

## 2023 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 14, 2023. 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 18, 2023, beginning at 1 P.M., the meeting for said purpose to be held at said Wentworth Elementary School.

### **Article 01 Election of Officers**

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

March 14, 2023 brought out 137 voters and the following were elected:

Selectman 3 years – Arnold Scheller  
Selectman 1 years – Brian A. DuBois  
Planning Board 3 years - Sonia Scheller  
Planning Board 3 years – Linda Franz  
Supervisor of the Checklist 5 years – Linda Franz  
Town Auditor 1 year – Lena-Maye Williams  
Cemetery Trustee 3 years – Duane Brown  
Cemetery Trustee 1 year – Lena-Maye Williams  
Library Trustee 3 years – Kathleen P. Vernon  
Town Trustee 3 years – Jennifer P. Meade  
Fire Commissioners 1 year - R. Peter Chierichetti  
Fire Commissioners 1 year – Brian A. DuBois  
Fire Commissioners 1 year – Jeffry Ames

**Motion to Accept: John Vlk**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Sr.**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by Voice Vote**

### **Article 02 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: Lena-Maye Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Duane Brown**

**Francis Muzzey suggested \$92,000 be added to the 2022 budget on line 4721 to correct the budget, explaining warrant article 03 proposes to raise and appropriate \$92,000. Explained the \$92,000 would be paid in the 2023 budget**

**Francis Muzzey asked to Amend the Article 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 to include line item 4721 in the amount of \$92,000 as part of the budget changing the total to \$1,560,529.

**Motion to move: Jeff Ames**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Sr.**

**No questions or comments**

**Re-read Amended Article**

**PASSED by Voice Vote**

**Article 03      N. Dorchester Road Bridge Bond**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$758,000 (gross budget) for the design, permitting, construction, and replacement of the North Dorchester Road Bridge (the "Project"); to authorize \$758,000 of such sum to be raised through the issuance of bonds or notes in accordance with the Municipal Finance Act (RSA Ch. 33); to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the date, maturities, interest rate, and other details of such bonds or notes; to authorize the Board of Selectmen to apply for and accept any federal, state, or private funds that may become available in respect of the Project to reduce the amount that must be bonded and furthermore to raise and appropriate \$92,000 for the first year's interest payment on the bond (final sum **\$850,000**). The Select Board recommends this action. (3/5th ballot vote required.)

**Motion to accept: Francis Muzzey**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Susan Judd**

**Much discussion took place**

**Re-Read Article as written**

**A paper ballot vote was taken**

**Yes=63**

**No = 16**

**After 1 hour, the article passed by paper ballot**

**Article 04      General Municipal Operations**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$359,867** 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: Jenn Meade**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Linda Brownson**

**No questions or comments**

**PASSED by Voice Vote**

**Article 05      Planning Board**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$3,500** 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: Duane Brown**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Paul Davis Jr.**

**John Meade asked to amend the article to read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,500** 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: Lena Maye Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Andrew Lasser**

**Amended Article was re-read**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 06      Historical Society**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,500** for the maintenance and expenses associated the Wentworth Historical Society Museum and the grounds on which it stands

**Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Sonia Scheller**

**Craig Pasco thanked all members of the Historical Society by name**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 07      Police Department**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$104,698** 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: Paul Davis Sr.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Bernice Sullivan**

**Chief Trott spoke to explain**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 08      Animal and Pest Control**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$4,000** for the expenses associated with Animal and Pest Control.

**Motion to accept: Jenn Meade**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Tim Minear**

**Lena-Maye Williams asked for an explanation**

**Chief Trott explained**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 09      Ambulance Services**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$105,000** for the operating expenses associated with Ambulance Services

**Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Marjorie Collicutt**

**Arnie Scheller motioned to amend amount to \$80,000**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Len-Maye Williams**

**Much discussion took place**

**Amended Article was read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$80,000** for the operating expenses associated with Ambulance Services

**Amendment failed by voice vote**

**The original Article was read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$105,000** for the operating expenses associated with Ambulance Services

**Passed by voice vote**

**Article 10      Fire Department**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$54,550** for the maintenance of the Fire Department for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant, with \$2,000 coming from unassigned fund balance and \$52,550 from general taxation.

**Motion to accept: Paul Davis Sr.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: John Meade**

**Chief Ames motioned to amend article to read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$54,550** for the maintenance of the Fire Department for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant, with \$9,000 coming from unassigned fund balance and \$45,550 from general taxation.

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Francis Muzzey**

**Amended article was re-read**

**Discussion took place**

**Bernice Sullivan suggested another amendment**

**Chief Ames and Francis Muzzey withdrew the first Amendment**

**Bernice Sullivan asked to amend article to read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$56,550** for the maintenance of the Fire Department for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant, with \$11,000 coming from unassigned fund balance with the intent that the increase of \$2,000 goes to the fire chief's incentive pay and \$45,550 from general taxation.

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Arnold Scheller**

**No Questions or comments**

**Amended article was re-read:**

**Passed by voice vote**

**Article 11 Highway and Streets**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$395,430** for Highway and Streets for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant. Said appropriation will be offset with \$30,000 coming from unassigned fund balance, an anticipated offset of \$63,500 from Highway Block Grant and the remainder from general taxation.

**Motion to accept: Jeff Ames**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Arnie Scheller**

**Hand vote was taken**

**Yes: 46**

**No: 16**

**Francis Muzzey asked to amend the article to read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$395,430** for Highway and Streets for the purposes detailed in the operating budget posted with the warrant. Said appropriation will be offset with \$93,500 from Highway Block Grant and the remainder from general taxation

**Motion to move amendment to the floor**

**Jenn Meade**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Richard Ducheneau Sr.**

**Amendment was re-read and the town voted on the amendment**

**Yes = 52**

**No -8**

**Amended Article PASSED by hand vote**

**Article 12 Western Star**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to continue with the third year of the seven (7)-year lease agreement for the purpose of leasing a 2022 Western Star 4700SF Dump/Plow Truck for the Highway Department and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$28,500** for the said third year payment for that purpose. The lease agreement

**Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Bernice Sullivan**

**No questions or comments**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 13      Transfer Station**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$83,730** for the purpose of disposal and hauling of solid waste and cost of maintenance for the Town Transfer Station, said amount to come from general taxation.

**Motion to accept: John Vlk**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Marjorie Collicutt**

**No questions or comments**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 14      Parks and Recreation**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$8,100** for the Parks and Recreation for the general maintenance of parks including the Common, Library, Riverside Park, and Hamilton Memorial Field.

**Motion to accept: Arnie Scheller**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Lena-Maye Williams**

**No questions or comments**

**Re-read Article**

**PASSED by voice vote**

**Article 15      Conservation Fund**

To see if the town will vote to establish a Conservation Fund which shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year, as authorized by RSA 36-A:5, with the fund to be held by the municipal treasurer (RSA 41:29) and managed by the Conservation Commission. Further, to name the Conservation Commission as agents to expend from said fund. The Select Board recommends this action.

**Richard Borger motioned to table**

**40 =Yes**

**18 = No**

**Tabled by hand vote**

**Article 16      Town Forest Conservation Appropriation**

To see if the Town will vote to place a conservation easement on the following town-owned parcels comprising the Wentworth Town Forest, Plummer Town Forest parcel, Map 8, Lot 11, Sub 32, consisting of 130.57± acres; Van Deusen Town Forest parcel, Map 8, Lot 11, Sub 33, consisting of 35.5± acres; and Turner Road parcel, Map11, Lot 6, Sub 19, consisting of 15.31± acres, said easement to be held by the Pemi-Baker Land Trust, and to further raise and appropriate **\$7,250** which is the one-time fee for the easement.

**Motion to bring to accept: Lena-Maye Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Jr.**

**Motion to Table: Francis Muzzey**

**40=yes**

**19=No**

**Tabled by Hand Vote**

**Article 17 Land Use Change Tax**

To see if the town will vote to authorize 100% of the Land Use Change Tax collected pursuant to RSA 79-A:25 to be deposited into the Conservation fund in accordance with RSA 36-A:5,III, as authorized by RSA 79-A:25,II. If adopted, this article shall take effect April 1, 2023, and shall remain in effect until altered or rescinded by future vote of the town meeting. (Majority vote required.)

**Motion to accept: Lena-Maye Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Andrew Lasser**

**Motion to Table: Jenn Meade**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Francis Muzzey**

**50=Yes**

**4 =No**

**Tabled by hand vote**

**Article 18 Conservation Appropriation**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$2,000** 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: Paul Davis Sr.**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: John Meade**

**Linda Brownson spoke on items**

**Lots of discussion**

**Rick Borger Jr. stated it should be left as town forest**

**Re-read Article**

**Yes=40**

**No=26**

**PASSED by hand vote**

**Article 19 Forest Maintenance Appropriation**

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,500** for all purposes related to forest maintenance as set forth in RSA 31:111 and 112, with funds to be deposited into the Forest Maintenance Fund. This fund is held by the municipal treasurer and managed by the Conservation Commission.

**Motion: John Meade**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Jr.**

**Lots of discussion**

**Re-read Article**

**Yes=29**

**No=36**

**FAILED by hand vote**

**Article 20      Sale of Town Forest Parcel**

To see if the Town will vote to allow the Select Board and/or the Conservation Commission to sell the property designated as Town Forest located on N. Dorchester Road, Map 12, Lot 2, Sub 6 consisting of 1.1± acres with proceeds of the sale deposited to the Conservation Fund. Please note the Town previously voted to authorize the Select Board to sell property designated as Town Forest. The Planning Board recommends this action.

**Motion to accept: Andrew Lasser**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Tabitha Vlk**

**Jenn Meade made a motion to amend**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Francis Muzzey**

To see if the Town will vote to allow the Select Board and/or the Conservation Commission to sell the property designated as Town Forest located on N. Dorchester Road, Map 12, Lot 2, Sub 6 consisting of 1.1± acres with proceeds of the sale deposited to the General Fund

**Amended Article as read passed by voice vote**

**Article 21      ETF & CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$259,100** to be placed in the following Expendable Trust Funds and Capital Reserve Funds, to come from 2023 general taxation. Please note \$50,000 to come from One Time Bridge Block payment and the remaining \$209,100 to come from 2023 general taxation. The Select Board unanimously recommends this action.

- Fire Truck CRF (established 1984) \$25,000
- Highway Equipment and Vehicles CRF (established 1973) \$25,000
- Police Cruiser CRF (established 1993) \$9,000
- Property Revaluation CRF (established 1995) \$5,000
- Town Bridges ETF (established 2006) \$100,000
- Town Hall Maintenance and repairs CRF (established 2000) \$5,000
- Road Paving CRF (established 2002) \$50,000
- Fire Department Site EFT (established 204) \$25,000
- Town Office Expansion ETF (established 2017) \$15,000
- Celebration ETF (established 2018) \$100

**Motion to accept: Lena-Maye Williams**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: John Vlk**

**Discussion took place**

**Jenn Meade motioned to amend the article to read:**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$310,100** to be placed in the following Expendable Trust Funds and Capital Reserve Funds, to come from 2023 general taxation. Please note \$101,000 to come from One Time Bridge Block payment and the remaining \$209,100 to come from 2023 general taxation. The Select Board unanimously recommends this action.

- Fire Truck CRF (established 1984) \$25,000
- Highway Equipment and Vehicles CRF (established 1973) \$25,000



Police Cruiser CRF (established 1993) \$9,000  
Property Revaluation CRF (established 1995) \$5,000  
Town Bridges ETF (established 2006) \$151,000  
Town Hall Maintenance and repairs CRF (established 2000) \$5,000  
Road Paving CRF (established 2002) \$50,000  
Fire Department Site EFT (established 204) \$25,000  
Town Office Expansion ETF (established 2017) \$15,000  
Celebration ETF (established 2018) \$100

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Richard Borger Sr.**

**Amended Article Passed by voice vote**

**Article 22 Webster Memorial Library**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$49,804** for the Webster Memorial Library expenses, \$2,270 to come from Library income, \$12,000 to come from the unexpended fund balance and the remaining sum of \$35,534 to come from general taxation.

**Motion to accept: Clyde Masterson**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Jr.**

**Linda Franz motioned to amend**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Andrew Lasser**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$49,804** for the Webster Memorial Library expenses, \$2,270 to come from Library income, \$4,251 to come from the unexpended fund balance and the remaining sum of \$43,283 to come from general taxation.

**Amended Article passed by voice vote**

**Article 23 Readoption of the Optional Veterans Tax Credits**

To see if the Town will vote in accordance with RSA 72:27-a to readopt the provisions of RSA 72:28, previously adopted, for the Optional Veterans' Tax Credit and the All Veterans Tax Credit, both currently at \$500 per year, to expand the eligibility requirements of the credits to include individuals who have not yet been discharged from service in the armed forces. If readopted and approved, this article shall take effect for the 2023 property tax year. This is recommended by the Select Board, and the tax rate impact is \$0.

**Motion: Andrew Lasser**

**2<sup>nd</sup>: Paul Davis Sr.**

**Francis Muzzey stated the impact of "\$0" is wrong**

**Re-Read Article**

**Passed by Voice Vote**

**Article 24      Other Business**

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

**Motion to accept: Paul Davis Sr.**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Jenn Meade**

**No other business**

**Passed by Voice Vote**

Respectfully submitted by Deborah Ziemba,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Deborah Ziemba". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'D' and 'Z'.