

**Meeting from page 7**

Article 5 passed by voice vote.

**Article 6**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,986,399 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. The Budget Committee recommends this article. The Select Board does not recommend this article. Majority vote required.

Jim Hersey introduced Article 5 for the Budget Committee. He explained how the Select Board develops the budget and then the Budget Committee works on it.

Because the budget this year was up substantially over last year, the Budget Committee tried hard to find places it could be reduced without causing problems. They approved a budget about \$37,000 less than the Select Board's proposal, in part by reducing proposed salary increases from 3% to 2% and by reducing the Fourth of July Committee's budget from \$10,000 to \$5,000.

Pecco Beaufays argued strongly against decreasing the proposed salary increases, and Jim Delaney agreed, pointing out that there were no salary increases last year.

Town Moderator Mishcon led the meeting through the budget line by line. There was a long discussion of the proposed Information Technology budget, which was almost double last year's budget. Marj Roy explained that the increase is due to badly-needed new accounting software and some new computer equipment.

The Road Agent Wages line of the budget increased sharply over last year's budget due to the new appointed Road Agent and the Select Board's hope that the new Road Agent would be involved in planning and building a new Highway Department garage. (See Article 5, above.) Andy Guptill made a motion to limit the increase in Road Agent Wages to 3%.

Former elected Road Agent John Thompson spoke of all that has been accomplished over the last five years to move the Town toward having its own Highway Department, disputing Select Board Chairman Chuck Keyser's opinion that nothing had been accomplished.

Pecco Beaufays praised John Thompson and Mark Thompson for the job they've done as elected Road Agents over the years, saying it is an insult to them to propose setting the new appointed Road Agent's salary so much higher than when the position was elected.

The voice vote on the motion to limit the increase to 3% was too close to call; the motion passed on a show of voter cards.

Doug Phelps of the Fourth of July Committee spoke to the halving of the Town's contribution, to \$5,000. He said the annual celebration costs about \$17,000, with \$10,000 of that going to the fireworks display. He felt that the reduction would mean "the Fourth of July celebration wouldn't exist." He made a motion to increase the Fourth of July line item to \$10,000; then at Steve Barton's suggestion, he raised it to \$14,000. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Molly Morgan made a motion to restore the 3% salary increase for Town employees that the Select Board had proposed. After some confusion about how to calculate the new numbers, the moderator made the point to the meeting that the bottom-line total budget number is the only number that the Town Meeting can legally bind the Select Board to; all the line items, and all the votes amending certain line items, carry no legal weight ... they are merely the Meeting's advice to the Select Board. The motion to restore the proposed 3% salary increase passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Scott Kidder of the Andover Fire Department made a motion to increase the Forest Fire Equipment line by \$10,000 to allow the department to complete the purchase of a Gator and trailer. The motion passed on a unanimous voice vote.

Article 6 passed on a unanimous voice vote, with an amended total budget of \$1,986,296.

**Article 7**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$243,500 to be added to the following Capital Reserve Funds (CRF) previously established. The Budget Committee recommends this article. The Select Board recommends this article. Majority vote required.

Revaluation \$5,000

Highway Grader \$15,000  
 Highway Projects \$150,000  
 Police Cruiser Replacement \$13,500  
 Transfer Station Equipment \$10,000  
 Bridge Rehabilitation \$50,000

Wendy Pinkham pointed out that the Transfer Station Recycling CRF had been left out of this article for \$15,000, though it was in the Town Report. Attorney Matt Serge said that it is not legal to add it at this point. Article 7 passed on a unanimous voice vote.

**Article 8**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$31,000 to be added to the following Expendable Trust Funds (ETF) previously established. The Budget Committee recommends this article. The Select Board recommends this article. Majority vote required.

Forest Fire Labor \$5,000  
 Town Buildings \$20,000  
 Technology \$6,000

Article 8 passed with no discussion on a unanimous voice vote.

**Article 9**

To see if the town will vote to autho-

rise the selectmen to enter into a three year lease-purchase agreement in the amount of \$65,000 for the purpose of leasing a 1-ton truck, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$21,666 for the first year's payment for that purpose. No lease will be entered into without an escape clause. The Budget Committee recommends this article. The Select Board recommends this article. Majority vote required.

Select Board member Bill Keyser moved the article and explained that the truck would be a Ford F-550 dump truck with a sander and plow.

John Thompson said that because the other articles were tabled, "we don't have a plan" and therefore we shouldn't proceed with purchasing the truck. "This whole thing needs to be looked at as a whole by a real committee that's serious."

John moved that the meeting table Article 9, thereby ending discussion. The motion passed on a show of voter cards, after a voice vote was too close to call.

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- Community resources
- Wellness information to help you and your family.

To receive regular community updates from our President and CEO, Tom Manion, be sure to subscribe to our email newsletter in the link provided on our website.

Thank you.



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 Dartmouth-Hitchcock

 **The Andover Area Democrats are proud to support the Andover Beacon!** 