

TOWN OF STRATHAM
TOWN MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 13, 2018

The ballot clerks and election workers were sworn in at 7:54 am and 1:50 pm. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Deputy Moderator Beth Dupell, Assistant to the Moderator Vic Collinino, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector Deborah Bakie, Selectmen Bruno Federico and Michael Houghton. Supervisors of the Checklist present were: Connie Aubin-Adams, Natalie Perry, and Melanie McGrail. Ballot clerks for the day were Dianna and Roger Thompson, Susan Canada, Cheryl Ewart, Susan Brett, Nancy Hunter, Joan, Gough, Vicki Marbacher, Vero Ludington, Diana Alsterberg, Connie Gilman, Lois Graham and Denise Lemire.

It was a very snowy and steady day with 998 votes cast at the Town Election, with 311 of those being absentee ballots. There were 27 new voters registered on Election Day, making the total number of voters on the Checklist 6373. There was a 16% turnout for this election.

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 743*. For Kensington for one year, vote for one: Robert Hall 724*. For Newfields for three years, vote for one: Paul Bauer 713*. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Helen Joyce 820*. For Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Katherine B. Miller 748*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Deborah Bronson 447* Penny Lee 285. For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Lovey Oliff 698*. For East Kingston for three years, vote for one: David Pendell 704*.

Stratham only results:

***Article 1:** Bond for CMS addition/renovations
Yes: 605 No: 346

*This bond was defeated. It needed a 60% vote to pass, and when all the six towns were tallied, they had only received 54.1% in yes votes.

Article 2: ERCSD Operating Budget:
Yes: 678* No: 248

Article 3: Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board (ERCSB) and the Exeter Cooperative Paraprofessional Association. (ECPA):
Yes: 666* No: 266

Article 4: Capital Reserve Fund for Synthetic Turf Replacement:
Yes: 624* No: 307

Stratham Memorial School District Ballot results as follows:
(*Denotes the Winner)

School Board Member for three years, vote for two: Sarah Galligher 785*. Eric Von Der Linden 704*.
School District Clerk for three years, vote for one: Mikki Deschaine 854*.

Annual Town of Stratham Ballot results as follows:
(* Denotes the Winner)

Selectman for three years, vote for one: Bob O'Sullivan 819*.

Cemetery Trustee for three years, vote for one: John L. LaBonte 826*. Library Trustee for one year, vote for one: Geri Lakey Denton 486* Victoria Su 290. Library Trustee for three years, vote for two: Nate Clinard 641* Joanne Ward 741*. Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, vote for one: Diane Morgera 833*. Town Moderator for two years, vote for one: David F. Emanuel 864*. Supervisors of the Checklist for two years, vote for one: Natalie Perry 842*. Supervisors of the Checklist for six years, vote for one: Connie Aubin-Adams 807*.

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

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section III, Subsection 3.9 Town Center District, by amending Subsection 3.9.6 *Review and Permitting Process* to further clarify the permitting requirements and procedures for developments within the Town Center Zoning District.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 708* No: 198

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

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section IV, by amending Section IV, Subsection 4.2 *Table of Dimensional Requirements* to clarify the purpose of the Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 718* No: 182

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

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section V, Section 5.4 Accessory Dwelling Units, Subsection 5.4.3 *Regulations* to add 5.4.3.i to reflect the statutory changes to NH RSA 674:70.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 723* No: 186

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 see if the Town will vote to amend Section VII, Subsection 7.4 *Permit Procedures*, Subsection 7.4.a.iv.9 and Subsection 7.4.b.v to establish and clarify the permitting process for signs.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 737* No: 151

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 see if the Town will vote to amend Section VII Signs, Subsection 7.5 Exempt Signs, by amending Subsection 7.5.i *Directional Signs*, and Subsection 7.5.s to add *Not-For-Profit/Non-Taxable Entity* signs, and renumber accordingly to amend the list of Exempt Signs.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 718* No: 165

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 see if the Town will vote to amend Section VIII, Subsections 8.11.b.ii, iv, and v, to modify the Planning Board's ability to grant density bonuses within Residential Open Space Cluster Developments.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 640* No: 239

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 see if the Town will vote to amend Section XII, Subsection 12.6.4 *Special Exception for Lots of Record*, to further clarify the permitting requirements and procedures within the Shoreland Protection District.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 697* No: 178

Article 9 – Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section XVI, Subsections 16.5.3 (b) and (c) *Procedure*, to provide a maximum of 60 calendar days for Historic Demolition Review.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 714* No: 172

Article 10 – Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To see if the Town will vote to amend Section XIX. Telecommunication Facilities by replacing said section in its entirety with comprehensively revised language, to further clarify the permitting requirements and procedures for Telecommunications Facilities.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 745* No: 140

Article 11: – Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as proposed by petition of Eugene Barker and twenty Five (25) other registered voters of the Town of Stratham?

To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Map, to include 170 Portsmouth Avenue (Tax Map 17 Lot 86) in the Town Center Zoning District.

The Planning Board does not recommend this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 398 No: 488*

The remaining Town of Stratham articles will be voted on March 16, 2018 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 p.m.

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting come to order at 7:10 pm. Members of the Stratham Cub Scout Pack 185 and Stratham Ladybugs led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Emanuel then called for a moment of silence for all those serving in the Armed Forces. Mr. Emanuel then went on to introduce himself and the Elected and Town officials: He introduced Selectman Michael Houghton, and newly elected Selectman Robert O'Sullivan. He also introduced outgoing Selectman Bruno Federico. Town Administrator Paul Deschaine and Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector Deborah Bakie were also introduced. Supervisors of the Checklist Melanie McGrail, Natalie Perry and Connie Aubin-Adams were also present. Mr. Emanuel then had Beth Dupell, Deputy Town Moderator read the dedication of the Town Report. This year's dedication was to the members, past and present, of the Stratham Fair Committee. Tavis Austin, Town Planner, assisted with the slide show presentation. Mr. Emanuel then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 13, 2018. 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 12: 2018 Operating Budget

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate Six Million Eight Hundred Sixty One Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty Nine Dollars and no cents (\$6,861,959.00) to defray general town charges for the ensuing year. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. **The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote.** Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion. Selectman Federico explained that for every \$100,000.00 in expenses approved tonight, it will add roughly .08 to the tax rate. A roughly 6.7% increase in appropriations includes a 30% increase due to payroll, personnel, and related items with a 2.9% COLA increase and merit raises. Also, there was an increase in support staff where deemed appropriate for the running and safety of Town Operations.

Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor.

Daniel Siller, Stratham Heights Rd., stated that last year's budget was underspent and inquired as to where the money went. Selectman Federico responded that there was less personnel with the Police Department as well as the Highway Department not being fully staffed, and also a loss of the Park Ranger due to medical retirement. Mr. Siller continued with a follow-up question asking what difference did the underspending make. Selectman Federico stated that \$300,000.00 was not spent on personnel for 2017. Mr. Siller went on with the question as to the largest line item on the revenue was Motor Vehicles Permits with 1.8 million last year and 1.8 million this year. However, revenue was up 2.1%, making it off by \$330,000.00. Mr. Siller went on to ask why an assumption would be made to make it less this year by such a substantial amount.

Selectman Federico stated that an estimate of revenues are provided by the Department Heads. The Town Clerk estimated 1.8 million last year as there was a very large increase in motor vehicle permits. If all the vehicles get reregistered, that estimate will increase accordingly. There will be a better projection for revenue estimates later in the year.

Paul Deschaine, Town Administrator, spoke that the revenue is very conservative for the revenue estimates in March. Last year there was a fleet of vehicles that were registered in Stratham that were not anticipated to register in Stratham. This was almost \$200,000.00 that was unanticipated. However, there is no guarantee that they will reregister these vehicles in 2018.

Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd stated that the Parks and Recreation are not separated to show fluctuations on pages 62 and 65 of the Town Report. Mr. Wool went on to state his concerns about the vandalism that has taken place in the Park in the past without a full-time Park Ranger and asked the Selectmen to consider a full-time person. Mr. Deschaine stated there would be two part-time positions which would cover 7 days a week. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 12 passed. Steve Simmons, Vineyard Dr. motioned to restrict reconsideration on Article 12. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. seconded the motion. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 12.

Article 13: CIP (Capital Improvements Program)

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Three Hundred Eleven Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$1,311,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2018 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 Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion. Selectman Houghton stated that the appropriation for 2018 is approximately \$20,000.00 higher than 2017. Selectman Houghton added several expenses have caused the CIP to increase such as property re-evaluation expenses that will take place in 2019, the Municipal Center phone system being outdated and beyond repair, the Master Plan

needing to be rewritten with a third party assisting in rewriting the process, the Building Inspector’s 2002 vehicle needing replacement, the continuation of putting money aside to allow the Highway Department to make the appropriate repairs to Town Roads, and improvements on the playing fields at Stratham Hill Park. These are considered the high cost items.

Nancy Hunter, Brown Ave. asked how much money currently has been contributed to the water and sewer study. Mr. Deschaine stated beginning in 2009 when the initiative started, roughly \$352,000.00 has been spent on studies and legal. Nancy asked what we are getting for this. She stated that she wished it were more transparent on what we are spending this money on in terms of studies and legal.

Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd stated on the question that was just asked the answer is on page 127 of the Town Report, \$409,000.00. Mr. Wool went on to state that the CIP is confusing and suggested not putting the chart on the same page as the CIP.

Paul Deschaine stated the Department of Revenue will no longer allow Capital Reserve Funds to be contained within the CIP and it needs a separate article to appropriate to Capital Reserve Funds.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 13 passed. Robert O’Sullivan made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 13. Pat Abrami seconded the motion. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 13.

Article 14 –Capital Reserve Funding

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Fifty Nine Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$359,000.00) to be added to the following capital reserve funds previously established.

Land Conservation Fund	\$35,000
Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund	\$104,000
Radio Communications Capital Reserve Fund	\$5,000
Highway Vehicle/Equipment Capital Reserve Fund	<u>\$215,000</u>
Total	\$359,000

The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion. Selectman Houghton stated the primary Capital Reserve Fund increase this year enables replacement of vehicles within the Fire and Highway Departments as needed.

Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., thanked the Selectmen for going back to a reasonable replacement program. Mr. Wool asked what the current fund balance is. Selectman Houghton stated that the Highway Department’s current balance is \$41,000.00 and that the Fire Department’s current balance is \$73,000.00. Mr. Wool thanked Colin Laverty and the Highway Department for the excellent job they do all year long.

Seeing no further questions from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 14 passed.

Article 15: Heritage Preservation Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$150,000.00) to be added to the Heritage Preservation Fund, a Capital Reserve Fund, as previously created at the March 11, 2011 Town Meeting.

The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion.

Selectman Houghton stated the intent to raise funds was to place a Preservation Easement on the old Town Hall, a heritage landmark within Stratham. The developer has agreed to allow the Town the opportunity to provide a Preservation Easement, which will be an investment to enhance the property and to keep it there. Selectman Houghton invited Nate Merrill, Chairman of the Heritage Commission, to speak on Article 15.

Nate Merrill presented that 301 years ago Stratham was incorporated in 1716. In 1877 Stratham's first and only dedicated Town Hall was built by two Stratham men in the Town Center District. It was in the center of three churches that were active at that time. The Town Hall became the hub for all civic, governmental, and recreational activity for the next 140 years. The old Town Hall has already been determined to be eligible for the State Historic Register. It is the only structure in this Town that has the French Second Empire Style. With no plans for utilizing the old Town Hall, the Town Meeting in 1997 voted to sell it in order to raise funds to make renovations to the current Municipal Center. Ironically, the same 1997 Town Meeting also voted to establish the Heritage Commission. The Heritage Commission is responsible for the proper recognition, and use and protection of resources that are valued for their historic cultural aesthetic and community significance. The Town Meeting in 1998 voted to approve the Town Wide Master Plan. The guiding vision statement in that plan states "The Town desires to maintain a well planned community with protected natural and historic resources". In 2011, Plan NH volunteered a group of planning professionals which selected Stratham Town Center for one of its Annual Community Charrettes. The plan that emerged from numerous community-wide listening sessions aiming to achieve a number of goals, were the creation of a unique sense of place, and to reestablish the historic significance, character, and connection to the Town Center. Also, in 2011, the Town Meeting voted to establish the Heritage Preservation Fund, which is part of the Capital Reserve Fund created for making investments in the Town Historic Resources when appropriate opportunities arise. Disbursement of any funds requires a public hearing and a vote by the Board of Selectmen. In the latter part of 2017, the old Town Hall and the adjacent former Baptist Parsonage, known as the Millie Parker House was sold to a new owner who immediately applied for demolition permits for both structures. After a 30 day historic review period the Parker House was removed and the new owner agreed to work with the Heritage Commission on a Historic Preservation Easement so long as the Town would agree to fund it at the Town Meeting. The owner agreed to hold off on demolition until April 1st. Mr. Merrill stated that those in the room tonight will decide the fate of Stratham's only Town Hall that was built as a Town Hall. It has served six generations of residents and this is the only chance to save it for future generations. Mr. Merrill went on to explain what a Preservation Easement is. He explained that it is like a Conservation Easement on land that permanently protects the structure from demolition or moving it in the future. It would also restrict certain exterior features that are important such as the Manshart roof, the tall windows, and the decorative brackets on the roof eaves. The Preservation Easement will be held by the non-profit NH Preservation Alliance, not by the Town. They are the only State-Wide entity serving this function. The property will remain in private hands and on the tax role. The Town will not be responsible for rehabilitation expenses or any future maintenance cost, or for enforcing the easement. That will be the job of the NH Preservation Alliance.

The following residents spoke in favor of this article: Pat Abrami, Bruce Scamman, Lucy Cushman, Dave Canada, Lee Beauregard, Deborah Bronson, Marty Wool and Deanna Lankler. Some of the reasons that were cited for this article were: its unique architecture, is considered "our Town Hall", one time cost - not an every year cost, permanent easement, and only Town Hall like it in our State. Respect, honor, preservation and reuse of historic buildings, along with many great memories and a reminder that this Town has been here for over 300 years were also reasons cited to keep the Town Hall.

Mark Ralabate, Evergreen Way, asked for clarification whether the easement was permanent or not.

The following residents spoke against this article. Rachel Jefferson and Daniel Siller. Some of the reasons they cited were: in 1997 the Town sold it, no public access to the building except for the tenants, subsidizing the developer, vinyl sided building, no longer “our Town Hall”, too late in the game, unsure of what the preservation end result will be.

Rachel Jefferson requested a paper ballot vote.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, explained that this was a ballot vote, and provided directions on the voting process. Once the ballot box was closed and the votes were counted, it was announced by Mr. Emanuel that Article 15 passed. The results were 141 Yes, and 57 No. Charles Currier made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 15. Pat Abrami seconded the motion. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 15.

Article 16 – Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Funds

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 Trust 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 Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion.

Selectman Federico stated that the Expendable Trust Fund is used for emergency purposes. With these funds it prevents the Town from having to borrow money.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 16 passed.

Article 17 – Authorizing Keno Games

To see if the Town will vote to allow the operation of Keno games within the Town of Stratham. Selectman Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion.

Selectman Houghton stated the allotted funds generated through Keno revenue is to be directed towards support of full day kindergarten. Selectman Houghton went on to explain Keno in general and how it operated.

The following residents spoke in favor of this article. Michael Dane, Pat Abrami and Rachel Jefferson. Some of the reasons cited were: It would have a limited impact on the Town, we should do our part with contributing for full-time kindergarten, it is considered lottery and not gambling, and all lottery money goes into an education trust fund. It also will help with the property tax rate.

The following residents spoke against this article. Deborah Altschiller, Patty Lovejoy and Mark Ralabate. Some of the reasons cited were: It is the States’ obligation to be funding education with general funds and not gambling money, we already pay for education through our property taxes, a Keno parlor is not needed in the Town, and it is not right for our Town character.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the negative, and Article 17 was defeated.

Article 18 – EMS Special Revenue

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$20,000.00) for the following purposes:

2018 EMS/EMT/First Responder Training	\$10,000.00
2018 ALS Services Contract	\$10,000.00

and to further authorize the withdrawal of Twenty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$20,000.00) 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 Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion.

Selectman Federico explained that the first item regarding EMT responder training was for a course that is offered every October for continuing education for our medical personnel. He explained that the second item regarding the service contract pertains to the advanced life support system's contract with Exeter Hospital.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 18 passed.

Article 19 – New Ambulance

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$300,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new ambulance and to further authorize the withdrawal of Three Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$300,000.00) from the 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 Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Michael Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion.

Selectman Federico stated that a request was made last year and was deferred until a study committee could put together the specifications for the ambulance and justify the issues that were present.

Selectman Federico invited Stratham Fire Chief Matt Larrabee to come forward to speak on the Article. Chief Larrabee stated the Fund was set up back in early 2000 to assist the Fire Department in purchasing new equipment, and the Fund roughly generates \$115,000 over a 3 year time period which comes from insurance billing for hospital transports. The purchase of the new ambulance will be at no cost to the tax payer. The new ambulance would be a Ford F550, a four wheel drive, and will be equipped with a stretcher that is operated by a power lift rather than the EMT having to manually lift it. Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Seeing no questions or comments, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 19 passed.

Article 20 – Purchase SCBA Equipment

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$200,000.00) for purchasing new replacement "self-contained breathing apparatus" (SCBA) equipment and to authorize the withdrawal of One Hundred Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$100,000.00) from the 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, and to further authorize the use of Sixty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$60,000.00) from the Fire Department Capital Reserve Fund, and to accept a contribution of Forty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$40,000.00) from the Stratham Volunteer Fire Department Fair Trust. No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. **The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote.** Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion.

Selectman Federico stated the SCBA packs have expired and that they have a 15 year life expectancy and they must be replaced. He further stated that the entire system should be replaced with up- to- date equipment.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 20 passed.

Article 21 – Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Funds

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 Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion.

Selectman Houghton stated the article has an ongoing practice for setting aside money to provide for the unfunded obligation for the retirement of Town Employees.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 21 passed.

Article 22 – Skate Park Study and Design

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum Thirty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$35,000.00) for the purpose of studying and designing a proposed skate park within the Town. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the stated purpose is 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 Michael Houghton moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Houghton spoke to the motion.

Selectman Houghton stated that there is a group of residents that has done research with an advisor to come up with designs and cost estimates with Stevens Park being identified as a possible location. Selectman Houghton went on to say that an engineering study would be completed to see if Stevens Park can support an activity of this nature, and if not, to identify an area within the Town which would be appropriate. The funds are intended to allow a third party engineering firm to study the viability of this Park within the Town. Selectman Houghton invited members of the study and Seth Hickey, Director of Parks and Recreation to speak on behalf of the article.

Kerri Vivathana, Kinloch Dr., spoke to the article. Kerri spoke of her educational background and experience. She went on to explain that the study group is planning to hire a local third party engineering firm to complete a comprehensive site evaluation to ensure the layout of the Park, and also to look at the Stevens Field area to see if it is deemed appropriate. Other locations being considered within the Town is Stratham Hill Park and the area adjacent to the Town Offices. Kerri stated that it is important that the skate park be part of our community and that location is critical to the long term success of this Park. She further stated that a site specific comprehensive design would offer a 7500 square foot park and the final location will determine whether this size is possible. This article is for the firm to design the Park which would allow biking, inline skating, scooter and skate boarding. The second phase of the Park will be done by fundraising and in-kind donations as well as a separate warrant article to be voted on at a future Town Meeting. Total cost for the skate park is estimated to be \$265,000.00 before fundraising and in-kind donations. Kerri stated that Primex informed the study group that insurance wise, there would be no difference in liability for the Town than any other Park. Kerri went on to state that the maintenance would be minimal and consisted of emptying the trash barrels and that the overall tax impact would be \$12.00. Kerri then explained that this type of activity encourages growth mindset lessons of perseverance, effort, grit, and determination. Kerri provided further that a skate park promotes physical health which is beneficial as statistics now show that 24% of kids ages 10-17 are obese. She further stated that no coaches or schedules are needed. Kerri explained that the complexity of a skate park improves brain function and improves new cell growth. With team sports not for everyone, Kerri closed by stating that the time is now to fill in the gap for non-traditional sports.

Seth Hickey, Parks and Recreation Director stated that this was his first time presenting a warrant article and he is passionate about this underserved population which would offer a place to go as there is no Community Center in Town. He also stated that it would require very little maintenance.

Jess Sturdivant, Union Rd., read a letter from a 4th grade student at Stratham Memorial School, Adell Leavis. Adell stated in the letter that there was a need for a skate park in Stratham, and it would provide a safe place for kids to ride their skateboard.

The following residents spoke in favor of this article: Michael Talone, Carla Breton and Lucy Cushman. Some of the reasons they cited for this article were: not everyone finds their way to a team sport, everyone is different, it is important to provide something for all kids, and anything that gets kids outdoors and away from technology is a plus.

Daniel Siller, Stratham Heights Rd. spoke against the article. Daniel stated that this should be funded with investors and bank money. He further stated that there is no rational reason why the whole Town should support this type of hobby, and that there are other skating parks to go to and utilize.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 22 passed. Jeremy Riggs made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 22. Cantrece Forrest seconded the motion. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 22.

Article 23 – Offshore Wind Power Study

By petition of Janet Szarmach and more than twenty five (25) other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, NH, to see if the Town shall express its support to Governor Sununu for New Hampshire to join Maine and Massachusetts and study the feasibility of developing offshore wind power in the Gulf of Maine. The Town will provide written notice urging that Governor Sununu request that the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management form an intergovernmental task force. A bipartisan NH legislative committee studied the potential for offshore wind in 2014, and recommended the establishment of this task force. Floating wind turbines located far offshore in federal waters, barely visible from land, combined with other renewable energy will move NH to 100% renewable energy by 2050. The building of offshore wind farms will bring a significant number of jobs and revenue to New Hampshire. Selectman Bruno Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Houghton seconded the motion. Selectman Federico invited a representative to speak to the motion.

Doug Marino, of Vineyard Dr. spoke to the motion. He stated it makes common sense for the Town to step up, and we're not appropriating any money. We're recommending to the Governor that this task force be commenced as noted in the article. He further stated that this is a great opportunity for the environment as well as future job opportunities. He concluded with that this initiative would bring close to 36 thousand jobs to NH over the course of the next 10 years.

Lester Cuff, Stratham Heights Rd. and Jennifer Kensey, Stratham Heights Rd. spoke in favor of the article. Some of the reasons they cited for the article were: NH has the fastest growing economy and the lowest poverty level, but we have the highest utility costs. They also stated that this project doesn't cost anything. They explained that it passed in the surrounding towns, and we're just joining in support and urging Governor Sununu to study the feasibility of offshore wind power.

Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 23 passed.

Article 24 – Other Business

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

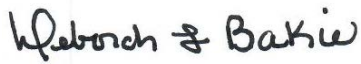
Rachel Jefferson, Fifield Lane inquired about the Town possibly moving to a different form of Town Council or becoming an SB2 town.

Marty Wool stated that the Town Meeting is the purest form of democracy. He further stated that though some might disagree, he feels that SB2 can be a disaster in some towns. He stated that in his opinion, people are more informed with a traditional Town Meeting. Marty concluded with that he is vigorously opposed to going to an SB2 Town.

Selectman Bruno Federico spoke to all the support from all the Town Boards and Commissions. He asked that residents consider volunteering to help these Commissions and Boards do their work. There are applications on the Town website.

Selectman Houghton stated our Town thrives through the commitment and dedication through volunteers. Combined with an enormously talented staff, it makes Stratham a truly exceptional place to live. Selectman Houghton recognized Selectman Federico's tremendous commitment to the Town for the last 12 years. Selectman Federico was presented with a clock from the Town as a token of our appreciation for his time. Seeing no other business before the Town, Moderator Emanuel adjourned the meeting at 10:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah & Bakie". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Deborah Bakie,
Stratham Deputy Town Clerk