

Town of Berwick Open Town Meeting  
June 15, 2016

Moderator Geoffrey Day opened the meeting at 6:00pm. Moderator Day will be using the Maine Moderator's Manual Sixth Edition to conduct the meeting. He stated as a non-resident, the Town Manager, Stephen Eldridge, will be allowed to speak. There are no other non-residents that will need to speak.

Moderator Day swore the following elected officials into office:

Rebecca England: Selectman, Assessor, Overseer of the Poor

Dustin Price: Member of the MSAD #60 Board of Director's 3-Yr Term

Kelly Smith: Member of the MSAD #60 Board of Director's 1-Yr Term

ARTICLE 33

Shall the Town vote to require all those who make and second motions at the Town Meeting to rise and identify themselves?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Tammy Cole seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

ARTICLE 34

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$20,000** for the General Assistance Account for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Tammy Cole seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

ARTICLE 35

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$14,525** for the Community/Agency Appropriations Account for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016?

**NOTE:** This account will be used to make contributions to and at the request of the following outside agencies or purposes: COAST Bus Service, American Legion, Memorial Day, Holiday Decorations, and the Seacoast Shipyard Association.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Tammy Cole seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

ARTICLE 36

Shall the Town vote to appropriate the sum of **\$15,000** from Unassigned Fund Balance to replace the roof over the former cafeteria/gym at the Doran School (potential future home of the

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Community Center) and place this amount into the Recreation Improvement Reserve Account for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Beth O'Connor seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

ARTICLE 37

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$8,500** as the first lease payment for the purchase of a new police cruiser for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount into the Police Capital Equipment account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended and authorize the Board of Selectmen to enter into a lease purchase agreement on terms it deems appropriate with the balance to be repaid over a period of no longer than five (5) years?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Dustin Price seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

ARTICLE 38

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$16,000** for the purpose of replacing the Police Department's 2006 ATV for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount into the Police Capital Equipment account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**NOTE:** The current ATV will either be traded in or put out to bid in the next surplus equipment bid process with the proceeds being deposited into the General Fund.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Paul Boisvert asked the condition of the current ATV, how often it is used and the net cost after trading or selling the current one. Town Manager Eldridge responded that he doesn't know the answer to the questions but stated it is in good condition and is used fairly often in the summer to patrol off road areas.

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Dustin Price seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 35 – 1.**

ARTICLE 39

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$10,000** for the purpose of replacing the Police Department's IT Server for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount into the Police Capital Equipment account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

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**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Ken Rains seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 35 – 1.**

**ARTICLE 40**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$15,000** to invest in capital repairs, maintenance, and renovations of the Berwick Public Works Garage and Salt Shed for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016, and place this amount into the Public Works Capital account established for this purpose, with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**NOTE:** This Account will be used to fund repairs, maintenance and renovations to the Berwick Public Works Garage and Salt Shed, which are expected to extend the life of those buildings. The capital repair anticipated to be completed during fiscal year 2017 is replacing the roof on the salt shed.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Eleanor Murphy seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

**ARTICLE 41**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,000** and authorize the Board of Selectmen to purchase Map U-1, Lot 74 for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016, and place this amount into the Recreation Improvement Reserve account established for this purpose, with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended? This includes the cost of the land as well as any closing costs associated with the purchase.

**NOTE:** This 2.7 acres of land is the PSNH parcel off Moulton Street and is currently a surplus parcel as determined by Eversource Energy, a New Hampshire corporation and current owner. The purchase of this parcel provides for land preservation, recreational and public access to the vistas downstream of the Salmon Falls River Dam.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** An unidentified audience member asked if any of the items voted on had any account or are we beginning to put money in these accounts. Moderator Day clarified that she was asking if these accounts had existing balances. Chair Wright responded that these are established accounts set up by the Finance Director for each individual department which have sub accounts for separate line items.

Mr. Donald Young stated that the previous speaker did not identify herself.

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Beth O'Connor seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

**ARTICLE 42**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$21,634** for Debt Service in Fiscal Year 2016/17 as authorized by the passage of Article 37 at the 1997 Annual Town Meeting?

**NOTE:** This Account will be used to fund one-half the cost for repayment of the Water Department Bond issued by the Federal Rural Development Agency for the new Water Treatment Plant. All other debt of the Town is in the Water Department Enterprise Fund Budget and is paid from revenues received by the Department.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Dustin Price stated that citizens of Berwick not on town water would be helping to pay the Water Department's debt. Chair Wright replied that residents with private water use Town water by having access to the Fire Department, fire hydrants, schools, etc. He also stated that in 1997 the Town voted that half of the Water Department debt would be paid by the Town and half by the residents.

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Beth O'Connor seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 35 – 1.**

#### ARTICLE 43

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$15,000** and authorize the Board of Selectmen to hold it in a Contingency Account and to use it to meet unanticipated expenses and emergencies that might occur during the Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and with unspent balances to be carried forward each year?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Kelly Smith asked what the current balance is. Town Manager Eldridge replied that the account is already set up and the balance is 4,000 – 5,000. Mr. Smith asked how much was used last year if \$15,000 is being added this fiscal year. Chair Wright stated the \$15,000 is an on-going amount that is appropriated every year.

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Tammy Cole seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

#### ARTICLE 44

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$19,700** for the Federal Stormwater Program for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount into the account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**NOTE:** This Account will be used for the purpose of implementing State and Federal permitting requirements for discharges from municipal separate stormwater sewer systems (MS4s).

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Dustin Price made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Eleanor Murphy seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

#### ARTICLE 45

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$500** for Emergency Management for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount into the account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

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**NOTE:** This Account will be used for the purpose of funding expenses like provision of shelter, food supplies and other associated costs during emergencies which occur within the Town.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Dustin Price stated that \$500 seems like a very low number for this purpose. Town Manager Eldridge replied that it is a “what if we need it” account. It has not been used very often. Chair Wright reiterated that this fund is for short time use for emergency shelter and food such as a hotel for fire victims.

Ms. Tammy Cole stated that the Article stated the balance will be carried forward each year until fully expended and asked if the \$500 is added to the balance. Chair Wright confirmed. She asked what the current balance is. Town Manager Eldridge stated the Emergency Management fund has \$1,156.53 currently.

Mr. Peter Cook stated the amount does seem modest and asked if this amount is intended for a single family’s need or is it intended for a Town emergency such as an ice storm to provide mass emergency assistance. Town Manager Eldridge stated the account is used at the discretion of the Emergency Management Director.

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Beth O’Connor seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

**ARTICLE 46**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$23,000** for the Unfunded Liabilities Account for Fiscal Year 2016/17, which begins July 1, 2016 and place this amount in the account established for this purpose with unspent balances to be carried forward each year until fully expended?

**NOTE:** This Account will be used to satisfy existing obligations to employees who have accrued compensated absences such as vacation time or sick time, if and when such entitlements must be paid out upon employee departure from the Town’s staff. The Town’s compensated absences balance as of June 30, 2015 was \$178,518.

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Paul Boisvert asked for clarification of the Article and if this account would pay any remaining vacation or sick time if an employee left employment. Town Manager Eldridge confirmed and explained that the account was established at the recommendation of the Town’s auditors.

Ms. Eleanor Murphy stated that in 2011, three employees resigned and the Town expended \$149,000 and did not have the funds set aside for that purpose. The Board of Selectmen established this account due to that issue.

**Motion:** Eleanor Murphy made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Tammy Cole seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

**ARTICLE 47**

Shall the Town vote to reallocate the remaining \$5,300 from the funds raised and appropriated for engineering cost associated with the Route 9 Bridge project as authorized by the passage of Article 39 at the 2013 Annual Town Meeting and instead authorize its use for road, bridge, and sidewalk construction and repairs, as well as Town parking lots and public ways, and including expenses for curbing, drainage and engineering fees when required?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

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**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Eleanor Murphy seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

**ARTICLE 48**

Shall the Town vote to charge interest on unpaid taxes at the rate of **7.00%** per annum, and to set the date when taxes committed for Fiscal Year 2016-2017 (July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017) become due and payable as October 17, 2016 and April 18, 2017, with said interest to be collected after October 18, 2016 and April 19, 2017, and allow the Tax Collector to accept prepayment of taxes prior to the Tax Commitment Date?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** Mr. Rob Keyes asked the current percent charged now. Town Manager Eldridge replied it is 7% as recommended by the State Treasurer.

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Eleanor Murphy seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 34 – 2.**

**ARTICLE 49**

Shall the Town Vote to set an interest rate of **3.00%** as allowed by state law as the rate to be paid to taxpayers who pay amounts in excess of amounts finally assessed and authorize any such interest paid or abatements granted to be charged against the annual overlay?

**THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN RECOMMENDS YES VOTE 3:0**

**Comments:** None

**Motion:** Lisa Huestis made a motion to approve the Article as presented. Eleanor Murphy seconded the motion.

**The motion carried: 36 – 0.**

There being no further business, Moderator Day adjourned the meeting at 6:47pm.

**Respectfully submitted,**

**Patricia Murray**  
**Town Clerk**

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| ARTICLE | MOTION         | SECOND         | PASS | FAIL |
|---------|----------------|----------------|------|------|
| 33      | Eleanor Murphy | Tammy Cole     | X    |      |
| 34      | Eleanor Murphy | Tammy Cole     | X    |      |
| 35      | Eleanor Murphy | Tammy Cole     | X    |      |
| 36      | Eleanor Murphy | Beth O'Connor  | X    |      |
| 37      | Lisa Huestis   | Dustin Price   | X    |      |
| 38      | Lisa Huestis   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |
| 39      | Eleanor Murphy | Ken Raine      | X    |      |
| 40      | Lisa Huestis   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |
| 41      | Eleanor Murphy | Beth O'Connor  | X    |      |
| 42      | Eleanor Murphy | Beth O'Connor  | X    |      |
| 43      | Eleanor Murphy | Tammy Cole     | X    |      |
| 44      | Dustin Price   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |
| 45      | Lisa Huestis   | Beth O'Connor  | X    |      |
| 46      | Eleanor Murphy | Tammy Cole     | X    |      |
| 47      | Lisa Huestis   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |
| 48      | Lisa Huestis   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |
| 49      | Lisa Huestis   | Eleanor Murphy | X    |      |

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Town Clerk