

TOWN OF STRATHAM
TOWN MEETING MINUTES
MARCH 8, 2016

The ballot clerks and election workers were sworn in at 7:45 am and 1:45 pm. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Deputy Moderator Tracey McGrail, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector Cathy Kenny, Selectmen David Canada, Tim Copeland, and Bruno Federico, Supervisors of the Checklist Caren Gallagher, Natalie Perry, and Melanie McGrail. Ballot clerks for the day were Dianna and Roger Thompson, Patricia Prior, Victor Collinino, Deborah Hodgdon, Dick Alsterberg, Susan Canada, Liz Chisholm, Susan Brett, Nancy Hunter, Andra Copeland, Anna Greenlaw, and Nancy Keane.

It was a quiet day with 937 votes cast at the Town Election, with 18 of those being absentee ballots. There were 8 new voters registered on Election Day, making the total number of voters on the checklist 6048. There was a 15% voter 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: Kimberly Meyer 612*. For Brentwood for three years, vote for one: Melissa A. Litchfield 602*. For Kensington for three years, vote for one: James B. Webber 596*. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Travis Thompson 772*. For Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Katherine B. Miller 639*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: For Exeter 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.) For Newfields 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.) For Stratham for three years, vote for one: Lucy H. Cushman 749*.

Article 1: ERCSD Operating Budget:
Yes: 616* No: 230

Article 2: Synthetic Turf Replacement Capital Reserve Fund:
Yes: 537* No: 308

Article 3: CMS Expansion and Renovation:

Yes: 462* No: 395

Article 4: Citizens Petition for a vote of confidence for Superintendent Michael Morgan.

Yes: 491* No: 261

Stratham Memorial School District Ballot results as follows:

(*Denotes the Winner)

School Board Member for three years, vote for one: write in candidate Cheryl Eveleigh 66*. School District Moderator for three years, vote for one: David F. Emanuel 845*. School District Treasurer for three years, vote for one: write in candidate Patty Lovejoy 22*.

Annual Town of Stratham Ballot results as follows:

(*Denotes the Winner)

Article 1:

Selectman for three years, vote for one: Joe Lovejoy: 393*. Terry Barnes: 345. Bob E. Jackson: 23. Colleen Lake: 129. Cemetery Trustee for three years, vote for one: June Sawyer: 801*. Trustee of the Trust Funds, vote for one: Bill Thompson: 45*, (write in vote). Library Trustee for three years, vote for two: Stephen Simons: 576*. Penelope B. O'Sullivan: 667*. Supervisors of the Checklist for six years, vote for one: Melanie McGrail: 787*. Supervisors of the Checklist for two years, vote for one: Natalie S. Perry: 776*. Town Moderator for two years, vote for one: David F. Emanuel: 827*.

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, Subsection 2.1.6 Agriculture Farm, Farming, by replacing the definition of Agriculture with the state statute definition (NHRSA 21:34-a), by adding a definition of Agritourism by making related changes to the Ordinance to incorporate each respectively; and to further amend Section

16.2 Subsection 16.2.1 Permit Required by exempting agricultural buildings; and amend Section 7 Subsection 7.5q Exempt Signs by exempting agricultural signs.

The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.

Yes: 732* No: 153

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

"To amend the Stratham Zoning Ordinance by changing the zoning of the properties identified as Tax Map 13, Lot 2, Tax Map 13 Lot 3, and portions of the properties identified as Tax Map 13, Lot 4, Tax Map 13 Lot 8 and Tax Map 13 Lot 9 to the Residential/Agricultural zoning district from the Gateway Commercial Business District Outer Zone zoning district."

Yes: 753* No: 145

The remaining Town of Stratham articles will be voted on March 11, 2016 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 pm.

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting come to order at 7:10 pm. Four members of the Stratham Cub Scouts 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, Bruno Federico, and outgoing Selectman Tim Copeland, and incoming Selectman Joe Lovejoy. Town Administrator Paul Deschaine, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau and Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector Cathy Kenny were also introduced as well as the Supervisors of the Checklist Caren Gallagher, Mel McGrail, and Natalie Perry. Tracey McGrail was introduced as the Assistant Moderator. Mr. Emanuel then had Tracey read the dedication of the Town Report. This year's dedication was to the Town and its residents in honor of Stratham's 300th Anniversary. Dave Emanuel then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 8, 2016. 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 4: Bonding Authority for Waterline Installation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Six Million Dollars (\$6,000,000.00) for the acquisition of land and/or easements by the Town, and for the design, permitting, and other related costs to install a public water system within the existing Utility District created during the March 2014 Town Meeting starting at an existing water main at the Exeter and Stratham town line to include but not necessarily limited to a meter house and booster pump station. The Town further authorizes the Selectmen to act on behalf of the Town in connection with such acquisitions and construction activities, and to further authorize the issuance of not more than Six Million Dollars (\$6,000,000.00) of bonds and/or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (NH RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds and/or notes and to determine the rates of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof.

A ballot vote with a two thirds (2/3) majority in favor is required for passage.

Polls must be open for a minimum of one (1) hour.

The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote.

Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman David Canada asked Moderator Dave Emanuel if John Boisvert, who is the Public Works Commission Chair and Chief Engineer of Pennichuck Water Works to speak to this Article and explain what we are trying to do. John Boisvert, 16 Dumbarton Oaks, went through the history of how this Article came to be. He also went over the recent agreement that Stratham signed with Exeter, which allows us to use Exeter's water system. John also went over the tax base, and how this Article, if passed, would result in a broader tax base and increase revenues for the Town. He then turned it over to Selectman David Canada to answer questions from the audience. Selectman David Canada then gave a brief summary of what this Article means to the Town and to the taxpayers. He went over the numbers for the costs of implementing this and explained how this would affect the tax rate, and what it would mean to each taxpayer the first year. Selectman Canada stated the first year would add \$.40 to the tax rate, or \$139.00 to the median residential tax payer. Selectman Canada also went over the costs for the following year, when they hope to add sewer to the same commercial area. He explained this would add six to eight million dollars the second year. He went on to explain that a second bond would add another \$.53 to the tax rate, and cost the median taxpayer \$184.00 in its second year. He further explained if this project were to see its entire completion,

the cost would be approximately twenty two million dollars for water and sewer to go up to Winnicut Rd. Selectman Canada explained this would not be paid with present dollars or by our present income structure. He further explained that a “rate paying customer base” would be established. Selectman Canada concluded with asking the voters for their support on this article, and stated he would be happy to answer any questions from the voters. The following residents spoke against the article: Marty Wool, Pat Abrami, Ray Thompson, Everett Lamm, George Rubin, Norton Newborn, Mark Whiting, Steve Robison, Lester Cuff, George Doran, Kate Faust, Esteban Rubens, Gordon Bailey, and Nancy Hunter. Some of the concerns that were cited from the residents regarding this article were: lack of information to the public, the cost, construction, and maintenance to the roads, future impact on fire services, no businesses have committed to this to date, lack of information on long term costs and long term strategic planning, concerns with entering into a partnership/contract with Exeter, congested downtown, increase of taxes, and suffering through the construction phase. Residents Bruce Scamman and Lucy Cushman spoke for the article. Bruce stated this has been talked about for the last five years, and will attract a larger variety of businesses coming in. Lucy stated that the development would be contained to the side roads of Portsmouth Ave., and that it will generate tax dollars so we won’t have to be paying for services ten to fifteen years from now. She also stated that the costs are only going to go up in the future, and we need to start now. Lucy urged the voters to be progressive, think ahead, and to vote yes on this Article. Seeing no further questions from the floor, Moderator Dave Emanuel read the question, explained that this was a ballot vote, and directed the residents to where the voting would take place. He then gave directions on the voting process for the written ballot. He further explained that the polls would be open for one hour, and stated that “the polls are now open.” Once the polls were closed and the votes were counted, it was announced by Mr. Emanuel that Article 4 was defeated. The results were 66 Yes, and 289 No. Everett Lamm, Autumn Lane, made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 4. The motion was seconded by Marty Wool. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 4.

Article 5: 2016 Operating Budget

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of Six Million One Hundred Sixty Seven Thousand Five Hundred One Dollars and no cents (\$6,167,501.00) 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 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 Budget Committee for their help with the budget. Mr. Canada went on to explain that every \$100,000.00 approved tonight will add 8.0 cents to the tax rate which would add \$27.86 to the average residential tax bill. Mr. Canada went over the significant increases in the operating budget. Elections: there are four elections in 2016 versus just the one in 2015, General Government buildings: due to upgrades needed to Town owned properties. Mr. Canada also stated Emergency Management, Sanitation, Stratham Hill Park, and the Library also have slight increases. He further stated that Police, Fire, and Highway are down due to lower fuel costs. Mr. Canada explained that Payroll was also up, due to a .8% cola and some merit increases where they felt it was appropriate, and also paid staffing for the Fire Department and increasing the staff by one for the Police. Mr. Canada explained that we receive substantial non-property tax revenue. He stated that they estimated 2.5 million in incoming revenue for this year. Mr. Canada concluded with the observation that while the net operating budget is up, the total requests are slightly down, and the BOS will continue to strive to be as conservative as possible. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked about the work that was needed on the Cushman House. Mr. Canada explained that it needed a new roof last year, and this year the siding needs to be tightened, and the house needs to be painted. He explained that we need to maintain this property as it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and it is an important part of the history of Stratham. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr. stated that any budget that results in the tax rate going down is a good budget, and he supports this article. Mr. Abrami then called the question. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 5 passed.

Article 6: Capital Improvements Program

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Three Hundred Fifty Two Thousand Six Hundred Dollars and no cents (\$1,352,600.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2016 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. Selectman Federico went over the new items in the 2016 CIP. Under "General Government", these items included the cost for replacing the Municipal Center HVAC system, the Municipal Center Electric Wall Divider, and the Municipal Center Generator Auto Transfer Switch. Selectman Federico continued with new items under "Protection of Persons/Property" which included the Fire Department Computer Replacement Program. He also made mention under "Cultural and Recreational Activities", the Library Reading Garden Updates, and the Replacement of the Irrigation Shed at Stevens Park. Selectman Federico stated that concluded the new items in the CIP and welcomed any questions. Nancy Hunter, Brown Ave., asked about the line item for \$25,000.00 regarding the Master Plan Update Reserve, and the line item for \$125,000.00 for the Water, Sewer, and Stormwater Infrastructure, Planning and Study. Selectman Federico responded that the Master Plan needs to be updated and completed, and we have tried to do this in-house for the last five years, and the various departments and committees were not able to complete their portions due to time constraints. Selectman Federico explained that they got several estimates ranging from \$80,000.00 to \$180,000.00. He stated that they are hoping the cost will be around \$100,000.00 to complete the Master Plan. He explained that this is a necessary document if the Town wants to continue to be have smart growth. Regarding the Water/Sewer question, Selectman Federico explained that Stratham is a MS4 Town, and therefore the EPA mandates us to document all drainage and where it goes, so we have to spend the money on these type of studies. Seeing no further questions from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 6 passed.

Article 7: Heritage Preservation Fund

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred Fifty Thousand dollars and no cents (\$250,000.00) to be deposited in the "Heritage Preservation Fund" as created by the March 11, 2011 Town Meeting. **The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote.** Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Bruno Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Canada explained the intent of this article is to purchase a preservation easement for the Lane property. Mr. Canada explained

that this came about after a proposal in 2015 to intensely redevelop the property at the traffic circle known as the Lane Homestead. After the proposal by the buyer was rejected by the Planning Board, the Heritage Commission asked the Board of Selectmen to support the purchase of a preservation easement on this historically significant property to ensure that something like this does not happen again. Mr. Canada explained that the easement came in at \$200,000.00 and that is what is being requested tonight, plus the estimated costs of putting this easement into the stewardship of the NH Preservation Alliance. Mr. Canada then asked the Moderator if he could yield the floor to Rebecca Mitchell, Chair of the Heritage Commission. Rebecca Mitchell, Portsmouth Ave., began by explaining why the Lane Homestead is so special. She stated that it is a Stratham Landmark. Rebecca also gave some history on this property. She explained Samuel Lane purchased four acres back in 1741. She stated he kept extensive and detailed diaries from the age of twenty-one until his death at age eighty seven. These diaries, which included copious lists and detailed business receipts form an archive that is unequal in all of New England. This archive is now located in the collections of the NH Historical Society in Concord. She also stated that in 1983, the Lane Homestead was placed in the National Register of Historical Places. However, Rebecca explained this still does not offer the Lane Homestead any level of enduring protection of changing its landscape. She further explained that last year, a prospective buyer submitted a building proposal that would include the demolition of three of its buildings as well as damaging alterations to the main house and stripping much of the landscape. She stated that this proposal was opposed vehemently by the Heritage Commission, and they realized, along with the Planning Office and the Board of Selectmen, that it was important to make sure that the people of Stratham understood the historical importance of the Lane Homestead, as well as understanding the needs of the property owners. They came to the conclusion that a preservation easement would answer both the current owners wish to sell, and the Town's interest in protecting the historic value of the property. Rebecca stated that the Selectmen agreed to ask the Town for the preservation easement as they saw the need to protect any future attempts from prospective buyers to change this historic landmark. She also stated that the Preservation Allegiance agreed to be the easement holder. She also stated that in October, the Preservation Alliance named the Lane Homestead to its 2015 **"7 to Save"** list of highly significant properties facing major risk of loss. She further explained that the Heritage Commission, on behalf of the Town, and with the Neily's consent, applied for a grant to partially fund the easement from

the Land and Community Heritage Investment Program, (LCHIP). She stated that in early December, LCHIP awarded the Town a grant of \$100,000.00. Rebecca also explained that a preservation easement will keep this property in private hands. She also explained that a preservation easement is subjected to the same State and Federal Laws that a conservation easement is subjected to. She further stated that this still allows the homeowner to retain all the residual rights of ownership except the right to substantially alter, or fail to maintain the historic character of the property. Rebecca asked for the support of the voters to put \$250,000.00 in the Heritage Preservation Fund to support this preservation easement. She explained \$50,000.00 will go towards covering the cost of developing the easement. She stated that it is true to the vision of Stratham's Master Plan, and it is also a vision of a Town with well protected historical resources. She further stated that this will be protecting our history, and that preserving the Lane Homestead ensures the enjoyment and education of all future generations. Moderator Emanuel then asked if there were any questions. Anita Demopoulos, 2 Morning Star Dr. asked if this easement would decrease the value of the property. Selectman Canada responded, that generally speaking, an easement would drop the value of the property. He further stated, that in this specific case, the property is currently under-valued, so we may not see any difference in the taxes. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 7 passed. Joanne Ward, Wedgewood Dr., asked for a round of applause for Rebecca Mitchell, who has worked so hard to bring this to Stratham. Selectman David Canada made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 7. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 7.

Article 8: Funding for the 300th Anniversary Celebration

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$11,772.00 for the purpose of defraying the costs associated with the observance of the Town's 300th Anniversary in 2016, with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the purpose has been fulfilled or 12/31/21, whichever is sooner. **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 Canada spoke to the motion. He explained that at the 2012 Town Meeting, an appropriation of \$55,000.00 was approved to hire an author to write a current

history of Stratham; 1900 to present. He explained that this project was completed in 2014, and that \$11,773.00 remains unspent. Selectman Canada further explained that the 300th Anniversary Committee would like to use that money to help defray costs associated for the three events planned this year. These events are the Stratham Play, the Dinner Dance, and the Parade. He further stated that the reason this is structured as an appropriation is to comply with the State rules. Selectman Canada also stated that we would be voting in new funds, with the old funds being returned unspent to offset. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 8 passed.

Article 9: 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 Trust Fund” as created by the March 16, 2012 Town Meeting. **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 explained that this fund is for any future repairs that may be needed, and that the BOS try to maintain a lean operating budget. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked what is currently in this fund. Town Administrator Paul Deschaine stated there was \$80,600.00 currently in this fund. Mr. Wool then asked why we weren’t using this money to replace the HVAC at the Municipal Center. Mr. Deschaine explained that this fund is used for unforeseeable and unexpected emergencies, and not for regularly scheduled repairs or maintenance. 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: EMS FUND APPROPRIATION

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$50,000.00) for the following purposes:

2016 EMS/EMT/ First Responder Training	\$10,000.00
2016 ALS Services Contract	\$10,000.00
2016 Ambulance Repairs and Upgrades	\$30,000.00

and to further authorize the withdrawal of Fifty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$50,000.00) 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. Selectman Copeland 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. Mr. Copeland also explained that the last item regarding ambulance repairs pertains to one of the ambulances that needs some upgrades and electrical repairs. He explained that Stratham currently has two ambulances. Selectman Copeland also explained that the Fire Department requested a new ambulance at a cost of about \$175,000.00 but the Board felt the current ambulance, being only twelve years old with about forty-five thousand miles on it, still had some years left on it. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd. asked why we didn't honor the Fire Department's request for a new ambulance. Selectman Copeland explained they did not see the need to spend the money for a new ambulance at this time as the current ambulance has nothing seriously wrong with it. 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: 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 Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke to the motion. He stated that this fund is used to pay employees who may be retiring or leaving the employment of the Town. He stated that there really isn't any way to budget for this, but we have to have the funds available for the employee's unused vacation/sick time, and any other retirement associated costs that the employee is owed. Gordon Bailey, Holmgren

Rd. asked why there is so much carryover on employees' vacation time. He stated that most private sectors have the policy of "use it, or lose it". Town Administrator Paul Deschaine responded that the Board of Selectmen are very sensitive to this issue, and that a number of adjustments have been made over the years to limit the carryover. He explained that one of the changes that was made was an employee can now only carry over eighty hours each year. Jeff Wilson, Willowbrook Ave., asked if we don't fund this article, would it affect our audit reports which would result in a negative result in the bond market, causing us to pay a higher interest rate for any borrowing we may pursue. Mr. Deschaine responded that this was certainly a possibility. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 11 passed.

Article 12: Ratification of the Length of Terms for the Verizon Wireless Lease of Town Property

To see if the Town will vote to ratify the Lease Agreement between the Town of Stratham and Cellco Partnership d/b/a/ Verizon Wireless dated July 13, 2015. The initial term of the Agreement is for five (5) years with extensions of four (4) additional five (5) year terms for a total of twenty five (25) years in duration. **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 Canada spoke to the motion. Selectman Canada explained the two motivating factors in presenting this article tonight. He stated the first reason is a matter of safety. He explained if you have an emergency, communication, and the ability to be able to use your cell phone, is paramount. Mr. Canada explained that the elevation for where the tower would go is one of the highest in town, allowing for a relatively short ninety foot tower. He also stated that there is space on the tower reserved for municipal use should we choose to use it. Mr. Canada explained that the second factor involves increase revenue to the Town. He stated that Verizon will initially pay the Town \$30,000.00 a year, with a yearly escalator. He further stated that there is no proof that property values near the cell town will go down in value. He explained that Verizon provided several studies by third party certified appraisers who looked at several New England markets, looking at actual before and after values, and found no degradation in property values. He further stated that an independent study by Avitar of New England commissioned by the Town of Deerfield validated these studies. Mr. Canada explained that Avitar provides a

wide range of assessing services and software to municipalities, including Stratham. Mr. Canada further explained that this proposal has been fully vetted and approved by the Select Board, the Planning Board, and Zoning Board of Appeals. Selectman Canada then asked Moderator Dave Emanuel for permission for Chip Fredette, the project manager for Verizon, to explain the technical aspects of this proposal. Permission was granted by a voice vote after an initial objection by a resident. Mr. Fredette started off by explaining that the purpose of the site is to provide 4G LTD coverage to Verizon Wireless subscribers of Stratham. He explained that this location was chosen for its central location and wireless gathering coverage. He further explained that the ground elevation is one of the highest in Town. He also stated that this is a shorter tower than the average cell phone tower. He stated that this would be about ninety feet in height, and the average cell phone tower is about one hundred and seventy three feet in height. He summarized the benefits as such: 4 G LTD coverage, more efficient public safety response, other carriers can add to this tower in the future, increase revenue to the Town, no burden on the Town's surfaces, no non-stick fumes, light pollution, noise, or increase in traffic. Moderator Emanuel then opened it up for questions or comments from the floor. The following residents spoke against the article: Lester Cuff, Pat Elwell, Mark Whiting, George Ciccanesi, Dr. Richard Feeney, Jay Nesvold, Pat Abrami, Paul Dachsteiner, Danielle Cressey, Gayle Vardakis, Stephanie Ciccanesi, Bob Valeri, Larry Foss, John Scheel, Fred Hutton, Wayne Young, Bruce Chevelier, and Kevin King. Some of the concerns that were cited from the residents regarding this article were: Health concerns in relation to the possibility of cancer due to radiation from the tower, an additional road having to be put in to access the tower, being placed in a residential neighborhood, safety concerns, possibility of the tower having added extensions to accommodate other carriers, and lack of information regarding long term effects in regards to health concerns. The following residents spoke for the article: Carol Hazekamp, Brian Orlandi, Chris Brett, Bob Lacoste, and Ethan Dodge. Some of the reasons they cited for the article were: need for better emergency safety calls, better cell phone coverage, the location is central and beneficial to all, and lack of proof that it has cancer causing agents. Residents John Demopoulos, Gaksel Yalcinkaya, and Esteben Rubens also had questions or comments regarding this article. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the negative, and Article 12 was defeated. Jay Nesvold made a motion to restrict

reconsideration on Article 12. The motion was seconded. The motion passed, and reconsideration was restricted on Article 12.

Article 13: Other Business

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

Moderator Emanuel asked the floor for a straw poll regarding Article 4.

Selectman Canada then asked the floor if it was a lack of information, or do the residents want to see sewer come in before water, or do the residents not want to see anything come in right now, that led to the defeat of Article 4. The residents were not receptive to the straw poll citing it was late, a better option would be sending the BOS emails regarding this, and half the people had already left. Gary Dolan, Jana Lane, asked the residents still present to congratulate Tim Copeland for his eight years of service as Selectman. Selectman David Canada also wished him the best, and stated that he will be missed. Selectman Copeland thanked everyone, and stated it was an honor to serve the Town of Stratham. Selectman Copeland then thanked all the members of the Boards/Committees for their contributions to the Town throughout the year. He asked if anyone is interested in serving on any Board/Commission, to apply by letter or application to the BOS by Tuesday, March 31, 2016. He stated that applications are available at the Town Offices and online at www.strathamnh.gov. Mr. Copeland also announced that the Conservation Commission will be holding its annual clean-up day on Saturday, April 16th, at 9:00 am. They will meet at the Stratham Hill Park Pavilion and gloves and safety vests will be handed out at that time. Seeing no other business before the Town, Moderator Emanuel closed the meeting at 11:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,
Joyce L. Charbonneau
Stratham Town Clerk

