

TOWN OF GRANTHAM NEW HAMPSHIRE

**Town Meeting
March 13, 2012**

SS. STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Moderator Victoria Smith called the 236th Annual Town Meeting to order at 5:15pm. The Grantham Junior Girl Scout Troop led the assembly in the Pledge of Allegiance.

The Grantham Town Report was dedicated to F. Robert Osgood. Selectman Connie Jones spoke to the dedication.

Moderator Smith stated that the meeting having been properly warned as it is certified on page 16 of the Town Report and by the authority vested in me by the laws of the State of New Hampshire I do now declare the 236th Annual Meeting of the Town of Grantham officially opened for business. Polls were officially opened at 10:00am for ballot voting and close at 7:00pm. Absentee ballots were counted at 1:00pm in the afternoon.

Moderator Smith introduced Selectmen Constance Jones, Kenneth Story and Warren Kimball; Town Clerk/Tax Collector Rita Friedman, Deputy Town Clerk/Tax Collector Cindy Towle, Town Administrator Becky Merrow, Administrative Assistant Melissa White; Police Chief Walter Madore; Supervisors of the Checklist: Donna Stamper, Sandra Noordsey, Janet Goodrow; Assistant Moderator Lorie McClory; ballot clerks: Paula Dorr, Michael Holdowsky, Missy Walla and Robert Grimley.

The rules of the Meeting, were adopted and the Moderator directed the Town Clerk to make the rules of the meeting a permanent part of the meeting record.

2012 Town Meeting Rules

1. Non-voters who are not officers of the town may be allowed to address the meeting only if the town votes to permit it.
2. All voters will direct their remarks to the moderator. Whenever a voter wishes to speak, he or she will address the moderator and identify him or herself.
3. Unless superseded by State law, reconsideration of a vote on any article should be brought up immediately after the vote has been declared. A vote on the issuance of bonds or notes over \$100,000 cannot be reconsidered at the same meeting. The town may also vote to restrict reconsideration of any other vote in the same manner.
4. The moderator will conduct a secret "yes-no" ballot vote when five voters make a written request prior to a voice or show of hands vote on any article open for discussion.

5. Any ruling by the moderator can be challenged. The moderator will conduct a secret “yes-no” ballot when seven or more voters question any non-ballot vote immediately after the vote is declared, and before any other business is conducted.
6. All proposed amendments to articles will be submitted in writing to the moderator prior to discussion of the amendment.
7. Registered voters only will be seated in the center section of the meeting hall. Non-Voters will be seated in the visitor’s gallery in the area bounded by the pillars and the inside wall of the meeting hall.

ARTICLE 1 – Election of Officers

To choose by ballot and major vote for the ensuing years as enumerated:

Kenneth Story	Selectman	3 years
Karen Ryan	Planning Board	3 years
Carl D. Hanson	Planning Board	3 years
Wendy L. Grant	Library Trustee	3 years
Edward C. Jenik	Library Trustee	3 years
Lorie M. McClory	Library Trustee	1 year
Robert Kevin Hughes	Library Trustee	1 year
A.W. Anderson	Cemetery Trustee	3 years
Robert A. Lewis	Trustee of Trust Funds	3 years
James F. Coakley	Trustee of Trust Funds	2 years
Jane R. Taylor	Supervisor of Checklist	6 years
Victoria H. Smith	Moderator	2 years

ARTICLE 2 -- Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning Ordinance Change(s)

Pursuant to RSA 675:4, we the undersigned registered voters of Grantham, New Hampshire submit this petition for an amendment to adopt the following Zoning Ordinance, to be included under Article XII: Signs, with a ballot vote:

SIGN, SANDWICH BOARD: A free standing, A-frame ground sign having a message on both sides shall be allowed in the Business and Business Light Industrial Districts only, and may not be larger than 3 ft. x 4 ft. (12 square feet) in area. The sign shall not obstruct visibility of vehicles or pedestrians, and shall not be located within a street or street right-of-way. Only one such sign shall be allowed in front of each business establishment. The sign shall be removed during non-open business hours. The sign shall be properly secured and/or weighted as to not intrude upon, infringe upon or cause a hazard to passers-by and/or the traveling public.

Rationale: Running a business in a small town is challenging. Sandwich Board signs are extremely beneficial in exposing customers to information regarding goods and services as well as special sales. As Grantham has very limited Business and Business Light Industrial Districts such signs would be minimal in number. In this economy, helping our local businesses to thrive is essential.

Is recommended by the Planning Board.

YES 255 NO 40

ARTICLE 3—Modification of the Standard Elderly Exemption.

It was moved and seconded: Shall the Town modify an exemption for the elderly under the provisions of RSA 72:39-b as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$40,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$60,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$75,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least 3 consecutive years and own the real estate individually or jointly, or if the real estate is owned by such person’s spouse, they must have been married for at least 5 consecutive years. In addition, the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$40,000, or if married, a combined net income of less than \$60,000; and own net assets not in excess of \$100,000 if single or \$120,000 if married, excluding the value of the person’s residence as described in RSA 72:39-a(I).

**Is Recommended by the Board of Selectmen
(Majority Vote Required)**

Article 3 Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 4 – General Government

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million thirty-six thousand seven hundred sixteen dollars (**\$1,036,716.00**) to defray the cost of **General Government** operations.

**IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority Vote Required)**

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Selectmen’s Office	\$148,390.00	\$191,492.00
Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$103,746.00	\$110,603.00
Supervisors of the Checklist	\$5,177.00	\$5,192.00
Financial Administration	\$67,593.00	\$28,700.00
Tax Maps/Assessing	\$35,000.00	\$35,000.00
Legal	\$10,000.00	\$12,000.00
Personnel Administration	\$450,200.00	\$464,300.00
Planning Board	\$7,750.00	\$7,750.00

Zoning Board of Adjustment	\$2,300.00	\$1,085.00
General Government Buildings	\$118,200.00	\$127,299.00
Cemeteries	\$15,900.00	\$19,545.00
Insurance	\$26,500.00	\$30,000.00
Regional Associations	\$3,100.00	\$3,750.00
TOTAL	\$993,856.00	\$1,036,716.00

Article 4 Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 5 – Public Safety

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of five hundred fifty-seven thousand six hundred fifty seven dollars (**\$557,657.00**) to defray the cost of **Public Safety** operations.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Majority Vote Required)

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Police Department	\$347,678.00	\$357,954.00
EMS (FAST) Squad	\$56,192.00	\$65,492.00
Fire Department	\$107,095.00	\$113,762.00
Forest Fire	\$375.00	\$375.00
Building Inspection	\$6,560.00	\$6,000.00
Emergency Management	\$13,251.00	\$14,074.00
TOTAL	\$531,151.00	\$557,657.00

Article 5 Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 6 – Public Works

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of six hundred seventy-four thousand one hundred forty three dollars (**\$674,143.00**) to defray the cost of **Public Works** operation.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Majority Vote Required)

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Highway Administration	\$177,400.00	\$184,100.00
Highway Maintenance	\$158,700.00	\$153,200.00
Street Lights	\$4,000.00	\$4,000.00
Transfer Station	\$121,349.00	\$122,843.00
Waste Disposal	\$184,000.00	\$204,000.00
Landfill Monitoring	\$8,000.00	\$6,000.00
TOTAL	\$653,449.00	\$674,143.00

Article 6 Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 7 – Health and Welfare

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty-three thousand seventy dollars (**\$33,070.00**) to defray the cost of **Health and Welfare** operations.

**IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority Vote Required)**

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Boarding Animals	\$100.00	\$100.00
Community Services	\$13,870.00	\$14,970.00
Town General Assistance	\$10,000.00	\$18,000.00
TOTAL	\$23,970.00	\$33,070.00

Community Agencies:

Lake Sunapee Home Health (Requested \$8,239.00)	\$7,500.00
Sullivan County Nutrition SVCS (Requested \$200.00)	\$ 200.00
Kearsarge Area COA (Requested \$2,500.00)	\$2,500.00
S. Western Comm Services (Requested \$850.00)	\$ 850.00
West Central Services (Requested \$2,420.00).....	\$2,420.00
Community Alliance of Human Svcs (Requested \$500.00) \$	0.00
Mascoma Valley Health Initiative (Requested \$1,875.00)..	\$1,500.00
CASA (Requested \$500.00).....	\$ 0.00
American Red Cross (Requested \$1,124).....	\$ 0.00
Total:	\$14,970.00

Article 7 Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 8 – Culture and Recreation

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of two hundred thirty-five thousand eight hundred seven (**\$235,807.00**) for **Culture and Recreation**.

**IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority Vote Required)**

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Recreation	\$34,377.00	\$35,319.00
Dunbar Free Library	\$164,545.00	\$172,105.00
Activities	\$26,655.00	\$27,383.00
Archives	\$500.00	\$1,000.00
TOTAL	\$226,077.00	\$235,807.00

Article 8 Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 9 – Conservation, Bond Notes, Interest and Tax Anticipation Notes

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of ninety-eight thousand three hundred dollars (**\$98,300.00**) for **Conservation, Bond Notes, Interest and Tax Anticipation Notes.**

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority Vote Required)

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Conservation Commission	\$2,500.00	\$2,000.00
Bond Payment	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00
Bond Interest	\$39,150.00	\$36,200.00
Tax Anticipation Notes Interest	\$100.00	\$100.00
TOTAL	\$101,750.00	\$98,300.00

Article 9 Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 10 – Capital Reserve Funds

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred sixty-two thousand two hundred fifty dollars (**\$162,250.00**) to be placed in previously established **Capital Reserve Funds.**

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority Vote Required)

Account Title	Budget 2011/2012	Proposed 2012/2013
Fire Department Capital Reserve	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
Highway Equip Capital Reserve	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
Town Office Equip Capital Reserve	\$1,000.00	\$2,000.00
Transfer Station Capital Reserve	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00
Police Vehicle Capital Reserve	\$5,000.00	\$10,000.00
Mowers Capital Reserve	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Revaluation	\$15,000.00	\$30,000.00
Town Buildings	\$15,000.00	\$15,000.00
Athletics Fields Capital Reserve	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00
Bridge Replacement Capital Reserve	\$33,250.00	\$33,250.00
TOTAL	\$111,250.00	\$162,250.00

Article 10 Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 11 – Library Capital Reserve Funds

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of fifty thousand dollars (**\$50,000.00**) to be placed in previously established **Library Addition Capital Reserve Fund**.

IS NOT RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(MAJORITY VOTE REQUIRED)

Moderator Smith recognized Ed Jenik to speak to the article. Mr. Jenik made a motion to amend article 11 to read: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of twenty five thousand dollars (**\$25,000**) to be place in the previously established Library Addition Capital Reserve Fund. **It was moved and seconded to accept amendment.**

Mr. Jenik explained the Board of Trustees felt the reduction was in keeping with financial responsibility to the Town.

Amendment Passed by Majority Voice Vote

Article 11 as amended Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 12 – Land Preservation Capital Reserve Fund

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one hundred thousand dollars (**\$100,000.00**) to be placed in previously established **Land Preservation Capital Reserve Fund**.

IS NOT RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority vote required)

Moderator Smith recognized Conservation Commission Chair Richard Hocker to speak to the article. Mr. Hocker made a motion to amend article 12 to read: To see if the town will vote to appropriate the sum of sixty thousand dollars (**60,000.00**) from the general fund surplus, to be placed in the previously established Land Preservation Capital Reserve Fund.”

Amendment Passed by Hand Count YES 109 NO 70

Moderator Smith recognized Phil Schaefer who asked if we could take money from the General Fund at any time if land came up for sale. Administrator Newton explained this action would require several public hearings and a vote by 2 different boards and the money would have to be in the Capital Reserve to accomplish that.

The Moderator recognized Deborah Cheever who inquired about the amount of acres currently in conservation in Grantham. Richard Hocker answered 1571 acres.

The Moderator recognized Robert MacNeil who asked if there was any pressing need to buy land this year. Merle Schotanus answered that it was not pressing, but asked that we take a look at the long term.

Article 12 as Amended Failed by Hand Count Yes 86 NO 101

ARTICLE 13 – Police Department Cruiser

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of thirty five thousand dollars (**\$35,000.00**) for the purchase of a replacement cruiser and to authorize the withdrawal of ten thousand dollars (**\$10,000.00**) from the Police Vehicles Capital Reserve Fund previously established for that purpose, twenty-five thousand dollars (**\$25,000.00**) to be raised by taxation and to permit the Selectmen to dispose of the existing 2007 Dodge Durango 4x4 SUV cruiser by “trade in” allowance or by sale as deemed in the best interest of the Town of Grantham.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(Majority vote required)

Moderator Smith recognized Police Chief Walter Madore to speak to the article. Chief Madore addressed the need for a replacement vehicle based on its age and mileage and the need for a reliable cruiser.

The Moderator recognized Bob MacNeil. Mr MacNeil spoke about the number of police vehicles the Town of Grantham Police Department has and the concern that the number of vehicles exceeds the need. He would like to see an evaluation of the police department cruiser fleet and further determine an equitable number and our needs for the future. Further discussion addressed the need for reliable vehicles in bad weather and concerns about high mileage and reliability of the cruisers in operation now.

Moderator Smith declared a secret Yes/No ballot vote for article 13.

Article 13 Failed Yes/No Ballot YES 79 NO 116

ARTICLE 14 – Athletics Fields Capital Reserve Fund – Change of Purpose

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of the Athletics Fields Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The Athletics Fields Capital Reserve Fund shall be used for construction of athletic fields, purchase of capital equipment associated with the Recreation Park Master Plan and other physical improvements, including but not limited to pavilions, playgrounds, septic systems, roads, snow towing equipment, conduits, parking areas and water wells and to vote to authorize the Selectmen as agents to expend from this fund.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN
(2/3 vote required per RSA 35:16)

Article 14 Passed by Majority Voice Vote (1 nay voice vote)

ARTICLE 15 – Taxpayer Coalition

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one-thousand dollars (\$1,000) and to expend said funds by making a contribution to the Coalition Communities group headed by the City of Portsmouth, New Hampshire. The Coalition Communities group consists of 35 towns and represents the Town of Grantham in attempting to find a solution to the educational funding issue that does not reinstate donor towns but allows Grantham to continue to keep the statewide education property tax for local use to fund local schools. The Coalition already has saved the Town of Grantham hundreds of thousands of dollars per year for several years. The Coalition is continuing to fight to reverse any new “donor town” formula. Less than \$0.01 Impact on tax Rate.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Majority vote required)

The Moderator recognized Carl Hanson to speak. Mr. Hanson opposed this article because he did not think it was appropriate for tax payer money to be used for lobbying efforts.

Article 15 Passed by a Majority Voice Vote.

ARTICLE 16 – It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to include the Smith Lot in the previously established Town Forest under RSA 31:110. The following tract of Town owned land currently under a conservation easement to the Upper Valley Land Trust known as the Smith Lot and shown on Tax Map 2011-12, located principally on Miller Pond Road, consisting of 29 acres more or less; and to authorize the Conservation Commission to manage the Smith Lot as part of the Town Forest under the provisions of RSA 31:112 II and to authorize the placement of any funds which may accrue from said forest management into a separate Smith Lot forest maintenance fund, which shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year as provided by RSA 31:1:3.

PETITION WARRANT ARTICLE

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Majority vote required)

Moderator Smith recognized Merle Schotanus to speak to the article. Mr. Schotanus offered an amendment to the article: In the second from the last (penultimate) line of the article after the words “management into”, delete the phrase “...a separate Smith lot forest maintenance fund,...”and replace it with the following phrase: ...the special forest maintenance fund established by the town meeting of 1990. So that the second from the last and the last line of the article will now read as follows:

“Management into the special forest maintenance fund established by the town meeting of 1990 and which shall be allowed to accumulate from year to year as provided by RSA 31:113.”

Amendment Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

Merle Schotanus then spoke to the amended article explaining that the town did not need two maintenance funds.

Article 16 Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 17 – Disposal of Town Owned Property

It was moved and seconded: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Board of Selectmen to dispose of any acquired properties through sealed bids or auctions, with the Selectmen reserving the right to accept or refuse any or all bids.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

Article 17 Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 18 – End of Meeting

It was moved and seconded: To hear the reports of agents, officers, and committees heretofore chosen, to pass any vote relating thereto, and to transact any other business that may legally come before said meeting.

IS RECOMMENDED BY THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN

(Majority vote required)

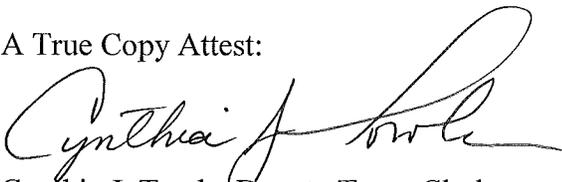
Moderator Smith recognized Selectman Kimball. Kimball announced the resignation of Town Administrator Becky Merrow who is leaving for another position in the State and expressed the Town’s gratitude for her work in Grantham.

This year the Hog Reeves are Jack Tibbetts and Rebecca Newhall
The Fence Viewers are Mike Palermo and Leslie Pike.

The Moderator recognized Selectman Jones to speak to where the next Town Meeting should be held. There was a request to the Selectmen, in petition form, from 81 people who wanted the meeting place changed to the School Gym. The Selectmen are of the opinion that it is best not to move the meeting. Selectman Jones mentioned the possibility of a bifurcated Town Meeting where the voting and business meeting could be on different days.

There being no further business or reports, Moderator Smith declared the 236th Town Meeting adjourned at 7:15 PM.

A True Copy Attest:



Cynthia J. Towle, Deputy Town Clerk
March 20, 2012