

MINUTES
GOFFSTOWN BALLOT DETERMINATION MEETING
Monday, February 6, 2012

Town Moderator Rodney Stark called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

There were 104 registered voters present, who were all given voter cards as they entered the hall and checked in with the clerks.

Assistant Moderator Fred Plett gathered four counters – Mark Lemay, Hank Boyle, Ray Labore and Al Baines – and they were sworn in by Town Clerk Cathy Ball.

Goffstown Police Officer Geoff Pinard directed the color guard, consisting of Goffstown Police Explorers Tom Jore and Sarah Chalifoux who carried in the colors, and the assembly pledged allegiance to the flag.

Moderator Stark then introduced the people at the front tables: Selectmen Scott Gross and Steve Fournier and Assistant Moderator Fred Plett; Selectmen Chairman Phil D’Avanza, Selectmen David Pierce and Nick Campasano; and Town Administrator Sue Desruisseaux and Assistant Town Administrator Derek Horne.

He also asked the town’s state representatives who were in the audience to stand and be recognized, and he recognized State Senator Lou D’Allesandro who was also in the audience. He also recognized the members of the Budget Committee who were present.

Moderator Stark recognized Selectman D’Avanza, who called Town Scribe Marie Boyle to the front. He announced that she is retiring as the town scribe after doing this job for many years, and thanked her for her service and presented her with a bouquet of flowers.

Selectman Campasano presented retiring Selectman Fournier with a plaque recognizing his service during the past few years.

And Selectman Gross presented outgoing Budget Committee chairman Dan Cloutier. Sel. Gross told Mr. Cloutier that his leadership was appreciated and he joked about giving him a gift of outdated software.

R. Stark called Parks and Recreation Director Rick Wilhelmi to the front.

R. Wilhelmi – I am your director of Parks and Recreation, and I’m very excited to be a part of a team of people committed to the health and wellness of all ages in our community through recreational activities. I am here to present the 23rd annual Robinson/Cullerot Community Volunteer Award, which is given to the person or group who best exemplifies the spirit of volunteerism for the community, as shown by Clint Robinson and Lionel Cullerot.

He asked Parks and Recreation commissioners who are present to stand, and named them: Chairman Mark Campbell; Vice-Chairman Kevin Baines; Bill Sullivan, Bob Draper, Howard Sobolov, Susan Tucker and Jane Steckowych.

He stated that the strength of Goffstown lies in its many volunteers and announced that this year's Robinson/Cullerot Award is being bestowed on an organization that has spent over a decade designing, working and building a trail 5.2 miles in length for the purpose of health and wellness, known as the Goffstown Rail Trail. He named the current Board of Directors: president Lowell Von Ruden, trail volunteer manager David Pierce, and secretary Joanne Houle. Other board members are John Feick, Ray Tabor, Phil Rose and Paula Bedard.

President Lowell Von Ruden accepted the award and said he was very pleased to receive this recognition, and very thankful to the people in town who have been so supportive of their efforts.

Volunteers are critical during our many years of doing rail-trail work, he said. He also expressed his thanks for the annual ski and skate sale, which helps tremendously.

Moderator R. Stark said, in 1996 the town voted to adopt what's commonly known as Senate Bill 2 – now RSA 40 or the Standardized Ballot System. Tonight's deliberative session is the first half of this year's 'town meeting;' the second half will take place at the election on March 13. He also gave instructions for the conduct of the meeting and noted that tonight we will be discussing articles 13 – 25 on the town warrant. The first 12 articles are for the election of town officers and planning articles. He also explained the procedure for presenting amendments and asked that everyone who speaks tonight please use the microphone and spell their last names.

Sel. D'Avanza moved to dispense with the reading of the warrant, and the motion was seconded by Selectman Campasano. Moderator called for a vote and the motion passed.

Moderator Stark then read the posting of the warrant, and proceeded with Article 13.

ARTICLE 13

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 Twenty Million, Three Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand, Two Hundred and Forty-Four Dollars (\$20,355,244).

This budget will be predicated by estimated revenues in the amount of Seven Million, Eight Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand, Eight Hundred Seventy-Three Dollars (\$7,865,873).

The Sewer Enterprise Fund of Two Million, Thirty-One Thousand, Two Hundred Twenty-Two Dollars (\$2,031,222) is included in this revenue amount and in the appropriations requested in this article.

The EMS Special Revenue Fund of Three Hundred Eighty Thousand, Five Hundred Forty-Six Dollars (\$380,546) 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 appropriations 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 herein, totaling Twenty Million, Three Hundred Fifty-Five Thousand, Two Hundred and Forty-Four Dollars (\$20,355,244).

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be Nineteen Million, Four Hundred Thirteen Thousand, Seven Hundred Forty-Eight Dollars (\$19,413,748), which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of 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 4-1-0; recommended by the Budget Committee 8-5-1

Selectman Gross moved the article to the floor; motion was seconded by Selectman Pierce.

Selectman Gross gave a Power Point presentation outlining the budget lines and explaining how that budget was reached.

He said that there was a \$300,000 difference between the selectmen’s and budget committee’s budgets, represented by the anticipated purchase of finance software. Rather than purchase it outright, the selectmen decided to set aside a capital reserve amount of \$150,000 and hopefully raise the rest of the money next year.

He noted that the tax rate has been relatively flat during the last five years, while citing the accomplishments that have resulted during that time. The Lynchville Park/Danis Park water project; upgrade of communications for use of police and fire departments; a library grant, etc. We’ve had to cut back on our roads – during the last few years, we have been spending about one million dollars less than we used to.

The state government gave less money to the towns this year. We’ve had no new hires this year except for two firefighters. We’ve made changes in employee’s benefits and in health plans, requiring employees to pay co-pays. We have many volunteers – like our call firefighters, etc. It’s a tremendous thing.

We do have challenges – health insurance has gone up 42% for employees in five years. Electricity is up – fuel - retirement contributions went up. The state is no longer subsidizing retirements for municipal employees. And veterans exemptions have taken a big cut out of revenues, as have elderly exemptions and the current use change tax.

Moderator recognized voter Barbara Carbonneau, who came to the microphone to question the amount in the welfare line. Sel. Gross said it was discussed over the course of two meetings, and the line was increased over the previous year.

Welfare director Evelyn Redmond came to the mike and said she feels the amount in the line is sufficient.

Mr. Nadeau – I would like to know how much it will increase the taxes – for every \$100,000.

S. Gross – I think it’s seven or eight cents per \$100,000.

Gary Boisvert – I have been at the selectmen’s office several times. I heard they were going to reconstruct Wallace Road. Is that in this year’s budget? Where is the money coming from?

S. Gross – “That’s accurate – the selectmen did say if their budget is successful, we will be funding the engineering and we will make that one-way from the roundabout to Worthley Hill Road.

G. Boisvert – This is a budget issue – the design is only three years old and now it’s already outlived its life.

S. Gross – We have some disagreements with some local residents and we’re trying to work them out.

Eliabeth. Dolan – Why is there a 50% increase in elections?

R. Stark – Last year there was just one election – the local election in March. This year there are four - the Presidential primary which was held in January; the local elections which will take place in March; the Legislative Election in September and the Presidential Election in November. We hire people for each election and the cost of ballots, etc. Every four years we have four elections.

S. Gross - Also, we’ve switched some of the people in town hall around – many of our employees are now wearing different hats. So you will see an increase there because people are being coded to different parts of the budget.

R. Stark – Seeing no more questions or comments, I’m requesting the Town Clerk to put this article on the ballot as printed.

S. Gross moved to restrict reconsideration of this article, motion was seconded by Sel. Pierce. Motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 14

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 Chauffeurs, Teamster and Helpers Local Union No. 633 of New Hampshire, representing certain employees of the Public Works Department which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
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2012	\$21,119
2013	\$44,575

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty-one thousand, one hundred and nineteen dollars (\$21,119) for the current fiscal year 2012, 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 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0; not recommended by the Budget Committee 7-6-1.

Sel. Pierce moved the article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. Campasano.

Sel. Pierce - This article puts in place a two-year contract for the years 2012 and 2013. It affects 24 people in the Dept. of Public Works. The previous contract was for five years, from 2006 to 2010.

A year ago the Selectmen desired to have a three-year contract for those workers, but a tentative agreement could not be reached. Since then the Selectmen and union reached this agreement. There are five major changes in this contract – Wages, Cola increase, health insurance, Pick up and go home, which was something specific to the trash pickup workers; and sick leave and vacation leave. This makes these workers equal with other town employees.

There was no discussion on this article.

Moderator – This article will go on the ballot as printed.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration on this article – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 15

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 Professional Firefighters of Goffstown Local 3420 of the International Association of Firefighters representing the firefighters which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing level:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2012	\$0
2013	\$29,645

and further to raise and appropriate the sum of zero dollars (\$0) for the current fiscal year 2012, 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 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0; recommended by the Budget Committee 7-6-1

Sel. Campasano moved this article to the floor, motion was seconded by Sel. D'Avanza.

Sel. Campasano – Article 15 represents a two-year collective bargaining agreement. Many of the changes in this contract are similar to those in the DPW workers' contract.

We ask that you support this agreement so all of our employees will be treated equally.

Guy Caron – I'm a member of the budget committee – I voted to not recommend these two articles – both 14 and 15.

I think it's really odd that our committee recommended one and not the other. I wouldn't want to send a message that we're in favor of one group and not the other. If you're in favor of one of these, vote for both, if not, vote for neither. All of these people are deserving. We're talking about a miniscule amount of money. I don't want to see the wrong message sent to the town employees.

Evelyn Redmond – I would like a clarifier on retirement funding.

N. Campasano – There's legislation they've put into effect that if an individual retired at X dollars over their compensation, there's a formula – a certain amount would not be included in their compensation.

Moderator – This article will go on the ballot as printed.

Sel. Campasano moved to restrict reconsideration of this article; motion was seconded by Sel. D'Avanza – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 16

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be added to the Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund previously established in 2008. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0; not recommended by the Budget Committee 11-2-1.

Sel. Campasano moved the article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. D'Avanza.

Sel Campasano moved to amend this article to \$75,000. Motion was seconded by Sel. D'Avanza.

Moderator – I have a written amendment from \$150,000 to \$75,000, signed by six voters, so it's acceptable.

Sel. Campasano – The Fire Apparatus Capital Reserve Fund was established in 2008. In 2009, our Fire Chief applied for a grant – the required local match was in that capital reserve fund. That fund is pretty much depleted. This article is to start replenishing that fund.

During our budget deliberative sessions the amount that was finally decided on was \$150,000; the budget committee said they would support a smaller amount. Our Fire Chief has been pretty successful in getting grants, and this money will be used for the matching funds which will be needed.

Moderator – Any questions on the amendment? There were none.

Vote on the amendment – amendment passed by voice vote.

There was no discussion on the main article. Moderator - Article 16 will appear as amended on the ballot.

Sel. Campasano moved to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion was seconded by Sel. D'Avanza. Motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 17

To see if the Town will authorize the establishment of a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of “Finance Software,” to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000) to be placed in this fund, and to appoint the selectmen as agents to expend from this fund. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0; not recommended by the Budget Committee 12-1-1.

Sel. D'Avanza moved this article to the floor, motion was seconded by Sel. Fournier.

Sel. D'Avanza moved to amend this article to \$100,000. Seconded by Sel. Fournier.

Moderator – I have a written amendment signed by five selectmen to reduce this article from \$150,000 to \$100,000.

Sel. D'Avanza – This was originally proposed for \$300,000. It was removed from the operating budget by the budget committee, who had concerns about the original amount and we were asked to form a study committee. Although the budget committee doesn't recommend this article, they said they would reconsider if the amount were lower.

Vote on the amendment – amendment passed by voice vote.

Moderator – Now discussion on the main article.

Sel. D'Avanza – Our current financial software was purchased in 2000. At that time, the software could not fit in the state tax and our people have had to work to get it in. Throughout the years, Goffstown is the largest community who uses this particular software and there are no plans for any major revisions. Support is provided by a part-time employee at the company. We have over 1400 funds that must be covered – (he cited them).

The software that the Town Clerk uses has to be transferred to this software program. So does finance and the assessor's office. Two-thirds of the cost of this software is for the conversion of data – and for training employees and storage. The budget committee supports the need and said they would support a lower number.

Ray Labore – My question is whether or not the town has addressed backing up software through an Application Service Provider process.

P. D'Avanza – We formed a committee back in 1999, but they didn't recommend it.

R. Labore – What were some of the negatives that made the committee uncomfortable?

Sel. Gross – This was a discussion at the budget committee – I think we discussed at the time that all options were on the table. We've talked about open zones – other things. One thing is we need to have a certain set of funds.

I would think we plan on having a committee established – we would love to have you and get your expertise, and several members of the budget committee have volunteered to serve. We do need to update our software – we will need this amount of money whatever we do.

Pierre Pouliot – With this program in process and then if we budget \$100,000 again – in three years we should be able to afford this software?

Sel. Gross – The selectmen did say it was a narrow issue and in our discussion with the budget committee we felt maybe we can do it for less than \$300,000. Ray brought up one idea, and we can also write the code ourselves. We're going to try to

limp along for another year. Our software now is very limited. We spend a lot of time checking because our software isn't reliable.

Moderator – This article will go on the ballot as amended.

Sel. D'Avanza moved to restrict reconsideration of this article, motion was seconded by Sel. Fournier – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 18

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) for Goffstown's Road Improvement Program. Passage of this article will direct the selectmen to include the Road Improvement Program in future operating and default budgets of the Town of Goffstown, beginning in 2013. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 13, which has \$500,000 budgeted for roads).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-1-0 and Budget Committee 8-5-1

Sel. Pierce moved this article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. Campasano.

Sel. Pierce – Since 2002, the town has been attempting to improve our roads with a management plan, which is a software plan. This shows which plan would be most beneficial in the life of all of our roads. For the past few years, we have been adequately funding that plan. About five years ago we made a reduction in that funding. A fully funded road plan would be about two and a half million dollars.

Both the selectmen and the budget committee recognize today's economy, so the selectmen put a half million dollars into Article 13 and one million dollars into this article. The combined effect would mean a slight reduction in the course of the road plan, but would still be acceptable. I urge voters to approve this article. There are several roads in town that need reconstruction. We know where those roads are. We have allowed roads to fall apart such as Addison Road, and many of our mountain roads. We review the list of roads in April, then we give the list to the DPW director.

We feel that this article will give the town much flexibility in keeping our roads up.

Steve Monier – Somebody said at the start of the meeting that the townspeople are frustrated and I am. I certainly hope that voters will approve this article. What is the intent of the second sentence?

Sel. Gross – It provides guidance for the board of selectmen, whether or not to include this amount in the default budget.

S. Monier – Does it mean you will not consider having a ballot article? This guidance just provides guidance as they establish their warrant, but you cannot speak for

the next board of selectmen. Does it exclude the selectmen from having a ballot article?
(Answer was no)

I ask this question because I think we are going in the opposite direction. I think there should be some sections - perhaps some corridor improvements – there are some sections of those roads that are in serious need of improvement now. Those are the roads that people coming into Goffstown see. We need to take care of them. This is an area – infrastructure is what can attract or not people who are thinking about coming into this town for economic development. I hope the board of selectmen considers that.

Sel. Gross – The budget committee considers both the town and the school budgets. I may not always agree with the budget committee, but they’re looking at everything that we pay in taxes. The reality is we cannot put more money in our budget due to the current economic situation. We have been able to stretch our road dollars. The DPW crews have been doing much of the drainage work themselves in some of the projects.

P. Kendall – I’m a member of the budget committee, but now I’m speaking for myself. I support this article, but I am disappointed in the article.

I feel there’s a little bit of game-playing here. I’m opposed to the wording.

It was in the operating budget but I think saying it’s in both the operating and the special article, we’re just playing games.

Sel. Gross – From the board of selectmen’s perspective it’s not game playing. In a perfect world we would like to fund this at 2½ million dollars but we cannot do it now. Hopefully, if the economy rebounds we will be able to fund it. We knew we couldn’t fully fund the road program, so that’s why we did it this way.

Moderator – This article will go on the ballot as printed.

Sel. Gross moved to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion seconded by Sel. Fournier – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 19

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) for the purpose of supporting the nonprofit Goffstown Main Street Program, Inc. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0; recommended by the Budget Committee 14-0-0.

Sel. Fournier moved this article to the floor, motion was seconded by Sel. Gross.

Sel. Fournier - The Main Street Program has been supported by the town at \$15,000 since 1999. We’ve all enjoyed the Pumpkin Regatta, Old Home Day, the

Christmas Tree Lighting and the other Main Street programs. This is the only article that won unanimous support from both the budget committee and the board of selectmen.

G. Caron – I move to amend this article from \$15,000 to \$20,000. Motion was seconded.

G. Caron – I think everybody knows the benefit of the Main Street Program in Goffstown. We have seen how many empty storefronts there are.

This extra \$5,000 will be for the benefit of our community. Let's help these people with an extra \$5,000. They have been doing a heck of a job for us.

Moderator – Any discussion on the amendment? (There was none).

Motion to amend the article passed by voice vote.

L. Von Ruden – Speaking for the Board of Directors of Main Street, I thank you for this.

Moderator – Back to the main article. (There was no further discussion). This article will go on the ballot as amended.

Sel. Fournier – I move to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion seconded by Sel. Pierce – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 20

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500) for the purpose of supporting the nonprofit Greater Manchester Chapter of the American Red cross. (This appropriation is in addition to Article 13).

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-2-0; not recommended by the Budget Committee 9-2-3.

Sel. Fournier moved this article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. Gross.

Sel. Fournier – The Greater Manchester Area Red Cross gives help following disasters. In Goffstown they've responded to natural disasters like the Mother's Day floods. They're asking for Goffstown to support their efforts.

Moderator – Seeing as there are no questions or comments, this article will go on the ballot as printed.

Sel. Fournier moved to restrict reconsideration of this article; motion was seconded by Sel. Gross. Motion was passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 21

To see if the Town will vote to change the classification of a portion of the former Henry Bridge Road from a Class V road to a Class B trail, pursuant to NH RSA 231-A:2(1).

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

Sel. Pierce moved this article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. Campasino.

Sel. Pierce – This road used to be used as a traveled way until Henry Bridge Road was moved to its present location, leaving it as a deep gully.

The town now has grant funding to carry the rail-trail across that gully, and the solution is to fill it in with gravel. This will leave an embankment of about 20 feet, which will not be able to be used as a traveled road, so the selectmen are asking that it be reclassified as a Class B Trail. There are four parcels owned there; all four of those have adequate access from other public roads.

Moderator – Seeing as there’s no discussion or any comments on this, this article will go on the ballot as printed.

Sel. Pierce moved to restrict reconsideration of this article; motion was seconded by Sel. Campasano. Motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 22

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Sixty-Two Thousand, Five Hundred Dollars (\$62,500) for the purpose of supporting Crispin’s House, Inc., a Goffstown nonprofit youth and family support agency. Crispin’s House is our local agency for youth drug and alcohol prevention, after school program advocacy, VolunTEENS Center, monthly Youth Forums, Juvenile Court Diversion, and program support for local children for disabilities.

Submitted by Petition.

Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-1-1; Not recommended by the Budget Committee 6-4-4.

Petitioner Al Baines moved the article to the floor, motion was seconded.

Al Baines - Crispin’s House is asking you to give us some consideration for our plight. We have our backs against the wall now – we’re without funding. We’re looking to hire an executive director. I’m the president of the board of directors, Rev. Exner is the

secretary. Other board members are Christy Curtis, Kevin Baines, Michelle Peterson and others. We have a program for young adults and children with disabilities. They do social activities for the kids in that program.

Last year we had to close the after school program at Mountain View Middle School. Those kids were not going home to an empty home. That's the most dangerous time for kids to get into trouble – 3 to 6 p.m. We can't do that anymore, but we are advocating for another program to do an after school program to keep our kids safe.

We are looking to support our local families with scholarships – they can be very expensive. We're also exploring another youth forum at the Mountain View Middle School. We're hoping to be able to put that into place soon. We have a VolunTEENS program here - these kids make themselves available to other nonprofits in town. We also have the Youth Attendant Program – if police have to bring in the children of parents who have been arrested, we have a list of people who will stay with the kids. We have a structured alcohol program for kids only – some of it is modeled after AA – no parents allowed. It's hosted in a private room at St. Mathew's Church.

We have no outside funding now – and we have no executive director, so we're limited in the grants we can seek.

We are not going away – we will be here with our volunteer assets – we have a potential executive director we can talk to and if he can come with us, it will be great. Our annual meeting will take place on Friday night at St. Lawrence.

Rev. Bill Exner – Al, you do a great job. These folks give of themselves tirelessly. For the past several years, we have been very fortunate. In the past there were state and county funds that are no longer there. If we don't take care of our kids, nobody else will do it. This is the one coalition that would not and will not quit. I hope you'll support this article.

Sel. Gross – I really can't think of any better people than Al Baines and Bill Exner. The selectmen's opinion on this is because it was a petitioned article and rather late. They didn't give us much information on a lot of things like their financial plan, etc. And the budget committee chose not to recommend it.

Tony Schwab – It seems we reduced two articles today to get the budget committee on board. I think people look at the recommendations and give them a lot of weight. I think you should reconsider your recommendation – you can change it when you put it on the ballot.

Sel. Gross – To address what Tony said – the law says the only way the selectmen and budget committee can change their recommendations at this session is to amend the article.

Kerry Steckowych - I am the town's prosecutor. I use Crispin's House services for court diversion and I hope to use them for other things, because we do have a problem with young people using prescription drugs and even heroin, which results in robberies and other crimes. A program like this can save us a lot of money – you're talking in the

hundreds of thousands of dollars. If Crispin's House can continue its programs, it will be great.

Moderator – I've been handed an amendment to change the dollar figure from \$62,500 to \$62,501, and it's an acceptable amendment.

Amendment was moved and seconded.

Ray Labore – Just a comment in support of the amendment. Crispin's House has been providing a valuable service to the town. I think Mr. Baines has just told us the program's needs in that they're being given little funding. If we're going to support the Main Street Program, etc., don't forget the youth in town. They're the assets of this community going forward.

Sel. Gross – Both the selectmen and the budget committee will be meeting after this meeting to reconsider any votes taken tonight.

Al Baines – I know there have been some questions about this. I will attend both the selectmen's and the budget committee's meetings to further discuss this.

Vote on amendment – Amendment passed by voice vote.

Moderator – This article will appear on the ballot as amended.

It was moved and seconded to restrict reconsideration of this article – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 23

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$2,000.00 annually for the purpose of eradicating and monitoring milfoil weed from Glen Lake and Namaske Lake. After a five-year period, reevaluation of the need will be resubmitted. Submitted by Petition.

Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-2-0; not recommended by the Budget Committee 6-4-4.

Petitioner Larry Pilotte moved the article to the floor; seconded by Sel. Fournier.

L. Pilotte – We have these environmental issues all over the country and all over the world. This is occurring in our lakes and our ponds all over New England. The results in the past six years that I have been working on this have been tremendous – the habitat is much better. Wildlife is coming back into the area.

I have been certified to do this – I have all of the qualifications and the ability to work on this. One man cannot do this all by himself. One of the things I've started is to

certify high school kids to get into diving as a recreation. Those kids' abilities will benefit us tremendously. After traveling all over the world, I came back to my own town where I first went camping on Namaske Lake forty years ago. I want to help solve a problem we have here.

When people come to this town they come because this is a beautiful habitat – we have two lakes here. I'm trying to start this program and I'll get some of the kids involved. I'm willing to pay them out of my own pocket. Hopefully this money will generate new technology for us to get this under control. I hope a lot of you will support this.

Moderator – I have been handed an amendment that will increase the appropriated amount from \$2000 to \$2001.

The amendment was moved and seconded.

D. Cloutier – If this special article isn't amended here, neither the selectmen nor the budget committee can reconsider it.

The moderator called for a vote on the amendment – ***the amendment passed by voice vote.***

L. Pilote – We cannot do this work during the summer months – it has to be done in early spring and late fall. As a diver you can only work for one hour. It takes 20 hours to plan the event and do the work. And there are also weather conditions to consider.

Sel. Gross – I have an amendment to remove the word 'annually' from the paragraph.

The amendment was moved and seconded and was passed by a voice vote.

R. Stark – The reason the word has to be removed is because this could bind a future board.

Kimberly Peace – I'm an official diver. It seems like we're putting all of our eggs in one basket. I understand that there are several ways to solve this problem. We've spent \$23,000 on milfoil already. We've sent many reports on what has been done or what the plans are or anything else that should be considered by the town. We also have milfoil upriver from Namaske Lake. I do not support this article.

Sel. Fournier – The \$23,000 is just a part of the money. Milfoil can never be entirely eradicated. They can use chemicals or other things. The selectmen support this article. We have two lakes in town. At one point in Namaske Lake you could no longer fish – it would be a shame to do the maintenance and then have this happen again. When DES did the eradication before, the plan was to continue monitoring and taking the milfoil from the lake as necessary.

Moderator – This article will appear on the ballot as amended.

Sel. Fournier moved to restrict reconsideration; motion was seconded by Sel. Gross – motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 24

**Shall we adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5-b, and implement a tax cap whereby the governing body (or budget committee) shall not submit a recommended budget that increases the amount to be raised by local taxes, based on the prior fiscal year's actual amount of local taxes raised by more than three (3) percent? (A 3/5 majority vote is required). Submitted by Petition
*Not recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4 – 0 – 1.***

Guy Caron moved the article to the floor – motion was seconded.

G. Caron – I have been asked by the petitioner, Ivan Beliveau, who is out of town, to introduce this article. He will be back the 9th, and he wants anyone in town to call him with any questions you might have.

Sel. Gross – I'm speaking in opposition to Article 24 – you people elected the Board of Selectmen, the Budget Committee and the School Board, and others. The nice thing about SB2 is that you have the flexibility to amend many articles. And in March, you will get an opportunity to vote on the official ballot. Many times there are differences of opinion between the selectmen, the budget committee, the school board and you people. Unfortunately, these tax caps don't allow for that. This doesn't offer the opportunity for government officials to take into account a change in environment. I hope you reject this tax cap.

John Burt – When Guy went up there I felt, this is for Ivan Beliveau. But Ivan left us a letter that he wanted read at this meeting. I'll read his letter now:

"I will not be at the Town Deliberative Meeting to read this myself.

"Last year, my stepson made arrangements to get married in the Central American country where his wife's parents are from. I'm now attending that wedding.

"It is felt that capping the property tax at a 3% yearly increase, which is above the Federal Reserve's annual inflation target of 2% announced last week, would be a good budget guideline.

"This tax cap limit would assist the Budget Committee and the town's governing bodies in defining the level of funds that would be available for budgetary purposes.

"Since Goffstown is an SB-2 town, the governing bodies would then be able to spend funds for any budget line item that experience and good judgment deemed necessary. It would only be necessary not to exceed the 'bottom line' of the budget – an SB-2 mandate.

“The adherence to the expected level of income increases and the flexibility within individual budget lines is identical to the practices of most households and businesses.

“The State of NH has created the statutes that clear the way for SB-2 towns to employ this process.

“Manchester has already chosen to employ this tax cap process.

“About six non-SB-2 municipalities have had property tax caps in place for several years. These municipalities have learned to live with and prosper with those defined levels of funding.

“It is anticipated that this process of clearly defining the upper limit in the increase of available funding for the town makes all town budgeting easier for the parties involved in the processes.

“It is requested that you vote for this Petitioned Warrant Article 24.

“Thank you for listening and allowing this to be read.”

Ivan Beliveau

John Burt – I’m a state representative. I’m on the Municipal and County Government committee. We worked many hours to get the House and Senate to approve this. You can go above 3% under certain circumstances. That will be explained. There are provisions to do that.

I think this is just to slow the increases down, but if an emergency comes up and you really need a fire engine or something like that, there’s a provision to do that.

Moderator – I have an amendment here signed by 7 people, so it’s acceptable. It increases the 3% tax cap to 6%.

J. Burt - Point of order – I think this really drastically changes this and I would like clarity about the law. I think that will change the intent of the article.

Moderator – It doesn’t change the language in the article – I will accept it. Town counsel has advised that the cap amount can be changed.

D. Gagnon – Isn’t there a rule about raising or decreasing more than 10%?

Sel. D’Avanza – The 10% rule is only in the appropriation. It’s what’s reported to the DRA.

Elizabeth Dubrulle – As a budget committee member I attended a conference and there was a seminar on tax caps – the interesting thing is all of them found they had not worked out the way they intended them to. The people who originally proposed them found they didn’t work.

Moderator – Are you one of the proponents of the amendment?

E. Dubrulle – Yes - I don’t think the cap is a good idea.

Keith Allard – The school budget is not going up 22% as was reported in the paper.

This tax cap does not pertain to the school district – it only pertains to the selectmen. This was not on the school warrant.

Sel. Gross – If for some reason we lost revenue, we could be found in violation of the tax cap. Also – this law – the public hearing for this warrant article was not held before the deliberative session. There will be a public hearing on February 13 at 7 p.m. at the selectmen’s meeting. The snow date is February 27. Usually you get the public’s input before the deliberative session.

D. Cloutier – I’m asked to vote on a cap of 6% now. I think if I brought it down to the lower amount it would be better. I’m not sure I like this at all. This restricts the budget committee and the deliberative session, too.

E. Dubrulle – My point is, I don’t think a tax increase should ever be taken for granted. I would like to see it level-funded. I don’t think a tax cap is a good idea. I don’t support this article in general.

Sel. D’Avanza – The thing I have a concern about is if this meeting changes an appropriation amount, it requires reconsideration and a vote by the budget committee and the selectmen. For instance, the increase in the Main Street article - \$5,000 – that could affect the cap.

John Morris – Why did these people bring this amendment forward? It seems like we’re just getting ourselves in trouble. Just vote against the thing when you go to vote. Some people will think 6% is a better number.

P. Pouliot – I think the reason we filed the amendment is because we thought the 3% was too restrictive. The amendment makes it 6%, making it a little bit more.

Lisa Jukes – I have a copy of the actual legislation. The legislation shows that you can override the cap. If this article were to pass, the people in this room could override it.

Bill Exner – I think part of the issue here is that this isn’t great law. Do you remember Proposition 2½ in California? What a mess that was?

I think we are not sometimes being properly represented by some of these ideas. We have a great democratic process here. I think this legislation itself is not very good. I would urge our friends and neighbors to vote this down.

D. Cloutier – The legislative body can override this. The question for the budget committee and the board of selectmen is what you have said tonight – is that your interpretation of the law?

Sel. Gross – After the deliberative session, we can challenge it. This law was very poorly written.

D. Cloutier – Don't you think this is appropriate? If I vote for the 6%, is it likely to be voted for on the ballot?

Sel. S'Avanza – Are you suggesting that we go to 100%? Just kidding. One thing that we can pretty much agree on – this is a new law. And it's having its public hearing after the deliberative session. With all these questions, do we really want to be involved with this type of legislation?

Phil Kendall – Do we not have a right at this meeting to move this question to the ballot or not?

Moderator – This is definitely going on the ballot – the question is about the amendment.

Vote on the amendment to increase the cap to 6%: a voice vote was confusing, so the moderator asked those in favor of the 6% to stand and the counters came forward.

Moderator – The amendment passed 35 to 26. I have been given another amendment – to change the percentage amount to 100%.

Vote on the newest amendment – *Amendment passed by voice vote.*

Moderator – Article 24 will appear on the ballot as amended.

Sel. Gross moved to restrict reconsideration; motion was seconded by Sel. Pierce. Motion passed by voice vote.

ARTICLE 25

Shall the Town of Goffstown have one zip code – 03045 – for all Goffstown properties with the exception of St. Anselm College? That would mean that those Goffstown properties with current mailing addresses of “Manchester, NH 03102” would change to “Goffstown, NH 03045,” except for St. Anselm College. (Referendum article).

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

Sel. D'Avanza moved this article to the floor; motion was seconded by Sel. Fournier.

Sel. D'Avanza – This is a referendum article and it's non-binding. All changes in zip codes have to be changed by United States Post Office laws. The board wishes to unify the town. We have heard regularly from some residents.

He cited three different incidents of problems with the town having two separate zip codes.

Moderator – Since there is no discussion on this article, it will appear on the ballot as printed. That’s it – we’re all finished. I’ll entertain a motion to adjourn.

A motion to adjourn was made and seconded and passed by a VERY LOUD voice vote.

Meeting adjourned at 10:27 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

MARIE BOYLE
Town Scribe

