

MINUTES
GOFFSTOWN BALLOT DETERMINATION MEETING
February 7, 2011

In the absence of Town Moderator Rodney Stark, Assistant Moderator Fred Plett acted as Moderator ProTem.

There were 126 registered voters present at the meeting out of 12,655 registered voters in Goffstown. That's less than 1% .

Five counters were sworn in: Mark Lemay, Mary Sullivan, Ruth Gage, Cathy Ball and Karen LeClerc.

F. Plett called the meeting to order at 7 p.m.

He asked that the meeting hold one minute of silence in memory of Helen Skoglund, who passed away this past weekend. Helen was a Goffstown resident who had served the town in many ways – as a school board member, as school treasurer, as town accountant and in several other capacities.

Officer Geoff Pinard directed the color guard, consisting of Goffstown Police Explorers Sarah Chalifoux, Sarah Blanchette and Sean O'Dowd, and the meeting pledged allegiance to the US flag.

Mr. Plett then introduced those sitting at the head tables – to his right, Recording Secretary Marie Boyle, and Assistant Moderator Lionel Coulon; to his left, Selectmen Chairman Scott Gross, Selectman Vice-Chairman Phil D'Avanza; Selectman Nick Campasano, Selectman Steve Fournier, Selectman David Pierce and Town Administrator Sue Desruisseaux.

He also introduced the town's state representatives, and our State Senator Lou D'Allesandro who were seated in the audience.

Budget Committee Chairman Dan Cloutier introduced the members of the Budget Committee.

F. Plett thanked the Budget Committee for all their hard work and they received a round of applause. He also noted that the town's DPW has done a great job with all the snow we've had lately, and they were also applauded

F. Plett then introduced Rick Wilhelmi, Goffstown's Parks and Recreation Director, who in turn called Lionel Cullerot and Barbara Robinson to the front tables.

Mr. Wilhelmi has been director of the Parks and Rec Commission since March of 2010.

Mr. Wilhelmi introduced the members of the Parks and Recreation Commission – Chairman Mark Campbell, Vice-chairman Bill Sullivan, Kevin Baines, Bob Draper, Howard Sobolov, Susan Tucker, Jane Steckowych, and Jan MacDougall.

He noted that he was here tonight to present the 33rd annual Clint Robinson-Lionel Cullerot Award.

R. Wilhelmi - This award is given annually to the person or group that best exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism for the community of Goffstown as was personified by Clint Robinson and Lionel Cullerot.

This year's award is being bestowed on a gentleman who has provided instructional and athletic training to our young children in the sport of Track and Field.

The Hershey Track and Field games introduce kids to physical fitness and healthy lifestyles through basic track and field events.

Jim Clark has been involved with the Goffstown Hershey Track and Field program for ten years. He has run in nearly every Goffstown Gallop since it was established and he won that race in 2002.

Jim was a call fire fighter for the town for over 10 years and has coached cross country as a volunteer for Mt. Zion High School in Manchester.

Thank you, Jim for your ten years of dedication to the national Hershey Track and field program.

Mr. Clark accepted the award and he thanked all the parents who helped out. He said he likes to go and run with the kids. He said he loves track and field because it's something that just about anyone can do.

He received a round of applause.

Moderator Plett explained the rules and procedures of this meeting. He noted that as everyone registered, they were given a 'voter card.' He said those cards must be signed with your name or you won't be allowed to vote tonight.

He also explained the effects of so-called Senate Bill 2. We won't be passing or defeating anything tonight, just deciding what will appear on the ballot at the election, and noted that the election will be held on Tuesday, March 8 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. at Goffstown High School for District 1 voters, and at the Bartlett Elementary School for the voters of District 5.

He also noted that just this week, the State Legislature changed the so-called 'to see' problem on town warrants, so that the articles may be amended, but only to the extent that they cannot change the subject of the article.

He also said amendments must be presented in writing to the moderator on the forms provided here at the head table – discussion will be only on the amendment, then there will be a vote on the amendment.

All questions and amendments must be directed through the moderator.

He said it's appropriate to discuss and debate issues – that's what democracy is all about – but he will not accept any personal attacks on individuals.

And he said we'll take up the articles one at a time.

Moderator Plett noted that Articles 1 and 2 are planning articles, and that they do not apply to this meeting. They will be voted on, on Election Day.

ARTICLE 3

Moderator read the article.

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate for the operation, expenses and commitments of the town government, the budget approved by the Budget Committee in the amount of Eighteen Million, Nine Hundred Twenty-Seven Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-Three Dollars (\$18,927,383).

This budget will be predicated by estimated revenues in the amount of Seven Million, Five Hundred Four Thousand Eight Dollars (\$7,504,008).

The Sewer Enterprise Fund of One Million, Six Hundred Eighty-Nine Thousand, Two Hundred Dollars (\$1,689,200) is included in this revenue amount and in the appropriations requested in this article.

The EMS Special Revenue Fund of Six Hundred Ten Thousand, Nine Hundred Thirty-Two Dollars (\$610,932) is included in this revenue amount and in the appropriations requested in this article.

The motion on the operating budget shall be the following, with only the appropriation amount subject to amendment: “Shall the Town of Goffstown raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant, or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling Eighteen Million, Nine Hundred Twenty-Seven Thousand, Three Hundred Eighty-Three Dollars (\$18,927,383).

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Nineteen Million, Nine Hundred Twenty-Five Thousand; Eight Hundred sixty-Three Dollars (\$19,925,863), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action by the Town of Goffstown or by law or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13 X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only”. NOTE; This article (operating budget) does not include appropriations in any other warrant article.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0 and Budget Committee 11-0-0

Selectman Scott Gross moved that Article 3 be placed on the ballot as printed; motion was seconded by Selectman Phil D’Avanza.

Moderator Plett recognized Selectman Gross.

Selectman Gross spoke to the motion – he thanked the Budget Committee members and especially Chairman Cloutier for all of their hard work during this past budget season.

He noted that several of the items that were originally included in the operating budget as part of the Capital Improvement Program, have now been made into special articles.

He said the selectmen set a level tax rate as their goal this year, which isn't easy because of the ever-increasing demand for services. With all the snow we've had this winter, the Police Department, the Fire Department and the DPW have been working very hard to keep the town safe.

He noted that the only departments that showed increased budgets over last year's were the Parks and Recreation and the Goffstown Library, notably because more and more people are taking advantage of our library and our parks and recreation programs.

Last year, he added, we had three large pieces of equipment that did not get voted in. You will see those equipment pieces in the warrant this year as special articles. We separated them out to let people vote on each of them on their own merits.

Moderator Plett recognized John Burt, who said he has an amendment to this article. Mr. Burt came forward and presented the written amendment to Mr. Plett.

The amendment read, **“To reduce the operating budget by \$186,329.00.”**

Mr. Burt moved the amendment, motion was seconded by Richard Meaney.

There was also a request for a secret ballot, signed by John Burt, Daniel J. Cloutier, Jennifer Getchall, William Gordon and Richard E. Fletcher.

Mr. Burt spoke to his motion –

My reason for asking for this amendment is that the selectmen wanted a number, which is \$186,329 less than this. The selectmen and the budget committee worked extremely hard to come to the number they had. However, they moved to add this amount, \$186,329 into the budget, and it passed. I voted against the motion. I believe that the amount the selectman offered was a good amount, and I think we should have stuck with that number.

I think the \$186,329 in the selectmen's budget is just in excess of what the taxpayers need to pay.

Selectman Gross asked the people to look at the handout they were given as they entered the gym. He directed them to several lines in the town budget graph. Said this extra money (\$186,329) will go directly into the road program.

He said this year the board of selectmen tried reluctantly to cut the budget to get to a level budget. They were pleasantly surprised when the budget committee voted for additional funds, but felt it was a great idea because this money would be used to repair and reclaim our roads.

Moderator noted that there has been a request for a written secret ballot.

Assistant moderator Lionel Coulon gave the voters instructions on the procedure to vote on this amendment.

Moderator Plett – The amendment is to reduce article 3 by \$186,329. If you vote Yes, you approve of the amendment; if you vote No, you do not approve of the amendment.

(People voted).

Following the vote, Moderator Plett announced the results: **The amendment was defeated, the results were Yes – 19, No – 91; for a total of 110 votes.**
Now back to the original article.

Seeing as there was no more discussion on this article, the moderator directed the Town Clerk to place Article 3 on the official ballot as printed

Mark Campbell moved to restrict reconsideration of Article 3 – motion was seconded by Selectman Pierce – motion passed.

ARTICLE 4

Moderator read the article:

To see if the town of Goffstown will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Goffstown by its Board of Selectmen and the New England Benevolent Police Association, Local No. 24, representing the Patrolmen which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

<u>Fiscal Year</u>	<u>Estimated Increase</u>
2011	\$0
2012	\$ 33,007
2013	\$42,311

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of zero dollars (\$0), for the current fiscal year 2011, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0 and Budget Committee 9-2-1.

Moderator Plett informed the audience that this article cannot be amended. He recognized Selectman D'Avanza.

Selectman D'Avanza spoke to his motion – This is the result of collective bargaining. There is no financial impact in this year of 2011.

Moderator Plett interrupted to say that nobody had moved the article to the floor.

Selectman D'Avanza moved to put Article 4 on the ballot as printed – motion was seconded by Selectman Fournier.

Selectman D'Avanza explained the terms and conditions of the agreement and noted that this is for the police patrolmen only.

During the negotiations, the selectmen had five goals which they wished to achieve during negotiations:

- 1) That there would be no financial impact in 2011;
- 2) That employee contributions to health insurance would be increased;
- 3) That there be no compounding of steps and COLA;
- 4) Mitigation of the Evergreen Law;
- 5) Mitigation of any potential of New Hampshire Retirement System.

We feel that we have achieved those goals, since

- 1) There is no financial impact in the year 2011;
- 2) Members will be on the same health insurance as non-union with larger co-pays,
- 3) The year 2012 has steps for those eligible, but has no COLA; 2013 has no steps, but a 3.25% COLA.,
- 4) If the Evergreen Law is repealed before this contract is passed, it will not apply to this contract.
- 5) Arrangements have been included so that any NHRS Spiking Assessment will not be calculated into the pension.

Moderator recognized Ruth Gage who had a question.

R. Gage – The two articles - articles 4 and 5 – are these two separate unions?

P. D'Avanza – These are two different divisions of the same union.

Moderator Plett asked if there were any questions or any further discussion on this article. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 4 on the official ballot as printed.

It was moved, seconded and passed to restrict reconsideration of this article.

ARTICLE 5

Moderator read the article.

To see if the Town of Goffstown will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Town of Goffstown by its Board of Selectmen and the New England Benevolent Police Association, Local No 124 representing the Dispatchers and Clerks at the Police Department which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2011	\$0
2012	\$9,378
2014	\$18,902

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of zero (0) dollars for the current fiscal year 2011, such sum representing the additional costs attributable by the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels in accordance with the most recent collective bargaining agreement. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0 and Budget Committee 9-2-1

Moderator Plett informed the people that this article, too, cannot be amended as it is the result of collective bargaining. He then recognized Selectman D'Avanza.

Selectman D'Avanza moved to put Article 5 on the ballot, motion was seconded by Selectman Fournier.

Selectman D'Avanza noted that the Selectmen's goals were the same for this article as with the previous article. He said that this is a new union and this represents their very first contract.

Moderator Plett asked if there were any questions or discussion on this article. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 5 on the official ballot as printed.

It was moved, seconded and passed to restrict reconsideration of Article 5.

Moderator Plett explained that these reconsideration votes are to prevent what used to happen at the old-style town meetings where people would wait until the meeting was almost over and most of the people had gone home, and then would reconsider a particular article and with only a few people present would pass the article.

ARTICLE 6

Moderator read the article.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of four Hundred Ninety Nine Thousand, Five Hundred Twenty-Four Dollars (\$499,524) for the purpose of reinstating the Budget Committee's reduction of the approved CIP road plan. Passage of this article will also indicate the voters' desire to keep the costs of the road plan in the annual operating budget. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0 and the Budget Committee 10-2-0

Moderator Plett recognized Selectman Pierce.

Selectman Pierce moved that Article 6 be placed on the ballot as printed, motion was seconded by Selectman Gross.

Selectman Pierce – We have this special article in here because about 1/3 of the town's road plan has been placed into this article. This road plan was voted in originally in 2002 or 2003.

Selectman Gross – It costs us a little over two million dollars a year to rebuild the roads in this town. The plan was working well and was pretty effective. But lately, in 2009 and 2010 the funding for this road plan was cut.

The selectmen took a million dollars out of that plan because of the economy. In a compromise with the budget committee, we decided that we would make it a special article.

Moderator recognized Dan Cloutier, the chairman of the budget committee.

Mr. Cloutier said he was surprised to see the article worded as it was, mentioning the budget committee.

Selectman Gross – Although we've made a lot of progress in the past 8 years, many of our roads still need to be upgraded. Addison Road is one of them. If you've driven on that road, you know what it's like. Several roads need reconstruction and while we're doing those, other roads will be degrading to the point of needing reconstruction.

This was a separate article for six or seven years or so and then we had a vote to put it into the operating budget. The board of selectmen was reluctant to do that – we felt that once you do that people might be reluctant to vote on special articles, expecting that they, too, would become a permanent part of the operating budget.

As for the language, you can amend it if you wish – I don't have any problem with that.

Moderator recognized Mark Campbell who said he agreed with Selectman Gross and hoped that this article would pass because our roads really need help. If they don't get fixed now, they'll only get worse.

Moderator Plett asked if there was any further discussion on this article – seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 6 on the official ballot as printed.

Sel. D'Avanza moved to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion was seconded by Selectman Gross. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 7

Moderator read the article.

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Five Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$550,000) for the purpose of purchasing a Pumper/Tanker to replace a 1992 Fire Engine and a 1989 Tanker, and to fund this appropriation with One Hundred Forty-Two Thousand Dollars (\$142,000) from the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund and Four Hundred Twenty Thousand Dollars (\$420,000) by taxation. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3).

Moderator recognized Selectman Campasano.

Selectman Campasano said he has an amendment to offer on this article. He handed the amendment to the moderator.

Moderator – **The amendment is to change the \$420,000 figure to \$408,000.**

N. Campasano explained that the amount to be raised by taxation is really \$408,000, after receiving the final numbers; and the selectmen wish to reduce that amount in this article. This amount is \$12,000 less than the article's original number.

Moderator asked for questions or discussion on the amendment only – seeing none he called for a vote on the amendment. The amendment passed by voice vote.

Selectman Campasano moved that Article 7 be placed on the ballot as amended-motion was seconded by Selectman D'Avanza.

Selectman Campasano - Last year the town sought to replace a 1992 Emergency-One brand fire pumper. That article, which included some other vehicles, did not pass at town meeting. Now we're seeking to replace that 19-year old emergency pumper .

Our fire chief is working on consolidating our fleet of vehicles. When one of our ladder trucks was unfit for service, it was decided to reduce our fleet from two ladder

trucks to one. The one ladder truck was replaced in 2009, funded in part by an Assistance to Firefighters grant in which \$712,500 from the federal grant was combined with town funds contained in the fire department's capital reserve fund to make that purchase.

This year's request is to combine a tanker vehicle and a pumper vehicle into one combination tanker/pumper to replace Engine 5 and Tanker 5. Both of those vehicles are in need of extensive repairs. This reduction in the number of vehicles will help to both reduce the annual operating costs of the fleet and lengthen the time period between vehicle replacements.

To purchase this new tanker/pumper, if the \$550,000 is appropriated, \$142,000 will be withdrawn from the existing fire department capital reserve fund and the balance of \$408,000 will be raised through taxation.

Moderator asked if there were any further questions or discussion. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 7 on the official ballot as amended.

Selectman Campasano moved to restrict reconsideration of this article, motion was seconded by Selectman D'Avanza. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 8

Moderator read the article:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Forty-Seven Thousand Dollars (\$247,000) for the purpose of purchasing an Automated Solid Waste Collection Vehicle to replace the 2000 Solid Waste Automated Collection Vehicle. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3)
Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0 and the Budget Committee 10-2-0

Moderator Plett recognized Selectman Pierce.

Selectman Pierce moved to have this article placed on the ballot – motion was seconded by Selectman Campasano.

Selectman Pierce noted that this article provides for the scheduled replacement of a trash collection truck. This is another item that would normally have appeared in the Capital Improvements Program.

During sessions with the Board of Selectmen and the Budget Committee, a compromise was reached and this vehicle's purchase was given individual status as an article for more public oversight.

The DPW has three waste collection trucks; two are the primary collecting vehicles which are out there daily picking up the town's solid waste and recycling waste. The third, the oldest, is used as a backup when something happens to one of the other vehicles.

If this passes and we do get a new truck, this new one will go out every day and the next oldest one will be used for backup. The present backup vehicle, a 2000 Volvo is to be traded in or sold. These vehicles make approximately 900 pickups a day, while, according to the vehicle manufacturers, they should be used for just 600 pickups per day.

We usually purchase a new vehicle every four years as a way to ensure that we can maintain a reliable curbside trash pickup for the town.

Moderator Plett asked if there were any questions or requests for further discussion. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 8 on the official ballot as printed.

Selectman Campasano moved to restrict reconsideration of this article, motion was seconded by Selectman Pierce. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 9

Moderator read the article.

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) for the purpose of supporting the nonprofit Goffstown Main Street Program, Inc. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 3).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0, and Budget Committee 12-0-0.

Moderator recognized Selectman Fournier.

Selectman Fournier moved that Article 9 be placed on the ballot as printed - motion was seconded by Selectman Gross.

Selectman Fournier cited all of the great events which Main Street has brought to downtown Goffstown, such as Friday Night Under the Lights, Concerts on the Common, the Pumpkin Regatta, and others.

He said that Main Street does a wonderful job of bringing people out and downtown to these events.

Moderator Plett asked if there was any discussion on this article.
He recognized Lowell Von Ruden.

Mr. Von Ruden said that he is a member of the Main Street Board of Directors. He said that the volunteers for this group have been wonderful and have done a great deal

of work for the town, which hopefully will keep the businesses we have downtown here and even bring in some new businesses, and he urged the voters to approve this article.

Moderator asked if there was any further discussion – seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 9 on the official ballot as printed.

Selectman Fournier moved to restrict reconsideration of Article 9, motion was seconded by Selectman Gross – motion passed.

ARTICLE 10

Moderator read article:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt an ordinance pursuant to RSA31:39-c, to allow for administrative enforcement of violations of any municipal code, ordinance, bylaw or regulation, and for the collection of penalties to be used prior to the service of a formal summons and complaint. The system provides opportunities for persons who do not wish to contest violations to pay such penalties by mail. The proposed ordinance is available for viewing on the town’s website and in the Town Clerk’s Office.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-1-1.

Moderator recognized Selectman Gross.

Selectman Gross moved that Article 10 be placed on the ballot as printed, motion was seconded by Selectman Campasano.

Selectman Gross explained that this article is for our prosecutor, Kerry Steckowych and our code enforcement officer, Derek Horne.

For the most part, he said, most of the people in town are very good about abiding by the town’s rules, bylaws, etc. Once in a while there’s a problem with certain people who don’t pay their fees, and this will provide them with a written summons which they can pay by mail. This is just for a small number of folks who don’t abide by our laws and regulations. It takes a lot of our employees’ time to try to collect these fees.

A copy of this ordinance was included in your handout.

Moderator asked if there were any questions or need for further discussion. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 10 on the official ballot as printed.

Selectman Gross moved to restrict reconsideration of Article 10; motion was seconded by Selectman Campasano. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 11

Moderator read the article:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive outlined in Chapter 79-E of state law and to designate two commercial areas as meeting the standards for an eligible district as set forth in RSA 79-E:2(1) of the town as eligible for said incentive:

(1) Pinardville Area which includes 147 taxable parcels and

(2) Goffstown Village Area which includes 100 taxable parcels.

(A map identifying these parcels is available on the town's website and in the Town Clerk's Office).

This plan has been endorsed by the Goffstown Board of Selectmen, the Goffstown Economic Development Council, and the Goffstown Main Street Program to promote improvements and investments in said commercial districts.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0-1.

Moderator recognized Selectman Fournier.

Selectman Fournier moved to place Article 11 on the ballot as printed; motion was seconded by Selectman D'Avanza.

Selectman Gross asked Moderator Plett if a non-resident could address the audience on this article. Moderator Plett gave permission.

Goffstown's Code Enforcement Officer Derek Horne spoke to the people in the audience.

He said the Goffstown Economic Development Council has reviewed and recommended to the Board of Selectmen to propose adoption of this article. The areas cited are in Pinardville and in the Village, as shown on the map that is included in the handout you received tonight.

He explained the provisions of the article. This enabling legislation was adapted to encourage investment in central business district, neighborhood business districts, downtowns, and village centers. It's to encourage the rehabilitation and active reuse of under-utilized buildings to help promote local economies, while sustaining smart, sustainable growth, as an alternative to sprawl.

If a property owner proposes to rehab his property at a cost of at least \$75,000 or 15% of the assessed value of the property he can apply to the selectmen for tax incentive relief.

There will be a public hearing to see if the rehab is a public benefit. If the project results in substantial rehabilitation, any new taxable value generated by the renovations could be free from property taxes for up to five years for a substantial rehabilitation; up to 2 additional years for new residential units; 4 more years for affordable residential units; and up to 4 additional years for a property listed or eligible to be listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

This does not change any zoning.

There is a further explanation of this on the handout you received tonight.

Selectman Gross – During the past several years, our taxes have been depending very heavily on the residential areas of the town. This article is an attempt to help with the residential taxes. It's hopefully to make it more attractive for businesses in Goffstown to remain here, and for new businesses to come here.

This is an incentive that will hopefully lessen some of the taxes on the residential properties in the town by increasing the town's valuation..

Moderator Plett asked if there were any questions or need for further discussion. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 11 on the official ballot as printed,

Selectman Gross moved to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion was seconded by Selectman Fournier. Motion passed.

ARTICLE 12

Moderator read the article.

To see if the Town will vote to adopt an Exemption for the Disabled under the provisions of RSA 72:37-b as follows: the exemption from assessed value for qualified taxpayers shall be \$80,000 off their assessment. To qualify, a person must apply in writing to the Selectmen no later than April 15 of the tax year, be eligible under Title II or Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act, must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years, must occupy the property as his principal place of abode as of April 1 of the tax year, must own property individually or jointly, or if owned by a spouse, they must have been married at least 5 years; had in the calendar year preceding April 1st a net income from all sources of not more than \$40,000 if single and \$60,000 if married, own assets not in excess of \$200,000, excluding the value of the person's actual residence and up to the minimum single family residential lot size specified in the local zoning ordinance.

Submitted by petition. Not recommended by the Board of Selectman 4-0-1

Petitioner Sue Wagner moved that this article be placed on the ballot as printed; motion was seconded by Karen McRae.

Moderator recognized the petitioner, Sue Wagner.

Ms. Wagner said the town of Goffstown has passed exemptions for veterans and the elderly over the past few years.

She said she feels that maybe this will help someone with their property taxes. The person must ask in writing and must be the occupant of the property. And there are a lot of other things that must be in place in order for them to be qualified for this exemption.

She explained the other qualifications for this exemption.

Moderator asked if there were any questions or need for further discussion of this article.

Moderator recognized Jen Foley, who asked why the Board of Selectmen didn't recommend this article.

Selectman Gross responded, saying that the selectmen did not really discuss the merits of this exemption. He said they were concerned because they didn't know what the impact would be.

In the past we have voted in elderly exemptions and veterans exemptions. If anyone gets an exemption, the other taxpayers have to make up the difference in the amount of taxes that need to be collected.

We have no idea how many people would be asking for this exemption and therefore no idea what the impact would be on the rest of the taxpayers.

Moderator recognized Scott Bartlett, Goffstown's Assessor who said he had an amendment to this article.

Mr. Bartlett moved to amend the article as follows:

To see if the Town will vote to adopt an Exemption for the Disabled under the provisions of RSA 72-37-b as follows: the exemption from assessed value for qualified taxpayers shall be \$45,000 of their assessment. To qualify, a person must apply in writing to the Selectmen no later than April 15th of the tax year, be eligible under Title II or Title XVI of the federal Social Security Act, must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years, must occupy the property as his principle place of abode as of April 1st of the tax year, must own the property individually or jointly, or if owned by a spouse, they must have been married for at least five consecutive years, had in the calendar year preceding April 1st a net income from all sources of not more than \$35,000 if single, and \$50,000 if married, own assets not in excess of \$150,000, excluding the value of the person's actual residence and up to the minimum single family residential lot size specified in the local zoning ordinance.

Motion was seconded by Gail LaVallee.

Mr. Bartlett explained the changes and said these numbers would bring the income and asset limits to be the same as the 65-year-old elderly exemption. The asset and income limits that appear in the article are more in line with the 80-year-old elderly exemption limits.

Moderator recognized Dan Cloutier who said it's going to be very hard to vote on this because we don't know what the impact would be. Do we have any numbers about what it would be?

Moderator Plett asked how many people would apply.

Ms Wagner said she didn't know – she had no idea how many disabled people there are in Goffstown.

Jen Foley – If this is passed, it can always be changed

Moderator asked if there were anymore questions. Seeing none, he called for a vote on the amendment – the amendment passed on a voice vote.

On the main article – Moderator asked if there were any questions or if there was further need for discussion.

Seeing none, the moderator directed the Town Clerk to place Article 12 on the official ballot as amended.

ARTICLE 13

Moderator read the article.

To see if the Town will vote to establish Police Detail Revolving Fund pursuant to RSA 31:95-h. The money received from charges for services shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, and shall not be considered part of the town's general fund. The town treasurer shall have custody of all monies in the fund, and shall pay out the same upon the order of the Board of Selectmen. These funds may be expended only for police detail related expenses, and no expenditure shall be made in such a way as to require the expenditure of other town funds which have not been appropriated for that purpose.

Submitted by petition. Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0-1.

Moderator Plett asked the petitioner to step forward and speak to the article.

Goffstown Police Detective Eric Sereno moved to have this article placed on the official ballot as printed – motion was seconded by Patrolman Geoff Pinard.

Detective Sereno said he did some research, and this is being done in New Boston, Dunbarton, Weare and several other towns.

When we have these specials, especially during election time, when all of the candidates come up to St. A's, Chief Sullivan has to come before the Board of Selectmen and ask for more funds because there's never enough money in his budget to cover these events.

When he makes up his budget, he doesn't know how much these will be. Sometimes it costs a lot of money. This year he has to go to the Selectmen to ask for extra money. If he doesn't use all of that extra money, it goes right back to the Town of Goffstown.

In a sense, this might save taxpayers some money because this will be a funding account, so the Chief won't have to go before the selectmen. The money in the account will come from the outside vendors. It will still be controlled by the selectmen.

Moderator recognized Elizabeth Dubrulle who asked why the selectmen didn't recommend this article.

Selectman Gross said the selectmen had considered putting this article on the warrant themselves. The reason why they decided not to, was that they decided to defer it until the town gets a new accounting software package.

There are administrative costs when we have these kinds of funds. It's difficult for the police chief to form a budget, especially when we have these political primaries such as the ones up at St. A's – they cost a lot of money that has to come out of his budget.

The Board of Selectmen is not against this revolving fund – it's just that the accounting package that we presently have won't take care of it., and the package we're looking at is very expensive.

Detective Sereno said he believes that the Town of Goffstown charges the vendor. If somebody comes and says they need a police officer, that officer doesn't get the full amount of money.

I know the software is expensive, but I don't see how hard it can be to just put in some numbers on a spreadsheet

If the chief under-budgeted for this and over expended his budget because of storms or power outages or other things, he would either have to get that money from other services or take it from other lines in his budget.

Robert Morris – Who pays for insurance, etc.?

Detective Sereno – The money is already provided. If this passes, the police chief can put so much into this. It's up to the selectmen.

Moderator Plett – Does this money come from taxes?

Detective Sereno – Originally the money will come from taxes, but only the original amount.

Selectman Gross – This money originally comes from what’s appropriated for the special details and then money comes in from outside sources - from the vendors. The officers will get paid from this fund.

Moderator asked if there were any further questions or a need for further discussion. Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 13 on the ballot as printed.

Moderator read the article.

ARTICLE 14

To see if the Town will vote to amend and add to the town’s Noise Ordinance the following paragraph L) under III. Specific Violations Enumerated:

L) Excessive/Nuisance Noise in a Residential area within 500 ft. of property line. If a complaint is made to the Goffstown Police Department by a resident to stop nuisance noise and/or excessive sound from, but not limited to, the use of any ATV, dirt bike, motorized vehicle, 4x4, off road vehicle, modified car/truck or machinery, etc. or any other nuisance/noise on any lot or parcel of land in a Residential Area within 500 ft. of complainant’s property line, it shall be considered unlawful and a nuisance. At the responding officer’s discretion, a verbal warning, written warning or a violation may be issued. Violations will be treated in accordance with Section IV: Penalties. A complainant may request to remain anonymous if the request is for a verbal warning. In addition, the Goffstown Police Department can request, if they deem it necessary, a ‘cease and desist’ order from the Board of Selectmen in a Board of Selectmen meeting if the nuisance/noise and or violation continues.

(The current noise ordinance is available at the Town Clerk’s Office or on the Town’s website).

Submitted by petition. Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0-1.

Petitioner Wayne Perrault moved to amend this article – motion was seconded by Donna Perrault.

Mr. Perrault handed the amendment to the Moderator.

The amendment reads as follows:

I, Wayne Perreault, the author and submitter of Warrant Article 14, do hereby make a motion to amend Warrant Article 14 of the 2011 Town Ballot by removing wording as some of the content is already in the noise ordinance and some lines/wording may be considered unconstitutional or unenforceable.

(Remove the following words and/or sentences:

“Within 500 feet of property line” from the title in paragraph L).

(Remove the following words)

“If a complaint is made to the Goffstown Police Department by a resident to stop”

(Remove the following words)

“within 500 feet of the complainant’s property line it shall be considered unlawful and a nuisance.”

(Remove the following words)

“At the responding officer’s discretion, a verbal warning, written warning or a violation may be issued.”

(Remove the following words).

“A complainant may request to remain anonymous if the request is for a verbal warning.”

Add the following words/sentence after the words “In a Residential Area” in the paragraph.

in such a manner as to be plainly audible at a distance of 50 ft. or more from the lot line, structure or vehicle.

So the warrant article will be amended to read:

“Shall the Town amend and add to the town’s Noise ordinance the following as paragraph L) under

III. Specific Violations Enumerated:

L) Excessive/Nuisance Noise in a Residential Area

Nuisance noise and/or excessive sound from, but not limited to, the use of any ATV, dirt bike, motorized vehicle, 4x4, off road vehicle, modified car/truck or machinery, etc. or any other nuisance noise on any lot or parcel of land in a Residential Area in such a manner as to be plainly audible at a distance of 50 ft. or more from the lot line, structure or vehicle.

Violations will be treated in accordance with Section IV: Penalties)

In addition, the Goffstown Police Department can request, if they deem it necessary, a “cease and desist order” from the Board of Selectmen in a Board of Selectmen meeting if the nuisance noise and or violation continues.

Moderator asked if there were any questions or need for further discussion on this amendment.

Mr. Perreault said that this article would put some teeth into the town’s noise ordinance. The present ordinance doesn’t name ATVs or other vehicles as making nuisance noise, and this article would do just that. He noted that there is a lot of noise in his own neighborhood, due to ATV races that are being held there.

Ruth Pierce – Why didn’t the selectmen recommend this article?

Selectman Gross – In reviewing this article, we thought it might be unconstitutional.

We hadn't spoken with our town counselor or our town prosecutor on this article. We understand and sympathize with the people whose neighbors are not being very neighborly.

Moderator asked if there were anymore questions on the amendment. *Seeing none, he asked for a vote on the amendment. The amendment passed.*

Moderator – Now on to the main article – any discussion?

Moderator recognized John Hikel.

Mr. Hikel said he thinks this sounds like this is discriminaatory. He asked, are we talking about snowblowers? Are we talking about regular chainsaws?

Mr. Perreault said if somebody wants to use a chainsaw or a snowblower or any of that type of equipment on his own property, that's fine as long as it's not being done late at night. That would make it a nuisance noise.

Moderator Plett asked if there were any other questions or need for discussion on this article.

Seeing none, he directed the Town Clerk to place Article 14 on the official ballot as amended.

ARTICLE 15

To hear the reports of Town Officers, Auditors and Committees and to pass any vote relating thereto.

ARTICLE 16

To transact any business that may legally come before said meeting.

Since there were no reports as cited in Article 15 and no other business to be transacted, Moderator Plett did not discuss these articles.

Selectman Scott Gross moved to adjourn the meeting, the motion was seconded by Pam Manney. Motion passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

MARIE BOYLE, Town Scribe

