

TOWN OF TUFTONBORO

Annual Town Meeting Minutes

March 8, 2022 – Town Elections

March 9, 2022 – Town Meeting

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Town of Tuftonboro, County of Carroll, and State of New Hampshire on Tuesday, the eighth day of March 2022, at 8:00 AM at the Tuftonboro Central School the meeting was called to order by Moderator Daniel F. Barnard, Jr. The polls were declared open for voting and to remain open until 7:00 PM or until all present that wish to vote have voted.

Ballots were cast for school officers and for articles on the school warrant, as provided for under the SB2 plan. The school district ballots were taken to Wolfeboro to be counted.

Listed below are the results of the town balloting for **Article 1: to choose all necessary Town Officers for the year ensuing:**

Selectman for Three Years	Votes
Robert “Bob” Murray	373
Lloyd Wood	127
Write In	7

Moderator for Two Years	
Steve Brinser	444
Write In	12

Supervisor of the Checklist for Six Years	
Marianne Marcussen	475
Write In	3

Budget Committee for Three Years	
Jeffrey Jordan-Reisner	377
Write In – Robert Roriston	77
Write In – David Dauphinais	59
Other Write Ins	42

Trustee of the Trust Funds for Three Years	
Chris Sawyer	416
Write In	21

Cemetery Trustee for Three Years	
Carol Bush	472
Write In	5

Library Trustee for Three Years	
Gordon Hunt	470
Write In	6

March 9, 2022 – Tuftonboro Central School

Moderator Daniel F. Barnard, Jr. called the second portion of the 2021 Annual Meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 9 at the gymnasium at Tuftonboro Central School.

The meeting was opened with a salute to the flag, led by the three local participants Samuel Saxby (10-11), Nolan Chominski (third in the 10-11 age group) and Brendan MacPhee (first in the 12-13 age group) in the National Pass, Punk & Kick Competition. Rev. Kevin Van Brunt provided an invocation.

The Moderator asked that all those who have served or are currently serving our country to stand to be recognized.

Moderator Dan Barnard explained the voting card each voter received when they checked in at the meeting. Non-registered voters were identified by a show of hands. Thanks were given to Dave Cash and the janitorial crew at TCS for assistance with set up with the town election and town meeting. Kyle Williams was also recognized for his assistance with the sound equipment. Rules for the meeting were reviewed by the moderator, published in the town report.

Barbara Loughman was introduced as town counsel and would be available for any legal questions that might arise during the meeting.

Mark Howard, President of the Tuftonboro Association, reminded everyone that the Annual Road Clean Up is on Saturday, April 23. Trash bags will be available at the town offices. Volunteers are asked to sign up for specific roads to clean. You may use your own bags or ones provided by the town. The Association will collect bags and take them to the transfer station.

School Board Chair Jack Widmer gave a report on the GWRSD voting results. Elected school board members are Brodie Deshaies for the At-Large position, Dana Streeter for Ossipee, James Pittman for Effingham, and Randy Walker as the Moderator. Mr. Widmer reported that all the articles on the school district ballot passed. Kathy Cuddy-Egbert is retiring as Superintendent, effective 6/30. The school board has hired a new Superintendent is Dr. Caroline Arakelian. She is currently the Assistant Superintendent in SAU 21 which included the Hamptons, Seabrook and Winnicunnet High School.

Moderator Barnard announced the results of the town election on March 8th. The officers elected stood to be recognized.

Bob Theve was recognized as serving on the Budget Committee for 15 years, Mary Ann Murray for 12 years as Library Trustee, Bill Marcussen for six years as Selectman, and Dan Barnard for 20 years as Moderator.

The meeting then proceeded with the remaining articles of the Town Warrant.

Article 2: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Eighty-Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Dollars (\$287,500.00) for the repair and upgrades of Union Wharf.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and recommended by the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectmen Chip Albee moved the article and Gordon Hunt seconded. Selectman Albee explained that the pier is in bad need of repair. Repairs would be made to the bulkheads and walkway. Intention would be to do this in the fall. Chris Sawyer spoke and agreed that the repairs are needed but asked if the money appropriated will be enough to make the repairs. Chip explained that if we don't have enough, the town will come back next year to ask for more funds. Philip Hunter asked if there was a diagram or plan for the project, wondering if there was going to be a canopy. He wanted to know who would benefit from these improvements. The plan is available in the town office, current plan does not have a patio. It is for the benefit of the Fire Department, Fish & Game, and those trying to access the islands along with improving the wharf for safety concerns.

The Moderator reread Article 2 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Six Hundred Twenty-Five Dollars (\$124,625.00) to pay a fourth and final installment toward the fire truck acquired in 2018 as approved by voters pursuant to Article 6 of the 2018 Town Meeting. The principal amount is \$120,209.83 and the interest is \$4,415.17. This five-year lease agreement contains an escape clause.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectmen Guy Pike moved and Steve Brinser seconded. Selectman Pike spoke to the article. This is the last payment of the fire vehicle and then the town will own it. No further discussion.

The Moderator reread Article 3 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred and Sixty-Eight Thousand Dollars (\$468,000) as additional funding, for the construction of the new Police Facility. This article will be non-lapsing until 12/31/2027 or completion whichever comes first.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 4-1)

Selectmen Bill Marcussen moved the article and Steve Brinser seconded. Selectman Marcussen reminded everyone that we had approved \$1.7 million for the police station in 2020. That included Capital Reserve funds, a Grant from the USDA and current taxation. This based on the best estimate from the general contractor. After the town meeting, the selectmen found that this sum would not be enough to finish the building as prices went up substantially. The additional funding is what is needed to achieve a guaranteed maximum price contract with the general contractor. There has been discussion about changing the design of the police station. The grant that has been approved is based on the current design and any change will require the town to go through the grant approval process again.

Chris Sawyer stated that she is not arguing about the need for a new police station, but she is concerned about the increased costs in gas as well as construction equipment and asked why we are going to spend money when the prices are going up in the current economy. The contract is not in place yet, but the money has been set aside for a new police station. She questioned if it is cost effective to build the police station now.

Gordon Hunt, Chair of Budget Committee, is in favor of a new police facility but asked if we have a guaranteed price. Selectman Marcussen stated that the guaranteed maximum price was given by the contractor. Bob McWhirter wanted more detail about what the guaranteed maximum price would be. Selectman Albee stated that the amount would be \$2,136,000. He agrees that there are concerns that the price would be that with the current economy due to the war in Ukraine. The only way to get solid bids is to put the bid out to contractors once this article is approved.

Discussion from several people focused on whether this is the time to build with the uncertainty in the world and the economy.

Jill Cromwell, chair of the Capital Improvement Program, stated that they had four other projects totaling \$450,000 were recommended but the Selectmen felt that the focus needed to be on the police station this year. If we put the police station on hold, those other projects will be delayed (plow truck, paving for highway garage, back hoe for the transfer station.) Jill asked if all the warrant articles passed, how much would our taxes go up?

Selectman Albee stated that if the current articles and operating budget presented at town meeting all passed, the total would be \$37,709 less from last year's total appropriations. The budget for 2021 was underspent by \$210,712, that money goes into Undesignated Fund Balance. The new tax rate is set in October, this has not gone up in the past four years.

Bob McWhirter asked if this article does not pass, would the Selectmen try to do something else with the police station? Selectman Marcussen stated that the current project would not be able to be completed with the current funds available. Chief Andy Shagoury is working on a grant for \$125,000.

If we have to redesign the station, there will be additional costs to make changes and would be jeopardizing grant funds. Selectman Albee reminded that years ago we put the fire station construction on hold and had the same arguments. When the project was completed, the fire station cost more than the original estimate. The selectmen need to be empowered to go out to bid with a maximum price so that they can then work on bids and bringing the project costs in line.

The Moderator reread Article 4 and called for the vote. The hand vote was too close to call so officials counted the hand vote for yes and no votes. The article **FAILED**. Yes – 62 No – 68

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$400,000) for the preparation and paving of major Town through roads.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved and Steve Brinser seconded. The Lakes Region Planning Commission has recommended that we increase budgets for road improvements incrementally. The town has focused on North Line Road, Federal Corner Road and Canaan Road. Max Ledoux asked about the differentiation between major town roads and neighborhood town roads. Guy Pike clarified that neighborhood roads are those that are not through roads, but more neighborhoods. He specifically mentioned Tupeck Lane and Shirley Road. These roads have been ignored and need work.

The Moderator reread Article 5 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000) for the preparation and paving of Tuftonboro Neighborhood Roads.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Bill Marcussen moved and Chris Sawyer seconded. Bill advised that the selectmen have discussed working on residential streets and felt that a separate article to focus on neighborhood roads would be appropriate. Roads needing work are Shirley Way, Tupeck Lane and Pine Mill Drive.

Jeffrey Newcomb lives on Shirley Way and Chandler Road and talked about how these roads are deteriorating and asked for the vote to approve these roads as they have been untouched for years.

The Moderator reread Article 6 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 7: To see if the Town will vote to establish an Expendable Trust Fund, to be known as the Police Vehicle Expendable Trust Fund, for the purpose of purchasing, equipping and refitting police vehicles for the Town of Tuftonboro, and to raise and appropriate the sum of Eighty Thousand Dollars (\$80,000)

to be placed into this fund; furthermore, to appoint the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend both principal and interest from this fund.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee)

Selectman Chip Albee moved and Steve Cloutier seconded. Selectman Albee advised that this is different from the way the purchase of a new cruiser has been handled in the past. Recommendations are to replace one cruiser but limited leased cruisers are available. This would give the selectmen flexibility in replacing a cruiser giving the option of repairing a cruiser.

Tim Galvin questioned the logic or process, feels that this should be a budgetary item.

Police Chief Andy Shagoury advised that the purchase of a police cruiser is typically handled as a warrant article. The wording states that it is for purchasing, equipping and refitting vehicles. Purchasing a new cruiser and equipping is challenging at this time. Costs are going up and inventory is limited. Bob McWhirter supports this article and feels that this would give them options for repairing. The question was asked if “refitting” would be “repairing.” Town Counsel, Barbara Loughman, confirmed that it would apply. Bob noted that five police vehicles are scheduled to be on an eight year replacement cycle. This is the second year that we have not replaced a cruiser. He supports the article.

Selectman Albee explained that if this money is not spent in 2022, the money will remain in the reserve fund to be used in the future with the Selectmen as agents to expend the funds. Chief Shagoury agreed that it is helpful to have as Capital Reserve in case the bill comes in the next year, rather than the budgeted year. Of the police vehicles, the 2011 vehicle has 140,000 miles and is rusting and the 2013 vehicle which was not replaced in 2021, has lower mileage but is rusting, Time and money is being spent on repairs.

The Moderator reread Article 7 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars (\$25,000.00) to purchase a baler and container for the purpose of implementing a paper recycling program at the Transfer Station as voted and approved by warrant article 16 of the 2021 Warrant.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectman Pike moved the article and Bob Theve seconded. Steve Brinser asked how long it would take to recover the initial cost of the baler. Selectman Pike stated that the market value of recycling will determine how long it would take to recoup the cost. The cost to recycle the paper will include the cost to operate the equipment. The town does not know how many people will recycle.

Steve Cloutier asked if there was a market for recycled paper. Selectman Marcussen said that there is a market, we don't know the value, but the purchase of this equipment is what we need in order to properly recycle paper.

Max Ledoux pointed out that the cost of this equipment includes a new position at the transfer station, budgeted for 2022. The town will have to pay a person to operate the machinery.

Gary Chehames reminded that in the 2020 town meeting, we agreed to investigate and go forward with paper recycling. The requirements are strict, but it would not be fatal if there was a small error in the stream. This does require a machine and a person to monitor the items going through, the budget committee added the position without knowing how many exact hours the person would be needed, so the hours could be changed. There is a market for recyclable paper and he believes that we should go along with this article as agreed last year.

Steve Wingate from the Conservation Commission reminded us that we are running out of space, we are responsible and if it doesn't work well, we should work on improving things. He encouraged the town to recycle and work hard at it.

Chris Sawyer stated she is not against recycling. The concept is good, but not sure that everyone will cooperate. Our town grows exponentially in the summer and those may not be taking the time to recycle. There will be an additional cost for a transfer station attendant to learn and operate the machine.

The Moderator reread Article 8 and called for the vote. The hand vote was too close to call so officials counted the hand vote for yes and no votes. The article **FAILED**. Yes – 61 No – 65

At this time, Moderator Dan Barnard reminded everyone that it might be appropriate to restrict reconsideration at this time to ensure that we would not vote on any of the issues already decided at the meeting. By restricting reconsideration, we would not reconsider or vote again at this meeting.

Steve Brinser moved to restrict reconsideration at this time for the votes taken at this meeting. Bob McWhirter seconded the motion.

The moderator called for a vote and the motion **PASSED**.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further, to raise and appropriate Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to put in the fund. Said sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at year end will lapse into the general fund.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectman Marcussen moved the article, Sean Christian seconded. Selectman Marcussen advised that this is an annual request, this provides for an emergency fund in the case that something arises that we have not budgeted. It provides a safety valve. This is typically not used, but makes the money available for the town's use.

Max Ledoux made a motion to change the amount of the article from \$5,000 to \$1. Sean Christian seconded. He believes that since we have not spent any money from this article in the past and the selectmen have confirmed that we had an excess balance last year that this money is unnecessary. The selectmen have the authority to spend up to the budgeted amount for the year. He believes this is a sneaky way to increase the unassigned fund balance every year.

Susan Weeks stated that the money goes to the contingency fund balance from the unassigned fund balance, and then back into the general fund if not spent. It does not increase the unassigned fund balance, but allows the opportunity to expend money in case of a sudden unexpected need.

The Moderator called for a vote on the motion to reduce the dollar amount from \$5,000 to \$1. The motion FAILED.

The moderator called for a vote and Article 9 **PASSED**.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Four Million Four Hundred and Nine Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Dollars (\$4,409,340.00) for general Town Operations. The Selectmen recommended Four Million Four Hundred Twenty-Four Thousand Three Hundred and Forty Dollars (\$4,424,340.00). This article does not include any special or individual warrant articles.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the article and Bob Theve seconded. Selectman Albee spoke to the article. The difference in \$15,000 came from a discrepancy in a departmental budget that was presented late in the year.

Chris Sawyer said that actually seeing the budgets for the town as a member of the Budget Committee is eye-opening. She hopes that people look at the budget before voting. At the last Budget meeting, the Selectmen increased the budget by \$40,000 because the state recommended that the town be re-evaluated since our evaluations are off.

Steve Brinser stated that the Budget Committee has spent a lot of time reviewing this budget. He is wondering if this is the right time to discuss. Selectman Pike reiterated that the public is invited to attend the Budget Committee meetings and that is the perfect time to have input into the town budgets.

Bill Rollins also stated that the time to review this budget is at the Public Hearing for the Town Budget, not at the Town Meeting.

Gordon Hunt stated that the budget is up by 5% this year, below inflation. The selectman had presented a Cost of Living increase for employees of 4.6%. He stated that we are a payroll driven business and believe that the cost of living increase was fair. Overall, the departmental budgets came through with prudent numbers.

Selectman Albee clarified that the state recommended the reevaluation as the town assessed values are off by 27%. The cost of \$40,000 is to reevaluate the entire town, so that the actual tax is based on the true value of your home. The value of your home will be accurately represented and taxes will not necessarily go up as the tax rate would be adjusted. Based on the overall budget and approved warrant articles and undesignated fund balance, 2022 taxes will be moderated.

Steve Brinser reminded everyone that the bigger portion of our taxes comes from the school budget, not the town. Jack Widmer stated that based on the school budget, Tuftonboro tax rate will go down by \$0.07.

Moderator Dan Barnard called for a vote and Article 10 **PASSED**.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:00 PM.

There were 144 voters in attendance, along with other observers.

I hereby attest to the minutes' authenticity and accuracy.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Coulter
Tuftonboro Town Clerk
3/16/2022