

WARRANT ARTICLES - TOWN MEETING 2013

The following are the warrant articles that the Andover Town Meeting 2013 will vote on. Background information is provided, where appropriate, in square brackets [].

Voting for the election of officials will be open on Tuesday, March 12, from 11 AM to 7 PM at the Andover Elementary/Middle School gym. As soon as the polls close, Town Meeting will begin to consider the following warrant articles.

ARTICLE 1: To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year. (By ballot)

[This happens by ballot voting from 11 AM to 7 PM on Tuesday, March 12, in the AE/MS gym.]

ARTICLE 2: To see if the Town will vote to authorize indefinitely, or until rescinded, the Selectmen to accept the provision of RSA 33:7, to issue tax an-

icipation notes. (This is a housekeeping article only.) (Majority vote required.)

[Because New Hampshire is not a "Home Rule" state, the town must periodically cite specific New Hampshire laws as the source of the town's authority for the way it does business. That's what this year's "housekeeping" warrant articles (Articles 2 through 5) accomplish.]

ARTICLE 3: To see if the Town will vote to accept the provision of RSA 31:95-b providing that any town at an annual meeting may adopt an article authorizing indefinitely, until specific rescission of such authority, the Selectmen to apply for, accept and expend, without further action by the Town Meeting, unanticipated money from a State, Federal, or other Governmental unit or a private source which becomes

Town Issues from page 10

owned, bank account balances, CDs, IRAs, mutual funds, stocks, bonds, automobiles and all other goods which are owned and saleable.

If qualified, a person 65 to 74 years of age would see the assessment on their home reduced by \$40,000 for a property tax savings of \$739. At 75 to 79 years of age, the assessment would be reduced by \$60,000 for a savings of \$1,109. At 80 years and older, the reduction would be \$70,000 for a \$1,294 savings. (Savings amounts are based on a tax rate of \$18.46.)

In 2012, five Andover residents qualified for a total reduction of \$180,000 in assessed property value. The reduction saved the five residents a total of \$3,328 in taxes. Assuming 75 cents per \$1,000 change in budgets or revenue, that savings for seniors added about \$2.50 to the tax bill of a typical \$200,000 property in Andover. If the warrant article is approved, we don't anticipate the number of qualifying residents to change significantly next year.

Highway Maintenance Study Committee (Warrant Article 22) By Andy Guptill

As many of you know one, of the largest portions of our town budget is our highway system. Our road agent and his predecessors, in conjunction with the Board of Selectmen, have on numerous occasions pointed out that next to our school, it is our largest investment and biggest chunk of our tax bill. In tough times, it becomes the easiest target for cuts, and we have continued to "kick the can down the road" over time, causing a serious deterioration in this investment.

I do not believe that one person or board has the answer to solve this problem, however I do believe that we as a community need to have a serious fact-based discussion to come up with

viable and efficient solutions. At the March 12th Town Meeting, I will make a motion from the floor under the final warrant article, entitled "other business," to adopt a referendum instructing the Selectmen to form a committee of those residents knowledgeable in highway infrastructure and/or municipal finance to research possible changes to our highway maintenance system and report back to Town Meeting in 2014 with their findings and recommendations. (Items under this article are not legally binding, however historically the Selectmen honor the wishes of the voters, as they work for us.)

My hope is that this committee would work similarly to the committee that researched our fire departments and come back with several options for the voters to choose from, as I feel that in several instances in the past, many voters would have supported some changes, just not the changes that were presented as a single option.

We have many people in town who are very knowledgeable in this field. To present a good plan to the town, it will take solid fact-based numbers, with everything placed out for each option. If we are willing to have this open, civil discussion, I believe that we as a community can do just as was done with our now more-efficient single fire department and move toward a better, more-efficient community.

I hope you will support this motion. Remember: voting in favor of it is not a vote to change anything. It is simply a vote to look into our options going forward as a community.

Ballot from page 9

Garage for 30+ years. I have also been the treasurer for the Andover Fourth of July Committee for over 25 years, as well as treasurer for the Andover Historical Society. I enjoy this type of work, and would appreciate your vote on Tuesday, March 12.

available during the fiscal year. (This is a housekeeping article only.) (Majority vote required.)

ARTICLE 4: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to accept gifts of personal property which may be offered to the Town for any public purpose, pursuant to RSA 31:95-e. The Selectmen must hold a Public Hearing before accepting such gift(s), and the acceptance shall not bind the Town to raise, appropriate, or expend any public funds for the operation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of any such personal property. (This is a housekeeping article only.) (Majority vote required.)

ARTICLE 5: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Tax Collector to accept prepayment of taxes pursuant to RSA 80:52-a. (This is a housekeeping article only.) (Majority vote required.)

ARTICLE 6: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Three Hundred Nine Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty-six Dollars (\$1,309,936) which represents the operating budget. (This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee.)

[This is the usual "approve the budget" warrant article. The amount mentioned in this article does not in-

clude any of the amounts mentioned in any of the other warrant articles. The amounts of all the warrant articles that pass (including this one) get added together to determine the final 2013 Town budget.]

[See "2013 Budgets Set For Annual Meetings" on page 1 of this issue and the complete Town budget on page 14 of the Andover Town Report 2012 for details.]

ARTICLE 7: To see if the Town will vote to expand the purpose of the existing Bridge Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund to include funds for Town Bridge Improvement Projects and State Bridge Aid Improvement Projects, and to appoint the Selectmen as Agents to Expend. (This requires a 2/3 vote.)

[This article expands the purposes for which money in the fund can be used and lets the Board of Selectmen use money for the fund's purposes without further action by Town Meeting. See page 10 for more details.]

ARTICLE 8: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$25,000 to add to the Bridge Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund. (This article is recommended by the Board of Selectmen and by the Budget Committee.)

[The Bridge Rehabilitation Capital Reserve Fund will be used to pay for the bridge rehabilitation project mentioned in this article does not in-



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