

2020 Town Meeting Minutes

To the inhabitants of the Town of Wentworth, in Grafton County, in the State of New Hampshire, who are qualified to vote in Town affairs:

You are hereby notified and warned that the election of Town Officers of the said Town of Wentworth will be held at the Wentworth Elementary School, 1247 Mt. Moosilauke Highway, Route 25, Wentworth, N.H., on Tuesday March 10, 2020. The polls will be open at 11 A.M. and close at 7 P.M. to bring in your votes on Article 1 (Election of Town Officers). All other articles will be presented, discussed, and acted upon on Saturday, March 14, 2020, beginning at 1 P.M., the meeting for said purpose to be held at said Wentworth Elementary School.

Article 1 Election of officers

To choose all necessary Town Officers for the ensuing year. (By Official Ballot).

March 10, 2020 brought out 217 voters and the following were elected:

Selectman 3 years – Arnold D. Scheller	183
Selectman 2 years – Jordan King	125
Library Trustee 3 years – Carol Young	199
Library Trustee 1 year – Jared King	203
Town Trustee 3 years – Jennifer Meade	196
Planning Board 3 years – Marina Reilly-Collette	171
Fire Commissioners 1 year - Jeffrey Ames	188
Fire Commissioners 1 year – Roland (Pete) Chierichetti	157
Fire Commissioners 1 year – Brian DuBois	150
Supervisor of the Checklist 2 years – Susan Bliss	180
Town Moderator 2 years – Stephen Welch	196

Motion: John Vlk

2nd: Donna King

Article 2 Receive reports

To receive reports from the Selectmen, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Treasurer, Auditors, and other Town Officers, and to vote on any motion relating to those reports.

Motion to accept as read: Ray Welch

2nd: Andrew Lasser

After much conversation, it was decided to change Article 2 to read:

To receive reports from the Selectmen, Town Clerk/Tax Collector, Treasurer, Auditors, and other Town Officers, and to vote on any motion relating to those reports with the exception of the Town Library, Land Closure Field, and the Old Post Office.

Passed on a voice vote

Article 3 General Municipal Operations

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$331,797** for General Municipal Operations for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant. This article does not include any amounts contained in any other article.

Motion to accept as read: Andrew Lasser

2nd: Jenn Meade

Motion by Brian DuBois to move articles 24, 25, and 27 in front of Article 4

2nd: Ray Welch

Passed by voice vote

Article 24 Highway Department equipment purchase

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$16,542** for the purpose of a tow behind, eight-foot (8') Hydraulic Broom for sweeping Town paved roads and a ten-foot (10') interchangeable York Rake, of which \$8,543 is to come from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund and the balance of \$8,000 to come from general taxation.

Motion to accept as read – Brian DuBois

2nd: Martha Morrill

Patty Welch asked if the Road Agent (non-resident) could speak on this

Passed by voice vote

Beth Folsom made a motion to amend

2nd Ray Welch

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$16,542** for the purpose of a tow behind, eight-foot (8') Hydraulic Broom for sweeping Town paved roads and a ten-foot (10') interchangeable York Rake, of which \$16,542 is to come from the highway equipment CRF with none coming from General Taxation.

Amendment passed by voice vote

A motion was made by Francis Muzzey to request a paper ballot and presented 5 signatures.

Amended article passed

Yes = 50

No = 12

Article 25 Red Oak Hill Road paving

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$135,421** for the purpose paving Red Oak Hill Road from its intersection with East Side Road to the Wentworth/Warren Town Line and to also pave approximately four hundred feet (400') of East Side Road in front of King's Lumber, of which amount 135,421 is to come from Road Paving Capital Reserve Fund, and nothing from general taxation.

Motion to accept: Martha Morrill

2nd: Francis Muzzey

Article passed by voice vote

Article 4 Highway and Streets

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$316,300** for Highway and Streets for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant.

Motion to accept: Morgan Currier

2nd: Tracy Currier

Ray Welch asked to make a motion to amend Article 4 to add \$7800.00 to the Highway budget to replace permits for Frescoln and Cross Rd Bridges

2nd: Deb Ziemba

Amended Article 4 to read:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$324,100** for **Highway and Streets** for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted in the warrant.

Amendment Passed by voice vote

A paper ballot was requested with 5 signatures

Paper Ballot Results

Yes = 51

No = 13

Amended Article passed

Article 5 Planning Board

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,000** for the Planning Board in connection with its activities for such purposes and such uses as deemed necessary by said Planning Board.

Motion to accept: Kathleen Springham Mack

2nd: Paul Davis Jr.

John Meade proposed and amendment

2nd: Ray Welch

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$6500.00 (\$1500 operating budget, \$5000.00 for Master Plan) to be expanded by the Planning Board in connection with its activities for such purposes and such uses as deemed necessary by the Planning Board

Amended article Passed by hand count

Yes = 41

No = 9

Article 6 Fire Department

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$41,250** for the maintenance of the Fire Department for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant, of which \$2,500 is to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and the balance of \$38,750 to come from general taxation.

Motion to accept as read: Andrew Lasser

2nd: Palmer Koelb

Passed by voice vote

Article 7 Freightliner lease

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to continue with the sixth year of the 7-year lease agreement for the purpose of leasing a 2014 Freightliner Dump/Plow Truck for the Highway Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$24,678** for the said sixth year payment for that purpose. The lease agreement contains an escape clause.

Motion to accept Article as read: Jennifer Meade

2nd: Linda Franz

Article 7 Passed by voice vote

Article 8 Conservation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,000** to be expended on behalf of the Conservation Commission and Town Forest in connection with activities for such conservation as set forth in RSA 36-A and expenses related to the forester.

Motion to accept Article as read: Kay Bailey

2nd: Jim Folsom

Article passed by voice vote

Article 9 ETF & CRF

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$164,100** to be placed in the following Expendable Trust Funds and Capital Reserve Funds, to come from 2020 general taxation.

a. Fire Truck (est. 1984)	\$15,000
b. Hwy Equipment & Vehicle (est. 1973)	\$25,000
c. Police Cruiser (est. 1993)	\$9,000
d. Property Revaluation (est. 1995)	\$10,000
e. Town Bridges Fund (est. 2006)	\$10,000
f. Road Paving (est. 2002)	\$50,000
g. Fire Dept Site (est. 2004)	\$15,000
h. Webster Library Trust (est. 2015)	\$15,000
i. Town Office Expansion (est. 2017)	\$15,000
j. Celebration ETF (est. 2018)	\$100

Motion to accept Article as read: Francis Muzzey

2nd: Palmer Koelb

Article 9 Passed by voice vote

Article 10 Transfer Station

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$69,101** for the purpose of disposal and hauling of Solid Waste and cost of maintenance for the Town Transfer Station, said amount to come from 2020 general taxation.

Motion to accept Article as read: Jim Folsom

2nd Quentin Mack

Article 10 Passed by voice vote

Article 11 Police Department

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$90,906** for the maintenance of the Police Department for the ensuing year for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant.

Motion to accept Article as read: Paul Davis Jr

2nd: Pete Chierichetti

Article 11 Passed by voice vote

Article 12 Animal and pest control

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$3,000** for the costs and expenses associated with Animal and Pest Control.

Motion to accept Article as read: Beth Folsom

2nd: Donna King

Article 12 Passed by voice vote

Article 13 Ambulance services

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$40,850** for operating expenses associated with Ambulance Services.

Motion to accept Article as read: Paul Davis Jr.

2nd: Susan Judd

Article 13 Passed by voice vote

Article 14 Parks and Recreation

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$5,650** for the Parks and Recreation for the general maintenance of parks including the Common, Library, Riverside Park, and Hamilton Memorial Field, said amount to come from General Taxation.

Motion to accept Article as read: Palmer Koelb

2nd: Arnold Scheller

Article 14 Passed by voice vote

Article 15 Webster Memorial Library

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$47,869** for the Webster Memorial Library expenses, \$9,186 to come from Library income, \$3,282 to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance, and the remaining sum of \$35,401 to come from General Taxation.

Motion to accept Article as read: Nancy Masterson

2nd: Clyde Masterson

Article 15 Passed by voice vote

Article 16 Additional Bridge EFT

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of **\$31,400** said amount to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund, said amount to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance and no money to be raised from taxation.

Motion to accept Article as read: Francis Muzzey

2nd: Palmer Koelb

Article passed by voice vote

Article 17 Elderly Exemption

To see if the Town of Wentworth will vote to increase the net income allowances for the Elderly Exemptions from property tax in the Town of Wentworth as provided for in RSA 72:39-b. The question to be voted on as required by RSA 72:39-b, I(c) is as follows:

“Shall we modify the Elderly Exemption from the property tax in the Town of Wentworth, based on assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows:

For a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$14,000, for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$21,000, and for a person 80 years of age and older, \$28,000.

To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least three 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 to each other for at least five consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$23,800, or if married a combined net income of less than \$36,400; and own net assets not in excess of \$63,000 excluding the value of the person’s residence”.

Note: If a majority of those voting on the question vote yes, the Elderly Exemption shall take effect on April 1, 2020. If eligible you must apply.

Motion to accept: Francis

2nd: Donna King

Article passed by voice vote

Article 18 Optional Veterans Tax Credit

Shall the Town of Wentworth vote to accept the provisions of RSA 72:28, Optional Veterans Tax Credit.

The optional veterans' tax credit, upon adoption by a city or town pursuant to RSA 72:27-a, shall be an amount from \$51 up to \$500. The optional veterans' tax credit shall

replace the standard veterans' tax credit in its entirety and shall not be in addition thereto.

The following persons shall qualify for the standard veterans' tax credit or the optional veterans' tax credit:

(a) Every resident of this state who served not less than 90 days in the armed forces of the United States in any qualifying war or armed conflict listed in this section (See RSA 72:28) and was honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from service; or the spouse or surviving spouse of such resident, provided that Title 10 training for active duty by a member of a national guard or reserve shall be included as service under this subparagraph;

(b) Every resident of this state who was terminated from the armed forces because of service-connected disability; or the surviving spouse of such resident; and

(c) The surviving spouse of any resident who suffered a service-connected death.

If adopted, the credit granted by the town of Wentworth will be \$500, the same amount as the standard or optional veterans' tax credit voted by the Town of Wentworth under RSA 72:28.

Note: This article, in similar form but with incorrect wording of the law, was adopted on March 17, 2018, in the amount of \$200; the amount by RSA 72:28 (as stated above in this article) can be any amount from \$51 to \$500, by vote of the town.

Comment: If a majority of those voting on the question vote YES, this Optional Tax Credit shall take effect on April 1, 2020. If eligible you must apply.

Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser

2nd: Jeff Ames

Article passed by voice vote

Article 19 Optional Veteran's Tax Credit for service-connected total disability

Shall the Town of Wentworth vote to accept the provisions of RSA 72:35, Service-Connected Total Disability?

72:35 Tax Credit for Service-Connected Total Disability. –

I. Any person who has been honorably discharged or an officer honorably separated from the military service of the United States and who has total and permanent service-connected disability, or who is a double amputee or paraplegic because of service-connected injury, or the surviving spouse of such a person, shall receive a standard yearly tax credit in the amount of \$700 of property taxes on the person's residential property.

I-a. The optional tax credit for service-connected total disability, upon adoption by a city or town pursuant to RSA 72:27-a, shall be an amount from \$701 up to \$4,000. The optional tax credit for service-connected total disability shall replace the standard tax credit in its entirety and shall not be in addition thereto.

I-b. Either the standard tax credit for service-connected total disability or the optional tax credit for service-connected total disability shall be subtracted each year from the property tax on the person's residential property.

II. The standard or optional tax credit under this section may be applied only to property which is occupied as the principal place of abode by the disabled person or the surviving spouse. The tax credit may be applied to any land or buildings appurtenant to the residence or to manufactured housing if that is the principal place of abode.

III. (a) Any person applying for the standard or optional tax credit under this section

shall furnish to the assessors or selectmen certification from the United States Department of Veterans' Affairs that the applicant is rated totally and permanently disabled from service connection. The assessors or selectmen shall accept such certification as conclusive on the question of disability unless they have specific contrary evidence and the applicant, or the applicant's representative, has had a reasonable opportunity to review and rebut that evidence. The applicant shall also be afforded a reasonable opportunity to submit additional evidence on the question of disability.

(b) Any decision to deny an application shall identify the evidence upon which the decision relied and shall be made within the time period provided by law.

(c) Any tax credit shall be divided evenly among the number of tax payments required annually by the town or city so that a portion of the tax credit shall apply to each tax payment to be made.

If adopted, the credit granted by the Town of Wentworth for Service-Connected Total Disability will be \$4,000.

Comment: This RSA became effective January 1, 2019. If a majority of those voting on the question vote YES, the Tax Credit for Service-Connected Total Disability shall take effect on April 1, 2020. If eligible you must apply.

Motion to accept: Jenn Meade

2nd: John Meade

Article passed by voice vote

Article 20 Historical Society

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$5,000** for the maintenance and expenses associated the Wentworth Historical Society Museum and the grounds on which it stands.

Motion to accept: Palmer Koelb

2nd: Deborah Ziemba

Article passed by voice vote

Article 21 Emergency Lanes EFT

To see if the Town will vote to establish an Emergency Lanes Expendable Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 and RSA 231:59-a for the purpose of maintenance and repairs on roads so designated as Emergency Lanes in the Town of Wentworth, and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$5,000** to be placed in this fund, and to further designate the Selectmen as agents to expend said fund. Note: Hooper Hill Road is the only road in Wentworth designated as an Emergency Lane at this time, but it is the expressed intent of this article that money in this fund may be used on other Emergency Lanes in Wentworth as they may be so designated in the future.

Motion to accept: Francis Muzzey

2nd: John Meade

Article passed by voice vote

Article 22 Landfill Closure CR

To see if the town will vote to discontinue the Landfill Closure Capital Reserve Fund, the principal and accumulated interest to actual date of discontinuance to be transferred to the town's general fund.

Motion to accept: Francis Muzzey

2nd: Beth Folsom

Article passed by voice vote

Article 23 Addition to Bridge EFT

To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of **\$84,394.65** to be placed in the Bridge Capital Reserve Fund established in 2006 (ETF) with said funds to come from the Unreserved Fund Balance (this amount represents the funds resulting from the discontinuance of the Landfill Closure Fund in Article 21) and no monies to come from general taxation. This appropriation is contingent upon the passage of Article 22.

Motion to accept: Sonia Scheller

2nd: Palmer Koelb

Article passed by voice vote

Article 26 Pemi-Baker Access Media

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$4,930** to be used for participation in pbCAM (Pemi-Baker Access Media) for the purpose of making video recorded selectmen's meetings and annual town meetings available for cable television viewers and the recording of the videos. The sum includes the \$250 yearly membership fee, the video recording of the current annual town meeting and all other selectmen/town meetings.

Motion to accept: Hannah Paquette

2nd: Ray Welch

Article passed by voice vote

Article 27 Highway Department new hire

Received by Petition. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$40,000** for a third, Full-time, hired person to be expended by the Highway Department for such purposes deemed necessary by the Road Agent.

Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser

2nd: Ray Welch

A paper ballot was requested with 5 signatures

Yes = 46

No = 19

Passed by paper ballot

Article 28 Selectmen Compensation

Received by Petition. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,500** in total to increase the pay for (2) Selectmen from \$2,200 to \$4,000 each and

pay for the Selectman Chair from \$2,200 to \$4,500. The purpose being to gain continuity on the Board and to attract and retain good candidates. This raise would remain in effect until voted on again at the annual Town Meeting. This salary shall cover all duties associated with the Selectmen.

Motion to accept: Jenn Meade

2nd: Paul Davis Jr.

Donna King made a motion to amend wording

2nd Jeff Ames

Received by Petition. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,500** in total to increase the pay for (2) Select Board members from \$2,200 to \$4,000 each and pay for the Select Board Chair from \$2,200 to \$4,500. The purpose being to gain continuity on the Board and to attract and retain good candidates. This raise would remain in effect until voted on again at the annual Town Meeting. This salary shall cover all duties associated with the Select Board.

Passed by hand count vote

Yes = 40

No = 4

Francis Muzzey made a motion to amend amended article

2nd Morgan Currier

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate \$6600 for the purpose of payment to the Select Board

Amended motion passed by hand count

Yes = 31

No = 10

Article 29 Other business

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

Motion to accept: Ray Welch

2nd: Andrew Lasser

To attest to the minute's authenticity and accuracy,
Respectfully Submitted by:



Deborah Ziemba, Town Clerk