

School Tax Rate on 2019 Tax Bills Decreased by 5%

Even accounting for DRA's error

Arch Weathers, Budget Committee

Last March, the 2019 annual School District Meeting voted an operating budget of \$5,655,656, up from the previous year by \$213,979 or 3.9%.

The State Education Grant this year is \$1,081,505. After accounting for other revenues, the amount to be raised by taxes for the schools in 2019 is \$4,334,450, up 11% over the previous year.

This increase is in part a result of the

New Hampshire Department of Revenue Administration allocating \$200,000 reserved by the Andover School Board for high school tuition as a revenue rather than as an expense.

This error resulted in the Town not raising an additional \$200,000 for taxes in the 2018 tax year. Had the allocation been handled correctly in the previous tax year, the increase in the assessment this year would not be so significant.

Andover's school tax rate for 2019 is \$21.64. This is a decrease of 5% over the previous year's school tax rate of \$22.94.

Anyone Can Write a Warrant Article for March Meetings

Requires signatures of 25 Andover voters

Charlie Darling, Beacon volunteer

Traditionally, the Select Board writes the warrant articles for Town Meeting and we, the voters of Andover, flock to Town Meeting to discuss and ultimately vote on each article. The articles that we accept, including the total budget figure, pretty much control how the town is run for the coming year.

But it's not just the Select Board that can put an idea (in the form of a warrant article) before Town Meeting to be voted on. In fact, anyone can do it.

Of course, there are a few rules:

1) The warrant article must be delivered to the office of the Select Board by the fifth Tuesday before Town Meeting. This year, that will be Tuesday, February 4.

2) The warrant article must be signed (legibly!) by at least 25 registered Andover voters. Each signature will be checked against the Town's checklist. If fewer than 25 of the signatures can be matched on the checklist, the article won't be added to the warrant.

3) According to RSA 39:3, the Select Board may make "only such minor textual changes as may be required," so the burden is on the writer of the warrant article to be sure it is worded clearly

and that it calls for an action that Town Meeting can legally take.

The rules for getting a petitioned warrant article on the Andover School District warrant are pretty much the same. The rules are in RSA 197:6, and the main difference from the rules described above is the deadline for petitions. A petition must be presented "to the school board or one of them not later than 30 days before the date prescribed for the school district meeting or the second Tuesday in March, whichever is earlier." This year, that deadline would fall on Saturday, February 1, which is 30 days before the Tuesday, March 2, School District meeting.

Any Other Business

If, for whatever reason, you can't meet all those criteria, you may still be able to put your issue in front of Town Meeting. The last article of the warrant is always "To transact any other business that may legally come before [Town Meeting]." That's your cue to be recognized by the moderator and put your issue before the voters.

But there's a catch: to be legally valid, any motion at Town Meeting must comply with NHRS 39:2, which requires that "The subject matter of all business to be acted upon at the town meeting shall be distinctly stated in the warrant, and nothing done at any meeting shall be valid unless the subject thereof is so stated."

So if your idea needs to be legally valid – if it expends money or changes an ordinance or something like that – then "any other business" is not the time to bring it up. Even if it were passed by the meeting, it wouldn't be legally valid because it would not meet the requirement of NHRS 39:2.

On the other hand, a motion that has no legal effect, such as honoring someone or expressing the meeting's support for an organization, works just fine as "any other business."

Check the Web Site!

Andover Police Department Report for October 2019

Press release

The Andover Police Department handled 194 calls for service during October, including:

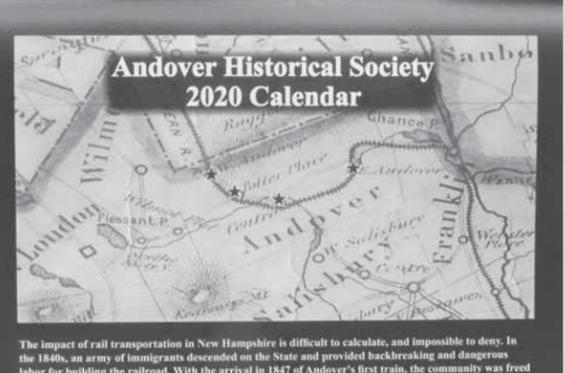
- Assist Citizen: 6
- Assist Motorist: 6
- Criminal Threatening: 1
- Domestic Dispute: 1
- Fraud: 1
- House Checks: 34
- Road Hazard/Obstruction: 7
- Suspicious Circumstances: 9
- Theft: 5
- Traffic Offense – Citation: 1

Traffic Offense – Warning: 54

Welfare Check: 3

Arrests

- Melissa Chilson, 30, Concord: Operating after Suspension; Operating after Suspension II; Operating without a Valid License
- Robert Hurlbutt, 53, Andover: Endangering Welfare of Child or Incompetent
- Justin Hammond, 37, Canaan: Criminal Trespass; Theft of Motor Vehicle



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SEASON'S GREETINGS

May the simple joys of the holidays fill your home with warmth and cheer!
And here's to a happy, successful & prosperous New Year for all!



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