



From left, selectmen Jim Danforth, Donald Gross, and Victoria Mishcon, along with Marjorie Roy, town administrator, and Joanna Sumner, town clerk and tax collector, sit at the front of Andover Elementary School's gym during the Andover town meeting on Tuesday night, March 12, 2013.

Photo and caption: John Tully, Monitor staff

## Andover Residents Vote Tax Exemption for Homeowners Who Go Green

Ray Duckler, Monitor staff

From the March 13 Concord Monitor

Addressing an issue as unclear as nearby fog-covered Route 4, Andover voters at last night's town meeting chose to grant a tax exemption for homeowners who install equipment designed to produce renewable energy.

In a debate that included a recess, research on geothermal energy, and discussion about the future of the planet, residents who utilize solar, wind, or wood-burning energy will not see the assessed value of their homes increase, thus saving them money on taxes, in an attempt to promote clean energy and move away from oil dependency.

By press time, the town had approved a budget of \$1.3 million, although voters hinted that they'd ask for an amended total once all 22 articles had been heard.

Article 20, as originally written, asked for a tax exemption "for persons owning real property which is equipped with one or more solar energy systems and/or wind energy systems intended for use at the immediate site."

An amendment to the article calling

for the addition of geothermal energy prompted moderator Dan Coolidge to call for a break so he could determine if geothermal energy was included in local statutes.

After returning to the podium, Coolidge said geothermal was not mentioned, but he added that wood heating central energy systems would be allowed under law, and the method was then added to the article, initiating a spirited debate.

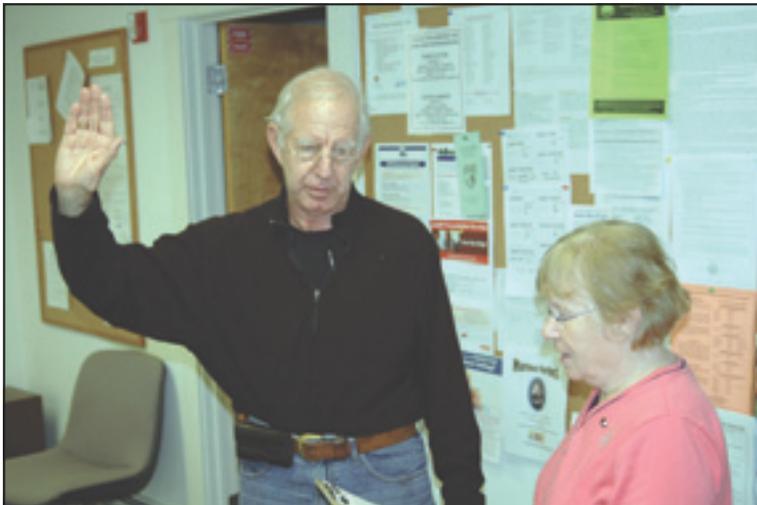
Victoria Mishcon, chairwoman of the board of selectmen, said the exemption is "tax neutral and additions (to homes) won't change the assessed value. There will be no burden on anyone else and the value of the installation will not be taxed."

Residents in favor cited the importance of using renewable energy, saying a new mindset was needed for the future, regardless of any impact on taxes.

"It's a move toward being independent from heating your home with oil," one voter said. "That's step one."

"It will encourage us to benefit our community and the world," said another

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Duncan Coolidge takes the oath of office from Town Clerk Joanna Sumner. Duncan is Andover's newest member of the Board of Selectmen, having won the March 12 election to replace Don Gross, who chose not to run for re-election. The Andover Board of Selectmen now comprises Vicky Mishcon, Jim Danforth, and Duncan Coolidge. Photo: Charlie Darling



Town Moderator Dan Coolidge ran the Andover Town Meeting this year.

Photo: Tina Cotton

## Town Meeting Results Article by Article

Voters approved all 20 warrant articles

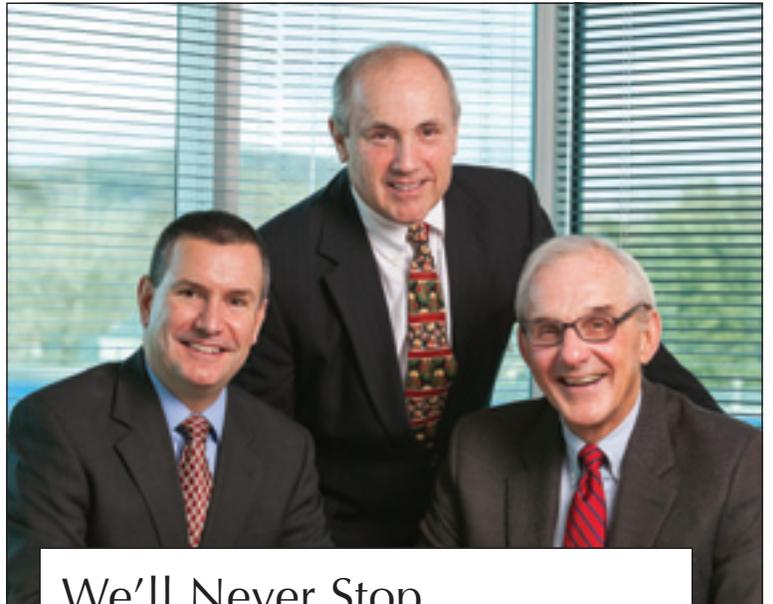
By Anne Hewitt, for the Beacon

On March 12, Andover taxpayers gathered in the AE/MS gym for Andover's annual Town Meeting. Moderator Dan Coolidge opened the meeting with an introduction of the Selectmen: Vicky Mishcon, Don Gross, and Jim Danforth; Town Administrator Marj Roy; Town Clerk Joanna Sumner; and State Representative Mario Ratzki. Judy Evans led the Pledge of Allegiance. Janet Moore gave a heartfelt tribute to Sandra Graves, who is stepping down af-

ter serving as a Library Trustee and the library board's treasurer for 33 years. Sandra received a standing ovation.

Dan reviewed the new voter ID process for Town Meeting. Andover residents must present photo ID to obtain a Voter ID Card that must be held up when a hand count is required to determine passage or defeat of an article. Attached to the Voter ID Cards are ballots that can be marked and submitted when a ballot vote is required. At this 2013 meeting, hand votes were required several times; ballot votes were not.

Article 1: Election of officers for See TOWN on page 6



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