

**State of New Hampshire
Town of Northumberland
2008 Results of Town Meeting**

At 9:00 AM on 3/11/2008 Moderator Ladd announced:

“To the inhabitants of the Town of Northumberland, Coos County and State of New Hampshire, qualified to vote in Town affairs: You are hereby notified to meet at the Groveton High School Ryan’s Auditorium in said Town on the second Tuesday in March next, March 11, 2008, to act upon the subjects hereinafter mentioned. You are hereby warned that on said date and at said place the polls will be opened at **9:00** in the forenoon and will remain open until **5:00** in the afternoon for the reception of your ballots under the Non-Partisan Ballot System. You are also hereby warned that on said date and at said place, at 7:00 in the evening, the matter of appropriations and such other business presently coming before said meeting will be taken up for your consideration and action.”

The Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Northumberland was opened at 9:00 AM Tuesday, March 11, 2008 to act upon the subjects hereinafter mentioned. The polls were declared open for the reception of ballots on Articles 1-9. Moderator Ladd announced that the absentee ballots would be opened at noon.

The business meeting opened at 7:10 PM with the Boy Scout Troop 233 leading residents with the Pledge of Allegiance. Moderator Ladd held a moment of silence for those men and women who have fought and died in our country and for those who have died within our own community.

The results of the ballot vote and Town Meeting are:
Ballots cast: 533 (including 72 absentee)

***Article 1:** To choose by ballot the following Town Officers for the ensuing three years: one Selectmen, one Library Trustee, one treasurer, one Town Clerk/Tax Collector and one Trustee of Trust Fund.

Selectmen:	James “Jim” Tierney	401
	Brian Sullivan (write in)	57
Library Trustee:	Mary Foster	473
Treasurer:	Melody Barney	501
Town Clerk/Tax Collector:	Melinda “Min” Marshall Kennett	494
Trustee of Trust Funds:	Deborah Weeks (write in)	53
	William Greene (write in)	20

***Article 2:** To choose by ballot the following Town Officer for the ensuing six years: one Supervisor of the Checklist.

Supervisor of the Checklist:	Shelly Fleury	467
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***Article 3:** To choose by ballot the following Town Officer for the ensuing two years: one moderator.

Moderator:	Carl Ladd	460
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***Article 4:** Do you favor the continuation of the Town Manager Plan as now in force in this town?
(Submitted by Petition of Voters)

Yes	225
No	265

***A petition for a recount was requested on 3/12/08. The recount has been scheduled for 3/21/08 at 4 PM**

Recount Results:
Yes 224
No 268

***Article 5:** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1as proposed by the Town Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows: repeal Section 4.14 Telecommunication Equipment and Facilities in its entirety, and reenact the section with new language that provides improved definitions, clarification of the construction performance requirements, and a detailed description of the plan requirements and procedures for conditional use permit applications?

Yes 225
No 90

***Article 6:** Are you in favor of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Town Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows: repeal the portion of Section 3.5 Forestry/Timber Management District which limits subdivisions for single family dwelling units in this zoning district to 20% of the lot?

Yes 297
No 159

***Article 7:** Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Town Planning Board for the Town Zoning Ordinance as follows: amend the Zoning Ordinance to adopt a requirement that a driveway permit be obtained prior to erection, construction, relocation or expansion of a driveway; to provide standards for the erection, construction, relocation or expansion of driveways; and to adopt a driveway permit application as part of the Zoning Ordinance?

Yes 260
No 208

***Article 8:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Ordinance to change the zoning designation of a parcel located at Lancaster Road and on Tax Map 227, Lot 9 from Agriculture to Commercial in order to allow for the use of the property as a business. (Submitted by Petition of Voters)(Recommended by Planning Board).

Yes 379
No 92

***Article 9:** To see if the Town will vote to amend the Zoning Ordinance to change the zoning designation of a parcel located at 141 Old Village Road and on Tax Map 236, Lot 38 from Residential Moderate Density to Light Industrial in order to allow for the use of the property as a business. (Submitted by Petition of Voters)(Recommended by Planning Board).

Yes 366
No 99

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$330,000 to reconstruct the portion of Deanbrook Drive, a Town owned roadway, within Deanbrook Village Cooperative, to include adequate site and road drainage to maintain and support public safety, infrastructure integrity and quality of life as discussed in the Preliminary Engineering Report conducted by Horizons Engineering and submitted to the Town of Northumberland in 2006, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$330,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and to authorize the Selectman to issue and negotiate the terms of such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon; further, to authorize the Selectman to apply for, accept and expend any grant monies that may become available for this purpose.. The reconstruction will be conducted as part of an overall infrastructure upgrade being pursued by Deanbrook Village Cooperative. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)(2/3 Ballot Vote Required)(\$2.10 Tax Impact)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0).

Motion made by Barry Colebank and seconded by Reverend John Taylor to accept article as read.

Discussion: Barry Colebank: “ My name is Barry Colebank and I have the honor of serving as the Chairman of Deanbrook Village Cooperative. Forty years ago this coming June, my mother brought her four children to this small town in Northern New England. My grandfather met us at the bus and our new world began. My grandfather worked at the Furniture Store/Funeral Parlor on State Street, and there I

met those that were the backbone of my new hometown. With names like Stiles, Main, Langley, Charron, Houle, Emery, Emerson, Normandeau, Ford, Hersom, Hurlbut, Weymess, Woodward, and others, their businesses were the lifeblood of our town. That following spring, my freshman civics teacher, Mr. Matthews, took us to witness democracy in its truest form. I came away from my first Town Meeting experience with a belief that has stayed with me my entire adult life, that an informed and involved citizenry will make the right decisions, not just for today, but for the future as well. Although the make up of our local business community has changed, I still hold true to my belief and I appear before you tonight to present to you the facts regarding our request so that you may reach an informed decision. Deanbrook Village Cooperative is a 40-unit manufactured housing development located on Deanbrook Drive, off of Route 3, near Northumberland Village, behind Ocean State Job Lots and York Street. The residents of this community exercised foresight in 1988 when they banded together to purchase the community from the private owner of the time. Deanbrook Village Cooperative Inc was formed in August 1988, the 10th such cooperative in New Hampshire. Manufactured housing cooperatives are formed as a means for the owners of manufactured housing, who own their homes but not the land underneath them, to incorporate and acquire the land in common. This removes these properties from the speculative market, provides long-term stability and security, and gives the residents of these communities control of the decisions regarding management, finances and improvements. There are currently 88 co-ops in NH today located in every county. This first co-op was Meredith Center in 1984 and the last, Litchfield Landing, just purchased this past month. Deanbrook Village Cooperative is an active member in this pioneering community. On March 13, 1990, the roadway within the cooperative was accepted for ownership by the town at the Town Meeting when Article 12 was approved. A Quitclaim Deed is on file in Book 0870, page 0879 for this transaction. Now approaching 40 years since its original construction, the residents of Deanbrook have undertaken an effort to evaluate the integrity of our infrastructure, identify and prioritize improvements and repairs needed to ensure continued safety and health, and obtain funding to accomplish these needs. In cooperation with the Town of Northumberland, a grant was received that allowed a Preliminary Engineering Report to be created. Conducted by Horizons Engineering, PLLC, who does business for the Town, the report was delivered to the Town in March 2006 and revised in August 2006. The report identified several areas that need further review and subsequent repairs. These repairs are grouped into Roadways, Sewer, Portable Water and Fire Protection, Site Drainage, and Utilities. Deanbrook Village Cooperative residents are eager to begin further evaluations and obtaining funding to repair those items that are in their responsibility. Any repairs or improvements to water, sewer, or utilities will require some excavation of the roadway. Our discussions with the Selectmen revealed their desire to fix the road one time only. The report concludes that the roadway is severely distressed over nearly its entire length and width, including severe alligator cracking, poor roadway and roadside drainage, wheel rutting, and very rough pavement surface conditions. It goes on to say that the roadway drainage deficiencies impact on public safety, infrastructure integrity and quality of life. It states that the roadways existing visible distress warrants complete roadway re-construction. Two methods are recommended for consideration, ranging from 18 inches of excavation and roadway buildup at an estimated cost of \$196,225 to 9 inch excavation with stabilization fabric and 3 inches of pavement for an estimated cost of \$164,290. Additional cost would include a share of the mobilization costs. In addition, site and roadside drainage improvement must be made to prevent both near and long term damage to the new roadway. The recommended combination of catch basins, drop inlets, culverts, etc. has an estimated cost of \$165,450. The \$164,290 for roadway replacement (the lower number) and \$165,450 for drainage comes to \$329,740 dollars and therefore our request is \$330,000. It is important to realize that these numbers are 2 years old. With the rapid escalation of oil prices, it can be assumed that these numbers may be low. Our Board of Directors believes that with a dedicated effort by representatives from our cooperative and the town, a plan can be reached to get these repairs accomplished within this dollar figure. The cooperative has already obtained funding to conduct the next engineering review needed to obtain funding from various state and federal organizations. Firms have submitted their qualifications and the review and selection process is underway. This past summer we attempted to obtain funding for our portions of the project. Working with Coos County, we began the application process but withdrew when our request for matching funding was denied. Several reasons were given but the most noteworthy was a lack of political and fiscal support from the Town, especially since the Town owns the roadway. We have been in close contact with our selectmen and I feel real progress has been made as is evident by their recommendation of this article. We are now pursuing fiscal support by approaching you, the electorate to receive the funding necessary for the Town's portion of the repairs so that we may pursue the additional monies, currently estimated at over \$1 million additional dollars that we need to complete our water, sewer and utility upgrades and repairs. It is important to note that this article is tied to the overall infrastructure improvement project being pursued by Deanbrook Village Cooperative. The members of the Deanbrook Village Cooperative Board of Directors fully understand that with the abandonment by

some long time area employers here is reluctance to commit to funding new projects, particularly one's of this magnitude. We cannot fully pay for a project of this magnitude out of our pockets, nor do we expect the Town to do so for their share. As this article states we anticipate external funding sources can, and will be found to fund this project. The severe blow that the departure of Wausau Papers has inflicted on our local community is indeed one that will affect our daily lives for years. But our community, like others before it, cannot just stand by and hope someone comes to rescue us. We must continue to maintain, and even improve the condition of our infrastructure so that we may show future potential businesses that we believe in ourselves and will provide the sound-supporting infrastructure that new opportunities will require. I want to thank you for this opportunity to bring you up to date on our efforts. I hope that each of you can support our efforts, making this undertaking not only a success for the residents of our Town but also a model to others who wish to participate in joint efforts to improve life and health for themselves and their children. Thanks to the Selectmen, Town Manager and staff for their support and keeping things running". Suzanne Batchelder asked what the town took in for revenue from the co-op. Melinda Kennett answered that it was about \$25,000. Leon J. Lacroix asked the Selectmen why the town took it over and did a Quit claim deed anyways. Brian Sullivan responded that once a town takes over a road we have to do a deed but wasn't sure why it was taken over. Leon J. Lacroix added that he didn't think we needed to do this now and that the town shouldn't take care of the road because no one else does. Brian Sullivan commented that it would really hard to give the road up now that the Town took it over and he just didn't know the process and asked the Town Attorney for advice. Attorney Walter Mitchell said at his best recollection it was a vote by the Town's people and to discontinue the ownership of the road there would be a statutory process. Discontinuance would mean the owner would have to pay for damages. David Hurlbutt commented that all people live in our community and didn't like Mr. Lacoix's comments about the park. The co-op folk's work with us and share in our troubles. We should all base our thinking on that. Mark Robinson asked Mr. Colebank if the site work needed to be done at each trailer or if it was just road drainage. Mr. Colebank responded that no, in fact another article later talks about a committee with the town and co-op to work it out. Roadway drainage has to run properly and in the right direction of the water flow not on the side of the road. The co-op has done a lot of work on their own by digging ditches and putting in drains. They want to run it into the brooks and there are some road drainage issues. Mark Robinson asked Mr. Colebank if the site pertained to the roads. Mr. Colebank said that he didn't want the water to run in the manufactured homes and that they don't call them "trailers" anymore. He wants to guarantee that the dotted line is between road and site when it's done. Leon J. Lacroix asked if the tenants had agreed to pay the million dollars prior and in conjunction or contingent upon taxpayers. Mr. Colebank said that the scope issues to work out are at \$1.99 million and very elaborate and that the tenants can't pay for that as they are low- income families. Mr. Lacroix asked if the Town put up the \$330,000 would you guarantee the 1.9 million. Mr. Colebank answered that if the Town agreed to pursue funding that they would have a special meeting for approval of the \$1.9 million. If the co-op can't get funding on the article it's null and void and that we wrote other articles a few pages from this one. We need to fix the road one-way or the other and may have to pursue other avenues. Uldric Bernard asked where the water drains off. Barry Colebank responded that there were two brooks on each side of the co-op. Mr. Bernard asked if it was legal to do that. Suzanne Batchelder added that she has permits that allows her water to run off into the Connecticut River so that yes, with the proper permits it is allowed. Arnold Tilton asked how many years would the Town pay on that \$330,000 bond. Brian Sullivan estimated 20-30 years. Addison Hall asked if the Town tore up the road now what will happen later on when it was time to fix the water and sewer, does it get torn up again. Barry Colebank said that the Selectmen agreed to do this one time only. If it falls apart they will be back next year if this article does not go. Carl Coulombe asked if the Town still had to appropriate the money not matter what. Brian Sullivan answered that it was contingent on the co-op getting their money and that there wasn't going to be a bond if they didn't get approved. Robert Larson added that there was no impact if there was no money. David Auger said that the word "contingent" wasn't in the article and that there should be a member of the body address this to the select board to add the word "contingent". Moderator Ladd asked if he was offering this as an amendment. Dave Auger made a motion to to add one sentence to amend this article. He amended this article to read the same with the addition of "Appropriations of such funds is contingent of the balance of funds to be raised by Deanbrook Village Cooperative". James Tierney seconded it. Barry Colebank said that he didn't understand and that if things pick up they would have a lot less to come up with. Wanted it read again.

No further discussion. Voice vote. The amendment to Article 10 passed.

No further discussion on the amended article. Blue ballot Vote. Article 10 was defeated by ballot vote of 91 Yes and 159 No.

Lee Rice Jr. made a motion to go to Article 15 and then to Article 31 because they were also ballot votes and by doing so would suspend the rules of the meeting allowing us to do so. Seconded by Terrance Bedell.

Moderator Ladd added that Article 15, because it was less than \$100,000 would not have to stay open (the polls) for 1 hour.

No further discussion. Voice vote. The vote passed to move onto Article 15 and 31.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,100 as a contribution for the support and services of Upper Connecticut Valley Mental Health Service and the Vershire Center. (.01 Tax Impact).

Motion by Mario Audit and seconded by Lorna Aldrich to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 11 passed as read.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$12,026 for the purpose of supporting Weeks Medical Center – Home Health Services in the delivery of services to town residents. (.07 Tax Impact).

Motion by Mario Audit and seconded by Robert Larson to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 12 passed as read.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the Groveton Cal Ripken Baseball Program, to be used to cover accident and liability insurance, tournaments, and registration fees. (Inserted on Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0)(.02 Tax Impact).

Motion made by Christopher Canton and seconded by Ryan St. Cyr to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 13 passed as read.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the Groveton Community Christmas Organization. (.02 Tax Impact).

Motion made by Mario Audit and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

Discussion: Suzanne Batchelder commented that the organization does a great job and was out in the cold doing it. The organization received a nice round of applause.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 14 passed as read.

Article 15: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$212,000 to purchase the former Groveton Paper Board Office Building located at 19 Main Street in Northumberland and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$95,400 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and to authorize the Selectman to issue and negotiate the terms of such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon. The remaining \$116,600 will come in the form of a grant from Rural Development. The Board of Selectmen recommends this article. (2/3 Ballot Vote Required)(No Tax Impact).

Motion made by Brian Sullivan and seconded by Mario Audit to accept article as read.

Discussion: Suzanne Batchelder asked about the outstanding balance that the Groveton Paper Board owed to the town. She asked if they were not paying taxes what would happen? Melinda Kennett, Tax Collector explained that in June of this year that anyone who has outstanding 2007 bills would go to lien then in 2 years, if not paid, the Town could take the Deed. She said that she didn't know what they would do, but that last year their lien holder paid the amount due once certified lien notices went out. Robert

Larson added that this would all be settled at the closing. Leon J. Lacroix asked why we had to appropriate the full amount and Robert Larson answered him that they could pay the taxes before closing so we needed to appropriate the full amount now to be safe and we have to establish a sales agreement price. Ron Caron said that he was against purchasing this building for several reasons most important was that no commercial business could use it if it was turned into a municipal building and we would lose \$5000 a year in tax money. The budget didn't include moving expenses and thought that it was conveniently lowered to make it feel that it's affordable. He added that the Town would need a vault. Melinda Kennett added that she had received a \$10,000 grant from Vital Records for a vault last year when we thought that we were moving and could probably get another grant. Ron Caron asked her if she had a grant for a handicapped restroom. Melinda replied that she did not and that the grant for the building included that. Lorna Aldrich added that the items mentioned are in the grant application. In 5 years of renting, the Town has spent \$124,413.83. Terrance Bedell said that this would be a savings for the town. We're talking about only a handicapped bathroom. What about the building that we are currently in not being fire rated, handicapped accessible, no alarms, no emergency exit or maintenance. Right now we are paying for nothing. Marcel Platt added that the police department is also not in code. Allen Holmes said that he had heard that there was water damage to the building. Alan Wheelock said that the water was picked up in an hour within the time it happened and an environmental study was going to be done on Friday of this week. Another resident asked how old the business was and Lorna Aldrich answered that it was built in 1980. Gina Bedell asked how old the bank building was and Mrs. Aldrich said probably the 1930's. Lee Rice Jr. made a motion to move the question and Christopher Canton seconded it. Voice vote. Moved the question.

No further discussion. Green ballot vote. Article 15 was defeated by ballot vote of 140 Yes and 131 No (2/3 required)

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 to move 8 graves at the Northumberland Cemetery. (.19 Tax Impact)

Motion made by Terri Charron and seconded by Lloyd Tippitt to accept article as read.

Discussion: Norman McLeod wanted to know why they had to be moved. He also asked why we didn't fix the river 30 years ago and shouldn't it be fixed instead of moving the graves. Terri Charron responded that we haven't fixed the bank because the cemetery committee has applied for assistance and has been denied because our town isn't big enough and we didn't have enough political pull. She added that the 8 graves needed to be moved. Last year we had no funds. They went to court and were told that they couldn't use the money in the trusts and the taxpayers would have to pay if the trust fund accounts were touched. Asking to move the 8 graves was consistent with the soft match grants. These are the same graves as last year and we are lucky to not have lost them down the river yet. Mr. McLeod asked if the State owned the river. Phillip Pinette wanted to know how many more graves would need to be moved. Mark Robinson asked what the Trust Funds were used for. Mrs. Charron answered that the trust was used for perpetual care and that we couldn't touch it. Bonnie Auger asked if an army corps of engineers was contacted to fix the problem and Mrs. Charron said that the army corps of engineers told her to move 1/2 the cemetery to the new section, delimb the trees, put trees in the bank and pray that they reroot themselves. Leon J. Lacroix asked what perpetual care meant. Terri Charron answered that it was individual care of people who paid for that. These 8 did not pay. Ron Caron asked if the graves paid for the mowing. Terri Charron said that the sales of new graves go for mowing and some perpetual funds are used as well. Ron Caron stated that he'd like to see which line item that comes from. Rebecca Craggy said that \$2200 a year comes from the cemetery fund to cover expenses. Wade White stated that this happened in Littleton. He asked what it would cost to move the whole cemetery. Terri Charron answered that to do that 3 years ago it would have cost \$3.2 million. They have applied for more grants and the Town is on a list to be helped. Right now the Town is trying to do what is least expensive.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 16 passed as read.

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500 for the purpose of supporting the Groveton Chem Free Graduation Fund, these funds to be used to promote alcohol and drug-free youth by sponsoring a chemical-free graduation celebration. (Inserted on Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0)(.01 Tax Impact).

Motion made by Beverly McFarland and seconded by Terrance Bedell to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 17 passed as read.

Article 18: To see if the Town of Groveton will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,000 (Two Thousand Dollars) to support Senior Wheels Demand Response Program. (Inserted on Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0)(.01 Tax Impact).

Motion made by John Normand and seconded by Lloyd Tippitt to accept article as read.

Discussion: John Normand said that this is the bus that he runs. It was for those 60 years old or older and it's suggested that donations are made to cover the price of gas. It was capable of hauling wheelchairs and it goes to the hospital and to get groceries.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 18 passed as read.

Article 19: To see if the voters will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,650 (one thousand six hundred and fifty dollars) to help support The Caleb Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver Program that serves the needs of elderly and disabled people in the community. (.01 Tax Impact).

Motion made by Lorna Aldrich and seconded by Mario Audit to accept the article as read.

Discussion: Uldric Bernard said he asked last year on how many people were served and he got no answer. He said that he feels no answer, no money. Lorna Aldrich responded that on page 84 of the Town Report it states that this services 296 people in the area.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 19 passed as read.

Article 20: To see if the voters will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,970.00 for the Senior Meals Program on behalf of the North Country Elder Program. Meals served to Groveton residents were 9,994, which is an increase over last year of 16.4%. (.01Tax Impact).

Motion made by Lorna Aldrich and seconded by James Weagles to accept article as read.

Discussion: John Normand said that this comes out of Whitefield 5 days a week. There are 3 hot meals and 2 freezer meals to 994 people. People volunteer for this and it's a good return on our money. Gloria Leighton asked if this included the Monday and Wednesday meals served here in town and Moderator Ladd answered that it wasn't the same.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 20 passed as read.

Article 21: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 for stabilizing of the Riverbank by the covered bridge. Said funds to come from the Forest Maintenance Fund. Further, to authorize the selectmen to apply for and expend any available grant monies that may become available for this project. This will be a non-lapsing appropriation per RSA 32:7, VI and will not lapse until the riverbank is stabilized or by December 31, 2011, whichever is sooner. (No tax impact)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0).

Motion made by Mario Audit and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

Discussion: Norman McLeod said that this was the same river as the cemetery and where were we going to get the money for this. Brian Sullivan said that it was from the Conservation Fund for town forests. This is an estimate from Horizons Engineering and it shouldn't be a yearly thing. Norman McLeod felt that the poor riprap caused this when the new bridge was built. Rose Roberge wondered why the Conservation Fund couldn't pay to fix cemetery. Brian Sullivan said that it was turned down. John Normand added that the DRA said that we couldn't use that money on the cemetery. Rose asked how much Wausau owned. Brian Sullivan said that they owned 2 small parcels there. Becky Newton said that the Town does own the property and the covered bridge and the road at one time. She doesn't object to this, as it does need to be taken care of. She wants to write a grant that could raise half of it.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 21 passed as read.

Article 22: To see if the Town will vote to modify the current elderly exemptions from property tax in the Town of Northumberland based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 74 years of age \$10,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 79 years of age \$15,000; for a person 80 years of age or older \$20,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years, own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person's spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$15,000 or, if married a combined net income of less than \$25,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$35,000 excluding the value of the person's personal residence and up to 2 acres of land. (Tax impact .04 cents)

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Kathy Wiles to accept article as read.

Discussion: Robert Larson supported this article and asked for the community to support it. He said that with the closure of the mill and that the rest have to pick up the slack that the 4 cents wasn't unreasonable. He said that the elderly are always the hardest hit because they can't get a second job or do overtime and don't get compensated for their loss of income. Elaine Gray agreed with Mr. Larson and in her research there are 24 who qualify, which is the same as last year before the amendment. The qualifications are on page 147 of the Town Report.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 22 passed as read.

Article 23: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for North Country Council to do a build-out Analysis for the Town of Northumberland. Said funds to come from the unreserved fund balance. (No tax impact).

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Mario Audit to accept the article as read.

Discussion: Christopher Canton, chairperson of the Planning board spoke of what the build out analysis was. He said it was a planning tool and that Mrs. Newton was getting with them to write a grant for the 1st phase. This money may not even be needed if they get the grant. He wants the zoning to be correct and modifications done as needed. With any luck we won't have to spend this money. Phillip Pinette asked if we don't get the grant we'd have this money to keep going? Mr. Canton answered that yes, for the second phase if not covered by the grant. Last year it was cut out of the budget. The process started in October and he needs to get this money now to get it done now. Robert Larson asked for the Town to support this. There is a lot of effort and commitment and agencies to bring business. The problem is that there is not place for business's to go and need this so things are zoned correctly. Right now we are treading water and we need business's here.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 23 passed as read.

Article 24: To see if the municipality will vote to authorize the selectmen to enter into a three year lease agreement for \$22,809 for the purpose of leasing a 2008 Ford Crown Victoria for the Police Department, and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,146.42, for the first year's payment and vehicle setup fees. This lease agreement contains an escape clause. (Tax impact .06)

Motion made by Brian Sullivan and seconded by Mario Audit to accept article as read.

Discussion: John Normand asked what the Town was doing with a third cruiser. Chief Lloyd Tippitt answered that the old one would go out to bid or salvage and the money goes into the fund for the new cruiser. We did a lease agreement because every two years we ask for a new car to replace the oldest one. The current 2006 cruiser has 80,000 miles and the new one would replace that. The old cruiser, the 2004 has 130,000 miles on it and would go out to bid. They are currently trying to use the older cruiser more to save mileage on the 2006 cruiser. The lease has no mileage gap and can become ours in 3 years. Rebecca Newton stated that she wanted the cruiser taken out of the budget because it is not necessary this year. Iris Emerson added that she works for the Coos County Sheriff's department as an office employee and that they were not approved on Saturday for new vehicles. They have a fleet of vehicles that have over 100,000 miles on it and are keeping another year to keep funds down.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 24 was defeated.

Article 25: To see if the town will vote to authorize the selectmen to accept for consideration requests for community revitalization tax relief incentives pursuant to RSA 79-E. If adopted, this warrant article will allow owners of downtown buildings who intend to substantially rehabilitate those buildings to apply to the selectmen for tax relief.

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Kathy Wiles to accept article as read.

Discussion: Rebecca Newton said that all received a flyer and businesses wanted to participate. An analysis showed that in a 10 year period that this incentive program would bring in more tax money. Each will have a public hearing and the voters say yes or no. The tax stay could be withdrawn and the property owners have to pay back all the tax money if they don't meet the terms and conditions of the stay. The downtown was important because it is the heart. She said she would love to see it go all around the town itself but the law states on the downtown. Suzanne Batchelder asked what was considered to be "downtown". Ms. Newton stated that it was the hill area near the tracks, to above the high school and to the covered bridge. She added that we could make this happen. Rose Roberge asked if Wausau owned half the town and where would anyone build. Suzanne Batchelder said that one business that she owns is "downtown" and wanted to put in a concrete sidewalk. She would have paid for expenses but wanted help with maintenance and was turned down. She wanted to know how to retain her business, as she owns 4 businesses in town and pay taxes but wouldn't qualify for this. Ms. Newton said that if they could put a committee together to define downtown that maybe they could work with it. David Auger added that this cost nothing so support it. Alphonse Bland said for sure it would cost the taxpayers. There would be an impact on taxes. He would like to see relief all the way around. Rebecca Newton added that she wished it could extend all around. She wants to work on the Senate Bill that Fred King is sponsoring for next year. The study showed that over a 10-year period the improvement is made with a stay on their taxes for 5 years. When the rate goes up they pay that. No cost to the town because they do pay their taxes on their old buildings. She would like to see the revenue increased. Ron Caron made a motion to move the question and Gary Normandeau seconded it. Voice vote. Question is moved.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 25 passed as read.

Article 26: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be placed in a Capital Reserve Fund for the reconstruction of the portion of Deanbrook Drive, a Town owned roadway, within Deanbrook Village Cooperative, to include adequate site and road drainage to maintain and support public safety, infrastructure integrity and quality of life as discussed in the Preliminary Engineering Report conducted by Horizons Engineering and submitted to the Town of Northumberland in 2006. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)(.06 Tax Impact)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0).

Motion made by Barry Colebank and seconded by Philip Pinette to accept article as read.

Discussion: Town Manager Lorna Aldrich made a motion to amend this article per recommendation by Town Council. Amendment reads as follows:

"To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of reconstruction of the portion of Deanbrook Drive within Deanbrook Village Cooperative, to include adequate site and road drainage to maintain and support public safety, infrastructure integrity and quality of life as discussed in the Preliminary Engineering Report conducted by Horizons Engineering and submitted to the Town of Northumberland in 2006 and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 to be places in this fund"

Seconded by Barry Colebank to amend article 26. Barry added that in January when he presented this petition in the warrant article several people said that yes, it needed to be repaired. They wondered how to sock away the money instead of the \$330,000 so this is it. Mark Robinson asked if the co-op would match this? Barry Colebank said that they were not for the road construction and it needs to be done.

Voice vote. Amendment to Article 26 passed.

Further Discussion: Suzanne Batchelder asked in order for her to get the town to fix her road does she need to do something like this. She said that it was taken by eminent domain by the town in 1964 and that she has 250 vehicles a day on it. She added that the road was terrible. Recently they had to pull a car

out of the ditch. At this point all the town does is fill the potholes. She also said that other roads need attention.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 26 was defeated.

Article 27: To see if the Town will work with Deanbrook Village Cooperative, Inc. to develop a plan to raise and appropriate the necessary funds to reconstruct the portion of Deanbrook Drive, a town owned roadway, within Deanbrook Village Cooperative, to include adequate site and road drainage to maintain and support public safety, infrastructure integrity and quality of life as discussed in the Preliminary Engineering Report conducted by Horizons Engineering and submitted to the Town of Northumberland in 2006, including the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33), and the pursuit of any grant monies that may become available for this purpose. Any public hearings necessary shall be held in time to support the presentation of the plan to the residents of Northumberland for consideration not later than the next regular Town Meeting, anticipated to be held in March 2009. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)

Motion made by Barry Colebank and seconded by Philip Pinette to accept the article as read.

Discussion: Barry Colebank said that he understood that under the circumstances that no one wanted to spend money. He added that we all had to come up with a plan. This road needs to be fixed or the Town will have a real mess on their hands. He added that the Town crew did one heck of a job to keep the road open and asked the audience to please be supportive in coming up with a plan.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 27 passed as read.

Article 28: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$ 428,047 for the purpose of operating and maintaining the water department. Said funds to be offset by the water user fees. Any short falls in the water user fees will be made up by the accumulated surplus in the "regular water account." (No tax impact on property tax rate.)(Inserted by Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Do Not Recommend 3-0)

Motion made by Ronald Caron and seconded by Allen Holmes to pass article as read.

Discussion: Ronald Caron said that what he was presently trying to do is because he had three different reports at the end of the year. The second one showed that it was not overspent and that it was 33,000 to the good. He added that they did analysis and said that money was moved around so that it wasn't overspent and that Property Taxes were funding water and sewer expenses. \$33,000 was overspent which the taxpayers would have paid. Water users should be paying the 1993 water bond, taken out of the tax rate and put into the water rate. \$442,401 is sitting in the water checkbook and \$318,668 in the sewer checkbook. This could lower our tax rate by 80 cents per thousand. He wants all these in separate line items and then amend the budget later on tonight. Dave Auger asked Mr. Caron if we could legally change the 1993 water bond through the water rate and if it was cleared with council first. Ronald Caron said that he believed that he could but it was a good question for the Selectmen. Dave Auger said that a legal opinion was needed on that. Lorna Aldrich answered that the auditor had mentioned this in the past and suggested leaving it where it is now. She also added that people will have to write three checks for this now if this passes. One for water, one for sewer, and one for taxes to go in the general fund. They could not longer pay them all together. Winston Hawes said that there should be some consideration on how this would affect the water rate. The community needs to look at that. Ronald Caron said that all the money coming in would come from user fees. He wanted to know where the over collected amount comes from in the last year. Winston Hawes suggested that this may not be accurate and removing it from the tax rolls back to the user fees would increase the fees. Ronald Caron said that the money in the checkbook could offset the water rate. This year we are billing the municipal buildings which water and sewer users pay for. In no means does he want to raise the water rate. He said that the taxpayers pay the municipal as it is spread out amongst them. His goal is to lower the taxes and doesn't believe the water rate will go up. Allen Holmes said that the water users have quite a reserve of money, which is a slush fund to operate the town on, and it's not fair to use their money to operate the town. Melinda Kennett said that she didn't know if this article was even legal and asked that James Tierney sits on the board for a year first and if it was still broke to fix it. She said that she closes at the end of the month to transfer water and sewer now. Ronald Caron said that if it wasn't legal then how come the

Selectmen hadn't yet found out as they have had it for weeks. David Auger said it seemed to him that if we were over collecting and generating a surplus then we could lower the water and sewer rates, take the money in that way and solve the problem. Timothy Savage asked what about the people who pay for water and sewer and don't use it. Put all this back on the people who actually use it. Rebecca Newton was disappointed to find out that there was a surplus in the water and sewer accounts when the work on the hill wasn't finished. Mrs. Langford said that she didn't mind paying her balances with three checks, as it was easier to keep track of that way. Lee Rice Jr. added that there were roads that needed fixing. He also said that he didn't believe that there was \$750,000 there unavailable. He would like to see capital improvements, stabilizing of tax rate and attract some businesses. Right now Northumberland cannot take on any more sewage. We have to dress up the town and sell it so that people will come here. Would be further ahead to use the extra money to make improvements, which will solve things long term instead of just patching it to make everyone happy for six months. Samantha Canton said that she has to balance her checkbook. Things do happen and sometimes we don't have money in our account. We have to borrow from somewhere. Lorna Aldrich added that at the time of the water project we asked if we could use the water and sewer funds and told that we could not. She directed Mr. Savage to look at his MS-6 and that the water and sewer was deducted so that the taxes are based on the balance is left. The water and sewer users are now paying water and sewer. David Hurlbutt said that he paid for his septic and his well by taxes that go into the general fund. He feels like he is paying for water twice. Ron Caron made a motion to move the question. Gary Normandeau seconded it.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Moderator Ladd declared a tie and asked for a stand up vote. Moderator Ladd declared that Article 28 passed as read with the "YES" standing votes having it.

Article 29: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$ 297,940 for the purpose of operating and maintaining the sewer department. Said funds to be offset by the sewer user fees. Any short falls in the sewer user fees will be made up by the accumulated surplus in the "regular sewer account." (No impact on property tax rate.)(Inserted by Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Do Not Recommend 3-0).

Motion made by Ron Caron and seconded by Allen Holmes to accept article as read.

Discussion: Ronald Caron said that this was the same thing as Article 28 and would appreciate the public support on this as well. Gina Bedell commented that she felt Ron Caron talked on both sides of his face and she was confused. She said that that and we all pay taxes he was creating a commotion and it was ridiculous. She said to him that he was making things worse and that we voted in our Selectmen and has the lawyer here. She added that she thought that we were riding the fence on legal issues. Ronald Caron answered that if things were wrong to blame him and made a motion to move the question. John Roberge seconded it.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 29 passed as read.

Article 30: To see if the town will vote to assess all land as it is currently zoned. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)

Motion made by Ronald Caron and seconded by Allen Holmes to accept article as read.

Discussion: Ronald Caron said that during the process with BTLA that he discovered 7 different zones and wants assessing industrial and light industrial accordingly. Barry Colebank asked how much this would cost us? Mr. Caron answered that it depended on who we have assess. Light Industrial was worth a lot more than commercial and residential. Allan Bryant asked how much would it cost for the reassessment? Robert Larson said that none would be required. Elaine Gray said that the land is assessed the way it is used. Main and State Street were zoned commercial but that residential was located within those and zoned residential. People don't want to have it-zoned commercial if they want a house there. A store is assessed at one rate and industrial is based on sales. The industrial rate is low because of no sales. Attorney Mitchell Bates said that the wording of this Article doesn't accomplish anything. Assessors should assess high as it is currently used. Commercial and industrial should be assessed the same. Accuracy depends on the market. Industrial generally sells higher but wouldn't know if that applies to us or not. The assessor determines that. If the sales are not here in town than the assessor bases it on experience. We can't change what the State requires. Melinda Kennett asked if this was similar to what Christopher Canton was working on. Christopher Canton said that it wasn't exactly. He

said that the Selectmen control this and guide the Planning board on this. Allen Holmes made a motion to move the question. Gary Normandeau seconded it.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 30 defeated.

Article 31: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 32:14, thus forming a Budget Committee for the town. (Ballot vote is required.)(Inserted by Petition of Voters)

Motion made by James Tierney and seconded by Ronald Caron to accept article as read.

Discussion: James Tierney explained what a budget committee does. This will work exactly as it does now with the Selectmen, School Board, and precinct. The next step is that it goes to the Budget Committee and then the Budget Committee will hold a public hearing to present the budget to the people and at Town Meeting. Once it goes to the Budget Committee, the Selectboard, School Board are out of it. What people give up is the right to raise the budget more than 10%, but they can cut it as much as they want to. You just can't raise it by more than 10%. Terrance Bedell asked how much the Budget Committee got paid each year. Mr. Tierney responded that the Budget Committee was voluntary. Lee Rice Jr. made a motion to pass over Article 31 and move on. Seconded by Terrance Bedell. No further discussion. Voice vote. Divide the house. The no's have it so the Article is not passed over. Allen Holmes stated that it was vital to have a Budget Committee. He was a member of the Concerned Citizens Group and they had worked the past couple of years so that everyone could look at it. He said that he had been in this town for over 20 years and it's taken him a long time to get involved to make this work and nothing is hidden. Gina Bedell asked what qualifications does a committee have to work. James Tierney responded that basically the committee has the bottom line authority. The school/selectmen can readjust, but can't make it go above 10%. Gina Bedell asked if this is giving it up from the Selectmen and giving it to you this is just swap. James Tierney answered that this was just another set of eyes. Suzanne Batchelder asked what kind of education the Budget committee had and did they know how to do this. James Tierney answered that it was the same as the Selectmen, School Board and Precinct. You just have to be a resident. Barry Colebank said that we already elect people for this and we already have budget meetings asked if we elected people to do this all now and what does a Budget Committee do and why do we need to elect another body to get into this whole process. James Tierney answered that this could be private around someone's kitchen table as it is now or be made a public process. Terrance Bedell said that he took offense to that and that if you have been to all of the meetings you would have a general knowledge of the process. When they put the budgets together they already have a public meeting and that's what we are there for. The Precinct for instance already knows what the fire department does and needs and he's afraid that the Budget Committee only has an ax to grind and doesn't really know what is going on. We already have the Selectboard, the Precinct and a School Board and people have the opportunity to go to that. Rae-Deanne Hurlbutt said that it seemed to her that it doesn't get rid of the Selectboard, School Board or Precinct it's that they all work together and James Tierney confirmed that she was correct. Barbara Wheelock said that whatever happens tonight happens but we already have 3 Selectmen running unopposed and no one from the concerned citizens was on the ballot. We have the Budget process already. She said that we already have public hearings. Ellen Gries said that what she didn't understand is that when the committee brings the budget to the Town to vote on that their hands would be tied because the town's people were limited to 10%. She said to James Tierney that he is presenting something and that it is completely tying the Town's hands. David Auger said that he had a couple things come to his mind. He said that he hadn't found a great deal of citizens who have wanted to get engaged with the school budget. The question he has is the word responsibility. He wondered how would the Budget Committee take responsibility. James Tierney responded said that it would work the same way as it does now. The School Board knows all the rules that the Budget Committee doesn't. The SAU would supply that information to the committee. If the State requires something then there's nothing that the committee could do anything about it. Their hands were tied on Special Education funds. Allen Holmes said he has been going to the school board meetings for 2 years and at one meeting he had 2 people chew his backside because he asked a few questions. Since then he has been to all but 2 meetings and doesn't know a hell of a lot more now than he did when he first started going. He doesn't understand some of the information that he gets. Michele Ladd said that a lot of what's going on the last few months there is a lot of people getting hurt. This is a very small community and she didn't want to see another layer of government in her town. She is concerned because we have gone from a 5 person board to a 3 person board and brought back the Town Manager position and now voted it out. We should take care of the issues or people that we have problems with. If you have an issue put down your dollar and get your name on that ballot. Some of the things going on are very underhanded and shady. The Concerned

Citizens Group are not open, they are shady and underhanded. Michele said that she had questions for the group and they left so she didn't get an answer. She does not want a Budget Committee. That is why she voted for a Selectboard and a School Board. Gary Normandeau made a motion to move the question. Seconded by Gina Bedell.

No further discussion. Red ballot vote. Article 31 passed by ballot vote of 147 Yes and 133 No.

Article 32: To see if the Town will vote to elect six (6) "at large" members to the Budget Committee. Three (3) additional members will be appointed, one (1) as a Board of Selectmen's representative, one (1) as the School Board representative, and (1) as the Village Precinct representative. (This warrant article will be passed over if Article 31 fails.)(Inserted by Petition of Voters)

Motion made by James Tierney and seconded by Ronald Caron to accept article as read.

Discussion: James Tierney said that basically this has passed and now it was time to elect six at large members. This would be for one year, after that 2-one year, 2-two year and 2-three year. Barry Colebank wanted to pass over this and then said never mind. Barbara Wheelock asked how we voted on this. Moderator Ladd said that we vote on 6. James Weagle asked if there were any legal ramifications. Suzanne Batchelder asked where the meetings were going to be held and how often and would it be during the day when workers couldn't go and if there were bylaws. James Tierney answered that they were under the municipal budget bylaws and meeting once a month. The Budget Committee was going to meet and work on the budget as long as it takes. Suzanne Batchelder asked who was going to pay for the expense of advertising and providing information to the public. She asked if this was going to be a structured meeting. James Tierney said basically only notifications to be paid for are the public hearings. They have to post in 2 spots in town. He said that they may post 1 in the newspaper with all of the dates twice and would have to be paid for. The Town would absorb it. Steve McMann asked if we would know when the meetings were. James Tierney said that they would be the same time each month and that would be up to the members. Scott Merrow asked if it was tonight that we elected. Moderator Ladd explained that the RSA was clear about doing the electing tonight. Mario Audit wanted the Moderator to appoint for one year or vote it down. Robert Larson asked that the Moderator appoint the six members. Attorney Mitchell said that we have to decide the next year whether it is elect or appoint annually by the moderator. Barry Colebank said that if we vote this down will it be appointed. Moderator Ladd said that if we approved Article 32 and then decide how to take care of it. Terrance Bedell asked if the committee would meet on this year's budget. Moderator Ladd said that they would meet this year for the 2009 budget. Sandy Mason asked if we were going to nominate. Suzanne Batchelder asked if we were going to elect these people. Walter Mitchell said that approving the budget committee to always be elected but the question is what do we do this year. Nominate off the floor and Moderator Ladd will preside over or authorize the Moderator next year.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 32 passed as read.

Discussion: Leon J. Lacroix made a motion to nominate off the floor and elect for one year. James Tierney seconded it. David Hurlbutt said we are not ready to elect these people tonight. Please let the Moderator appoint. John Roberge answered that we voted to elect them tonight. Barbara Wheelock asked what about the people that have already left and I think this committee has already been decided. Samantha Canton added that we already had voted and that the people who left will be left out. Gina Bedell said that she couldn't vote on the ballot things because she couldn't get out of work in time and that's how it goes. Claire Prosper said that she was very disappointed when she moved back to Groveton. She thinks this committee election is rigged. She felt that people should be given the opportunity to vote and that this committee would have no balance. It should be well presented from both sides and get both opinions. Brian Sullivan asked if we were bound to do this tonight or can we do it at a later time. Kathy Wiles wanted Articles 31 and 32 reconsidered as she said it only passed by 24 people. Moderator Ladd told her that she was not Town Council and that there was a question on the floor for Town Council. Attorney Walter Mitchell said that these people had to be elected by means other than the official ballot. Take nominations and continue with this meeting. Kathy Wiles then asked if she could say what she wanted to say. She said that we are not ready for this and made a motion to reconsider Article 31 and 32. Gina Bedell seconded it. There was no reconsideration. David Hurlbutt said that something needed to be decided immediately. Moderator Ladd said that his rules could be overruled. Tom Grimes asked if we had to wait for an hour again. Moderator said yes. John Roberge asked if we could do this again in two weeks. Moderator Ladd said that everyone needed to hold on and tend to one thing at a time.

Nominations went to the floor from James Tierney and seconded by Leon J. Lacroix for Theresa Brooks, Ronald Caron, John Normand, Nancy Merrow, Allen Holmes and Kim Deblois. Sandy Mason nominated and James Leighton seconded for Gina Bedell, Angela Marshall, and Suzanne Batchelder. Melinda Kennett nominated Ann Pelchat but Ann declined. Barbara Wheelock wanted to nominate Bruce Pelletier and said that he would accept, but James Tierney said that no one working for the Town, School or Precinct could not be on the committee and Pelletier works for the school. Mario Audit nominated Terrance Bedell but Terrance declined. Lora Charbonneau said that we were unprepared for this. Barbara Wheelock nominated Brian Sullivan. Brian declined. Leon J. Lacroix made a motion to close the nomination and Gary Normandeau seconded it. Moderator Ladd said that his rule was that we stand and vote and not to vote for more than six. Six members of the Budget Committee voted on for 1 year:

Theresa Brooks, Ronald Caron, John Normand, Nancy Merrow, Allen Holmes, and Kim Deblois.

Article 33: To see if the town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 32:5, V-a to require that all votes by the budget committee (if one is adopted) and the board of selectmen relative to budget items or warrant articles shall be recorded votes and the numerical tally of any such vote shall be printed in the town warrant next to the affected warrant article.

Motion made by Barry Colebank and seconded by James Tierney to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 33 passed as read.

Article 34: To see if the town will no longer require 24 hour police coverage. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)

Motion made by Ronald Caron and seconded by Craig Hersom to accept article as read.

Motion by Marcel Platt and seconded by Terrance Bedell to pass over Article 34.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Becky Newton divided the house. Article 34 was passed over by standing vote.

Article 35: To raise and appropriate up to \$1,500 to reimburse the Groveton Firemen Association for a portable water meter. This money will be withdrawn from the water budget. (Inserted by Petition of Voters)(No Tax Impact)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0).

Motion made by Ronald Caron and seconded by Robert Hart to pass over Article 35.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 35 was passed over.

Article 36: To see if the Town, having a Master Plan adopted by the Planning Board on May 6, 1991 and amended on August 26, 2003, will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to appoint a capital improvement program committee, which shall include at least one member of the Planning Board and may include but not be limited to other members of the Planning Board or the Board of Selectmen to prepare and amend a recommended program of municipal capital improvements projected over a period of at least 6 years, in accordance with RSA 674:5. (No Tax Impact)

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Lorna Aldrich to accept article as read.

Discussion: David Auger wanted to explain what this Article was all about. He said it was to allow the Selectmen to create another committee to allow all departments in town to submit in advance their desires for appropriations for major equipment to do better planning. This allows for better control of the tax rate. This will decide in advance what is the most important and put a schedule up.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 36 passed as read.

Article 37: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,524,893 which represents the operating budget of the Town, said sum exclusive of special or individual articles addressed.

Motion made by Mario Audit and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

Ron Caron made a motion to amend Article 37 to say the same thing except with “the sum of \$1,668,672.00”. James Tierney seconded it.

Discussion: Sharon Benoit asked what about our obligation to the Town Manager. Suzanne Batchelder said that she thinks we would pay the Town Manager regardless because the amendment couldn't legally be done. Attorney Walter Mitchell said that he needed to talk to the Selectmen about the Town Manager contract. Rebecca Newton suggested zeroing out the Town Manger line. Attorney Mitchell said that RSA 32 you would have to zero out the entire Town Administration budget and he didn't think we should do that. Ronald Caron made a motion to move the question and the Moderator said no. Barry Colebank wanted more information pertaining to the PD reduction. Ronald Caron said that the part timers could fill the position. Elaine asked about the \$18,000 out of financial administration, if that was for the current assessment or the BTLA order to be reassessed. Ronald Caron said it was his interpretation that it was the assessor's obligation to reassess. Elaine answered that there were more bids coming in from other companies. Elaine also pointed out that no one took raises this year. Melinda Kennett asked that they keep the money in the Town Manager line until after the recount period on Friday and asked why more money was added into her Town Clerk/Tax Collector line Ron Caron said that money was added back into her line and taken out of water because she only sent 4 bills a year out and he couldn't justify getting more for that. Chief Lloyd Tippitt said he was very conscientious with his budget and his overtime was mainly court. Most arrests happened between 11-7.

No further discussion. Amendment to Article 37 passed. No further discussion on amendment. Voice vote. The amended Article 37 passed.

Article 38: To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Selectmen to appoint all other officers as required by law.

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 38 passed as read.

Article 39: To hear reports of agents, auditors, committees or other officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relating thereto.

Motion made by Robert Larson and seconded by Mario Audit to accept article as read.

Melinda Kennett presented with Employee of the Year award.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 39 passed as read.

Article 40: To transact any other business that may be legally brought before said meeting.

Motion by Robert Larson and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 40 passed as read.

Motion to adjourn by Brian Sullivan and seconded by Mario Audit passed unanimously by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 12:24 AM, 3/12/2008.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Kennett
Town Clerk
Town of Northumberland