

Town of Stratham  
Town Meeting Minutes  
March 11, 2014

The ballot clerks were sworn in at 7:45 am and 1:45 pm. Present were Moderator Dave Emanuel, Assistant Moderator Tracey McGrail, Town Clerk/Tax Collector Joyce Charbonneau, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Catherine Kenny, Selectman Bruno Federico, and Selectman Tim Copeland. Also present were the Supervisors of the Checklist Sue Hunter, Caren Gallagher, and Melanie McGrail. The ballot clerks for the day were Diana Thompson, Roger Thompson, Diana Alsterberg, Andra Copeland, Victor Colinino, Anna Greenlaw, Erin Copeland, Susan Canada, Susan Brett, Natalie Perry, Peg Mullin, Liz Chisholm, and Lucy Hopping.

It was a quiet day with 603 votes cast at the Town Election, with 13 of those being absentee ballots. The number of total voters on the checklist that morning was 5650. This represents a 10% turnout of voters.

**Exeter Region Cooperative School District Ballot results for Stratham only are as follows: (\*=Denotes the Winner)**

Cooperative School Board: For East Kingston for three years, vote for one: (There was no candidate on the ballot, winner will be determined by the six Cooperative towns via write-in votes.) For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Christopher Suprock 94. Kate Segal 320\*. For Kensington for two years, vote for one: Jane Bannister 384\*. For Stratham for three years, vote for one: James Firmin 476\*. For Cooperative School District Moderator for one year, vote for one: Katherine B. Miller 425\*. Cooperative School District Budget Committee: For Brentwood for three years, vote for one: Krista K. Steger 375\*. For Exeter for three years, vote for one: Roy Morrisette 425\*. For Kensington for three years, vote for one: Cheryl McDonough 387\*.

Article 1:

Operating Budget: Yes 338\* No 163

Article 2:

Collective Bargaining Agreement between the Exeter Region Cooperative School Board (ERCSB) and the Exeter Area Administrators Association. (3 years)  
Yes 338\* No 228

Article 3:

Collective Bargaining Agreement between the ERCSB and the Exeter Education Association. (3 years)  
Yes 325\* No 235

Article 4:

Maintenance Fund: Yes 364\* No 197

Article 5:  
Special Education Fund: Yes 348\* No 215

Article 6:  
Easement: Yes 440\* No 113

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

School Board Member: for three years, vote for two: Eric Von Der Linden 449\*  
Robert E. O'Sullivan Jr. 458\*

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

Article 1:  
Selectman for three years, vote for one: David Canada 501\*. Library Trustee for three years, vote for one: Terry Reardon-Pollini 528\*. Cemetery Trustee for three years, vote for one: Colin Laverty 359\*. Fred Hutton Jr. 209. Town Moderator for two years, vote for one: David F. Emanuel 556\*. Supervisors of the Checklist for six years, vote for one: Caren Gallagher 541\*. Treasurer for three years, vote for one: Deborah L. Bronson 516\*. Town Clerk/Tax Collector for three years, vote for one: Joyce L. Charbonneau 568\*. Trustee of the Trust Funds for three years, vote for one: There was no candidate on the ballot, Mikki Deschaine won by write in votes: 71\*.

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

To amend the Zoning Ordinance by adding a new section, Subsection 3.9 Town Center District to create a new performance based zoning district;

And in connection therewith, amend Subsection 3.4.5 Town Center District by deleting said section in its entirety and inserting revised language to define further the purpose and intent of the Town Center District;

And in connection therewith, amend Subsection 3.6 Table of Uses by designating the appropriate permitted uses in the Town Center District in accordance with Subsection 3.9.8 Development Standards And Tables;

And in connection therewith, amend Subsection 4.1.3 General Requirements to further clarify and define the permitted separation between buildings in the Town Center District;

And in connection therewith, amend Subsection 4.2 Table of Dimensional Requirements by deleting all references to the Town Center District and assigning the appropriate

dimensional requirements for this District as Subsection 3.9.8 Development Standards And Tables;

And in connection therewith, amend Subsections 3.8.6.a. Review and Permitting Process, 3.8.7.a. and c. Building and Site Design Standards, and Subsection 7.3 Administration by replacing all references to the Gateway Review Committee in their entirety and inserting Technical Review Committee and to update the composition of appointed committee members.

Yes: 379\* No: 170

***The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.***

Article 3:

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

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section IV: Dimensional Requirements, Subsection 4.3 Explanatory Notes by inserting language to further clarify and reference the dimensional requirements for structures and developments within the Gateway Commercial Business Zoning District and Town Center District.

Yes: 407\* No: 146

***The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.***

Article 4:

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

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section VII. Signs, Subsection 7.9.b. General Regulation, viii. Sign Permitted in Commercial and/or Industrial Uses, 4. Wall/Building Signs by inserting revised language to further clarify the square foot area calculation of allowable wall/building signage.

Yes: 448\* No: 122

***The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.***

Article 5:

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

To amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section XX: Sanitary Protection & Septic Ordinance, Subsection 20.1.5.e.i. by inserting language to further clarify the criterion for the issuance of a Conditional Use Permit by the Planning Board.

Yes: 452\* No: 119

***The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.***

Article 6:

Are you in favor of adopting the following amendment to the Town of Stratham Building Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board?

To amend the Stratham Town Ordinance, Chapter 7-01 Building Ordinance by replacing said section in its entirety with revised language to further clarify and provide additional guidance on the regulatory authority and requirements of the Town and the use of third party consultants.

Yes: 444\* No: 121

*The Planning Board recommends this article by unanimous vote.*

**The remaining Town of Stratham articles will be voted on Friday, March 14, 2014 at the Stratham Memorial School at 7:00 p.m.**

Town Moderator Dave Emanuel declared the meeting come to order at 7:08 p.m. Lucy Cushman led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Emanuel then called for a moment of silence for all those serving in the Armed Forces, and for those that could not be there tonight. Mr. Emanuel then went on to introduce himself and everyone on the stage; The Board of Selectmen, (B.O.S.): David Canada, Tim Copeland, and Bruno Federico; The Town Administrator: Paul Deschaine, and the Town Clerk/Tax Collector: Joyce Charbonneau. Also introduced were Catherine Kenny, Deputy Town Clerk/Deputy Tax Collector, Lucy Hopping, Office Assistant, and the Supervisors of the Checklist, Sue Hunter, Mel McGrail, and Caren Gallagher. Newly appointed Tracey McGrail was also introduced as the Assistant Moderator. Diana and Roger Thompson were introduced as they were there to assist the Supervisors. Mr. Emanuel then called on Town Clerk Joyce Charbonneau to read the Dedication of the Town Report. This year's dedication was to Jerry Howard, who retired as the Assistant Moderator after many years of service. Resident Travis Thompson then read the Memorial Dedication on Claire Ellis, who passed away this past December and who had served on many town and school boards in Stratham. Moderator Emanuel then read the Memorial Dedication on Christopher Rowe Sr., who passed away last April and who also served on many town boards, as well as being one of the first organizers of the Stratham Fair in 1967. Dave Emanuel then read the results of the ballot voting on Tuesday, March 11, 2014. He stated there were no requests for recounts. Mr. Emanuel then explained the Rules of Procedure for Town Meeting.

**The Following articles were discussed and voted on:**

**Article 7: 2014 Operating Budget**

To see if the Town will raise and appropriate Five Million Nine Hundred Five Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Eight Dollars and no cents (\$5,905,738.00) to defray general town charges for the ensuing year. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Tim Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman David Canada spoke for the motion. Mr. Canada first thanked the members of the Budget Committee for their help with the budget: Gary Dolan, June Sawyer, Travis Thompson, and two new members, Steve Doyle, and Tracey McGrail. Mr. Canada explained that every \$100,000.00 that is approved tonight will add 8.2 cents to the tax rate. Mr. Canada went on to explain that the median home value in Stratham is \$346,950.00. He stated that if your home is at the

median, each \$100,000.00 will add \$29.49 to your yearly tax bill. Mr. Canada referred the residents to page seventy-five of the Town Report to see the summary of this year's budget. He stated that net operating expenses increase for this year is approximately \$300,000.00. Mr. Canada then went through each item on the operating budget and what the increase was for each department. He then went on to explain the revenue side of the ledger; income that we receive other than property tax. Mr. Canada stated this income offsets expenses. The expected revenue is \$2,500,060.00. This is about 41% of the operating costs of the Town. Mr. Canada then went through each line item in Revenue including Departmental revenues. He went on to explain that offsetting increases from the various departments are reductions in health care, police, technical support, and sanitation expenses, as well as an anticipated increase in Motor Vehicle registration revenue. Mr. Canada stated that the significant increases in expenses were mainly due to three items - payroll, paving, and retirement, with the single biggest driver being road paving. He explained that Highway Agent Colin Laverty undertook a street-by-street analysis of our roads this year. He rated each road with a standardized grading system. He then assigned every road a paving cycle designed to preempt the need for expensive reconstruction. Based on his study, Colin concluded that the amount we have been devoting to paving was not sufficient and that we actually need to annually spend \$230,000.00 more on our roads than we did last year. This will be revisited and validated every year. Mr. Canada concluded with his summary of the operating budget, and turned the meeting back over to the Moderator. Mr. Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., asked about the need to replace the roof at the Bartlett/Cushman house and what the cost would be for that. Mr. Canada responded that it would cost about \$15,000.00, and stated it does need a new roof. Mr. Wool also brought up the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee, and wanted to point out that they have received \$5000.00 for operating costs each year since 2010, and also received \$55,000.00 for the hiring of an author to publish a history book on the Town of Stratham. He wondered if we are spending too much money for the party and parade, and that it is just something to think about. Mr. Wool went on to state he had some concerns about the Public Works Committee and the \$35,000.00 that is in the budget for them. He wondered if the sewer and water is going to cost the Town a lot of money before it ever happens, and are we going to get the Town money back. Mr. Canada responded that the money in the operating budget has nothing to do with sewer and water; it has to do with storm water. Mr. Wool also wanted to second the paving proposal and went on to say that Stratham has one of the best road systems in the county. Mr. Wool recommended that we follow Colin's recommendations to keep these roads up. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 7 passed.

### **Article 8: Create the "Highway Capital Reserve Fund"**

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund to be known as the "Highway Department Capital Reserve Fund" under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purposes of purchasing and maintaining Highway Department vehicles and equipment, and further to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Bruno

Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. He explained that this fund will allow the town to raise money and keep it in this fund until we need to expend it. He further explained that this is different from the C.I.P. in that if you do not spend the money in the C.I.P. by the fifth year, it reverts back to the Town. He stated that by creating the Capital Reserve Trust Fund, we will be able to expend money as we need it on vehicles that need to be repaired or purchased at the time of need, rather than doing this on a set schedule. Moderator Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor. Seeing no questions, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative and Article 8 passed.

### **Article 9: CIP**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Four Hundred Seventy Seven Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$1,477,000.00) to implement the Capital Improvements Program for 2014 as presented in the Town Report and approved by the Planning Board. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until the specific items are completed or obtained but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. Selectman Federico explained that the Capital Improvements Program is a plan developed by the Town to determine the capital needs over the next five years. He explained that realistically we deal monetarily with the current year to see how we can fund it and determine the priorities for the Capital Improvements Program. Mr. Federico stated that there are four major components in the CIP: General Government, Protection of Personal Property, Public Works and Highways, and Cultural and Recreational Activities. Mr. Federico then went on to explain each line item under each of the major components which can be found on page 76 of the Town Report. Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Nancy Hunter, 2 Brown Ave., asked if we can change a line item in the CIP. Moderator Emanuel responded that she can amend Article 9 any way she would like as long as it is pertinent to the CIP. Nancy then asked about the \$62,000.00 for the Town Center and what is that buying. Selectman Federico responded that back in 2009 we applied for a State Grant to provide transportation enhancement to the Town Center. This will provide bike lanes, sidewalks, and street lights. He further explained that we had thought we were out of the running for this grant, but in 2013 the State asked us if the town ahead of us dropped out, would we be willing to take part. He then stated that we went in to deliberative sessions to discuss this very thoroughly and concluded that we did want to take part in this grant. He explained that The Transportation Enhancement Program Authority funded \$503,000.00 to improve the Town Center. Our portion that we are responsible for is \$62,000.00. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr., stated his question is related to the \$187,000.00 over the last six years for a Town Center. He stated that the Town Center left that area with the Master Plan in the 90's. He explained this is in regards to Article Three that was on the Town Ballot on Tuesday. This particular article asked to adopt an amendment regarding the Gateway Commercial Business District and Town Center District. Mr. Stephenson

stated that he appreciated the vote but disagreed with the outcome. He further stated that the Police Station, the Fire Station, and the Town Hall are not part of the Town Center and he does not think this is an example of "If you build it, they will come". Roger Stephenson then made a motion to amend the Capital Improvement and take out the \$62,000.00. Nancy Hunter seconded the motion. Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions from the floor regarding the amendment. Paul Deschaine, Town Administrator, wanted to make sure that everyone understood that if the \$62,000.00 is not raised, he will have to inform the Department of Transportation that we will reject at least \$503,000.00 and what could be as high as \$620,000.00. Mr. Deschaine stated this is what we could lose out on in the grant money from the State. He went on to state that he understood this is a large undertaking from beginning to end, and it is not going to happen in one fell swoop. He explained it is going to happen in pieces, and this is the very first piece. Mr. Deschaine stated he felt it would enhance our community significantly. He explained we are only paying 20% and the State is paying 80%, and he wanted to make sure that we understood that we are walking out on a very significant opportunity if we vote for this amendment. He explained that a number of communities are just waiting to snatch up this money if we bow out. Colleen Lake, Portsmouth Ave., stated that she is the Chairman for the Town Center Revitalization Committee and stated that she was one of the writers of this grant. She wanted to make sure everyone understood that the State is giving us \$500,000.00. She stated that this is money that we do not have to raise. Colleen explained that we only have to raise 20% of the money that the State is giving us. The State is going to pay for our sidewalks, our bike lanes, and our street lights. She reiterated that the State is giving us this money for free. She asked everyone to please not vote in favor of this amendment. Eric Von Der Linden, Hickory Pond Lane, wanted to point out that there is no such thing as free money, that it is our tax money that the State is doling out. He also questioned who is going to maintain the sidewalks, and clear them of snow when necessary. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., stated he is in support of this article, and said "If the residents think this is a good starting point, then you should vote for this article." He concluded with the statement to "vote your conscience, and if you want to see this community getting better, then vote for this article." Mary Ann Capiello, 2 Robin Glen Rd., is in support of this article. She would like to see bike lanes being used and feels it would be safer for the children. She stated she would also like to see a place where people can walk, and meet each other. She feels the more opportunities the Town has to improve, the better. Cantrece Forest, Dumbarton Oaks, asked if there is going to be a crosswalk at the lights by People's Bank. Colleen Lake responded that there is a plan for several crosswalks starting at the bank, to the Wiggin Library, and from Pipers Landing all the way to the Post Office. Cantrece asked if the lights will stop to allow pedestrians to cross. Mr. Deschaine stated that is not the case. This project is a multi-phase project, and a stop light is not in the first phase. There will be crosswalks, but the light that is there will not stop traffic in the first phase. Cantrece then asked what are the other phases, and what is the timeline to adding a stop light by the bank. Mr. Deschaine responded that at the present time there is no timeline for the light as there is no funding for that at this time. He stated that part of the project is to hopefully provide seed money, and raise funds for this purpose. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr., stated that this did not just come out of the blue, and that the Town had to have voted on this. Colleen Lake wanted to let the residents know that the intent of the Committee was not to go after

taxing more people, but getting money through grants. Paul Schneiderman, Crockett's Way, stated that this will result in a positive tax effect when we improve that area. It will most likely bring in more commercial businesses, which in turn will lower our taxes. Mr. Schneiderman stated that he would urge the voters not to vote for this amendment, and further stated that you will save yourself some money in the future in lower taxes. He also stated that he sees people early in the morning walking on the street, and it will be much safer with sidewalks. Mr. Deschaine stated that the Transportation Grant was done in 2009. In 2013, we heard that we got the grant. In the meantime, between 2009 and the present, we have been putting \$25,000.00 away each year for the line article Town Center Grant Matching Improvements. Richard O'Neill, Barker Rd., asked to move the motion. Moderator Emanuel stated he would like to recognize the last few people already at the microphone. Mr. Canada stated this article is going to cost the median household \$17.35. Mr. Canada also said "Let's spruce up the Town Center on the State's dime, and at the same time, slow down traffic there, which this will do." Mr. Emanuel then explained the amendment before us is to reduce the CIP by \$62,000.00. Mr. Emanuel then asked for the vote on the amendment, the No's had it, and the amendment for Article 9 failed. Seeing no further questions from the floor, Mr. Emanuel then read the question for Article 9 as originally written, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 9 passed.

#### **Article 10: Banning Hunting at Stratham Hill Park and Adjacent Town Owned Property**

By petition of Tana Ream and over 25 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the Town will vote to adopt an ordinance that will ban hunting on those lands shown and described on Town of Stratham 2013 Tax Map 22, Lot 83, known and referred to as Stratham Hill Park and the Noyes Property, and 2013 Tax Map 22, Lot 85, known and referred to as the Gifford Property, said ban to be enforced by the Stratham Police Department in accordance with Chapter 1-01 of the Town of Stratham Code of Ordinances, with the exception of the provisions within a wildlife management program for the stated properties. Should this Article pass, Article 11 is null and void. The Board of Selectmen remains impartial on this Article. Selectman Canada stated that although the Board remains impartial on this issue, he did want to clarify the issue of reversion of the Park to Tuck descendants ownership should we pass a hunting prohibition. He explained that the deed states that the Town is empowered "to make all necessary by-laws in regulating the use of the property." Selectman Canada explained that we have had an ordinance governing use for decades. He stated that it is ludicrous to think that if a judge considered a hunting ban over-stepped our authority, he or she would take the land from the public domain as the sole remedial action. He stated that the obvious remedy would be to order the Town to rescind the offending edict. Selectman Canada further stated that the B.O.S. is 100% comfortable in amending the bylaws of the Park from time to time. They also asked the Town Attorney for her opinion. She quoted RSA 477:3-b and agreed with the B.O.S. In part, she stated that "violations of deed covenants may still be enforced as a matter of equity but without forfeiture provisions." Tana Ream, 1 Apple Way, moved to accept this Article. Mark Roberts, Chisholm Farm Dr., seconded the motion. Tana Ream spoke for the motion. Tana stated that she found out recently that hunting was allowed in the park, and found that to be shocking. She found

out that most people were unaware of this as well. Tana stated she is not against hunting, and a lot of her family members are hunters. She believes that hunting is necessary, but not in the Park, and not at the same time as recreational uses. She stated she is being proactive in bringing this article forward, not reactive. She further stated that the Selectmen agree that they have the authority to make by-laws for the land at Stratham Hill Park. Tana also stated the case “Forrester versus Scott” that pertains to this situation. She also stated that she had a statement from one of Tuck’s descendents Kathleen Tuck Fontaine that supports this Article that she has brought forward and proceeded to read the statement. Tana then stated they have a presentation and wanted us to ask ourselves, “Do you think it is a safe choice to mix hunting with other activities?” Claude Peyrot, 6 Crockett’s Way, stated that according to NH Fish and Game, State Federal Municipal County private land is open to hunting unless it is posted against hunting. He further stated that hunting is a privilege granted by the landowner, and not a right granted to the hunter. Mr. Peyrot then went through a power point presentation with dates that hunting is allowed, the kind of firearms allowed at Stratham Hill Park, and statistics on hunting accidents. He also showed where hunting is allowed in New Hampshire. He then pointed out where hunting is currently allowed at Stratham Hill Park. My. Peyrot stated that this warrant recognizes the change in use and the uses of the Park, it addresses wildlife management issues, and it puts safety first. He concluded with asking for the residents to vote in support of this article. Steve Robison, 1 Autumn Lane, stated that this land was granted to the Town in 1905. He stated that we don’t live in the world of one hundred years ago. He feels this article is just common sense. Mr. Robison also stated that he is a shooter and a hunter, but he supports this article, and believes hunting should not take place at Stratham Hill Park. He explained that this is not about anti-hunting but basic common sense and safety. Mark Roberts, Chisholm Farm Dr., stated that he supports this article. He stated that all the supporters of this article wanted to do here was to bring about a safety zone to the Park so everyone can enjoy the Park with their family and their friends without fear of being shot. He asked everyone to please support this article. He concluded with the statement that the supporters and writers of this article are not trying to change anything but the hunting at Stratham Hill Park. Lawrence Dennis, Alderwood Dr., stated that although coyote hunting is allowed 365 days a year in the State of NH, there was not one single Fish and Game coyote hunting permit ever issued for Stratham Hill Park. Mr. Dennis stated that this issue is not about hunting. He stated this issue is about Tuck donating this land. The deed states in part, “for all people in the area including other towns to use and enjoy.” He stated if that does not happen, then the land will go back to the heirs. Mr. Dennis also warned that if this passes, the supporters of this article could take on banning all hunting in Stratham. Mr. Dennis also stated that there are a lot of accidents in the Park; mountain bikes, dog bites, etc., but there has not been one incident with a firearm. Selectman David Canada stated a point of information: The Selectmen chose not to take a position on this when it was brought forth in 2012, and they are not taking one tonight, but he wanted to clarify that if hunting is banned, it should not affect the legalities of the original deed. They consulted with Town Council, and Council concluded that the Town can make all necessary bylaws regulating the use of the Park. He reiterated that the Selectmen are 100% comfortable with amending the by-laws of the Park including banning of hunting if this article passes. He again quoted the RSA that Town Council referred to. Heidi Shealy, Stratham Heights Rd., stated she is

very concerned with the language, and believes this could be an issue in the courts if this article passes. She quoted an excerpt on “necessary by-laws”, and believes the Judge would have an issue with that as the Judge could find that it is not necessary. She stated that hunters are law abiding citizens who have the right to use the Park for hunting. She reiterated the words “necessary by-laws” and stated that this is the restricted covenant that the Judge could find is not necessary as there has never been a hunting accident in Town, nor has there ever been an incident with hunters in town. She stated in her opinion, this could cause the court to not allow the Selectmen to enforce this article if it passes. She further stated that Fish and Game regulates hunting, and we should leave this to the experts. Chris Duffy, High St., stated that he spends a lot of time at Stratham Hill Park, having raised two children and nine dogs over the last thirty years. He has never seen a hunter, and he is in the Park all the time. He stated that he does not feel that hunting is a risk to the park as there has never been a hunting accident in Stratham. There have been a lot of other accidents and untimely deaths, but none related to hunting. He also wanted to point out that the Park is there for all to share. He feels that for the same reason that he is allowed to walk his dogs in the Park, and bikers have the right to ride their bikes in the Park, hunters should have the right to hunt in the Park as long as its safe and they follow the laws. He further stated that hunting helps with deer control. He concludes with “If you ban hunting in the park, we are going to see an increase in deer population, and all the problems associated with that.” Tom Shealy, Stratham Heights Rd., stated that according to Fish and Game, no one has ever been shot who was wearing orange by a hunter in all of NH history. He also stated that we will see an increase in Lyme disease and other related tick diseases if you ban hunting at Stratham Hill Park. Dan Crow, Benjamin Rd., stated that we can and should co-exist here in Town. He stated that he is the President of the Stratham Hill Park Association, and the Association does not support this article. He stated that he personally does not support this article. Mr. Crow stated that he feels that it is unnecessary, and it will create an undue hardship to the Selectmen, the Police, and to the Park Ranger. He asked who will be doing the border patrol, and who will be maintaining the signage? He also pointed out the cost of the signage. He stated that we do not have a hunting problem; we have a public awareness problem. Mr. Crow stated that we have failed to educate the people who use the Park and we should be posting the forest trails, and also post when people and their dogs should be wearing orange. Mr. Crow stated that they realize the need to create safety zones throughout the Park. Defeating this article will allow the Stratham Hill Park Association the opportunity to continue with the education of our members. He asked that the voters defeat this article as written. John Dodge, Portsmouth Ave., stated that he is a Regional Law Enforcement Supervisor for DRED for 1.9 million acres. He stated he is not a hunter. He then reported on death statistics in the United States. He stated that the Park can be dangerous but not from hunting. He stated that the top causes of fatalities for outdoor recreation in the U.S. is skiing , sledding and snowboarding at 11%, hiking, 6%, and mountain biking, 4%. He reported that hunting accidents are at just 0.05 percent. Mr. Dodge stated he does not see the need for this warrant article. Heidi Hanson, Strawberry Lane, stated she supports this article. She feels this article is appropriate and necessary. Heidi further stated that she does not feel the language of the deed will be a concern, and that the opinion from the Town Attorney also stated that it is not a risk whatsoever. She also stated in regard to deer control that this article does

provide for a wildlife management program to control the deer population. She also responded to the statements of risks and safety at the Park made by previous speakers. She wanted to point out that if you are biking and you crash, you assumed that risk as a bike rider. The hunter assumes the risk when hunting, but innocent bystanders who happen to be in the same proximity and who are not hunters assume this risk as well, often without even realizing it as they are not aware that hunting is going on. Heidi concluded with asking the voters to support this article. Frank LaSorsa, Brown Ave., stated that he supports this article, and he supports the hunters. He is impartial on this article. He did have a question for Police Chief Scippa and asked him how the Police would handle a 12 year old with a sling shot killing a squirrel. Chief Scippa responded that they would have a talk with the 12 year old, and return him back to his family. Matt Gunn, Winnicutt Rd., stated that he supports this article. He stated that he supports hunters and hunting, but not on public property. He stated that he feels we have hung out a giant sign for out- of- state hunters that welcomes them to Stratham. He stated this article will affect the out- of- state hunters and our local hunters will know where they can hunt in Stratham. He stated that no one is out to take out hunting overall. It is a public park, and this article will keep the hunting local. Josh Crow, Winnicutt Rd., stated that he grew up in Stratham, and that he has participated in activities in the Park all his life, including hunting. He does not see a problem having hunting allowed in the park. He stated he has never had any conflicts with residents and that hunters are never seen in the Park, and they do not want to be seen. He stated that Fish and Game has designated the entire Town of Stratham as Unit M, and Unit M is currently in place for a population control measure for deer. Josh also stated that the majority of the hunters that use the Park are local, and are not from out-of- state. He stated that there have never been any hunting incidents in the Park, and further stated that “we are all safe and educated hunters.” Josh stated he is a First Responder and that public safety is very important to him. He stated he has responded to many accidents in this community, but there has never been a hunting related accident. He asked the residents to please vote no on this article. Heidi Shealy, Stratham Heights Rd., reiterated her concerns on the wording of the Tuck deed. She then read excerpts from the deed. Lester Cuff, Stratham Heights Rd., stated he supports this article. He stated that he feels if hunting is going to continue to be allowed in the Park, then it is an accident waiting to happen. Mr. Cuff then recounted a hunting accident when he and his cousin were five years old, and his cousin almost lost his eye. Kathleen Ohrenberger, Alderwood Dr., stated that this past year there was a hunter with a rifle that was walking past her home, and it scared her. She also saw three hunters in the Park, and that also scared her. She is concerned for her safety and her neighbors’ safety. She is also concerned that her dog could get shot, and she stated she would be heartbroken if that were to happen. She supports this article. Dave Moriarty, Winnicutt Rd., stated he grew up hunting. He does not support this article. He does not feel it would be right to ban hunting in the Park. Pat Kelley, Benjamin Rd., stated that two years ago when the hunting issue first came up, he went to the Town Meeting and proposed to meet with the Selectmen in the Park to work out safety zones, and to work with the Park Ranger to make it safe for everyone that would use the Park. He stated that he and other supporters of hunting had a plan. He explained that they drew 1000 square feet around the school and stated that would be off limits for hunting. He also stated that almost the entire hill by the fire tower would be off limits for hunting. They

agreed that the fields, the trails, the ponds, and the baseball areas would also be off limits for hunting. They also agreed to draw lines that anything inside the power lines would be off limits for hunting. They spent a lot of time doing this, and Pat stated that Fish and Game were also there that day. He stated that Fish and Game volunteered to give us the signs to post. Pat stated that he and other supporters volunteered to put the signs up so everyone would be protected. Pat further stated he walks his dog 4 to 5 times a week. He stated he is always in the Park, and he has never seen a deer track on the trails. He further stated that he was very disappointed in the Selectmen and in the Park Ranger, in that he and others volunteered their time to come up with this plan, and also were going to volunteer their time to put signs up everywhere to protect people using the Park, and it was never followed through. Luke Breton, Evergreen Way, asked to move the question. Heidi Hanson, Strawberry Lane, reiterated that the legal language of the deed would allow the Selectmen to ban hunting if this article passes. She again urged the voters to please support this article. Selectman Canada pointed out that Heidi Shealy omitted the first sentence from Town Council when she read Council's opinion on this matter and that first sentence is pertinent. He then proceeded to read what Mrs. Shealy omitted. Roger Dunn, Depot Rd., commented about the Park Town Ordinance where it states no golf balls or devices such as slingshots, pellet guns, paint ball guns, etc. Lisa Crow, Benjamin Rd., stated that she is in the Park every single day and has been for the last four years, and she has never seen a hunter. She further stated she is not in the populated areas of the Park but further out in the trails. Lisa further stated hunters are not going to be in the populated areas as they don't want to be seen. She pointed out that there is a big issue with ticks, and it is not just Lyme disease we have to be worried about. There are four other tick related diseases that there is a problem with in this State. Lisa further stated that these are a lot worse than Lyme disease. She explained that allowing hunting to continue in the Park will help control these tick-related diseases. She also stated that a lot of the trails are on private property, and the homeowners who own this land will still be allowed to hunt. Selectman Copeland responded to a point that Mr. Kelley brought up earlier. Selectman Copeland explained that when Mr. Kelley stated that the Selectmen did not take any action, the reason why was the compact zone was voted down two years ago, and hunting was allowed to continue in the Park. That was the reason the Selectmen did not take any action. Mr. Kelley responded to Selectman Copeland's statement with the response that "we were ready to act and post signs in the Safety Area. Even though hunting was not voted down, we could still have put up the signs for a Safety Zone." Moderator Emanuel stated he has a request by five registered voters in Stratham for a secret ballot. Mr. Emanuel read the question and directed the residents to the area where the voting would take place. He then gave directions on the voting process for the written ballot. He further explained that the polls would be open for one hour, and stated that "the polls are now open." Once the polls were closed and the votes were counted, it was announced by Mr. Emanuel that Article 10 passed. The results were 139 yes, 112 no, and 2 blanks. David London, Seavey Pasture Rd., made a motion to restrict reconsideration on Article 10. It was seconded by Claude Peyrot, the motion passed and reconsideration was restricted on Article 10.

### **Article 11: Creating a Compact Zone at Stratham Hill Park and Adjacent Town Owned Property**

By petition of Tana Ream and over 25 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the Town will designate as a "Compact Zone" under RSA 644:13 II (b) the lands known as Stratham Hill Park, shown and described on the Town of Stratham 2013 Tax Map 22, Lot 83, known and referred to as Stratham Hill Park and the Noyes Property, and 2013 Tax Map 22, Lot 85, known and referred to as the Gifford Property, which results in a person being guilty of a violation if such person fires or discharges any cannon, gun, pistol, or other firearm on said lands except by written permission of the Chief of Police or governing body. Moderator Emanuel declared Article 11 null and void as Article 10 had passed.

### **Article 12: Appointment of a Town Treasurer**

To see if the Town will vote to change the Office of Town Treasurer from an elected position to an appointed position per RSA 41:26-e, and to have such an appointment made in accordance with RSA 669:17-d by the Board of Selectmen. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman David Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Canada spoke for the motion. Selectman Canada first wanted to thank Kevin Peck for his years of service as Town Treasurer. Selectman Canada went on to say that "As times change and life becomes more complicated, we need to adapt to circumstances." He further stated that "The Town Treasurer is a case in point. There is a long list of attributes needed by a modern Town Treasurer. A Treasurer today needs a college degree and relevant experience in the world of finance. This is not guaranteed with an elected Treasurer. We need to ensure that the selection of our treasurer is based on their training, education, skills, financial knowledge, investment experience, and competency, not politics or popularity." He asked that we allow the Selectmen to properly choose our Treasurer. He stated "Having an appointed Treasurer will allow the Town to establish qualifications for the position when it becomes vacant." He explained that this will also allow the Town to check references and follow all the normal steps to ensure the selection of someone equal to this important task. George Waldron, Tansy Ave., asked about the compensation for an elected Treasurer versus an appointed Treasurer. Selectman Canada responded the compensation would be the same. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., stated a concern about the space between the Selectmen and the Treasurer. He stated "When one body appoints a person to work in the financial end and that person has to notify the Selectmen that they are not following the rules on a particular item or items, that person may be hesitant to do that in fear that he or she could lose their job." An elected treasurer is not under the thumb of the Board of Selectmen. Mr. Wool stated he is against this Article. Kevin Henry, Chisholm Farm Dr., asked about the selection process and what kind of outreach there would be for the community. Selectman Canada responded that the B.O.S continually asks for volunteers; that there is always a need for the various committees throughout the Town. He stated that the B.O.S. just want to fill the position with the most qualified person. John Sapienza, Raeder Dr., spoke in support of this article. He stated that the Town auditors would uncover anything that was not clear. Cindy Stark-Jones, Winnicutt Rd., stated that an audit does not guarantee independence. She stated she agreed with Mr. Wool, and that there is value in having a

separation between the two bodies. She stated she could make arguments for both sides, but just wanted it to be clear that an audit does not guarantee anything. Selectman Copeland wanted to point out that there are a lot of people out in our community that are very qualified, but they simply do not want to run for election. He stated that this will allow good qualified people to apply for this position. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr., wanted to point out that the State does allow a Treasurer to be appointed. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 12 passed.

### **Article 13: Petition for a Constitutional Amendment**

By petition of Everett Lamm and 27 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the town will vote to urge:

That the New Hampshire State Legislature join nearly 500 municipalities and 16 other states, including all other New England states, in calling upon Congress to move forward a constitutional amendment that: 1) guarantees the right of our elected representatives and of the American people to safeguard fair elections through authority to regulate political spending, and 2) clarifies that constitutional rights were established for people, not corporations.

That the New Hampshire Congressional delegation support such a constitutional amendment.

That the New Hampshire State Legislature supports such an amendment once it is approved by Congress and sent to the State for ratification.

And furthermore, that this Town Meeting vote be a record that We the People want Congress and our state legislature to:

- Institute full, effective and immediate electronic disclosure of all election-related spending by any individual, group, corporation, party or institution;
- Provide for fair, nonpartisan and vigorous enforcement of existing campaign laws and regulations by federal and state agencies;
- Enact an absolute ban on campaign contributions by foreign governments, foreign agencies, foreign corporations or their subsidiaries and employees in the United States;
- Enact legislation that would cut down the influence of big bankroll donors by multiplying the power of small donations through the use of voter vouchers, tax credits, and matching public funds.

The record of the vote approving this article shall be transmitted by written notice to Stratham's congressional delegation, and to Stratham's state legislators, and to the President of the United States informing them of the instructions from their constituents by the Board of Selectmen within 30 days of the vote.

Everett Lamm, Autumn Lane, moved to accept the Article as read. Jonathan Caldwell, Drury Plains Rd., seconded the motion. Everett Lamm spoke for the motion. He spoke

in support of the article. He stated that this is a non-partisan petition to ensure fair elections, and that this will not cost the Town any money. Mr. Lamm stated that this article will return the election process back to the voters. He urged the voters to support this article. Frank LaSorsa, Brown Ave., proposed an amendment to include the words “and unions” in paragraph two after the words “not corporations.” Gary Dolan, Jana Lane, seconded the motion. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr., stated that corporations include unions. David London, Seavey Pasture Rd. stated that money donated from corporations for the 2012 elections was over 400 billion dollars and money from the unions was only a third of that. Seeing no further questions on the amendment, Mr. Emanuel read the amendment, and then asked for the vote on the amendment. The No’s had it, and the amendment for Article 13 failed. He then asked for any further questions on the original article as written. Debra Altschiller, Apple Way, spoke in support of this Article. Mrs. Altschiller stated that “Town Meeting is a unique form of democracy – one voice, one vote and is the purest form of democracy.” She stated that the people on these seats and bleachers are “we the people”, not “we the corporations.” She further stated that “people live and people die, but the 501C:4 is forever. It lives as long as it is fed cash, and the cash can be sent anonymously.” She also stated that keeping big money in check in regard to electioneering is a very old American story. She stated that in 1907 President Roosevelt signed an act to prohibit corporations from making money contributions in connection with political elections. She concluded with asking the voters to support this article, and to send a message to our representatives that “we the people” demand that our singular voice and singular vote matters. She again asked everyone to please vote yes on this article. Pat Abrami, Tall Pines Dr., spoke and stated he will be voting no on this article and feels that this would create a Constitutional Convention. John Dodge, Portsmouth Ave. asked for a correction in Paragraph 2, sentence two, in regards to the Constitution granting people rights. He stated our State and Federal Constitutions control the government. He stated that the Constitution does not give us our rights. Everett Lamm, Autumn Lane, stated that Mr. Abrami was misreading this, and this article is not asking for a Constitutional Convention. Mr. Lamm stated this is more of a Constitutional amendment. Mr. Lamm stated as far as Mr. Dodge’s point on granting us rights, Mr. Lamm feels it is the “Bill of Rights” that grant the people their individual rights, not the Constitution. Lester Cuff, Stratham Heights Rd., also spoke in support of this article. Travis Thompson, Stratham Heights Rd., asked to move the question. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 13 passed.

#### **Article 14: Creating a Utility District**

To see if the Town will vote to authorize the creation of a Water and Sewer Utility District in accordance with RSA 31:134—149 to provide public water and sewer utility services to properties within the following Zoning Districts:

- All Zones of the Gateway Commercial Business District
- Special Commercial District
- Commercial/Light Industrial/Office District
- Professional/Residential District
- Town Center District

- Flexible/Mixed Use Development District
- Industrial District

as defined by the Stratham Zoning Ordinance as amended from time to time; and to further designate the Board of Selectmen as the governing body for the District with all the authority granted under these statutes. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote.

Selectman Canada moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Canada spoke for the motion. Selectman Canada stated that the B.O.S. worked with Senator Styles and Representatives Copeland and Abrami to pass legislation that is referred to as “Senate Bill Eleven” and which became law as RSA 31:134. He stated that this law essentially allows us to assign the costs of establishing utilities to those who would directly benefit. He then asked to yield to Public Works Commission Chair, John Boisvert, to elaborate on this article. John Boisvert, Winnicutt Rd., stated that we are still looking at the least cost options for Stratham to bring public water and sewer to Town. He further stated that they are having conversations with Exeter and Portsmouth. He stated that this gives us time to construct the political process and formulate the issues and bylaws and also for making all the rules and regulations while we are waiting for this to take place. Lucy Cushman, Winnicutt Rd., stated that she has always been supportive of public water and sewer in the Gateway District. She did state, however, that she does not want to see it all over Town. She wanted to point out that if you allow this Commission to set up this broad area, then you are saying you are willing to look at water and sewer for the whole town. Selectman Canada responded that Lucy’s fears are unfounded. He explained that there are two types of mains, gravity and force. He stated that this will be a forced main. He further explained that we cannot hook up a gravity system to a forced main because it is a smaller line, and you can’t convert it. He also stated that this article will allow us to create a district that we can assess the property owners whose land has tripled in value from sewer going in and we will be able to charge for that rather than the going tax rate. Marty Wool, Winnicutt Rd., stated that he agrees with Lucy, and that he is against this article. He stated that he wants to see this process slow down. He stated that we have spent \$100,000.00 to study this issue, “so let’s study it before we spend any more money on this.” Bruce Scamman, Blossom Lane, stated that he is favor of this article. He stated he would like to see the Commercial District be allowed to expand so it could allow restaurants and other businesses in, which in turn will create a better commercial base and lower taxes for all the taxpayers. Paul Deschaine, Town Administrator, wanted to inform everyone that they are deciding tonight who is going to be serviced. He further stated that if this article is adopted, this will define the service area on where to provide services. Matt Gunn, Winnicutt Rd., stated that he agrees with Bruce and he is for this article. He further stated that “we have great commercial space and huge potential in Stratham, but it is not going to be developed until we can provide them with public sewer and water.” Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor. Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 14 passed.

## **Article 15: Adoption of the Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program**

To see if the Town will adopt the provisions of RSA 79-E Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentive Program giving the Board of Selectmen authority to grant Community Revitalization Tax Relief Incentives and to further designate the two zoning districts of the Professional / Residential (“PRE”) and Town Center (“TC”) districts as defined by the Town of Stratham Zoning Ordinance as amended from time to time as meeting the standards for an eligible district as set forth in RSA 79-E:2. (A map of these districts is available on the Town’s website and Town Clerk’s Office.) The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Canada seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. Selectman Federico stated that RSA 79-E allows municipalities to provide tax relief programs to certain areas that they feel need revitalization. He stated that the Town designated these areas in Stratham as the Professional/Residential, and the Town Center Districts. He explained that this would allow a property owner in these two districts who want to upgrade their property to have a five year tax relief over any adjustments or improvements to their property. After five years, they would be taxed at their increased assessment value. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 15 passed.

## **Article 16: Funding the Heritage Preservation Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate Fifty Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$50,000.00) to be deposited in the “Heritage Preservation Fund” as created by the March 11, 2011 Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by a vote of two to one. Selectman Canada moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Canada spoke for the motion. Selectman Canada explained that three years ago Town Meeting set up a capital reserve fund known as the Heritage Preservation Fund. He stated that no money was appropriated at that time and the fund remains empty. He stated that “we are very fortunate to have several people on the Heritage Commission who advocate for our heritage and are ready to preserve it in any number of ways.” He asked that we listen closely to Heritage Commission Chair Becky Mitchell and her explanation of what the Commission might be able to do and why it may need the money to do it. He then asked to turn the floor over to Becky. Becky Mitchell, Portsmouth Ave., and Chair of the Heritage Commission first explained that these funds will not be expended without a public meeting. She then stated a few examples of how this Fund would be used. She stated the first example would allow us to use this for matching funds for outside grants. She also stated another way this Fund could be used would be to nominate Stratham properties that should be listed on the National or State Register of Historic Placements. She stated that the Heritage Commission is now in the process of nominating the Bartlett-Cushman House to the National Registry, and they have every reason to expect success in that endeavor. She also stated that the Heritage Commission would like to see other Stratham properties similarly recognized. She also stated that the Heritage Commission would also like to

see more historical markers in Town telling the stories of significant chapters of Stratham history. Becky also explained that these funds could also prevent a demolition of a significant structure that has value to the history of Stratham. Becky further stated that the cost for a median household in Stratham to put \$50,000.00 into this Fund would be \$14.18. She stated that “you can make a contribution to historic buildings and other landmarks that tells Stratham’s story.” Becky concluded with asking the voters to support this Article. Moderator Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr., stated that he supports this article, knowing that any expenditures of this Fund will come before the Selectmen in a Public Hearing. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Mr. Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 16 passed.

### **Article 17: Funding for 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

Shall the Town vote to raise and appropriate, by special warrant article, the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$10,000.00) for the purpose of defraying the costs associated with the observance of the Town’s 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2016. This is a special warrant article which will be non-lapsing until this purpose has been fulfilled, but shall in no case be later than five (5) years from this appropriation per NH RSA 32:7 (VI). The Board of Selectmen does not recommend this Article by a vote of two to one. Selectman Canada moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Canada first wanted to recognize the people on the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee for their dedication and hard work leading up to the 2016 Anniversary. He then yielded the floor to Chairman John Dold for an update on the progress of this Committee. John Dold, William Circle, and Chair of the 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Committee stated that there are nine members on this Committee and that they have worked very hard since 2010. He then introduced all the members on the Committee. He then went over the events that are being planned for the celebration of Stratham’s 300<sup>th</sup> Anniversary which will take place in 2016. He stated that in March of 2016, they will start off with a theatrical play on the History of Stratham. On the fourth of July weekend in 2016, there will be a large parade that will include high school bands, University bands, and military marching bands. It will also include floats, antique cars, and fire trucks and ambulances. He presented a power point that highlighted a dinner dance on that same July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend at Stratham Hill Park. He stated it will be in a large tent, and it will be catered, with music as well. John stated that there will be fireworks at the end of the night. He then went over all the projected costs for these events. He stated that the total cost for all of these events would be approximately \$50,000.00. John then went over the proposed funding to alleviate some of these costs. He stated that by 2016 the 300<sup>th</sup> Committee should have \$20,000.00 in funds that were raised through various fundraisers. He stated these are the reasons for the request of \$10,000.00 tonight from the Town, and possibly \$10,000.00 for each year over the next two years, depending on the results of the fundraising. He concluded with information on the “Town Motto” contest that is currently ongoing. He stated the winner will be announced at the Memorial Day Service at Stratham Hill Park. Moderator Emanuel then asked for questions or comments from the floor. Selectman Copeland asked to speak as a citizen of the Town and not as a Selectman. He stated that he was against this article because he feels it is too expensive,

and because most of the events fall on the Fourth of July weekend when a lot of people will be away. He urged the Committee to continue their fundraising, and to keep within a reasonable budget. Mr. Copeland stated we should not be spending \$30,000.00 of taxpayers' money for a giant party here in Stratham. He stated that this is not the time to do this, and our budget is up as it is. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question; and it was determined to be unclear by a voice vote. He then asked for a raising of hands to determine the vote. The hands were counted and it was determined the aye's had it by a vote of 51 for, and 46 against. Moderator Emanuel declared that Article 17 passed.

### **Article 18: Annie's Angels**

By petition of Michael J. Welty and 32 other registered voters of the Town of Stratham, to see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the amount of \$2,500 for support of Annie's Angels Memorial Fund, Inc. The funds will be used to continue support for Stratham residents struggling financially through life threatening disease, illness or disability. Annie's Angels is a 501(c) (3) charity. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Michael Welty, Walters Way moved to accept the article as read. June Sawyer, High St. seconded the motion. Mr. Welty spoke for the motion. He stated that Annie's Angels is a 501 (c) (3) charity founded by Bill Dagiau in 2007 in memory of his mother Annie. Mr. Welty stated that she struggled for years with Stage 4 Cancer, and lost her fight on Christmas night in 2002. He explained that Annie's Angels is dedicated to families who are struggling financially with the additional challenge of threatening diseases and disabilities. He further explained that Annie's Angels are presently helping fifteen local families struggling financially due to disease, illness or disability. He stated that Annie's Angels are on a constant lookout for Seacoast Families and individuals who are truly in need of assistance to maintain life's daily requirements. He explained that some of the expenses that they pay for are: food to feed your family, gas in your car to get you to the doctor, oil in your tank to keep you warm, and paying your electric bill to keep your lights on. Mr. Welty stated that since May of 2007, Annie's Angels has raised over \$500,000.00 for financial support through various events. He asked for the voters' support on this article. Moderator Emanuel asked for questions or comments from the floor. Joellen Cuff, Stratham Heights Rd., stated she feels this is a very worthy charity, but questions the appropriateness of public tax money being appropriated for a private charity. She stated that donating to a private charity should be a personal choice. Selectman Canada explained that every year the Town donates to a host of different charities that provide some service to Stratham residents. He went over the list of some of the charities that the Town donates to. Julie McGuinness, Lovell Rd. stated that this charity is currently helping a local twelve year old, and relayed the story of what he is going through right now. She stated that there are several fundraisers going on and Annie's Angels are helping them make this happen. Eileen Joyce, Winterberry Lane, stated she is in support of this article, and also mentioned the local twelve year old, and what he and their family are going through, and how Annie's Angels are helping them. She asked the voters to please support this article. Lester Cuff, Stratham Heights Rd., asked about the list of charities that Stratham donates to and stated that he does not think we should spend taxpayers' money on charities. Selectman Federico responded

with the statement that a better name for this is “a public service agency, not a charity.” He then proceeded to list the current public service agencies that the Town gives money to. He clarified that the first time you ask for money, you go before Town Meeting, just like Annie’s Angels are doing tonight. Gary Dolan, Stratham Lane, stated that he has served on the Budget Advisory Committee for the last fifteen years. He explained that the Budget Committee, along with the Board of Selectmen, reviews this list every year, and they also review what the service or assistance is that will be provided to the Town. He stated that if the Budget Advisory Committee does not believe that they are providing enough services to the Town, then they cut their funds. Roger Stephenson, Stephen Dr., stated that he is in support of this article and for three hundred years, the Town has provided social welfare to the citizens of Stratham in different ways, and he stated that is one reason he is proud to support this Article. He also stated that Annie’s Angels was started by a small business in Stratham. Selectman Copeland also spoke in favor of this article. He stated that the residents of the Town directly benefit from this program and that is why he supports this. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 18 passed.

#### **Article 19: Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Five Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$25,000.00) to be deposited into the “Town Buildings and Grounds Maintenance Expendable Trust Fund” as created by the March 16, 2012 Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Federico moved to accept this article as read. Selectman Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. Selectman Federico stated that this fund was created at the 2012 Town Meeting, but the Town did not put any money into it at that time. They first wanted to see what the Town had for resources and the conditions of the septic systems, wells, roofs, etc. They now want to put money into this trust fund in order to better maintain the Town buildings and grounds. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative and Article 19 passed.

#### **Article 20: EMS Fund Appropriation**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Twenty Nine Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$29,000.00) for the following purposes:

2014 EMS/EMT/First Responder Training	\$19,000.00
2014 ALS Services Contract	\$10,000.00

and to further authorize the withdrawal of Twenty Nine Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$29,000.00) from the Stratham Fire Department EMS Special Revenue Fund created for these purposes during the March 17, 2000 Annual Town Meeting and as amended during the March 11, 2005 Town Meeting. No additional funds from general taxation are to be used. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Copeland moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Federico seconded the motion. Selectman Copeland spoke for the

motion. Selectman Copeland explained that this article has to be brought to Town Meeting every year. He stated that this is no cost to you in tax dollars. He explained that this is just revenue that is produced by ambulance billing. He stated that the money raised comes through the Town, and then is put into a special account. He further explained that it has to be voted on every year by you so it can be taken out of this special account and put towards the EMS training. He stated that the Advanced Life Support System, (ALS) service contract is also money that is in and out. The billing process is through Medicaid, and Medicaid has to be paid before the funds are recovered. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 20 passed.

#### **Article 21: Accrued Benefits Trust Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars and no cents (\$10,000.00) to be deposited into the “Accrued Benefits Liability Expendable Trust Fund” as created by the March 16, 2007 Town Meeting to meet the currently unfunded obligations of the Town. The Board of Selectmen recommends this Article by unanimous vote. Selectman Federico moved to accept the article as read. Selectman Copeland seconded the motion. Selectman Federico spoke for the motion. He explained that this fund was created several years ago. He further stated that this fund enables the Town to pay accrued benefits owed to employees who are retiring or leaving without the Town having to borrow the money. Seeing no further questions or comments from the floor, Moderator Emanuel read the question, the vote was taken in the affirmative, and Article 21 passed.

#### **Article 22: Other Business**

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

Selectman Canada first wanted to thank all the residents that volunteer their time on the various boards and committees. He stated that anyone who wished to volunteer on the various boards to please feel free to sign up on the Town website or at the Town Offices by March 31st. He also asked that any newly elected Town Officers come forward and be sworn in after the meeting, or come to the Town Clerk’s office next week. Selectman Copeland announced that the Conservation Commission will be holding their annual clean- up day on Saturday, April 12, at 9:00 a.m. He stated that they will be meeting at the Stratham Hill Park Pavilion and everyone will be issued gloves and safety vests. Lunch will also be provided. Seeing no other business before the Town, Moderator Emanuel asked everyone to put their chairs away on the chair racks. He then closed the meeting at 12:00 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Joyce L. Charbonneau  
Stratham Town Clerk