

TOWN OF TUFTONBORO

Annual Town Meeting Minutes

March 14, 2023 – Town Elections

March 15, 2023 – Town Meeting

At a legal meeting of the inhabitants of the Town of Tuftonboro, County of Carroll, and State of New Hampshire on Tuesday, the fourteenth day of March 2023, at 8:00 AM at the Tuftonboro Town House, the meeting was called to order by Moderator Steve Brinser. The polls were declared open for voting and to remain open until 7:00 PM or until all present that wish to vote have voted.

Ballots were cast for school officers and for articles on the school warrant, as provided for under the SB2 plan. The school district ballots were taken to Wolfeboro to be counted.

Listed below are the results of the town balloting for **Article 1: to choose all necessary Town Officers for the year ensuing:**

Selectman for Three Years	Votes
William “Chip” Albee	339
Tim Galvin	138
Write In	2

Town Clerk for Three Years	
Jennifer Coulter	472
Write In	2

Tax Collector for Three Years	
Jacquelyn H. Rollins	397
Chris Sawyer	87
Write In	0

Supervisor of the Checklist for Three Years	
Write In - Dan Barnard	78
Other Write Ins	46

Road Agent for Three Years	
Jim Bean	298
Frank Tranchita	171
Write In	3

Budget Committee for Three Years	
David W. Dauphinais	352
Garreth A. Chehames	339
Write In	11

Budget Committee for One Year	
Brendan D. Gaughran	409
Write In	9

Trustee of the Trust Funds for Three Years

Peter Sluski	421
Write In	2

Cemetery Trustee for Three Years

Alana Albee	441
Write In	6

Library Trustee for Three Years

Paul Matlock	434
Write In	4

March 15, 2023 – Tuftonboro Central School

Moderator Steve Brinser called the second portion of the 2023 Annual Meeting to order at 7:00 PM on Wednesday, March 15 at the gymnasium at Tuftonboro Central School.

The meeting was opened with a salute to the flag. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by three local participants, Samuel Saxby, Nolan Chominski and Brendan MacPhee, in the National Pass, Punt & Kick Competition under the guidance of Parks and Rec Director, Dennis Zilembo.

Rev. Thom Christian provided an invocation.

The Moderator asked that all those who have served or are currently serving our country to stand to be recognized.

Moderator Steve Brinser explained the voting card each voter received when they checked in at the meeting. Non-registered voters were identified by a show of hands. Thanks were given to Dave Cash and the janitorial crew at TCS for assistance with set up for the town election and town meeting. Kyle Williams was also recognized for his assistance and expertise with the sound equipment. Rules for the meeting were reviewed by the moderator, guidelines provided by the NH Municipal Association. Rules can be found in the town report.

Attorney Laura Spector-Morgan of Mitchell Municipal Group was introduced as the town legal counsel. She would be available for any legal questions that might arise during the meeting.

Sue Wingate of the Tuftonboro Association reminded everyone that the Annual Road Clean Up is on Saturday, April 22. Trash bags will be available at the town offices. Volunteers are asked to sign up for specific roads to clean on the sheet at the town offices. You may use your own bags or ones provided by the town.

School Board Chair Jack Widmer advised that the town of Effingham had postponed their election to Tuesday, March 28. Since they are in the GWRSD, voting results for the school board positions and articles will not be available until after that date.

Moderator Steve Brinser announced the results of the Town Election and introduced the Elected Officers.

Gordon Hunt was recognized for his time serving on the Budget Committee for six years, and Guy Pike was recognized for serving as a Cemetery Trustee for seven years.

The meeting then proceeded with the remaining articles of the Town Warrant.

Article 02: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Hundred and Eighty-Seven Thousand and Five Hundred Dollars (\$287,500.00) for the repairs and upgrades of Union Wharf and boat launch. This special warrant article will be a non-lapsing appropriation raised from the Undesignated Fund Balance, no additional monies to be raised from new taxes. This article will not lapse until upgrades and repairs to the Wharf and boat launch are completed or by March 2028, whichever is sooner.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Bob Murray moved the article and Sue Weeks seconded. Selectman Murray advised that there was a delay this year on making the upgrades due to permitting issues. The money has already been approved and allocated. Jeff Newcomb asked if the repairs would improve the docking situation at the wharf. Selectman Chip Albee replied that they will be replacing the bulkheads and access will be better. Fran Laase asked if the boat launch would be expanded. The design is available at the town offices, but we do have to fit within the current design.

The Moderator reread Article 2 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 03: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Four Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$450,000.00) for the preparation and paving of major Town through roads.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved and David Dauphinais seconded. Selectman Pike stated that the selectmen increased the amount requested based on input from the Lakes Region Planning Commission. The roads to be completed would be Federal Corner Road and Tuftonboro Neck Road. Skip Hurt stepped forward and encouraged the selectmen to consider using Bonds in order to raise more money and to cover more roads. That would benefit the whole town, not just residents on those selected roads.

The Moderator reread Article 3 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 04: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred and Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000.00) for the preparation and paving of Tuftonboro Neighborhood Roads.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved the article and Max Ledoux seconded. Jeff Newcomb who lives on Shirley Way raised concerns that the Neighborhood Roads are not getting enough attention and that it will take a long time to repair these at the amount that is being allocated. Diane Sebastian also from Shirley Way is concerned that the road repairs are not being done correctly as some of the repaired road already has many cracks.

The Moderator reread Article 4 and called for the vote. The article **PASSED**.

Article 05: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to be placed into the previous established Police Vehicle Expendable Fund.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the article and Susan Weeks seconded. Selectman Albee explained this fund will allow the town to replace cars as needed. There are no plans to purchase this year and the town still has approximately \$16,000 in the fund.

The Moderator reread Article 5 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 06: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fourteen Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$14,250.00) for the purpose of purchasing and installing a stationary generator at the Melvin Village Fire Station.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved the article and Gordon Hunt seconded. This generator will provide power in case of an outage and bring the Melvin Village Fire Station in line with the other stations in town.

The Moderator reread Article 6 and called for the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 07: Shall the Town of Tuftonboro readopt the OPTIONAL VETERANS' TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28, II, for an annual tax credit on residential property of Five Hundred Dollars, (\$500.00).

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 5-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the article, with Paul Thornton seconding the motion.

Peter Sluski made a motion to amend the article as written from \$500 to \$750 as allowed under RSA 72:28, II. This is the maximum amount allowed under this RSA. Selectman Pike seconded the motion. Peter indicated that there are nine other municipalities in NH that have adopted this amount, as a tangible support of veteran property owners.

Amended Article 07: Shall the Town of Tuftonboro readopt the OPTIONAL VETERANS' TAX CREDIT in accordance with RSA 72:28, II, for an annual tax credit on residential property of Seven hundred-fifty Dollars, (\$750.00) as allowed under the referenced RSA.

The Moderator reread the Amended Article 7 and called for the vote to approve the amendment. The amendment PASSED.

The Moderator reread the Amended Article 7 and called for the vote. The Amended Article 7 **PASSED**.

Article 08: To see if the town will vote to establish a contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further, to raise and appropriate Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) to put in the fund. Said sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at year end will lapse into the general fund.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved the article and Paul Thornton seconded. This article is to provide funds in case of unusual or unexpected expenses for the year.

The moderator called for a vote and the article **PASSED**.

Article 09: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred and Twenty-five Thousand Dollars (\$125,000.00) to replace and equip the Fire Department's 2010 Car 1.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the motion, with Bob Murray seconding. Selectman Albee spoke to the article, indicating that the funds will be used to replace the Fire Chief's 13-year-old SUV, with a Pick-Up Truck. The truck would work better with the fire equipment and the old car has had some repair issues.

Chief Adam Thompson spoke to the article stating that the current mileage is around 115,000 with a rebuilt engine. With a pick-up truck, the equipment would be separated from people. They have three different bids currently in the \$53,000-60,000 range, with the additional money being used to equip the vehicle.

The moderator reread the article and called for a vote. Article 9 **PASSED**.

Article 10: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$30,000) for the permitting, engineering, and design of a 100kw solar/electric generation facility. This is a non-lapsing article (December 31, 2028).

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the motion and Gordon Hunt seconded. Selectman Albee explained that the selectmen were looking at options for the Town Municipal buildings. A federal law has changed which will allow government entities to participate with the 30% tax credit. They originally looked at a proposal for the whole project, but did not have enough support. The funds allocated would be used to look at designs for the three town buildings or at the Transfer Station to generate electricity to be sold to NH Electric. By designing the project in 2023, the Selectmen hope to move forward next year with a full project. The goal is to reduce our costs for electricity, but need to get more information from the design.

Moderator Steve Brinser reread the article, called for a vote and Article 10 **PASSED**.

Article 11: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to establish an Engine 4 Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing and equipping a new Fire Truck as suggested by the Capital Improvement Committee. Furthermore, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the fund.

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Bob Murray moved the Article, with Sue Weeks seconding the motion. Selectman Murray offered an Amendment to the Article. He would like to change the wording from Engine 4 to Apparatus. This would take the limitation off a specific vehicle. Paul Thornton seconded the motion.

Some discussion followed about the reasoning for this, mainly concluding that this would make the funds available for whatever apparatus might be needed.

Jill Cromwell from CIP advised that they are trying to establish Capital Reserve funds to help pay for these large purchases over time.

Amended Article 11: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to establish a Fire Engine Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing and equipping new Fire Apparatus. Furthermore, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the fund.

Max Ledoux made a motion to strike the last sentence appointing the Selectmen as agents to expend the fund. Skip Hurt seconded. Jill Cromwell asked if the Selectmen think that is necessary. Selectmen Albee stated that based on the costs of fire apparatus, he doubts that there would be enough money in the fund to expend it without the approval of the voters.

Moderator Brinser called for a vote on the amendment to strike the last sentence. The vote **FAILED**.

The moderator read the Amended Article and called for a vote to approve the amendment. The amendment was passed as read.

The moderator called for a vote to approve the Amended Article 11 and the article **PASSED**.

Article 12: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirty-Six Thousand, One Hundred and Thirty Dollars (\$36,130.00) to purchase and equip a Compactor to replace Compactor #2 at the Transfer Station.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Guy Pike moved the article and Selectman Bob Murray seconded. Guy spoke to the need to replace the current compactor.

The moderator read the article again and the article **PASSED**.

Article 13: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$50,000.00) to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing and equipping equipment for the Transfer Station. Furthermore, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from the fund.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 4-2)

Selectman Bob Murray moved the article, with Selectman Guy Pike offering a second. Selectman Murray explained that the Transfer Station is currently using a Back Hoe to move containers and other things. They would like to purchase a Loader, which would be more expensive. This appropriation would be used to establish a Capital Reserve Fund for equipment.

Skip Hurt spoke and indicated that he does not object to the expenditure, but would like the town to focus on a different way to fund things. He believes that using bonds to spread the cost of these items more easily over the years would be more effective. He thinks the town should come up with more innovative ways to purchase equipment.

Selectman Albee responded that the Selectmen are averse to taking on debt and that they budget and appropriate funds to avoid that. Budget Committee Member David Dauphinais also stated that by saving toward large expenditures we are being fiscally responsible by appropriating the money in this way.

Ann Hackl asked for clarification of what “equipment” would be purchased. She wonders if a Paper Baler would be considered, as we voted for paper recycling in 2021 and then did not vote for the paper baler in 2022. Selectman Murray stated that since the baler was not approved last year, the town does not seem to support that. If the town changed their position, it could be reviewed again.

Max Ledoux pointed out that the Selectmen could go ahead and purchase a baler if they wanted to since they are allowed to expend this fund.

Tim Galvin indicated that there was a lot of discussion about the Loader at Budget Committee meetings and the use of it and wanted clarification from them. Budget Committee Chair Gordon Hunt stated that in their meeting, one of the selling points of the Loader is that it could be used by other departments.

Moderator Brinser agreed with Ann Hackl that we should be more specific about what equipment would be purchased. There was much discussion about what “equipment” means. Moderator asked Selectman Albee to clarify. He indicated that the selectman would come back to the voters for a final decision about what equipment would be purchased.

Robert Zimmerman asked about paper recycling, as they do in Sandwich, and is wondering if there is a market for it. It was noted that last year at town meeting, an article for the purchase of a baler for paper recycling was defeated. One of the concerns was the cost to the town to recycle paper.

Trustee Peter Sluski reminded everyone that the wording needs to be clear as the trustees can only expend the funds based on the specific wording of the article. If you restrict the wording of the article, it may make it more difficult to expend the money.

The question was raised again about using the funds to purchase a Baler. Max Ledoux suggested that the selectmen could purchase one with the approval of this article. Selectman Albee stated that the selectmen would not as the town had voted that down in 2022.

Town Counsel Laura Spector-Morgan agreed that Max Ledoux was right that the funds could be spent for a paper baler, but the Selectmen had already indicated that they would follow the will of the people as indicated in the 2022 Town Meeting.

Joe Ewing made a motion to change the article to read Front Loader instead of Equipment. Skip Hurt seconded. Moderator Brinser asked for a vote on the amendment and that FAILED.

Moderator Brinser reread Article 13 as originally presented and called the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 14: To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty-Two Thousand Dollars (\$52,000.00) to purchase and install a Fire Suppression System in the Town Office File Rooms.

(Majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Selectman Bob Murray moved the article and Paul Thornton seconded. Selectman Murray discussed the need to protect the property and historical records that are in the vaults and the safe room at the Town Offices. Nancy Piper wondered if this was a water system. Selectman Murray confirmed it will be a clean dry agent used to extinguish flames.

Moderator Brinser reread the article and called the vote. Article **PASSED**.

Article 15: To see if the Town of Tuftonboro will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$250,000, for the purpose of providing a capital contribution towards the renovation of the Pop Whalen Ice and Arts Center. *In 1989, Tuftonboro provided Wolfeboro with a capital contribution which was 12% of the initial arena construction cost \$250,000 is 3.6% of the construction cost for the new facility.* (By Petition)

(Majority vote required)

(Not Recommended by Board of Selectmen 0-3)

(Not Recommended by Budget Committee 0-6)

Jackie Rollins moved the article and Brian Hastings offered a second.

Brian Hastings spoke to the article stating that this would be in the best interests of the community, both young and old. He feels that we should continue to support Pop Whalen and our students in the community. This provides a place for them to go and it is very accessible to local families. The cost of the renovation to the ice rink is \$6.9 million. Wolfeboro has committed \$4.2 million. The \$250,000

would be less than Tuftonboro's usage of 10%. The one-time cost would be an average of \$44.00 to the taxpayers.

Dave Dauphinais offered his concern for the timing of this request. The project started last year and the town was approached this year after the construction has been completed. He wanted to know what the town gets from making this donation. Selectman Albee responded that we currently pay \$16,000 to participate in Wolfeboro Parks and Rec programs, and there would not be anything additional provided by this donation.

Selectman Albee also pointed out that the petitioned warrant article on the GWRSD Ballot looking to raise \$300,000 for Pop Whalen would also come from Tuftonboro taxes if approved.

Mary Hunter pointed out that the donation in 1989 was for Pop Whalen even though it was in Wolfeboro. This is for the people who use this property, not the actual property. Prices went up in 2021 and because of the increased cost since the initial quotes, they need more money to finish the project.

Selectman Murray stated that the duty of the selectman is to manage the town and they did not feel it was appropriate to give money to another town. If people want to make donations to Pop Whalen, that would be their choice.

Erin Dauphinais asked if making a private donation to Pop Whalen would be tax deductible. She suggested that people do that since a tax payment is not deductible. She felt that the money should come from private donations.

Bill Alcaraz strongly encouraged people to support the next generation of kids.

Rick Weeks felt that there were valid points being made on both sides. He made a motion to amend the amount of money requested to \$100,000. Susan Weeks seconded. Moderator Brinser called for a vote to amend the article from \$250,000 to \$100,000. The vote FAILED.

Brian MacPhee stated that he feels that this is a very honorable project but the method for funding is a problem. Friends of Abenaki is supposed to raise money to fund the remaining part of the project, but they are asking taxpayers of another town to raise the money. Contributing privately is an option for people who would like to do that, but he does not feel it is right to ask taxpayers to give money to a private organization. The town should be focusing on needs not wants.

Andy Bonenfant made one last plea to support our kids. \$50 would go a long way to step up and assist children and the future of this program.

There was a request in writing by a minimum of five voters to proceed with a secret ballot for Article 14. Voters took a voting card to vote yes or no. Ballots were collected by the ballot clerks.

The meeting continued while votes were tabulated.

Article 16: Shall the Town of Tuftonboro accept the provisions of RSA 53-G:1-RSA 53-G:11 providing for the establishment of a communications district, together with the municipalities of Albany, Bartlett, Brookfield, Chatham, Conway, Eaton, Effingham, Freedom, Hales Location, Harts Location, Jackson, Madison, Moultonborough, Ossipee, and Tamworth in accordance with the provisions of the proposed agreement filed with Tuftonboro Board of Selectmen.

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

Selectman Bob Murray moved the article, with Selectman Pike seconding. Selectman Murray explained that this article would give the town the ability to negotiate with a group of towns to help get better internet service throughout the communications district. There is no money associated with this article. There was no further discussion.

Moderator Brinser reread Article 16 and called for a vote. The article **PASSED**.

The results of **Article 15** (Pop Whalen) were read – 55 Yes and 112 No – the article **FAILED**.

At this time, Moderator Steve Brinser reminded everyone that it might be appropriate to restrict reconsideration at this time to ensure that we would not vote on any of the issues already decided at the meeting. By restricting reconsideration, we would not reconsider or vote again at this meeting.

Max Ledoux made a motion to restrict reconsideration of articles. Jill Cromwell seconded. The Moderator called for a vote and the motion **PASSED**.

Article 17: To see if the Town will approve the building of a Police Station designed to be approximately 26% smaller than that which was initially presented at public meetings and on the Town web page. Passage of this Article would enable the Selectmen to have a new Police Station constructed and equipped for the amount of money already voted and approved by the Town at previous Town meetings and avoid inflationary pressure to raise additional money from taxes.

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the article. Selectman Pike seconded. Selectman Albee spoke to the article indicating that last year the article to raise the additional money needed to complete the police station as designed failed. There is a new design that could be built with the current funds that have already been collected. This design would allow for a second phase when and if the tax payers wanted the additional space. The town has secured a grant from the USDA for \$375,000 that requires an affirmative vote from the town to accept the smaller building.

Jeff Newcomb asked what changes were made to the original plans. Policy Chief Shagoury indicated that the supervisor's office was eliminated, the Emergency Operations/training/meeting room was eliminated, the size of the locker room was reduced, and an exercise room was eliminated and a storage area relocated into the hallway.

Tim Christian questioned what would happen to the grant money if we don't do this. If we don't do it now, the selectmen will present it again next year.

Peter Sluski, Trustee of the Trust Funds, stated that we have \$751,494 in the Capital Reserve Fund and \$375,000 from the Grant, for a total of \$1,126,494. He wonders if that amount is adequate. Selectman Albee indicated that it would be and that the plans and design have been completed, so there would not be additional costs for that.

Nick Madden raised a question about using the existing space at the Town Offices. Chief Shagoury indicated that they had evaluated that and the cost to make changes and to make the building accessible by using the basement would be prohibitive.

Moderator Brinser reread the article and the article **PASSED**.

Article 18: To See if the Town will vote to reaffirm that the Pier and boat launch at 19 Mile Bay, commonly referred to as Union Wharf, will be held in perpetuity for the benefit of the general public (both residents and non-residents). The Select board will retain authority to regulate the uses, and access to the wharf.

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

Selectman Chip Albee moved the article and Selectman Pike seconded. In order to secure additional grant money to complete more work on Union Wharf, the town needs to approve this article. This will help improve Union Wharf for everyone. There was no further discussion.

Moderator Brinser reread the article and the article **PASSED**.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Four Million Seven Hundred and Fifty-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Fifty-Three Dollars (\$4,752,753.00). for general Town Operations. The Selectmen recommended Four Million Seven Hundred and Fifty-Two Thousand, Seven Hundred and Fifty-Three Dollars (\$4,752,753.00). This article does not include any special or individual warrant articles.

(Majority vote required)
(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0 and the Budget Committee 6-0)

Budget Committee Chairman Gordon Hunt moved the article with Max Ledoux offering a second. Chairman Hunt spoke about the work that the Budget Committee and Selectmen did this year. He indicated that they really worked hard and dug into the budget. Even with a cost-of-living increase of 7.5%, they were able to keep the increase to only 1.25% for the town budget. He feels that this is a good budget and asked for the town's support.

Moderator Brinser reread the article and the article **PASSED**.

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting at approximately 9:40 PM.

There were 185 voters in attendance, along with other observers.

I hereby attest to the minutes' authenticity and accuracy.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer M. Coulter
Tuftonboro Town Clerk
3/29/23