

Town Meeting
March 13, 2024
Minutes

Moderator Dauphin called the meeting to order at 7:00pm. A moment of silence followed by the Pledge of Allegiance.

Article 1 Operating Budget

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committees recommended sum of \$758,721 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommended this appropriation (Majority vote required.)

Dee Denehy moved to floor
Bruce Murphy seconded

Discussion: None

Reread Article 1. All in favor with the exception of one opposition. Article 1 passes.

Article 2 Defibrillator

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$4,000 to be added to the Defibrillator Capital Reserve Fund previously established. (2004) The Selectmen and the Budget Committee recommend the appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Brian Bazarnicki brought to floor
Karen Hastings seconded

Discussion: None

Reread Article 2. All in favor. Article 2 passes.

Article 3 Fire Department Vehicle Expendable Trust

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$50,000 to be added to the Fire Department Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund previously established. (2002) The Selectmen and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Steve Ackerman brought to floor
Valarie Piedmont seconded

No Discussion

Reread Article 3. All in favor. Article 3 passes

Article 4 Breathing Apparatus

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be added to the Breathing Apparatus Replacement Expendable Trust Fund previously established. (2016) The Selectmen and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Nate Lund brought to floor
Michael Rivers seconded

No Discussion

Reread Article 4. All in favor. Article 4 Passes

Article 5 Emergency Management Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 to be added to the Emergency Management Expendable Trust Fund previously established. (2015) The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Gary Wheeler brought to floor
James Chapman seconded

No Discussion.

Reread Article 5. All in favor. Article 5 Passes.

Article 6 Replacement Turn Out Gear

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,000 to be added to the Replacement of Turn Out Gear for the Fire Department Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2018). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Bill Whyte brought to floor
Martha Rivers Seconded

Discussion: John Trusdall ask "how close we are to achieving the money that you need to buy the turnout gear?" He stated he did see on the tv last night that Manchester and Concord replaced their turnout gear with the state that it is in, it puts the firefighters at risk of cancer. Chief Dee Denehy states that our gear has just expired. It has a 10 year

service life. We are going to start purchasing some. We have \$35,000 in the account right now and we are in the process of applying for two different grants and hopefully we can use this trust fund money to be our matching portion. Selectman Bart Cushing stated that there was \$35,000 in the account before this money was put in and stated that Dee may want to tell the people how many pieces of gear you need to buy for your crew. Chief Dee Denehy states that they need 12 sets and they run about \$4,500.00 a piece and the cancer part is the PFAS that has been used as the water protector in them so there is some concern about cancer from that.

Reread Article 6. All in favor. Article 6 Passes.

Article 7 Minitors

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,000 to be added to the Minitors Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2009). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Janel Miller brought to floor
Ernest Allender seconded.

Discussion: Chief Dee Denehy explains that minitors are the little pagers that we carry to let us know when there is an emergency. They run about \$450 plus or minus dollars. Now and then we have to replace them. We are trying to plan ahead for that.

Reread Article 7. All in favor. Article 7 passes.

Article 8 Fire Department Equipment Replacement Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be added to the Fire Department Equipment Replacement Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2014). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Bruce Murphy brought to floor.
Bart Cushing seconded.

Discussion: Selectman Cushing stated that the fund balance currently is just under \$13,000.

Reread Article 8. All in favor. Article 8 Passes.

Article 9 Legal Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be added to the Legal Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2004). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Clem Louder brought to floor.
Eric Zablowsky seconded.

Discussion: Jack Carlton states that he is new in town. He asked “are there any anticipated legal obligations or expenses that are the reason for this fund? If so, what are they and what can we expect going forward?” Selectman Bart Cushing said we use it for several things. One of the things is we have had some expendable money related to the administration of the town that we have had to pay legal fees for. Specifically with a right-to-know request. We have had some people in town with debris and they have been issued letters due to too many junk cars frankly and we have had to issue letters and ask for them to remove them or talk to us about a way to remove them. We have sent out letters in response to citizens complaints and there will be legal costs to enforce that. We are a reactive board regarding that. We don’t go around town saying hey you have 5 junk cars there we are going to do something about it. It has been citizens coming to us asking us to act. A motion to compel. We have some potential legal stuff with regards to a culvert installation with DES and we don’t know about that as yet. There is also an issue with the Public Service of NH/Eversource. There has been a lawsuit filed by Eversource to towns in NH that thought they were being over taxed for their utilities. Power poles, lights, main transmission lines, etc. Eversource came back and said that they were being unfairly done. We are one of a number of towns that had a legal firm in Concord working for us along with our own attorney. Thankfully those costs have not been great but are probably in the \$1,000 range. Our lawyer, Gary Kenyon, who has served us very well in my opinion, called us up and said he just negotiated a settlement with Nelson and he would like to pursue that for the town. The Selectboard has given approval of those negotiations so that we can put this thing to bed. Those that have been here a number of years know that we had to refund money to Eversource and so far I think there is somewhere around 6 years in question. I think that they have won the 3 years that have come to fruition and the towns have won none. It is probably time to settle so that we don’t have 3 more years of a court fight. That is an example of why we want the expendable trust fund. We are not looking to spend it but boy it doesn’t take too long to go through \$5,000. That’s it.

Reread Article 9. All in favor. Article 9 Passes.

Article 10 Office Equipment Replacement

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,000 to be added to the Office Equipment Replacement Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2012). The Selectmen and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

James Chapman brought to floor.
Janel Miller seconded.

Discussion: None

Reread Article 10. All in favor. Article 10 passes.

Article 11 Revaluation of Town

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,000 to be added to the Expendable Revaluation Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2011). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Karen Wheeler brought to floor.
Jason Ballou seconded.

Discussion: Jenny Schmidt who states she is also new to town asked for someone to explain what this is for. Selectman Clem Louder states that Avitar comes in and we have a cycle to reevaluate the Town which is mandated by the State and this year they are going through the entire town doing a curb side reevaluation. So we have a yearly stipend that we give them and a stipend at the end of this cycle. Selectman Bart Cushing stated that it is a pretty large stipend around \$40,000.00 per year. We save every year and to me this tops it off for this year. (Inaudible). Nicole Langlois stated that when Avitar came through and did the last evaluation their taxes increased dramatically. She stated that she thought that there was some conversation about using Avitar again. "Did that occur and I missed it" she asked? Selectman Bart Cushing stated we did not choose to change them. Avatar is also not only used for property evaluation but also for motor vehicles that the town clerk uses. So we have stayed with that Company. They have changed their contract during the year due to their labor rates and this has concerned the selectboard but we did not really investigate thoroughly an alternative source for assessing. One thing the selectboard has done though is if someone comes to us and says that they believe they have not been taxed fairly, they will come back and do an assessment of that (we have to pay extra for this), or you can ask for an abatement if you don't think it is fair. We have to go back to Avitar and ask if it is correct or not. One thing this board has not done, at least in the 3 years I have been involved, is that Avatar has been a neutral arbiter when a citizen says I have not been fairly taxed. They come in and look at the thing and apply some methodology to it. This Board has decided to not go against their professional recommendation. I think previous years that has happened. They have everything put out for us so we decided to stay with that company. I would say that if anybody gets a card to come view your property, you are well advised, in my opinion, to let them in your house. If they don't go into your house, they are going to assume that you have nice wide plank hardwood floors, you've got a full basement that might be finished, and they will assume everything is the best. It has always

behooved me to let them come in an assess and they will give a fair assessment. Selectman Clem Lounder asked "didn't have a problem with them 5 or 6 years ago?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that he does not know. Selectman Clem Lounder stated that we did get evaluated and I was disappointed in them too. They did say that this year they plan on being curb side and you should read your card and make sure your card is accurate. If your card is not accurate then you should come in and say look, I am unhappy with the way it reads. New person bought Janine Marr's house old County Rd. Jenny asks "how do you read your card?" It was clarified that it was a tax card. Selectman Bart Cushing stated that they will send you a notice with a key and you can go on the computer, and they keep that open I believe for 60 days so you can go on and see what your evaluation is. You can also call the Selectmen's Office and ask for a copy of your tax card. You literally have a card that is on your property with all the amenities, value of your land, etc. It really is worth your time to do it.

Reread Article. All in favor. Article 11 passes.

Article 12 Vessel Rock Road Culverts

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75,000 to be added to the Vessel Rock Road Culverts Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2019). Funds to come from the unassigned fund balance. The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Dee Denehy brought to floor.

Gary Wheeler seconded.

Discussion: Jack Carlton asks "what is the Unassigned Fund Balance?" Selectman Clem Lounder states that we get some money from logging, we get some money from the State we are allowed to use and we also had at the end of the year 3.5% surplus from the last year that we didn't spend from what comes in as income from other sources. Lisa Rodriguez asked "how this article is related to Article 13? Are those the same funds that can be moved out of that fund if we put them in there?" Selectman Bart Cushing states that Vessel Rock Road is going to be a major project. Last time we got a cost estimate it came in just under \$500,000. We have at this time I think \$164,000 saved in that account. We are not quite halfway there. That is going to be a major project. We are not sure how we are going to do it. We have not yet hired the engineering for it but we need to start saving the money for it. The next one, Article 13 is to rename the existing Vessel Rock Road Culvert Fund to Culvert Fund to use on any culverts that need work. For instance the Mack Road and any other culverts that need repair due to wash out, we want to have the flexibility of the Selectboard to use those funds on any culverts needing repair due to high precipitation levels. Does that answer your question? Lisa Rodriguez asked "will the \$75,000 go into Vessel Rock but it will be fluid so it can be used somewhere else? It will go into Culverts, correct." Selectman Brian Bazarnicki stated that the next Article will change the name from Vessel Rock to just Culverts. Selectman Bart Cushing stated that the reason for the change is so that we could use it for Town culverts, not just that

one culvert. That one culvert based on experience for Mack Road if that has catastrophic loss we will have money in there to cover it. If it does not have catastrophic loss I don't know if we are going to be doing that right now. Frankly, based on all the fun we have been having with the DES, catastrophic loss means that the thing washes right out, you have to get permits but they are speedy permits, you also get FEMA help in rebuilding it. Lisa Rodriguez asks "is it more about Article 13 in a way? So the \$75,000 is going to go into Vessel Rock for now?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that it will go in there for about 10 minutes if we vote on that Article. The State of New Hampshire does tell us what they can go into and that we have to set them aside, and then if we want to change the name of that fund. Selectman Clem Louder stated that they have been advised to be less proactive and more reactive. Part of the reason is because we will apply and be qualified for more funds on top of what we are saving but we have but if we don't have a bank account on these projects these funds don't count.

Reread Article. All in favor. Article 12 passes.

Article 13 Town Culverts

To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of the existing Vessel Rock Road Culverts Expendable Trust Fund previously established (2019) to the Town Culverts Expendable Trust Fund for use on any town-maintained culverts in Gilsom. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (2/3 vote required.)

Denise Rackliff brought to floor.
Bruce Murphy seconded.

Discussion: Karen Wheeler asked "why we were only limiting it to just culverts especially if we are concerned we can get 80/20 from the State should something happen so say it wasn't a culvert but just a general road. We don't have an expendable trust fund for that so will that impact our ability?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that it was his understanding that we cannot make it too broad and we can't say culverts and bridges. We were informed when we got money for bridges that culverts and bridges are two different things even though water goes across them and the road goes across that. We can't make it too broad like equipment replacement has to be for new equipment purchases. It has to be bridges, or culverts or repaving of the roads but we can't broaden it out that far. Lisa Rodriguez asks "what is the protocol to mitigate risks if it does collapse?" Lisa clarifies by asking "what steps to take to reduce the risks if these funds are moved out of this fund? What would the protocol be to prepare for that?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that from our work on Mack Road we have come to understand that we cannot work if any water is flowing, period. We had roads that were failing in town. They were at the edge of the banks but we can only go to the water's edge. We cannot go in the water, period. Part of that is also in the right-of-way with the DOT who also has a powerline. This is speaking specifically about Vessel Rock. The engineering costs the last time we had an estimate done was somewhere in the area of

\$75,000 to \$80,000. Now if you have an emergency and let's say we do have a flood coming down there, we can go up there in an emergency and have at it as far as remediating. As far as being proactive without an engineer, it has to go through the Department of Environmental Services for a wetland permit, it has to go through DES for a shoreline permit, it has to go through ARLAC which is the river council, it has to go through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineering if it goes into the Ashuelot River. It is daunting. So anytime we mess around with Harlen's work, he had to go to culvert school and we had John Buschbaum with us on permits. If we get messing around close to the wetlands and the flowing brook we have to be extremely careful. Even if it is a slope we can't touch that sucker unless they say we can and if we do it is under our own hazard. I know that is not the answer you want to hear and I don't blame you because I know right where you live. Lisa Rodriguez stated that during the flash floods her house was the drain from Bingham Hill. The water went into my 1750 year old basement. Selectman Bart Cushing said that our hope is that with the money we can see a way to have that engineering done. We just applied last year for a culvert fund for one of our projects where we get 75/25 funding. If we have a permit in hand we are in better shape to get that money. However, the problem is that if you pay for an engineer to go do a study it has a shelf life just like Wonder Bread, it's only good for 5 years. And they don't grant you an extension, they may give you 90 to 120 days. If we go and spend \$100,000 or \$50,000 for engineering and we don't have enough money to say we can get this project done in 5 years you have to start all over again. That did happen on Mack Road.

Reread Article 13. Audience Count. Betsy Cushing counts 16 votes on the left hand side, and Angela Lombara counts 26 on the right hand side. We needed 34 votes and have 42. Motion passes.

Article ae 14 Church Street and Mack Road Bridges/Culverts

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$25,000 to be added to the Church Street and Mack Road Bridges/Culverts Expendable Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2017). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Bill Whyte brought to floor.
Dee Denehy seconded.

Discussion: Judy Terry stated that we just had the discussion about "to broad" to be able to combine. Again, this one has at the end the word "culvert" so why don't we remove the word "culvert" and put the culvert part to read "Town Culvert" and then we will have a "Bridge" and a "Culvert?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that that project was started under that name and has been a dedicated project that is ongoing. The \$25,000 is to do the shoreline completion as requested by DES on the bank erosion which has been part of the whole issue also and we also have to put guardrails in on the uphill side of that. Last year we spent approximately \$100,000 to get the culvert in and the road paved. And this is to get the guard rails up gradient and also to do some

remediation work and we will also need to use some engineering guidance and permitting alterations to the original amount. So we did have this fund and it has been worked down to almost nothing. We need \$25,000 to complete the project. Judy Terry asks "so this will bring this to completion?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that that is their best guess. Selectman Clem Louder followed up by saying they hope so but they are not sure it depends on the permitting and stuff like that. Selectman Bart Cushing followed up by saying that he was quite happy that they got that done. He stated that it is 100% known that the last rain events we had last summer, we had a major rain event previously and the 3 houses downgradient from that had severe damage done to their property. The rain event that we had last summer did not have that. The culvert was changed and enlarged, changed in design and the culvert did its job. So while we will get the seal of approval from the State, we don't have that yet, it did solve the problem for the citizens of Gilsum. Road Agent Harlen Maguire can show you the pictures of it, very dramatic and two times in the last decade that they have been severely disrupted.

Reread Article. All in favor. Article 14 passes.

Article 15 Highway Truck

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2009). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

CJames Chapman brought to floor.
Brian Bazarnicki seconded.

Discussion: None

Reread Article. All in favor. Article 15 passes.

Article 16 Highway Heavy Equipment

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to be added to the Highway Department Heavy Equipment Expendable Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2016). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Clem Louder brought to floor.
Valarie Piedmont seconded.

No Discussion.

Reread Article. All in favor. Article 16 passes.

Article 17 Repaving of Town Roads

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$55,000 to be added to the Repaving of Town Roads Expendable Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2011). The Selectmen and Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required).

Jason Ballou brought to floor.
Garen Wheeler seconded.

Discussion: Jason Ballou asks “is there a plan in place for what roads you want to pave and what years?” Road Agent Harlen Maguire responded that his plan is to do Mack Road next year. Karen Wheeler asked “how much does that leave us if we do Mack Road because I don’t see much there?” Selectman Bart Cushing stated that Road Agent Harlen Maguire had a quote from Arlington Paving if I remember right that substantiated that number. (Inaudible) He stated that Road Agent Harlen Maguire had several different roads in Town he was asked by the Board to prioritize; 5 to 10 things to get done in a 5 year plan. He got pricing on 5 roads. He prioritized them from there. He chose Mack Road first. This is above where the culvert got replaced. He also had on there I think Vessel Rock but that is the one that came up the most in need of work. The Selectmen feel that he knows more about roads than we do. He knows when they are bumping, when they get torn up and he prioritized what they are, he spent the time driving around with the estimator, Arlington Paving. (unnamed speaker) asked the question “do you get more than 1 bid for these kinds of jobs?” Moderator David Dauphin stated that we had 3 bids. Selectman Bart Cushing stated if you can get 3 bids. In the current environment like last year it has been a challenge to even get one bid. That said, you want to have a bidder that is obviously financially stable and also seek out advice if you obviously feel you have been misused. Like Mack Road we invited 5 contractors and 2 gave us bids. It’s a challenge. Ernest Allender asked “is there a plan to do Banks Road at all from the culvert down to the main street? He continued by saying that it seems to get washed out with every storm and the road is constantly having to be backfilled and padded down. Should that get on the priority list at any time?” Road Agent Harlen Maguire stated that it is on the short list.

Reread Article 17. All in favor. Article 17 passes.

Article 18 Howard Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Howard Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, to maintain or replace the Howard Bridge and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to put in the fund., with this amount to come from the Restricted Unassigned Fund Balance which represents funds received from a One-Time Bridge Payment, further to name the Selectmen and Road Agent, as agents to expend from said fund. No amount to be raised from taxation. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)

Bruce Murphy brought to floor.
Karen Wheeler seconded.

Discussion: Karen Wheeler said she is wondering why we wouldn't create a fund that just said Bridge Maintenance so that again going back to an emergency we would have a plan in place and maybe get the 80/20 from the State versus getting it for a specific bridge. Selectman Clem Louder stated that they had discussed that but they felt that where they were with the budget this year that they would address it in another year but that they wanted to put money in this bridge because the writing is on the wall and we are going to have to work on it sooner or later. Karen Wheeler stated that if we named it Town Bridges and just put that as a priority we would be ahead of the game by just establishing a broad bridge maintenance fund versus having it named specifically to Howard Bridge and dealing with it next year. She stated that her thought is why not just start out with having it as a bridge and/or maintenance fund that way we are covered if something happened through the State. Selectman Bart Cushing said that payments from the state have to be dedicated to bridge maintenance and he doesn't think the selectboard would be opposed to renaming it at this point he is not sure of the legalities of doing it. He stated he would be supportive of it but didn't know if we legally could change it. Karen Wheeler said that she believes that they can change it and if we vote yes and it went to the State and they disagreed that it would just still default to the original wording of Article 18 but that she is unsure of that. She said that she is surprised that we don't have a lawyer on hand. She stated that she would like to make that motion. Vicki Ayer stated that she said she believed that it would drop off if we voted to change it and DRA came back and said that changes the purpose and is not allowed where we didn't vote on the initial one. We wouldn't be allowed to proceed with it because we never voted on it and it would just drop off. Karen Wheeler asked "what if I amended the motion to read to change the wording of the fund to the Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund and then have an amendment stating that should this be declined by the State then the wording would revert back to the Howard Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund and we voted on everything all at once?" Cassandra Curtis stated that she had another idea for a solution but that she thinks that is a simple one. Barbara Bryce asked "where is Howard Bridge?" Dee Denehy stated that it is off Old Marlow Road. Selectman Bart Cushing said he believes there are 3 residences there. He said that it is a good size bridge and has a pretty long span. It has not been red listed as in the past. It will be a very expensive endeavor to fix. Depending on what they do for loading and abutments I would guess \$1,500,000 to \$2,000,000. Selectman Clem Louder stated that he agrees with Vicki Ayer he knows that funds are specifically for bridges and they cannot use it for anything else. He stated he understands what Karen Wheeler wants to do with the amendment; he just doesn't want to lose the money. Moderator David Dauphin said that if there is an amendment it needs to come forward in writing to be clear. Barbara Bryce stated that she is a little confused about the procedure. She asked "if indeed we vote on this and then add an amendment is that something?" She stated she just wants to make sure that the Town is in good shape and she is not sure how that can be approached. Barbara went on to say that if we

don't vote on this then it could drop off if the State does not agree so I guess we really can't vote on it first and then amend it after. Moderator David Dauphin stated that we would vote on the amendment and depending on how the vote on that amendment went we would still need to go back and vote the original one down if the amendment passes. If it does not pass then we would vote on the amendment as written. Chief Dee Denehy stated that one of the safeguards here is that this money comes from the State and can only be used on bridges so even if we screw this up royally the money doesn't go anywhere and we still have it and we still have to use it on bridges. Betsy Cushing asked "how does this change the purpose by doing the amendment if it is still fixing bridges?" Selectman Brian Bazarnicki stated no, it only fixes the Howard Bridge and not any other bridges. Betsy Cushing asked "so the purpose would change to any bridge?" Brian Bazarnicki stated that the amendment would change it to any bridge. The current way the warrant is written is specifically for Howard Bridge. Betsy Cushing asked "do you know why you wrote it for Howard Bridge?" Selectman Clem Louder stated that they felt they needed to open that account for Howard Bridge but having it on any bridge we can always use it on the Howard Bridge anyway. Moderator David Dauphin asked "is there any other discussion on Article 18 the Howard Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund." He continued "are there any other questions on the Warrant Article as written?" (unnamed speaker) asked "when is the work to be done and are we still putting money in until we have enough to work on specifically Howard or should we make it (inaudible) this year and start new next year?" Selectman Clem Louder stated we need some money for it right now. We have a fix on it right now but I guess you would call it a temporary fix and the signs are rising that we know we are going to have to deal with it sooner or later. Moderator David Dauphin stated that there is an amendment on the floor and I will read the amendment and it is mostly to change the name. So we are going to change the name, this is an amendment that we are going to vote on to see if the amendment passes. If it passes we need to go back to the original warrant article and vote that one with the name change. So the amendment will read Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund. Should the State not accept the wording it would revert back to the original wording of Howard Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund. Also the words Howard Bridge in the fourth line down, Howard would be removed. So there is an amendment on the floor if you are in favor of this amendment raise your green card, raise your red card...amendment passes. Now we need to go back to Article 18 and it should be read as amended Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund. *To see if the Town will vote to establish a Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, to maintain or replace the Bridges and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to put in the fund., with this amount to come from the Restricted Unassigned Fund Balance which represents funds received from a One-Time Bridge Payment, further to name the Selectmen and Road Agent, as agents to expend from said fund. No amount to be raised from taxation. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)*

Barbara Bryce brought to floor
Cassandra Curtis seconded

Discussion: Jack Carleton stated that he heard you say maintain and replace the bridges. I think that is superfluous and we can strike that word "the." Selectman Brian Bazarnicki stated that instead of "bridges" put "town maintained bridges." I think that would be more specific. Moderator David Dauphin stated that there have been two suggestions. (Inaudible) Selectman Brian Bazarnicki stated that where you struck out "the" replace it with "Town maintained." Moderator David Dauphin states that he will try to read the amended amendment with the suggested wording. Article 18 Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Fund. *To see if the Town will vote to establish a Bridge Maintenance and/or Replacement Expendable Trust Fund per RSA 31:19-a, to maintain or replace the Town Maintained Bridges and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 to put in the fund., with this amount to come from the Restricted Unassigned Fund Balance which represents funds received from a One-Time Bridge Payment, further to name the Selectmen and Road Agent, as agents to expend from said fund. No amount to be raised from taxation. The Selectboard and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (Majority vote required)*

Jason Ballou brought to floor
Karen Wheeler seconded

Discussion: Jason Ballou asked the Selectboard "The unassigned bridge money that is received as it stands, you can use this for any bridge is that correct?" Selectman Clem Louder states as long as it's a bridge.

Reread Article 18. All in favor raise green cards, all opposed red cards, any abstained...Article passes.

Article 19 Library and Town Office

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to \$15,000 for the purpose of installing a fire alarm system in the Library and Town Office, and authorize the withdrawal of \$15,000 from the Library and Town Offices Expansion/Renovation Capital Reserve Fund previously established (2000) for such purpose. No amount to be raised from taxation. The Selectboard, the Fire Chief and the Budget Committee recommend this appropriation. (majority vote required)

James Chapman brought to floor.
Bruce Murphy seconded

Discussion: Martha Rivers stated that she is wondering why anyone would be opposed to this because on Sunday we were told by the people running for the Selectboard that this Article has been voted on for 15 years, a very long time. "Why would anyone be opposed to putting a fire system into a Town building?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that it has never been voted on as an article. He stated the Budget Committee, the Fire Chief and Selectboard said it is time. It's for every room in the building, not only the Library and we decided to quit kicking the can down the road and get it done. (unnamed speaker) stated just to confirm that we heard on Sunday that it was a fire suppression and alarm system. This reads alarm only. "Is that the case that it is only an alarm

system and not a suppression system?" Selectman Bart Cushing stated that whoever told you that did so in error it is an alarm system and also a water monitoring system for the basement. It is not a chemical thing you cannot use water in the Library. Chief Dee Denehy got a quote for \$12,800 or \$13,200 so that is why we set aside \$15,000 to do the system but it is an alarm and water monitoring system for the basement. (Inaudible) asks if it is also being monitored by Mutual Aid and Chief Dee Denehy stated that yes it was, Virginia asked if it has flashing lights and asked whether the alarms would be in the bathrooms as well and it was stated that yes they would be.

Reread Article 19. All in favor. Article 19 passes.

Other Discussion: Moderator David Dauphin thanked Bart Cushing for his years of service to the Town. He thanked all the people that came to Town Meeting for showing up, those that showed up to vote and those that went to the Meet the Candidate event that was held in the Library on Sunday the 10th. He thanked all the people that served on committees and those that continue to serve. Selectman Bart Cushing stated that there are books up front for Monadnock Regional School and he stated that for 10 months the Town sends them \$90,000 per month and that's greater than what you just voted on. It is kind of worthwhile to take a copy and see where your money goes for Mondock Regional. Moderator David Dauphin stated that there were Citizen of the Year Ballots that people can take and stated that they can be dropped at the Library, there can be dropped in the Library mail slot, there is a mail slot in front of the Museum, any of the Library Trustees would be glad to accept one. That award is going to be presented at the community dinner in August which we are hoping to have here again. He welcomed new folks to Town. Moderator David Dauphin asks if there are any additional questions before the meeting is adjourned? (unnamed speaker) asked a question "the Accessory Dwelling Unit, that passed right?" Moderator David Dauphin stated that all three of the Zoning Amendments passed. (unnamed speaker) asked "if that is now law, we don't have to have that accessory dwelling attached to the septic that your home is on?" Moderator David Dauphin stated that that was his understanding. Selectman Clem Louder stated that if it's not attached you still have to have a State approved system, you just can't dig a hole. Bill Whyte stated that the State stuff used to read that an ADU used to be attached to the principal dwelling. The septic is a separate question for the ADU. What they are saying is that you can have an ADU attached and that you have to have an adequate system but that you can connect to the house system if you can demonstrate that it has adequate capacity. So in other words, if you have a house and you have an ADU you can attach it to the septic as long as you can demonstrate that it is adequate. There is nothing stopping you from having an ADU that is attached and adding a separate septic system that is State approved. And the last part is the wording on this makes it clear that you can have an ADU that is not attached to the principal dwelling as long as it's within the zoning and building regulations. Selectman Clem Louder asked Bill White "does that include lot size and frontage?" Bill Whyte responded that what the State/regulations says about ADU's is that they can utilize the approved lot size of the principal buildings so if you have a building that's on 2 acres and you are required to

have 2 acres. If you have 2 acres you can have an ADU on that 2 acres. Selectman Clem Louder asked "if you have a house that is not compliant at this time and grandfathered and only on a half an acre how is that going to fit?" Bill Whyte replied that he thinks you would be going through the ZBA. Selectman Clem Louder responded that is what he wanted to know. He stated that how it is written it doesn't say that. Bill Whyte said that how he interprets it is if you had a principal dwelling that was grandfathered and non-conforming and you want to have an ADU, if you met the setbacks and the septic requirements then I think you can. Bill Whyte states that he is giving an opinion. Vicki Ayer stated that if you have a half acre lot with a house on it and you want to build a separate ADU you are not going to meet the setback requirements because it's too small. Sally Struble stated that she understands that the 3 year Selectman position ended in a tie vote. She asked "what happens if it is tied again? Is there a runoff election?" Selectman Brian Bazarnicki stated it would be a coin flip. Moderator David Dauphin stated that it could be a coin flip or it could be a deck of cards, that is what it comes down to. It;s a draw of lots and there is an RSA in the book about that. There is a group that has been organized to go through that recount.

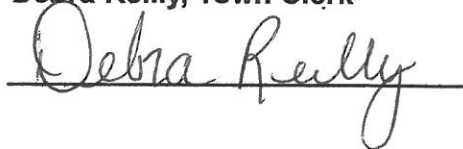
Moderator Dauphin made a motion to continue the meeting to March 12, 2025.

Bruce Murphy brought to floor.
Clem Louder seconded.

Motion Passes.

Submitted by: Debra Reilly, Town Clerk

3/20/24

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Debra Reilly". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.