

**Town Meeting from page 5**

along pretty briskly until the meeting reached the Highways and Bridges line item.

Selectman Dennis Fenton moved to increase the line item by \$75,000 to be spent as follows: \$32,500 for winter road maintenance, and \$42,500 for repairs to the Highland Lake Dam. Bill Bardsley, chair of the Budget Committee, said that the Budget Committee has no authority over amendments, but while its members don't like this amendment, they agree that there's really no choice.

Jeff Newcomb of the Budget Committee recounted a number of details that he feels point to the contractor being at fault for the latest extra costs in the dam project. He urged the Selectmen to negotiate very aggressively with the contractor on this point.

A number of other people, including David Jewett and Bryant Adams, voiced displeasure with the contractor and/or the engineer and urged the selectmen to hold the contractor and/or the engineer liable for the problems they've caused.

A voice vote was called, and the amendment to increase the Highways and Bridges line item by \$75,000 passed nearly unanimously.

Jim Delaney moved a \$10,000 increase to the Summer Equipment Rental line item in light of rapidly increasing gas costs. The voice vote was close, so the moderator divided the room. The amendment was defeated, 51 to 71.

Town Administrator Mark Stetson moved to add \$5,000 to the Projects line item in order to temporarily re-open Maple Street while the contractor waits for the frost to get out of the ground. After a number of questions, the meeting passed the amendment unanimously.

The last major budget hurdle was to address the selectmen's recommendation to top coat the east end of Maple Street and Channel Road up to the fire station. The Budget Committee opposed the plan because they feel the project would be done better and last longer if it were put off until 2009.

Jim Delaney moved an increase of \$28,480 to implement the selectmen's plan. John Thompson spoke in favor of the plan.

Once again, the voice vote was too close to call. On a show of hands, the amendment passed, 77 to 32.

With all the amendments squared away, the vote to pass a budget of \$1,303,756 was all but unanimous.

**Warrant Article 12**

**To accept a donation of land from the Thompson family to expand Lake View Cemetery.** When the New Hampshire Department of Transportation is done re-routing Route 11 at Cemetery Corner in East Andover, the newly-acquired land will be added to the cemetery. The article passed unanimously, with the meeting expressing its thanks to the Thompsons for their generosity.

By 10:30 PM the meeting was adjourned.



Mark Stetson at this year's Town Meeting.

Photo: Bob Bussey

## Mark Stetson Wraps Up 13 Years' Service To Andover

*After 13 years, Mark Stetson has stepped down as Andover's Town Administrator. We caught up with Mark for this exclusive interview before he left.*

**The Andover Beacon:** What's next for you?

**Mark Stetson:** I am going to work for a firm that provides assessing services to municipalities all over New Hampshire.

**AB:** What prompted you to make the change?

**MS:** I decided that after 13 years it was time for a change. Assessing was a very enjoyable part of my job as Town Administrator, so I'm excited to be able to do that kind of work full-time.

**AB:** Let's go back to the beginning of your stint as Andover's Town Administrator. Why was the Town looking for a TA, and why did you want the job?

**MS:** Bill Bardsley was the prior Town Administrator. He retired in April of 1995, which was shortly after Suzy and I had sold Stetson's Village Store. Bill knew that I was looking for a job, and he encouraged me to apply. Until that point, my only involvement with town government was being a member of the Cable TV Committee. It was a terrific opportunity to become more involved in the community and to offer something back to the community.

**AB:** A lot has happened since then. What are some of the notable changes around town, projects you've been involved with, etc?

**MS:** Numerous road and bridge projects, restoration of the Cilleyville/Bog Bridge, the town office addition and library renovation, and the construction of Andover's first, real police station. Obviously the current project to effect repairs to the Highland Lake dam should be on that list of notable projects.

**AB:** What accomplishment has given you the greatest satisfaction, and why?

**MS:** Helping to maintain Andover's conservative fiscal policy has been very important to me. The Cilleyville/Bog

Bridge restoration, the town office addition, and the police station are all high on the list, too. The biggest reason is that with each project, residents of Andover came together to help, investing a lot of time, expertise, and, in some cases, financial donations. Without the community's support, none would have happened.

**AB:** What has been your greatest frustration or challenge in being TA, and why?

**MS:** The ever-increasing workload that both the state and federal governments are shifting down to the town level in the form of new laws and more extensive procedures to do business.

**AB:** What do you think are the biggest challenges that the new TA will face?

**MS:** Getting to know the town and its residents will take a while. Residents will need to have patience with him while he gets up to speed.

**AB:** What has it been like to work with Andover residents?

**MS:** Dennis Fenton and Roger Godwin are clearly at the top of the list in terms of being the most enjoyable people I've had the pleasure to work with. From there, every town employee, past and present, and members of all the other town boards and committees have helped make this a rewarding experience. Andover is truly a special place to live and work.

**AB:** What can Andover residents do to make the TA's job better, more rewarding?

**MS:** Become better informed about the process of town government and the limitations imposed on town officials by state and federal laws. Read the *Beacon*, watch Channel 8, attend meetings, and participate in the process to let your voice be heard.

**AB:** Andover will face many challenges, both in the near term and in the long term. Do you think we're well positioned to face those challenges?

**MS:** It's extremely important that we See Stetson on page 7



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