

**TOWN OF THORNTON**  
**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**  
**2017 Town Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday, March 14, 2017**  
Thornton Town Office  
16 Merrill Access Road, Thornton, NH

The Town Meeting and Polls were opened at 8:00am by Moderator Robert MacLeod. The polls will remain open till 7:00pm.

To the inhabitants of the Town of Thornton in the County of Grafton in said state, qualified to vote in the town affairs and to act upon the following subjects:

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

**OFFICIAL ELECTION RESULTS**

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Select Board Member</u></b>  <i>Three Year Term, Two positions</i></p> <p>Bradford R.(Brad) Benton  133  Roy Sabourn 121</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Select Board Member</u></b>  <i>One Year Partial Term</i></p> <p>Stephanie A. Oleson 23  Nancy A. Decoteau 57  John F. (Jack) Gaites 72</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Overseer of Public Welfare</u></b>  <i>One Year Term</i></p> <p>Marianne Peabody 149</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Town Clerk</u></b>  <i>Three Year Term</i></p> <p>Brook J. Rose 151</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Trustee of Trust Funds</u></b>  <i>Three Year Term</i></p> <p>Warren E. Bahr 139</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Trustee of Trust Funds</u></b>  <i>2 Year Partial Term</i></p> <p>Anthony Torino 130</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Cemetery Trustee</u></b>  <i>Three Year Term</i></p> <p>Geraldine Benton 16  <i>(Write-in)</i></p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Library Trustee</u></b>  <i>3 Year Term</i></p> <p>Chris Wilkie 14  <i>(Write-in)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Planning Board Member</u></b>  <i>Two Year Term (partial term)</i></p> <p>Leslie M. Hoyt 141  Bart Dutto 11  <i>(Write-in)</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Supervisor of the Checklist</u></b>  <i>Two Year (partial term)</i></p> <p>Mary E. MacLeod 147</p>

The total number of registered voters on Checklist: 2027  
New Voters: 5  
Total Registered Voters: 2032  
Ballots cast: 163

Polls closed at 7:00pm.

**The meeting reconvened at the Thornton Central School on Saturday, March 18, 2017 at 10:00am to act on the remaining articles of this warrant.**

**Saturday, March 18, 2017**

Voters present: 47

The Town Meeting was opened at 10:00am by Moderator Robert MacLeod. Moderator MacLeod led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Moderator MacLeod introduced the following individuals representing the Town: Town Clerk Brook Rose, Town Administrator Tammie Beaulieu, Select Board Chairman Roy Sabourn, Select Board Vice Chair Marianne Peabody, Select Board member Brad Benton, Select Board member Jack Gaites, and Select Board member John Paul-Hilliard. Supervisors of the Checklist Gloria Kimball, Cynthia McAuley, and Mary MacLeod were also introduced.

The Board congratulated all candidates on this year's ballot on their recent election.

**MOTION: To permit non-residents to speak at the meeting for the purpose of information and clarification of the articles.**

Moved: Gloria Kimball

Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**MOTION: To waive the reading of the warrant in its entirety.**

Moved: Gloria Kimball

Second: Alfred Burbank

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 2:** To see if the Town will vote to approve an additional full time highway equipment operator position to be added to the Thornton Highway Department, and to furthermore see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **thirty-three thousand dollars (\$33,000.00)** to compensate the wages and benefits for the position hired on or after June 1, 2017. This position will be incorporated into the highway department annual operating budget starting in 2018. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Alfred Burbank

Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 3:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of eighteen **thousand dollars (\$18,000)** to be added to the existing Assessing Capital Reserve Fund. The Board

of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Alfred Burbank  
Second: Anita Ross

Discussion: A voter questioned whether this article is necessary in order to pay Avitar Associates. Chairman Sabourn explained that money is allocated into this fund every year. The State mandates that the town conduct a town wide revaluation every five years which costs approximately \$100,000.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 4:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the existing Municipal Buildings Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Alfred Burbank  
Second: William Deleo

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 5:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) to be added to the existing Fire Truck/Rescue Vehicle/Equipment and Major Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Cynthia Schofield  
Second: Alfred Burbank

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of seven thousand dollars (\$7,000) to be added to the existing Police Cruiser and Cruiser Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: voter  
Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars (\$50,000) to be added to the existing Property Tax Map Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: William Deleo  
Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 8:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred five thousand dollars (\$105,000) to be added to the existing Highway Vehicle, Equipment and Major Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article.

(Majority vote required).

Moved: Cynthia Schofield  
Second: Anita Ross

Discussion: Mary Anne Medaglia questioned why so much money was being requested for highway equipment. Chairman Sabourn explained that the requested funds will be added to the existing Highway Vehicle, Equipment and Major Maintenance Capital Reserve Fund that takes care of the entire fleet of highway vehicles. The Board anticipates that in order to keep up with winter plowing, which has been a problem the last few years, this article will permit the Board to withdraw approximately \$100,000 to purchase another Ford 550 plow truck with a plow and a wing for the new highway department employee to drive. The primary purpose of this article allows this purchase without significantly reducing the fund.

Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) Committee member Cynthia Schofield explained that on page 23 of the annual report is the CIP Plan which outlines each CIP item. The CIP is reviewed and worked on all year by the committee. She explained that by strategically planning for capital improvements, the Town has not had to finance or bond for any major expenses which saves the Town a great deal of money. Ms. Schofield invited everyone to attend the CIP Committee's monthly meetings.

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)** to be added to the existing Department Paving Projects Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Alfred Burbank  
Second: Cynthia Schofield

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)** to be added to the existing Transfer Station Major Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

Moved: Chris Warn  
Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **two million seven hundred twenty-eight thousand one hundred forty-six dollars (\$2,728,146.00)** to support town operations for the 2017-year. Said sum does not include special or individual articles. (Majority vote required)

Moved: Alfred Burbank  
Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously.**



## **OTHER BUSINESS AS PRESENTED**

### **Resident Howard Clement**

Mr. Clement questioned the Town's commitment to the NH Department of Revenue's (DRA) requirement for a town fund balance policy. He questioned why the policy amount is not clear in the budget and what happened to the \$930,000 surplus funds from last year. Town Administrator Beaulieu replied that the NHDRA creates the formula for the fund balance retention. Administrator Beaulieu referred Mr. Clement to page 97 of the annual report which is what NHDRA provides the town after the town has completed all of the required MS reporting to the State. The State suggests towns retain 5-17%. The town currently retains 10.87% in a fund balance retention account, not a cash account. She further explained that if the town used the surplus up in one year, the tax rate would inflate very quickly in the years to follow and the town would be in a difficult position in the event of an emergency. The Select Board uses the surplus annually to offset the tax rate. This year the Select Board applied \$250,000 to the tax balance from this fund. Administrator Beaulieu explained that the use of the fund balance policy is completely at the discretion of the voters. The voters can allocate more funds to bring down the tax rate via town floor action however; the Select Board does not recommend this for the above stated reasons.

### **MOTION: To move the question.**

Moved: John Paul-Hilliard

Second: Alfred Burbank

**Motion carries unanimously.**

### **Resident and Library Trustee Anita Ross**

Anita Ross stated that on behalf of the library, she would like to thank Carolyn Piantedosi for her service as a library trustee. She also welcomed Chris Wilkie as the new trustee. She challenged everyone to visit the library as paper books are still in style!

### **Residents Sally and Richard Davis**

Resident Sally Davis commended Andrew Vermeersch as well as the entire crew from the Campton Thornton Fire and Rescue and the Thornton Police Department. Emergency services recently responded to an emergency call at the Davis residence. The team went above and beyond, even helping shovel the driveway so the family could follow the ambulance. Applause was given to our local emergency response team by the entire audience.

Mrs. Davis also wanted to discuss recycling at the transfer station. She would really like to see magazines being recycled. She went so far as to meet with the Select Board and North Country Council to see what could be done to advance this process. She made it clear that she is not criticizing the transfer station as the employees are great. She would like to see advances made in local recycling. Select Board member John Paul-Hilliard replied that in the recycling industry,



magazines are defined as dead paper as they have been recycled so many times. If any moisture is introduced to this type of paper it disintegrates. He explained that the lack of infrastructure is the reason magazines cannot be recycled. There is no proper storage for the magazines while they are being held for transfer. The town is working to improve the infrastructure at the facility. Mr. Paul-Hilliard further explained that the other facets of recycling at the facility are running very well. Transfer Station Manager Kevin McGuire does an extremely great job managing the recycling program. He added that if the town can find a way to recycle magazines, it will be done.

### **Town Election**

A town resident questioned why the town decided not to postpone the town election when the weather was clearly unsafe for travel. Moderator MacLeod responded that according to NH state law, the town cannot legally change the date of the town election. He explained that the law is written so that the moderator can postpone the town meeting but not a town vote. The Secretary of State made an official announcement that towns had no authority to change the polling date. From Moderator MacLeod's standpoint, the town responded according to what the law requires. The Select Board was in agreement with Moderator MacLeod's analysis. Moderator MacLeod added that he suspects the legislature may make some revisions to make the RSA clearer. He welcomed local residents to testify and share their perspectives in regards to inclement weather during an election with the legislature.

### **Town Administrator Retirement**

On behalf of the Select Board, Chairman Roy Sabourn expressed the Board's appreciation to Town Administrator Tammie Beaulieu for a job well done. He explained that this is Administrator Beaulieu's last town meeting as she will be retiring at the end of 2017. Chairman Sabourn detailed her excellent work over many years working for the Town of Thornton. Administrator Beaulieu has saved the town thousands of dollars every year with her excellent contract negotiation skills. She has streamlined town operations and the town's relationship with neighboring municipalities is the best it has ever been. Chairman Sabourn added that it will be difficult to find someone to replace her as she has been a friend to all that have served the town. The Board presented Tammie Beaulieu with a bouquet of flowers. Standing applause was given by all.

### **MOTION: To adjourn.**

Moved: Chris Warn

Second: Anita Ross

**Motion carries unanimously and meeting is adjourned at 11:00am.**

Given under my hand and seal this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year 2017.

Respectfully,

Brook J. Rose

Thornton Town Clerk