

**TOWN OF THORNTON  
STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE  
2019 Town Meeting Minutes**

Tuesday, March 12, 2019

The polls were opened at the Thornton Town offices located at 16 Merrill Access Road, Thornton, NH at 8:00 am by Moderator Robert MacLeod. The polls remained open until 7:00 pm.

The total number of registered voters on Checklist: 2092

New Voters: 3

Ballots Cast: 238

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**

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<b><u>Select Board Member</u></b> <i>3 Year Term, One Position</i> Joseph Monti 115 John Paul-Hilliard 108	<b><u>Trustee of Trust Funds</u></b> <i>3 Year Term, One Position</i> Anthony Torino 191	<b><u>Cemetery Trustee</u></b> <i>3 Year Term, One Position</i> Peter Laufenberg 121 Duncan Booth 95
<b><u>Library Trustee</u></b> <i>3 Year Term, One Position</i> <i>Write In:</i> Diane Gravel 29	<b><u>Overseer of Public Welfare</u></b> <i>1 Year Term, One Position</i> Marianne Peabody 204	<b><u>Town Clerk</u></b> <i>1 Year Term, One Position</i> Donna Monti 204
<b><u>Trustee of Trust Funds</u></b> <i>2 Year Term, One Position</i> <i>Write In:</i> Ralph Bradley 9	<b><u>Planning Board Member</u></b> <i>3 Year Term, Two Positions</i> Peter Laufenberg 157 Donna O'Donnell 138	<b><u>Supervisors of Checklist</u></b> <i>6 Year Term, One Position</i> Mary Pelchat 136 Clarissa Uttley 51

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**Warrant Articles**

**Zoning Amendment 1:**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment No. 1** as proposed by the Thornton Planning Board for the Thornton Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Article XV Flood Plain - SECTION IV: CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Article XV Flood Plain - SECTION VII: OTHER PERMITS

Article XV Flood Plain - SECTION XI: DEFINITIONS

Use of term:

Change **“Building Permit”** to **“Zoning Compliance Application”**

*Recommended by the Planning Board.*

YES   174  

NO   42  

**Zoning Amendment 2:**

Are you in favor of the adoption of **Amendment No. 2** as proposed by the Thornton Planning Board for the Thornton Zoning Ordinance as follows:

Revise Article II: DEFINITIONS (A) Accessory Apartment - rename to be Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

Revise Article VIII GENERAL PROVISIONS (A) Accessory Apartments - to rename Accessory Apartment to Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), add statutory references, clarify the purpose of the provision, define ADUs, and allow ADUs that are not only within a single-family home, but also those that are attached to a single-family home, provided there is an interior door connecting the ADU and the single-family home.

*Recommended by the Planning Board.*

YES   172  

NO   43

**The Thornton Town Meeting** convened at the Thornton Central School on Saturday, March 16, 2019 at 10:00 am to act on the remaining articles of this warrant.

Voters Present: 78

**Saturday, March 16, 2019**

The Town Meeting was opened at 10:00 am by Moderator Robert MacLeod. Moderator MacLeod shared that there were email sign-up sheets at the front desk. By sharing their email addresses with the Town of Thornton they would receive updates once a month of important notices or events happening in the Town of Thornton. He also directed their attention to handouts relative to the new Security Alarm Ordinance recently adopted by the Town of Thornton which were also on the front desk.

Moderator MacLeod then led the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator MacLeod introduced the following individuals representing the Town: Town Clerk Donna Monti, Town Administrator Debra Shepard, Select Board Chair Roy Sabourn, Select Board member Marianne Peabody, Select Board member Brad Benton, Select Board member Jack Gaites, Supervisors of the Checklist Cindy McAuley and Gloria Kimball

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

**Moved: Bill DeLeo**

**Seconded: Mark Fischler**

**Discussion: None**

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

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

**Moved: Ralph Bradley**

**Seconded: Kate Hadaway**

**Discussion: None**

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #3:** Shall the town Modify the provisions of RSA 72:35 for an optional tax credit of \$2,800 for a Service-Connected Total Disability on residential property? The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

**Motion:** Ralph Bradley

**Moved:** Bob Gannett

**Discussion:** Resident Karl Haartz stated that the State of NH just recently passed a bill raising the limit on this exemption from \$2,000 to \$4,000 and he proposed an amendment to this article.

**Amendment:** To raise the amount of the total disability exemption from \$2,800 to \$4,000.

**Motion to move this amendment forward:** Anita Ross

**Moved:** Robert Ross

**This amendment moved by majority vote.** Article #3 shall now read:

**Article #3:** Shall the town Modify the provisions of RSA 72:35 for an optional tax credit of \$4,000 for a Service-Connected Total Disability on residential property? (Majority Vote required).

**Motion to move as amended:** Karl Haartz

**Moved:** Anita Ross

**Discussion on Amendment:** Resident Bill DeLeo asked if there would be any impact on the current budget. Chairman Sabourn responded that there would be a small budget impact as a result of this amendment. There are currently 7 residents who currently have this credit. He went on to explain that the State of NH allows a municipality to adopt this credit at an amount between \$2,000 and \$4,000. The Town of Thornton has in the past adopted this credit at approximately 2/3 what the State allows. Chairman Sabourn stated that the \$2,800 amount was put forward by the board to keep this credit in the 2/3 range. He said he does not feel this change will cause any shortfall in the budget. Bill DeLeo asked for a poll of the board on their thoughts on this subject. Chair Roy Sabourn, Select Board members Peabody and Benton all supported the \$2,800 amount for this credit. Selectman Benton went on to explain that the suggested amount of \$2,800 is double what it was in the past at \$1,400. Chair Sabourn went on the clarify that the Optional Standard Veterans Credit of \$500 is not automatic and residents need to apply for it and meet certain guidelines as established by the State of NH. Residents would also need to apply for this Optional Service-Connected Total Disability credit and meet certain criteria. Residents can qualify for both of these veteran credits. Resident Sally Davis asked for clarification on what would the process be if residents voted no on this amendment today. The Moderator explained that if residents voted no on this amendment today, the article would be killed until the next election unless another motion was made to go back to the \$2,800 amount.

**Motion made to vote on the amendment as presented:** Sally Davis

**Moved:** Robert Ross

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #4:** To see if the Town will vote to modify the current Part Time Highway Department Position (32 hours) to a Full Time Highway Department Position (40 hours) with benefits and to furthermore see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty thousand six hundred and seventy four dollars (\$20,674) to compensate for the additional wages and benefits for this position becoming full time on or after May 1, 2019. This position will be incorporated into the Highway Department annual operating budget starting in 2020. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

**Motion:** Bill DeLeo

**Moved:** Joe Monti

**Discussion:** Mary Anne Medaglia asked how many highway employees are there at this time. Chairman Sabourn responded that there are currently 3 full time employees and by hiring another full-time person the town will no longer have to rely on subcontractors.

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #5:** To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of the existing Road Paving, Construction and Repairs Capital Reserve Fund to Emergency Road Paving, Construction and Repairs Capital Reserve Fund and to further clarify the purpose of this fund is for paving, construction and repairs due to emergency or unforeseen events. To further designate the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend these funds. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (2/3 vote required)

**Motion:** Joe Monti

**Moved:** Bill DeLeo

**Discussion:** Sally Davis asked the board to clarify the difference. Chairman Sabourn explained the reason for this request.

**Motion carried by 2/3 vote.**

**Article #6:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifteen thousand dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the existing Assessing Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

**Motion:** Bill DeLeo

**Moved:** Bob Gannett

**Discussion:** Resident John Palmer asked for clarification on the purpose of this fund. TA Shepard explained this fund is for the cost of the revaluation conducted by our contracted assessing firm, Avitar, which is done every five years.

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article#7:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of forty-five thousand dollars (\$45,000) 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)

**Motion:** Bob Gannett

**Moved:** Bill DeLeo

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #8:** 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 Police Cruiser and Cruiser Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (Majority vote required).

**Motion:** Kate Hadaway

**Moved:** Alfred Duguay

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #9:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred and sixty thousand dollars (\$160,000) 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).

**Motion:** Nathan Hadaway

**Moved:** Gerald Gateman

**Discussion:** Resident Al Lewis asked for clarification as to what these funds are used for. Chairman Sabourn answered that these funds are used for large highway department purchases like trucks, plows, etc.

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #10:** To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two million nine hundred and fifty-seven thousand, four hundred and seventeen dollars (\$2,957,417.00) to support town operations for the 2019 year. Said sum does not include special or individual articles. (Majority vote required)

**Motion:** Bob Gannett

**Moved:** Karl Haartz

**Discussion:** Resident Sally Davis asked if there were any updates relative to the Transfer Station improvements. Chairman Sabourn informed everyone that the Town was waiting on a bid from a local contractor and was confident one would be received shortly. Chairman Sabourn stated that there is

money in the Town of Thornton CIP for Thornton's share of this project. Chairman Sabourn reminded everyone that Campton and Ellsworth will also share in the cost of these improvements at their respective percentages.

Resident Steven Babin spoke about the importance of zoning enforcement and asked the board to consider a budget item for this in next year's budget. Chairman Sabourn stated that the board would discuss and consider this for next year's budget.

Resident Barbara Patterson then raised a concern about the tree that is down in Pine Grove cemetery and who is responsible for taking care of this. Chairman Sabourn stated that the Cemetery Trustees would be responsible but there would need to be discussion on where the funds would come from in their budget as he did not believe they have a line item for tree removal. He stated that the newly elected member of the Cemetery Trustees is present today and he is confident he will bring this concern back to the trustees. There was further discussion relative to this issue.

Resident Chelsea Avery asked why the cemetery is not plowed in the winter. Chairman Sabourn stated that there has always been concern that people driving in the cemetery in the winter can do damage to headstones because the road is not clearly marked. Not plowing cemeteries in the winter is a very common practice in NH and the Town of Thornton has never plowed in the past.

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

**Article #11:** To see if the Town will vote to discontinue completely and absolutely the Class VI highway, roadway, street or thoroughfare between US Rte. 3 and Mirror Lake Road further identified as the "northern spur" or a portion of "Old Mirror Lake Road" running between and along the land now or formally of Pitman and the land now or formerly of Kosoff. (Petition article)

**Motion:** Steve Babin

**Moved:** Alfred Duguay

**Discussion:** Resident Bill DeLeo asked what does this mean in town responsibilities. Petitioner Alfred Duguay states that the road was closed back in 1985 subject to gates and bars and since then, the abutting owners have plowed and maintained the roadway, the Town has not. The abutters want to have a business there and want the road closed permanently. He further states that this will not affect any residents. Resident Arthur Gross states he wants the road left as is in case the spur needs to be used due to flooding issues in the future. Resident Robert Ross who lives on Mirror Lake Road states that the road floods often and the gates and bars had been previously placed but residents of the old store have added more barricades. He stated that when the gates and bars were placed, the road was closed to vehicle traffic but not pedestrian traffic. Chairman Sabourn stated he has reviewed the minutes of the March 1985 town meeting on which an article relative to this road was voted on. The minutes stated that the Town would throw up and discontinue the Northern Spur and place gates and bars. The article passed but it appears it was defective because only one process can be used-either discontinued or subject to bars and gates but not both. Gates and bars mean that those residents that have a need or desire, can remove gates and bars and travel at their own risk, but must replace gates and bars. As of right now, it remains a Town road. If this petition article passes, all public use will be

discontinued and the abutters will have the right to claim the land under the road. The town will no longer have a claim to that road. Mr. Ross stated that he does not think it is right for the Town to just give away the right to this property when the public has been denied access to it for at least the last 10 years due to abutters blocking it with personal property being piled there and more gates and bars added. Mr. Duguay then stated that the only thing stopping people from walking through there is the growth of trees and a downed tree blocking access.

**Motion made to call the question by Peter Laufenberg**

**Moved: Joe Monti**

**Motion carried by majority vote.**

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

Bill DeLeo asked if the planned Transfer Station renovation would have any impact on services at the station. Chairman Sabourn stated that he does not believe so because any work that would have to be done that could potentially disrupt service could be done on a day when the Transfer Station is closed.

Bill DeLeo asked for an update on the Economic Development Committee. Chief Kenneth Miller responded that he and Brian Regan, Town Planner, have been meeting relative to this and working on finding ways to bring new things to Thornton. He believes there should be more for residents to do in town, more business, and maybe a park area with a gazebo, etc. Chief Miller stated that they are looking for interested residents who would like to join this committee and encouraged anyone interested to stop by Town Hall.

Chairman Sabourn informed residents that a new Events Committee has been formed by residents and they are trying to come up with ideas to improve the town, have more events, improve community spirit, develop more programs for children, etc. They have a small budget and are looking for residents interested in serving on this committee. Anyone interested is encouraged to stop by Town Hall. Chairman Sabourn thanked the Events Committee for supplying the refreshments for this meeting.

Cindy Schofield questioned use of old meeting house and field. Chairman Sabourn advised that there is nothing on the Board's agenda at this time relative to the use of this building. He said that there were some erosion issues under the building which have been addressed. The parking lot is being used by patrons of the ball field. As far as he knows, there are no ongoing plans at this time. Ms. Schofield suggested that the economic development committee and/or events committee should maybe put this on their radar for future possible development.



Chairman Sabourn let everyone know that the Beautification Committee is also looking for residents to serve on this committee and encouraged anyone who may be interested to stop by Town Hall.

Chairman Sabourn thanked the PTO for also contributing refreshments to this meeting.

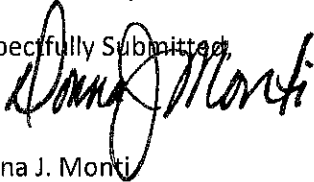
**Motion to adjourn:** Bill DeLeo

**Moved:** Alfred Duguay

**Meeting was adjourned at 11:22 AM**

Given under my hand and seal this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Donna J. Monti". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial "D".

Donna J. Monti  
Town Clerk  
Town of Thornton

**Minutes of the Select Board/Recount Board  
March 21, 2019**

On Wednesday, March 13, a request for recount of votes for the position of Select Board Member was received by the Town Clerk's Office. A recount meeting was then scheduled for Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 2:00 PM.

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by Town Clerk Donna Monti.

In attendance were Roy Sabourn, Chairman of the Select Board, Select Board members Marianne Peabody, Jack Gaites and Brad Benton, and Town Moderator Robert MacLeod.

The contested candidates, Joseph Monti and John Paul-Hilliard were present. Mr. Monti was also represented by his observers, Lee Freeman and Joel Freeman. Mr. Paul-Hilliard was represented by his observers, Michelle Paul-Hilliard and himself acting as an observer.

The Recount Board consists of the Select Board members, Town Moderator and Town Clerk. Due to the fact that Mrs. Monti's husband was a contested candidate, she recused herself from handling any of the ballots.

The rules were explained to all involved. The seal was broken on the ballot box at 2:10 PM and hand counting commenced.

The votes were tallied and the results were: Joseph Monti 115; John Paul-Hilliard 108. There was one ballot which was questionable. It was decided that a vote would not be taken since it would not affect the outcome of the election.

The winner was declared as Joseph Monti and he was sworn in by Moderator Robert MacLeod.

The ballots were resealed and placed in the vault in the Town Hall.

Meeting adjourned at 2:45 PM.

Given under my hand and seal this 9<sup>th</sup> day of April, 2019.

Respectfully Submitted,



Donna J. Monti  
Town Clerk  
April 9, 2019