

Town of Stratham
Town Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2015

The ballot clerks and election workers were sworn in at 7:45 am and 1:45 pm. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector Catherine Kenny, Selectman David Canada, Selectman Tim Copeland, and Election Worker Bruce Cotter. Assistant Moderator Tracey McGrail arrived at 12:00 pm and Office Assistant Lucy Hopping arrived at 4:00 pm to help at the election.

Also present were the Supervisors of the Checklist Susan Hunter, Caren Gallagher, and Melanie McGrail. The ballot clerks for the day were Dianna and Roger Thompson, Diana Alsterberg, Andra Copeland, Elizabeth Chisholm, Susan Canada, Margaret Mullin, Cheryl Ewart, Nancy Hunter, Joan Gough, Natalie Perry, and Patricia Prior.

It was a quiet day with 724 votes cast at the Town Election, with 14 of those being absentee ballots. The total number of voters on the checklist is 5803, making this a 12% turnout of voters.

**Exeter Region Cooperative School District Ballot results for Stratham only are as follows:
(*Denotes the Winner)**

Cooperative School Board: For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Margaret (Maggie) Bishop 520*. For Newfields for three years, vote for one: (There was no candidate on the ballot, winner will be determined by the six Cooperative towns via write-in votes.) For Exeter for two years, vote for one: Dennis Grubbs 498*. For Kensington for two years, vote for one: (There was no candidate on this ballot, winner will be determined by the six Cooperative towns via write-in votes.) For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Helen Joyce 577*. For Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Katherine B. Miller 475*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: For East Kingston for three years, vote for one: David Pendell 469*. For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Mark Paige 218*. Michael DeMartino 151. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: (There was no candidate on this ballot, winner will be determined by the six Cooperative towns via write-in votes.)

Article 1: Operating Budget:
Yes: 493* No: 98

Article 2: Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board and the Exeter Area Paraprofessional Association.
(3 years)
Yes: 437* No: 199

Article 3: Synthetic Turf Replacement Capital Reserve Fund.
Yes: 404* No: 233

Article 4: (Citizens Petition) CMS to readdress the formal policy for student use of personal electronic communication devices.

Yes: 457* No: 180

Stratham Memorial School District Ballot results as follows:

(* Denotes the Winner)

School Board Member for three years, vote for two: Travis Thompson: 565*

Sarah Galligher: 524*. School District Clerk for three years, vote for one: Mikki Deschaine: 621*

Annual Town of Stratham Ballot results as follows:

(* Denotes the Winner)

Article 1:

Selectman for three years, vote for one: Joseph Lovejoy: 217. Christopher Cavarretta: 159. Bruno Federico: 294*. Cemetery Trustee for three years, vote for one: John L. LaBonte: 577*. Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, vote for one: Diane D. Morgera: 577*. Library Trustee for three years, vote for two: Gerald "Lee" Beauregard: 482*. Connie Aubin-Adams: 523*.

Article 2: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 2.1 Definitions, Subsection 2.1.6 Agriculture, Farm, Farming by deleting the subsection in its entirety and replacing it with Subsection 2.1.6 Agriculture, Agritourism, Farm, Farming, and Farmers' Market to reflect the statutory changes and uses defined under NH RSA 21:34-a Farm, Agriculture, Farming (as amended.)

And in connection therewith, amend Section III: Establishment of Districts And Uses, Subsection 3.6.D. Agriculture/Forestry Uses in its entirety with new subsection 3.6.D. Agriculture, Farming & Forestry Uses to further clarify and codify the uses for all Zoning Districts as referenced in NH RSA 21:34-a Farm, Agriculture, Farming.

And in connection therewith, Subsection 3.6 Table of Uses and Footnotes to Table 3.6. Uses by inserting Footnotes 2. Farm Roadside Stand, 3. Farmer's Market, and 4. Agritourism and renumbering the existing footnotes accordingly to establish a permitting and review process for farm roadside stands, farmer's markets, and agritourism.

Yes: 179 No: 518*

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 3: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section XX Sanitary Protection & Septic Ordinance, Subsections 20.1 General, 20.2 Replacement of Existing Systems without Expansion of Design

Capacity, 20.3 Replacement of Existing Systems with Expanding Design Capacity, and 20.4 Vacant Lots of Record and insert new subsection 20.5 Subdivisions to further clarify and update the requirements, design specifications, and regulatory review process for sewage disposal systems in Stratham.

Yes: 416* No: 237

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 4: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section V. Supplemental Regulations, Subsection 5.6 Retirement Planned Community by adding a new Subsection 5.6.2 Septic Design to further clarify the septic design requirements and specifications for developments within the Retirement Planned Community Zoning District and renumbering the existing subsections accordingly.

Yes: 450* No: 189

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 5: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend Section XVII. Board of Adjustment, Section XVII. Board of Adjustment, Subsection 17.3 Rules to allow the Board of Adjustment to adopt rules and regulations involving the enforcement of Section XVII.

And in connection therewith, amend Subsections 17.5 Applications and 17.8 Scope of Review to include Equitable Waivers pursuant to NH RSA 674:33-a as a type of application reviewed by the Board of Adjustment.

And in connection therewith, amend Section XVII. Board of Adjustment, Subsection 17.8.2 Special Exceptions by adding language allowing the Board of Adjustment to seek an advisory opinion from the Planning Board for special exception applications.

And in connection therewith, amend Section XVII. Board of Adjustment by inserting new Subsection 17.11 Duration of Approval to reflect the statutory changes to NH RSA 674:33 Powers of Zoning Board of Adjustment involving the duration of approval for Variances and Special Exceptions.

Yes: 408* No: 214

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 6: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend Section XVIII. Floodplain Management District by replacing Subsections 18.1 Definitions in its entirety with new Subsection 18.1 and amending Subsections 18.3 Design Criteria, 18.4 Sewer Design, 18.7 Watercourses, and 18.8 District Boundaries And Design in

compliance with the National Flood Insurance Program regulations and to allow the Town and its residents to remain eligible to participate in said program.

Yes: 462* No: 173

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 7: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend Section V. Supplementary Regulations, Subsections 5.1.2 Expansion of Non-Conforming Uses and 5.1.3 Expansion of Non-Conforming Structures to establish the criteria and permitting process for an expansion of an existing non-conforming structure and non-conforming use within the Gateway Commercial Business and Town Center Zoning Districts.

Yes: 384* No: 248

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Article 8: Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend Section 3.8 Gateway Commercial Business District, Subsection 3.8.8 Development of Standards And Tables, a. Permitted Uses By Zone by further clarifying the permitted agricultural, farm, farming, and forestry uses allowed within the Gateway Commercial Business District Central and Outer Zones.

And in connection therewith, amend Section 3.8 Gateway Commercial Business District, Subsection 3.8.8 Development of Standards And Tables, a. Permitted Uses By Zone, by inserting footnote 1 to establish an expedited review process for the expansion of existing agriculture, horticulture, floriculture, and crop production uses within the Gateway Commercial Business District Central and Outer Zones and renumbering the existing footnotes accordingly.

Yes: 184 No: 504*

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

The remaining Town of Stratham articles will be voted on March 13, 2015 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 p.m.

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting come to order at 7:05 p.m.

Lucy Cushman led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Emanuel then called for a moment of silence for all those serving in the Armed Forces, and for those who could not be there tonight. Mr. Emanuel then went on to introduce himself and everyone on the stage: The Board of Selectmen, (B.O.S.): David Canada, Tim Copeland, and Bruno Federico; The Town Administrator: Paul Deschaine, and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Joyce Charbonneau. Also introduced were Catherine Kenny: Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector, and the Supervisors of the Checklist: Sue Hunter, Melanie McGrail, and Caren Gallagher. Tracey McGrail and Bruce Cotter were also introduced as Assistant Moderators. Mr. Emanuel then had Tracey read the dedication of the Town Report. This year's dedication was to Terry Barnes,

who retired last year as our long term Building Inspector/Code Enforcement Officer. Mr. Emanuel then had Bruce Cotter read the Memorial Dedication. This year's dedication was to Dwight Crow, who passed away last June and who served on many Boards and Committees throughout the Town including the Fire Department, the Stratham Fair, the Town Budget Committee and the Zoning Board of Adjustment. Dave Emanuel then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 10, 2015. He announced there were no requests for recounts. Mr. Emanuel then explained the Rules of Procedure for Town Meeting.

The Following articles were discussed and voted on:

Article 9: 2015 Operating Budget

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate Five Million Nine Hundred and Sixty Nine Thousand Five Hundred and Fifty Three Dollars and no cents (\$5,969,553.00) to defray general town charges for the ensuing year. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman David Canada spoke to the motion. Mr. Canada first thanked the members of the Budget Committee for their help with the budget. They were all returning members this year: Steve Doyle, Tracey McGrail, Gary Dolan, June Sawyer, and School Board Representative Travis Thompson. Mr. Canada explained that every \$100,000.00 approved tonight will add 8.2 cents to the tax rate, same as last year. Mr. Canada went on to explain that the median home value in Stratham is \$347,100.00. He stated if your home is at the median value, each \$100,000.00 approved will add \$28.46 to your yearly tax bill. Mr. Canada stated that the total appropriation for operating expenses this year is \$5,969,553.00, which is an increase of \$160,000.00. He explained that offsetting this increase are two factors which will reduce what we need to raise in taxes this year: an increase in revenue, and money left over from 2014 which was budgeted but not spent. Mr. Canada then went on to explain each item in the operating budget and what the increase was for each department. The significant increases in the operating budget were due primarily to Payroll, NH State Retirement, Town -Owned residential properties that need some capital improvements, Highway equipment repairs, Solid Waste Collection and Disposal, and Electricity. Offsetting these increases from the various departments are reductions in health care, payment for legal work, payroll for the Code Enforcement office salary, public service agencies which includes Welfare Assistance and public transportation, debt service, and non-recurring expenses at the cemeteries and at the Highway Garage. Mr. Canada explained some of the major changes on the income side of the ledger include increases in motor vehicle registrations, the franchise fee from Comcast, building permit fees, Rooms and Meals tax from the State, and Refunds and Reimbursements from our health care provider. Mr. Canada also updated us on the proposal to build a water system for the commercial district. He stated we are very close to an agreement with Exeter to provide water for us. The B.O.S. hope to bring a proposal for a water system as well as sewer services to Town Meeting next year. He stated that discussions have been very productive with both Portsmouth and Exeter in regards to sewer services, and added that there would be substantial environmental benefits if we can avoid using Great Bay as a pipe to get treated effluent to the ocean. As a final note, Mr. Canada

informed us that the Bartlett Cushman House is now listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Mr. Canada then turned the meeting back over to the Moderator. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr. asked if the Vocational-Technical School is now on the tax rolls. Mr. Canada responded in the affirmative. Mr. Abrami also asked if there are any other big properties that are on the tax rolls that were not on last year. Mr. Canada responded that Lindt is in line to do some new construction this year. He added that Stoneybrook Lane has done some new development as well. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked how much money we are planning on putting into the Cushman House this year. Mr. Canada responded that the house needs to be painted this year, and that is going to cost about \$20,000.00. Mr. Wool also asked several questions about the 300th Anniversary Committee and what has been spent so far. Mr. Deschaine responded that fundraising has been done, and will continue in the future to offset expenses. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 9 passed.

Article 10 – Capital Improvement Program

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Five Hundred Thirty Seven Thousand Five Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$1,537,500.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2015 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman David Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Bruno Federico spoke to the motion. Mr. Federico went over the highlights and the drivers for the 2015 C.I.P. He explained that there are four major components in the CIP: General Government, Protection of Personal Property, Public Works and Highways, and Cultural and Recreational Activities. Mr. Federico went over each line item under each of the major components which can be found on page 54 of the Town Report. Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions from the floor. Bob Goodrich, Portsmouth Ave. asked about the signalization on Bunker Hill Ave. and Winnicutt Rd. and how did we come up with a million dollars in two years and nothing ahead of time. Mr. Federico responded that the Planning Board wants to keep those items in the CIP to show the State that we are serious about signalization at those intersections. Mr. Federico also stated that if there were any major developers wanting to develop in those areas, the Planning Board would ask the developer to contribute into the fund for those improvements. Mr. Goodrich also asked about the Town Center and noted that they are looking for \$25,000.00 a year. Mr. Goodrich does not see anything pertaining to the potential costs involved for this. Mr. Deschaine, Town Administrator, responded that the appropriations currently, are forward looking numbers, and that we don't know what the matches and projects may be in the future. Jeremy Riecks, Doe Run Lane, asked how old the Police Station is, and why is the trim failing. Mr. Federico responded that the building committee, in order to save money, decided to go with finger jointed pine instead of any of the other long term alternatives. Mr. Riecks also asked about the all-wheel street loader in the CIP. Mr. Federico responded that the Highway Department is

asking to replace one of their tractors that they use for road side mowing. The new loader will be more versatile and can be used for more functions than just the road side mowing. One of the additional functions will be clearing snow off the new sidewalks that will be included in the Town Center. Mr. Riecks also asked what happened to past contributions over the last several years from developers for signalization at Bunker Hill Ave and Winnicutt Rd. Mr. Deschaine responded that for Bunker Hill Ave. some of the funds went to traffic and signalization studies, and in terms of Winnicutt Rd, some of the funds went to the preemptive light that is in front of the fire station presently. Patrick Kelley, Benjamin Rd. asked about the trim at the Police Station as well, and what is going to be used to replace it. Mr. Federico responded that a better plastic product will be used, and that is the only issue currently with the police station that needs improvement at this time. Mr. Kelley also asked whether we already have a contract for the new fuel system that we are planning on getting this year at the Highway Garage. Mr. Deschaine responded that the contract we will enter into is a State bid contract provided by the D.O.T. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked about the Municipal Center parking lot paving topcoat and the costs associated with that. Mr. Canada responded that the costs came within budget. Mr. Wool also asked about the Fire Dept. Capital Reserve Fund for the new fire truck. Mr. Federico responded that the Fire Dept. has a plan, and the next truck coming up won't be until 2022, so that is why it is not currently in the C.I.P. Mr. Wool also asked about the radio communications capital reserve. Mr. Federico responded that we currently have \$67,000.00 in reserve. He further stated that one radio costs \$3,800.00. Mr. Federico explained that the Police Department currently has eighteen radios, and that the last radio purchase was for the Fire Dept. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 10 passed.

Article 11 – Conservation Easement Purchase

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred and Seventy Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$175,000.00) together with other funds to purchase a conservation easement on land currently owned by David and Jeanne Short located at 18R Scamman Road (Tax Map 18 Lots 45 and 46) and to further authorize the Selectmen and Conservation Commission to act on behalf of the Town in connection with this acquisition per RSA 36-A. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA. 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Copeland yielded the floor to Pat Elwell, member of the Conservation Commission. Pat Elwell, Strawberry Lane, speaking on behalf of the Conservation Commission, explained the area that they are looking at to make into a conservation easement from the Shorts property. She explained that the area is about 38 acres and that it is adjacent to the forests, the other parcels, and the backland. She further explained that if this property was developed, it could potentially have fourteen homes on it. Pat stated that some of the wood lots in back could also be potentially developed as well. She explained that this land is part of the extensive trail system and that this proposal will allow us to continue public access to these trails. Pat explained that a conservation easement is buying the conservation rights to this land so it can

never be developed. She stated that it will preserve the existing wildness corridor, and that NH Fish and Game has identified this corridor as the highest ranking habitat in the State. Pat explained that the conservation easement on this property means it will be preserved forever, and it will prevent access rights to those back lots. Pat stated that by conserving this land now, it will limit the costs associated with putting in community services that would be required by fourteen homes that went on that property. She explained that the current owners, Dave and Jeanne Short have let everyone use these trails in the past, but if they decide to sell someday, the new owner could sell this and turn it into a development. She informed us that the Shorts would like to see this area remain undeveloped, so future generations can continue to use the trails and surrounding areas without fear of development. Pat stated that \$600,000.00 is the purchase price of the conservation easement. She explained that this property was recently appraised at over a million dollars, so the Shorts are giving us a great deal. Pat informed us that the Conservation Commission has some money in the Land Conservation Fund that will be used towards this purchase, so the balance to the Town that we are trying to raise tonight is \$175,000.00. She explained that this comes out to a one-time tax rate of .14 (fourteen cents) per \$1000.00 of assessed value. Pat explained that the South East Land Trust is going to be monitoring this easement for us, and that their job as a non-profit organization is to protect and monitor these kind of easements and parcels. She explained that we have several other parcels in Town that they have worked on with us to ensure that they are maintained the way the conservation easement was written. Pat asked for our support on this article, and that this is going to be something that will tie the back parcels together and that will really help to maintain the trails and keep them open to the public for perpetuity. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. June Sawyer, High St. asked how many acres we currently have under conservation at this time and do any of the woodlots actually meet the two acre requirements for building a house. Mr. Federico responded that we have approximately five square miles in conservation land that equals about 3000 acres, or in other words, 33% of Stratham is in conservation. There was no answer on the woodlots at this time. Bruce Scamman, Blossom Lane, asked about putting any of this conservation land into a NH DES mitigation bank for future town purposes. Mr. Deschaine responded that he is not sure that this property would be eligible at this point in time of the process. Carol Hazekamp, Dumbarton Oaks, asked about the assessed value on the land. She asked if the one million dollar value was assessed on the land being used as conservation versus would it be a different assessment if the land was being assessed as buildable. Mr. Deschaine responded that the million dollar assessment is the value of the conservation easement. June Sawyer, High St. asked if we get any tax value on land that is in conservation easements. Mr. Deschaine responded in the affirmative. He explained that the private property owners still own the property, but the value is diminished once it is put in conservation, so the owners do get a tax break. Bob Goodrich, Portsmouth Ave. asked why the evaluation was so high, and if the house was involved in the evaluation. Mr. Deschaine explained that the value of the one million dollars reflects the developmental projection of that property for fourteen house lots. Mike Johnston, Glengarry Dr. asked if we did not maintain access to these trails, is there a possibility of having the right of way required in the sale of the property and would it be possible to maintain the trails without having the entire parcel. Mr. Deschaine responded that the Shorts have been more than amenable in allowing access to their property, but there is no way of

knowing if any future owners would feel the same way, and there is no guarantee that would be continued. Lucy Cushman, Winnicutt Rd. stated that it is a lot of money for this article, but she supports this article. She stated that if this property were to be sold to a developer, the developer would cobble all these separate wood lots together and make a larger development. Lucy stated she is supporting this to block that from ever happening. She stated she would like to see this wildlife corridor remain open in its natural state and that this is a way for us to prevent any future developments. Ron Laurence, Depot Rd. asked if the Barker property and some of the woodlots are under conservation now. Mr. Deschaine referred to the screen and stated that it shows in green what is owned by the town and what is in conservation, and he explained what is in white is privately owned. Pat Elwell also responded that the Short property could be cut off if someone came in and bought the Barker farm and some of the woodlots. If this were to happen, the trails could all disappear by the Short property. She stated this easement would block that from happening. Ellen Ellis, Dumbarton Oaks wanted to thank the Shorts for allowing their property to be used, and that her family, as well as her friends and neighbors, use this Park all the time. She stated it is an unbelievable opportunity to have access to this, and she supports this article. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Drive, wanted to thank the Shorts, for providing this opportunity, Pat Elwell and the Conservation Commission for bringing it before us tonight to vote on, and the Selectmen for voting to recommend this property. He reiterated what was mentioned earlier as far as the cost savings over time in regards to housing and future costs for education if fourteen houses were to be developed on this property. He stated that we are saving money as tax payers if we protect this area. Mr. Stephens also stated that we are all on well water and that there is no better way to protect ground water than to protect open space. Mr. Stephenson stated that he supports this article, but wanted to add in the interest of full disclosure, that he is a board member of the South East Land Trust. Selectman Tim Copeland, Raeder Dr. asked to speak as a resident regarding this article. Mr. Copeland stated that he supports this article, and feels that this is a really good deal, and that it is going to be good for Stratham in the long run. Patrick Kelley, Benjamin Rd. asked about the public right of way along the power lines, and does this parallel the big fields. Mr. Kelley also asked if the wood lots could hold us hostage in the future and demand money to access this new property. Pat Elwell responded that right now the wood lots are land locked and that there isn't a lot that the owners could do with them. She also stated that the trail in the back is part of the back of the Barker property. Mr. Short also responded that the school property has a significant amount of land in this area, and that Stratham has a cul-de sac limit on the books, which is about 800 feet. He stated that road development costs would be a significant hindrance in trying to develop anything at the park along this area being considered. Mr. Short concluded that the school owned property and road development costs would make this prohibitive to building back there. Mr. Kelley stated this property is only going to cost us \$50.00 to purchase per family on average. Mr. Kelley concluded with thanks to the Short family for the opportunity to purchase this easement and he supports this article. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 11 passed.

Article 12 – Funding for the 300th Anniversary Celebration

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate, by special warrant article, the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$10,000.00) for the purpose of defraying the costs associated with the observance of the Town's 300th Anniversary in 2016. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until this purpose has been fulfilled, but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a vote of two for and one against. Selectman Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Canada spoke to the motion. Selectman Canada stated he wanted to thank everyone on the 300th Anniversary Committee for their dedication and hard work leading up to the 2016 celebration. He stated this committee was formed in 2010, and now the celebration is right around the corner. Mr. Canada asked to yield the floor to John Dold, Chairman of the 300th Anniversary Committee. Liz Chisholm, Squamscott Rd., asked to speak first, and stated that her dad was chairman of the 250th Anniversary Committee and now she is on the 300th Anniversary Committee. She asked for volunteers to help on this committee, and that there are sign-up sheets outside in the hall if anyone is interested. John Dold, William Circle began by asking the committee members to stand up so they can be recognized. He then went over the highlights of the events that are to take place next year for the 300th Celebration. He went on to explain that there will be three major events for 2016 and they will consist of a historical play, a dinner/dance, and a parade. These three events will be spread out over 2016. Mr. Dold stated that the play will take place in March. He then highlighted the acts for the historical play. Mr. Dold then went over the dinner/dance. He explained that the meal will be catered, and that there will be guest speakers and fireworks. He explained the final date has not been set yet for this event but it will take place sometime in the summer. Mr. Dold stated that the third event will be in the fall, and will incorporate many bands and floats, that a lot of associations will be involved, and that they are also trying to sign up the Budweiser Clydesdale horses to lead the parade. He explained that the estimated costs for these three events is \$50,000.00. Some of the funding for this will come from fundraising. The 300th Anniversary Committee has raised \$24,000.00 to date in fundraising efforts. He explained that we are requesting \$10,000.00 tonight from the Town that will be added to this fund. He stated that we also received \$10,000.00 last year from the Town that has been added to this fund. Mr. Dold stated that if you approve tonight's \$10,000.00, we will have \$44,000.00 in our fund. He explained that over the next year, we should be able to raise the difference so we will have the \$50,000.00 needed for these events. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Heidi Hanson, Strawberry Lane asked if the proceeds from the sales for the new history book, and the ticket sales for the dinner/dance would go back to the Town to offset the cost to the taxpayer. Mr. Dold responded that yes, the money will go into the 300th Anniversary Fund, and anything left over would revert back to the Town. John Sapienza, Raeder Dr., mentioned that when he was part of the 275th Park celebration, the cost for their dinner/dance was borne by the individuals who bought tickets to participate in that event that night. Mr. Sapienza stated that he supports this article and asked everyone to support this committee for all the hard work they have done. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked what the cost is for the dinner/dance, and Mr. Dold responded it would be \$50.00 a head. Mr. Wool also asked what was left in the fund from the \$55,000.00 that was approved a few years ago at Town Meeting for commissioning an author to write the history of Stratham. Mr. Dold responded that out of the \$55,000.00 that

was approved a few years ago, there is about \$7,000.00 left after paying all the costs associated with this endeavor and buying 500 paperbacks and 50 hardcovers to sell. Seeing no other questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 12 passed.

Article 13 – Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$25,000.00) to be deposited into the “Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Fund” as created by the March 16, 2012 Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion. Selectman Federico stated that we are continuing our grounds maintenance expendable trust fund. He explained that last year we raised \$25,000.00 and that we would like to raise another \$25,000.00 this year to defray any building and ground maintenance expenses for the town buildings including the highway shed, the library, the municipal center, the police dept. and the fire station. Seeing no questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 13 passed.

Article 14 – EMS Fund Appropriation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Nine Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$59,000.00) for the following purposes:

2015 EMS/EMT First Responder Training	\$14,000.00
2015 ALS Services Contract	\$10,000.00
2015 Purchase of 2 Replacement Stretchers	\$35,000.00

and to further authorize the withdrawal of Fifty Nine Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$59,000.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Tim Copeland moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Copeland spoke to the motion. He stated that this article has to be brought to Town Meeting every year. He explained that this is no cost to us in tax dollars. It is revenue produced by ambulance billing. Jonathan Caldwell, Drury Plains asked why the two stretchers are so expensive. Selectman Copeland responded that these particular stretchers are electric, and that one person can handle getting a patient onto the stretcher and into the ambulance. The non-electric stretchers can take several people lifting the stretcher depending on the weight of the patient. Lieutenant Josh Crow, member of the Stratham Fire Dept. further explained that he feels this is really reasonable as far as preventing injuries to the EMT's in preventing back and other injuries when lifting stretchers and patients. He further explained that we are the only town on the Seacoast using the old stretchers. He asked us to support this article. June Sawyer, High St. stated that she is one of those people that will come out to pick you up, and they had a recent call that took six of them to lift the stretcher to get the patient into the

ambulance. She explained with the new electric stretchers, one person would be able to do this. Seeing no other questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 14 passed.

Article 15 – Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$10,000.00) to be deposited into the “Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund” as created by the March 16, 2007 Town Meeting to meet the currently unfunded obligations of the Town. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion. He explained that this trust fund was set up to meet any obligations of the Town when an employee retires. He stated that we could potentially have nine employees this year who could retire. He explained we have to pay out vacation, sick time, and retirement benefits if they retire. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked how much money is in the trust fund currently. Mr. Federico responded that \$51,663.00 is currently in the fund. He also added that the net unfunded obligations is \$91, 281.33. Seeing no other questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 15 passed.

Article 16 – Other Business

To transact any other business that may legally come before this meeting.

Mr. Canada stated that he wanted to take this opportunity to thank all the people who have participated in the various Committees, Commissions, and Boards over the past year. He stated the Town could not operate without you. He further stated that anyone who wishes to volunteer to please feel free to sign up on the Town Website or at the Town Offices. Mr. Canada also asked any newly elected Town Officers to come forward and be sworn in after the meeting by the Town Clerk. Selectman Copeland announced that the Conservation Commission will be holding their annual clean-up day on Saturday, April 18th, at 9:00 a.m. at the Stratham Hill Park Pavilion. Seeing no other business before the Town, Moderator Emanuel closed the meeting at 9:15 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce L. Charbonneau
Stratham Town Clerk

