tax value in that it's less and less land value available in taxes and property values go up. The point of his previous question is when do they stop buying land as a town.

Tom Clow, Concord Stage Road, noted that the town doesn't always own some of the land because sometimes an easement is purchased; the owner agrees not to develop on the land but at the same time taxes can continue to be paid on that land and can be bought or sold just not developed. Land can be under a conservation easement but still generate taxes.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 23 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Naomi Bolton, Town Administrator, provided information requested by Gary Hopper stating that 6,891.34 acres on the MS form is exempt which means that is acreage that is state owned, town owned, conservation land or other land. She added that non-exempt is 29,953.07 acres so if dividing the two figures it's 23 percent that is exempt.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 24

To see if the town will vote to Enact a noise Ordinance, restricting the use of Tannerite or any other type of binary rifle target, within a residential area that results in a potent explosion? **BY PETITION**

Selectman Meaney moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Phil McManus, petitioner, Hoit Mill Road, spoke out of necessity and concern with regard to the health and well-being of the residents and pets; the concern is a product called Tannerite, how it's being used and where its being used. He explained that it's an exploding target that alerts the shooter of a rifle that shoots high velocity rounds that the target has been struck. He clarified that this is a noise ordinance specifically for binary exploding targets only and that the article's purpose is to give police the legal authority to enforce against those individuals who misuse Tannerite or similar binary targets because, at present, there are no noise ordinances in place. He noted that the trademark name Tannerite is not regulated at the federal or state level and becomes problematic when the user mixes it in excessive amounts. He highlighted two incidents occurring on November 3rd and 11th in 2020. Mr. McManus indicated that because of numerous call complaints over the past two years, police wanted to witness the individual mixing and shooting the target to determine what is reasonable and what amount would be considered disorderly conduct under RSA 644:2; the amount of Tannerite mixed and used in the police observed demonstration was 1.5 pounds and proved to be a potent blast but paled in comparison with previous explosions. Even though the explosions are random, he feels a town ordinance is needed to give police the legal authority to enforce against this type of extreme behavior. When Tannerite is used to create large explosions rather than its intended use as a shot indicator and most importantly within close proximity to other homes, he noted that it becomes more than just a noise annoyance, it has the potential to become lethal if used improperly. He indicated that, according to Chief Moore, the Tannerite targets are approximately 1,500 ft. from his home and within 400 ft. to other homes. He has spoken to the owner of Autumn Hills Campground who stated he has seasonal campers with PTSD, some traumatized by the explosions and others threatening not to return to the campground resulting in the loss of business. Mr. McManus further stated, most importantly, people and pets with underlying health conditions may be at risk acknowledging that his pet has a serious heart condition noting that this should be taken very seriously and acted upon before irreversible harm comes to people and pets.

Over the last two years, Mr. McManus indicated that the explosion occurs, the police are called, they speak to the individual who says they will tone it down and within a week is at it again. He feels that exploding targets should only be used in a remote area where families and homes are not impacted. He noted that the target shooter stated to the police that he celebrates important dates for vets; most residents would agree that celebrating and honoring our vets is very important but shooting Tannerite in large volumes and such a close distance to other homes is excessive. He indicated that homeowners often have to deal with certain annoyances and disturbances such as loud traffic, a chain saw, a dog barking, etc. but a Tannerite explosion is intense and excessive, especially when it shakes your home, and goes way beyond what is considered customary interferences. Mr. McManus has spoken to a former selectman who advised him that an overwhelming majority of the residents he had spoken to would go a step further and ban it all together and suggested that he send out a town wide mailing. He pointed out that, during the 2015 deliberative session, there was debate in regards to adopting a noise ordinance and five years later they are still without a resolution. He is concerned that if they don't enact a noise ordinance then others will be tempted to use Tannerite in the same way and, before you know it, the town will sound and feel like a war zone in which he assumes many

lawsuits may follow. In closing, he pointed out that this petition is not in any way politically motivated and not intended to challenge anyone's 2nd amendment rights. He believes everyone has the right to gun ownership noting that he owns one himself; he also believes all homeowners should have the right to use their property as they see fit but common sense and respect should prevail. He feels that, unfortunately in this situation, the homeowner has crossed over the line and instead of being respectful and considerate of others, he chooses to be inconsiderate and excessive in his behavior.

Police Chief Moore pointed out that the actual proposal wasn't coordinated with them and, as it is written, would never be able to enforce it because it specifies Tannerite rather than just the noise ordinance. He noted that it would greatly enhance the cost to the taxpayers for example: for them to prosecute, they would have to prove it's Tannerite and if they had an uncooperative homeowner they'd have to get a search warrant; they would need to gather evidence and submit it to a private laboratory with a cost of \$500 to \$1,000 per offense; when talking about explosives, they may have to bring in state resources for certain safety precautions. He has no problem with the Police Department enforcing a general noise ordinance should the town decide that's what they want but, as written, it's not enforceable by the department and would put them in a very bad position if it were passed.

Derek Winsor, South Stark Hwy, does support the spirit of the article noting they have felt the impact of these explosions as described within the article numerous times in recent months. He stated that the house shakes and its startling because they don't know when it's coming; it has become a quality of life issue. He recalls at a selectmen's meeting that there was some discussion on this issue generally speaking and he shares concerns expressed in that meeting – potential damage to underground systems like wells and septic, effects it has on pets, etc. To this, he added his particular case explaining that he has a child with autism and one of the hallmarks of autism is an excessive sensitivity to loud noises. He noted that every time this happens, which has been multiple times recently, he becomes very disturbed and they have to engage in calming him. He stated that it's become a reoccurring and real issue.

Tom Flaherty, Sunrise Lane, believes what the Police Chief was alluding to was, as written, this violates State RSA 159:26 which prohibits municipalities from enacting ordinances related to firearms stating that this is clearly a firearms related article. He suggested that the people having the issues talk to the individual directly if they haven't done so already.

Leah Cushman echoes Mr. Flaherty's comments noting that she realizes this is just advisory anyways and doesn't have any impact except to pressure the selectmen to pass a noise ordinance which they can't because it has to do with limiting the use of firearms and, under that RSA, it's illegal. In regards to comments about certain expectations of noises in a society such as chainsaws, vehicles, etc., she argues that the sound of gunfire and explosions is very much a normal part of Weare society.

Paul Gannon, Flanders Memorial Road, owns a part time gunsmith business and regularly discards firearms on his property to test the functionality. He argues that someone tell him the difference between a Tannerite explosion or the blast of a semi caliber musket when it goes off – no one would know the difference. His oldest son has autism and functions perfectly fine when his son is in the house and he himself is outside testing firearms.

Rochelle Kelley, Wildwood Road, noticed, while reading the selectmen's meeting minutes, that the arguments for Tannerite damaging wells and basements was unfounded. She pointed out that a

selectman had stated that only happens if an underground explosion occurs and that above ground explosions cannot cause that damage.

Lily Tang Williams, Pine Hill Road, commented that this type of firearm shooting noise in Weare makes her happy to hear and makes her feel safe. She's afraid that if they pass an ordinance like this it may go down the wrong slope and be abused. She is not bothered by the noise and hopes that the Weare citizens take a responsibility when they do shoot.

Derek Winsor, South Stark Hwy, stated that in an ideal world one would follow up with the person causing the noise but he isn't sure who is causing the noise. In terms of the speaker that also has a child with autism, he respectfully submits that autism is, by definition, a spectrum disorder; not only are people different, people with autism are different and fall into different places along the spectrum therefore each person reacts differently.

Phil McManus, Hoit Mill Road, stated that the ordinance he has proposed is not about restricting firearms or shooting a gun but specifically for people who misuse the product Tannerite. He noted that this person is not mixing the amount of Tannerite properly within the neighborhood which is resulting in an explosion that is shaking their homes. He's just trying to provide his opinion and propose the ordinance as it stands. He added that it's fine if it needs to be amended but feels that they still need some type of noise ordinance in town.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 24 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 25

By petition of 25 or more eligible voters in the town of Weare to see if the town will vote to urge that the New Hampshire General Court, which is obligated to redraw the maps of political districts within the state following the federal census, will ensure fair and effective representation of New Hampshire voters without gerrymandering. Additionally, these voters ask the town of Weare to urge the NH General Court to carry out the redistricting in a fair and transparent way through public meetings, not to favor a particular political party, to include communities of interest, and to minimize multi-seat districts. Furthermore, as the New Hampshire State Constitution, Part 2, Article 11 allows towns of sufficient population to have their own state representatives, not shared with other towns, for the town of Weare to petition the NH General Court for its own exclusive seat(s) in the NH House of Representatives if it does not already have it, ensuring that State Representatives properly represent the town's interests. The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice from town officials to Weare's state legislators, informing them of the demands from their constituents within 30 days of the vote? **BY PETITION**

Selectman Hippler moved the article as read. The motion was seconded.

Bev Cotton, Colby Road, stated that this is a non-partisan effort explaining that every ten years, the states take on the redrawing of their political maps after the US Census has been completed. She pointed out that they do this for the NH House, Senate, Executive Council, County Commission, and Congressional Districts. She explained that this process is called redistricting and is supposed to give big towns their own voting districts; the requirement is, for every 3,290 people, you get a

representative in your State Legislature unbundled by two other towns. She noted that this would give the opportunity for Weare to have its very own representatives and not sharing those representatives with other towns; it would also guarantee that Weare constituents would be exclusively listened to when it came to matters of concern. What she is seeking in the approval, at the state level, is of a bipartisan committee to work on this, develop maps, hold public forums and bring forth to the legislature to be voted on. Ms. Cotton stated that this is a non-binding resolution so what this would do is that the information would be taken forward representing the voices of the constituents of Weare, NH along with other towns in the state and hopefully those voices would be heard in support of a non-partisan redistricting commission with no party favoritism and that is clear and transparent.

Gary Hopper, Buxton School Road, gave context to this: in 2000, when he first ran, Weare had its own state representative, in 2001 redistricting occurred and democrats didn't like how the districts were laid out so they took it to the Supreme Court which decided to redistrict the State of NH and that's when Weare ended up with a huge district lumped in with Goffstown. He added that, in 2003 or 2004, a constitutional amendment was introduced to make sure small towns like Weare get their own state representative. Functionally, he understands the intent of this article but in practical matter, he believes they will have little if any affect. He explained the reason being that the Constitution clearly states that the House shall redistrict itself, even if they have a committee, it is a recommendation and the House is going to do what it does anyway. Secondly, he stated that the premise that this commission is going to be non-partisan is naïve at best because the people on that commission will be appointed by politicians and they will staff that commission to get the results they want. He understands the intent but doesn't see any advantage to voting for this because the House is going to have to vote to redistrict itself.

Leah Cushman, North Huntington Road, echoed Mr. Hopper's comments.

Rachel Cisto, Dustin Tavern Road, stated that redistricting by third party or independent committee is something that is done in a lot of other states with very little fanfare. She understands that there are some constraints to the way NH redistricts but essentially this article is just saying that we, as residents, support the idea of either party from drawing ridiculous large districts to favor their own party and ensuring the point of the census that everyone gets their chance to be represented by someone who is local to them and understands their concerns. She is 100 percent in favor of this article.

There being no further discussion, Moderator Meaney announced that Article 25 would be placed on the ballot as written.

Maureen Billodeau, Town Clerk, moved to restrict reconsideration. The motion was seconded and passed.

ARTICLE 26

To transact any other business which may legally come before this meeting?

There being no other business, there was a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded and passed.

*A true copy; I attest:
Michelle Mulholland*


Maureen Billodeau
Town Clerk