

TOWN OF GRANTHAM
TOWN MEETING
MARCH 11, 2003



SS. STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SULLIVAN COUNTY

Moderator Merle Schotanus called to order the 227th Annual Grantham Town Meeting at 10:00 A.M. He introduced Pastor Ron Bruce who gave the invocation. Before he offered the invocation Pastor Bruce said he wanted to take a moment for silent reflection on what is going on today in the world. In particular he asked that we remember the men and women in the military services that went before us and gave us the opportunities to stand here, as we do today, and those who are ready to do that again.

The Moderator then introduced the combined Color Guard of the Cub Scouts, Troop 276 and Brownies, Troop 2060 of Grantham to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

In welcoming first time Town Meeting participants, Moderator Schotanus commented that it is very important that we recognize new residents for being interested in our form of government, which is democracy, as we know it in it's purest form. Democracy is a messy business but in order to make it work we have to be involved.

The Moderator directed attention to the cover of the 2002 Grantham Town Report and the picture of the Town Seal that was approved by the voters of Grantham at Town Meeting last year. The Town Report is being dedicated to the Grantham Historical Society. Selectman Jones said the Board of Selectmen would like to take this opportunity to thank the current and past members of the Historical Society for the effort put forth in preserving the Town's history. There are several projects that the Society is working on, such as the preservation and restoration of the Grantham Militia flag, the design of a commemorative seal and the development of an education pamphlet to place in the new information building at the I-89 rest area. This worthwhile endeavor is headed up by Ella Roney and includes the Historical Society of Grantham, Croydon and Springfield. The citizens of Grantham are urged to get involved and support the Grantham Historical Society in every way possible.

Moderator Schotanus , stating that the meeting having been properly warranted as it is certified on pages 18 and 19 in the Town Report and by the authority vested in him by the laws of the State of New Hampshire declare the 227th Annual Meeting of the Town of Grantham officially open for business. He added that the polls are officially open as of now and will remain open until 7:00 P.M. this evening for the purpose of ballot voting on articles 1 through 3.

At this time, the Moderator recognized the School Moderator Pro Tem, Pam Hanson to make any announcement she might have regarding the Grantham School District. Ms. Hanson stated that the School District meeting was held last Thursday, March 6, 2003 and today you are invited to vote on article 1 which is to choose by ballot a moderator, a

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clerk and a treasurer, each to serve one year and two members of the school board to serve 3 years each.

The Moderator introduced the Town Clerk, Rita Eigenbrode; the Town Administrator, Tina Stearns; the Selectmen: Chairman Michael Hayward, Sr., William Hutchins, and Constance Jones. Manning the camera, Chief of Police Russell Lary. The Moderator then introduced Piper Scalabrin, School District Clerk and the three Supervisors of the Checklist: Deborah Cheever, Donna Stamper and Joann Purdy. The appointed ballot clerks are Connie Howard, Sarah Barton, Sandy Palermo and Laurie McClory.

The Moderator stated that on page 9, in this years Town Report , are the proposed rules for the conduct of this meeting. He called for a motion to adopt the rules of the meeting and if adopted to direct the clerk to make them a permanent part the meeting record. It was moved and seconded and adopted by unanimous voice vote.

2002 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 himself 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.

The Moderator stated that articles 1 through 3 will be acted on by official ballot. Articles 4 through 18 will be open for discussion, debate and voted on. Article 4 requires 2 votes. The first vote is procedural. The reason for this vote is because article 5 proposes a bond issue of over \$100,000 and by law must be taken up before any other article, except voting for officers and zoning changes. The Moderator recognized Connie Howard for a procedural motion. She moved, in accordance with the provisions of RSA 33:8-a, II, that the Town Meeting act on article 4 in the sequence in which it appears on the warrant. It was seconded by Warren Kimball. Speaking to her motion Connie Howard said, this makes it legal for us to act on the motion pertaining to this article at this time.

Unanimous Voice Vote in the Affirmative

ARTICLE 4: (Petitioned by 25 Registered Voters) It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 for the use of the Grantham Historical Society, restoring the sums raised at the 1992-1993 town meetings, but never paid to the Society."

By Petition
Majority Ballot Vote Required

Moderator Schotanus noted an error underneath article 4. As written it reads *Majority Ballot Vote Required*. A ballot vote is not required. Moderator Schotanus recognized Ella Reney to speak for this article and she explained that in the fall of 1991 the Grantham Historical Society was organized. Money was appropriated for the Society in the next two town meetings. She thought these funds were going into a capital reserve fund. However, they went into the general fund and the Historical Society never petitioned to take it out. Ella went on to describe projects that the Historical Society members are working on, including the restoration of the historic Grantham Militia flag.

Unanimous Voice Vote in the Affirmative

ARTICLE 5: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,100,000 (gross budget) for the construction of the Police Department Facility and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$1,100,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with the provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon."

2/3 Majority Ballot Vote Required
Special Warrant Article
The Selectmen recommend this article

Selectman Hutchins spoke for this article. In 1999 we were brought information that our town facilities were somewhat inadequate. An engineering survey done on the Town Offices and the Police Department showed that codes were violated, the biggest violator being the Police Department. The Board, having considered several options, endorses the plan before you. The plan contains an initial cost study and is not the finalized plan and could cost less since we have already come across some cost reductions.

Chief Lary was recognized and commented that he was glad to see so many citizens turn out for Town Meeting. He explained that the Town Administration and Police Department have been working on changes for years, including having a building committee in 1999, and feels that we have done research. We need a new facility because there is only 879 usable square feet in the existing police station. Physical contact between police officer and detainee is dangerously possible because there is a lack of space for adequate control. The storage of records is in an area that is compromised by moisture. The entry to the police department is not handicapped accessible. There is

enough crime in Grantham to warrant this plan since if you have a few crimes a year you still have a situation that needs a facility to house those problems. A police station should be located where is easy access for public, easy to get to. It is not easy to find the police station where it is now and it is not easily accessible. Chief Lary referenced the original Master Plan's recommendation that the Police Station should go next to the Fire Station. It is easily accessible, conveniently located, has plenty of parking and is on Town land. Chief Lary invited questions and comments on the article . Alan Briere read a statement that was in support of the proposed police facility and which has been made part of the Town Clerk's records.

It was moved and seconded to close discussion and the motion passed by majority voice vote. The Moderator declared a recess to allow for voting on article 5.

Defeated by 2/3 Ballot Vote 334 Votes Cast 101 Yes 233 No

ARTICLE 6: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$494,289 to defray the cost of **General Government** operations."

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Selectmen's Office	90,395	94,676
Town Clerk / Tax Collector	62,146	64,428
Financial Administration	47,360	48,500
Tax Maps / Assessing	16,500	35,000
Legal	12,000	12,000
Personnel Administration	147,812	144,970
Planning Board	3,425	4,175
Zoning Board of Adjustment	2,450	2,770
General Gov't Buildings	72,110	61,040
Cemeteries	8,750	9,900q
Insurance	12,000	14,750
Regional Associations	1,197	2,080
TOTAL	476,145	494,289

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

Selectman Jones spoke to the article and pointed out that as part of tax maps and assessing the Town will be hiring a part time building inspector for \$10,000. Under personnel administration health insurance premiums have gone up but enrollment is down which explains the decrease. The Planning Board increase is due to working on the Master Plan. Our property insurance is up since we switched insurance carriers and were reassessed. There was a 25% increase in the building values. Phil Schaefer noted that the amount stated in the article was \$10,000 higher than shown in the MS-6 Budget of the

Town of Grantham. Administrator Stearns stated that the \$10,000 was for building inspection and we have the right to include that with our tax maps and assessing line item. Myron Cummings voiced concern that the Town was not keeping up with property assessments and he asked why. Administrator Stearns said that the Town was doing all that it could but it has been very common in the past two years that the assessments have been half of what houses are selling for due to market conditions. As noted before, the Town is going to hire an assessor and will bring the assessments up to where they should be.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 7: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$339,766 to defray the cost of Public Safety operations."

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Police Department	237,169	268,156
FAST Squad	18,450	21,460
Fire Department	49,160	49,775
Forest Fire	375	375
TOTAL	305,154	339,766

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

The Fast Squad presented an amendment to article 7, which read "To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$356,766 to defray the cost of Public Safety operations. Fast Squad \$38,460. The Moderator said that the Fast Squad's intent is to increase their line item from \$21,460 to \$38,460. The total bottom line becomes \$356,766. The amendment was moved and seconded. Administrator Stearns spoke to the amendment and explained that New London Ambulance Service is in some financial constraints and asked for contributions to cover the cost of the ambulance service. The Town of Grantham has an estimated cost of \$17,000. Ms. Stearns went on to explain that the town is waiting for a letter of retribution to the first letter since apparently it should never have gone out. We would like the \$17,000 added to the budget as a contingency just in case New London ambulance service stops operations. *The amendment was passed by unanimous voice vote.*

As amended, the article now reads: "To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$356,766 to defray the cost of Public Safety operations." Fast Squad line increased by \$17,000 to \$38,460. Phil Schaefer questioned why the Police Department is up by \$30,000. Chief Lary answered that the higher amount was due to an increase in part time officers hours and increased costs for gas, tires, training.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 8: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$460,750 to defray the cost of **Public Works** operation."

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Highway Administration	135,080	127,910
Highway Maintenance	87,000	86,000
Street Lights	2,400	2,400
Solid Waste Collection	133,058	89,440
Waste Disposal	118,000	145,000
Landfill Monitoring	5,000	10,000
TOTAL	480,538	460,750

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

Selectman Hutchins spoke to this article and explained that the highway budget was down due to less paving requirements and highway maintenance. Road Agent Joseph Newcomb and assistant Jeffrey Hastings were commended for the fine job done. Selectman Hutchins referenced a letter from the Town's insurance carrier from the State, who surveyed our roads and said, " They had never seen a better maintained set of roads in any town our size." Phil Currier and Linda Roberts were recognized for doing a great job at the transfer station. Art Magowen, Solid Waste District representative, received praise for the job he does as representative and explained about the Solid Waste project. Selectman Hutchins explained that the landfill is now enclosed and will have to be monitored for the next 19 years. Administrator Stearns answered a question place by David Springsteen concerning the increase of the landfill monitoring line. She explained now that the landfill is closed the monitoring is more extensive and therefore, more expensive.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 9: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,288 to defray the cost of **Health and Welfare** operations."

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Boarding Animals	300	300
Community Services	5,854	9,988
Town General Assistance	5,000	5,000
TOTAL	11,154	15,288

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 10: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of 111,451 for **Culture and Recreation.**"

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Recreation	6,000	6,000
Dunbar Free Library	98,531	102,951
Town Archives	500	500
Old Home Day	2,000	2,000
TOTAL	107,031	111,451

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

M. Hope Hunter, Library Trustee, spoke to this article by explaining that the small increase in the Library budget was due to health insurance costs.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 11: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$114,812 for **Conservation, Bond Notes, Interest and Tax Anticipation Notes.**"

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Conservation Commission	1,100	1,100
Bond Interest	8,251	43,612*
Bond Payment	0	70,000
Tax Anticipation Notes Interest	100	100
TOTAL	9,451	114,812

**This amount can be reduced to \$16,600 should the Police Department Facility Warrant Article be defeated.*

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

Sarah Barton was recognized to present an amendment to this article, "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$87,800 for Conservation, Bond Notes, Interest and Tax Anticipation Notes". The amendment was moved and seconded. The Moderator explained that the article, being amended by reducing the Bond Interest to \$16,600, now has a total of \$87,800. Joey Holmes asked what the \$70,000 Bond Payment was for. Administrator Stearns answered that it was the first payment of the landfill closure, which is due in August. *Amendment adopted by unanimous voice vote.*

As amended, the article now reads: "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$87,800 for Conservation, Bond Notes, Interest and Tax Anticipation Notes." The Bond Interest line decreased from \$43,612 to \$16,600.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 12: It was moved and seconded "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate funds to be placed in previously established **Capital Reserve Funds**. These sums to come from fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and no amount to be raised from taxation."

Account Title	Budget 02/03	Proposed 03/04
Fire Department CRF	25,000	35,000
Mowers CRF	1,500	1,500
Highway Dept. Equipment CRF	30,000	30,000
Municipal Bldg. CRF	25,000	50,000
Office Computers CRF	0	1,500
TOTAL	81,500	118,000

*(Majority vote required)
The Selectmen recommend this article*

Selectman Jones spoke for the article saying she is a firm believer in Capital Reserve Funds and hope that this article will pass as written. Cindy Towle made a motion to amend the article to read, To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$368,000 to be place in the previously established Capital Reserve Funds. This increase, to reflect \$250,000 to be placed in Municipal Building Capital Reserve. Ms. Towle explained that she believes in putting money in the Capital Reserve Fund for the buildings that the Town will need. A reworded, possible amendment, which would strengthen the amendment that Ms Towle offered, was handed to the Moderator by the Town Administrator. Ms. Towle withdrew her amendment and Myron Cummings withdrew his second so that the reworded amendment could be presented. Ms.Towle moved the following amendment: To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$368,000 to be placed in previously established Capital Reserve Funds and authorize the transfer of \$118,000 to come from the fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and the remainder to come from taxation. Municipal Building Capital Reserve \$250,000. Seconded by Andy Anderson. Moderator Schotanus explained that the Municipal Building Capital Reserve Fund line would read \$300,000, \$50,000 to come from the fund balance (surplus) and \$250,000 to be raised by taxation.

Selectman Jones explained that every \$10,000 added to the Capital Reserve Fund adds \$0.04 to the tax.. Bill Zimmerman asked if monies from the Municipal Building Reserve Fund could be used for administrative overhead such as architectural, engineering and

planning purposes. The Selectmen responded affirmatively. *Amendment failed by majority hand vote.*

The Moderator opened discussion on Article 12 as it is written in the warrant. Cindy Covell moved to amend the article to read: "To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$193,000 to be placed in previously established Capital Reserve Funds and authorize the transfer of \$118,000 to come from the fund balance (surplus) for the year ending June 30, 2003 and the remainder to come from taxation." Municipal Building Capital Reserve would increase by \$75,000. Seconded by Kathy Osgood. *Amendment passed by majority voice vote.*

As amended, the article now reads, "To see if the Town will raise and appropriate \$193,000 to be placed in previously established Capital Reserve Funds and authorize the transfer of \$118,000 to come from the fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and the remainder to come from taxation." Municipal Building Capital Reserve line increased from \$50,000 to \$125,000.

Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 13: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of Transfer Station Equipment and to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in this fund, and appoint the selectmen as agents to expend from the fund. These sums to come from fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and no amount to be raised from taxation."

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 14: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of Police Vehicles and to raise and appropriate the sum of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) to be placed in this fund, and appoint the selectmen as agents to expend from the fund. These sums to come from fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and no amount to be raised from taxation."

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 15: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of up to one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000) to purchase a new Highway Truck and authorize the withdrawal of sixty-five thousand dollars (\$65,000) from the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. The balance of up to thirty-five thousand dollars (\$35,000) to come from fund balance (surplus) for year ending June 30, 2003 and no amount to be raised from taxation."

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 16: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to lease the Municipal Gymnasium located on 75 Learning Drive to the Grantham School District (SAU #75) effective July 1, 2003."

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

Chick Pillsbury voiced concern about whom would be handling the gym scheduling. Administrator Stearns answered that as far as she knew it would be the school secretary during the school year and the superintendent's office during the summer months. The existing commitments, such as Recreation Department use, Town Meeting day, Eastman meetings, and volleyball use will continue as they are. This will be clearly defined in the lease agreement. Any new commitments will be arranged through the school office. Bill Sullivan asked how long the lease was for. The administrator said it would be incorporated with the current lease, which is a 99 year lease, for \$1.00 The School District leases the land that the school is located on from the Town.

Passed by Majority Voice Vote

ARTICLE 17: It was moved and seconded "To see if the town will vote to discontinue the Landfill Closure Capital Reserve account established May 12, 2001."

(Majority vote required)

The Selectmen recommend this article

Administrator Stearns explained that there was nothing in the fund but, per RSA 35:16 a, *The Discontinuing of a Fund*, we have to bring a separate warrant article to close out that fund.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

ARTICLE 18: "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."

The Selectmen and Administrator Stearns thanked Bob Osgood, Emergency Management Director, for working very hard to update the Town's emergency management plans; Kenneth Barton, Sr. for doing a wonderful job as Fire Warden and doing it since 1961; outgoing Selectman Michael Hayward, Sr. for serving his 3 years and a job well done; Art

Magowen for all of his efforts in the solid waste department; and Dr. Kenneth Kerwin, the current Health Officer, who does an extremely good job.

Bill Zimmerman was recognized and made a motion that the Selectmen and School Board be encouraged to act jointly in appointing a long range Capital Planning Committee. Seconded by Bob Kessler.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

Frances Hastings nominated Jonathan A. and Shannon E. Fox for the position of Fence Viewers and Jeremiah John and Lauren Jane Fountain for Hog Reeves.

Passed by Unanimous Voice Vote

There being no further business or reports, Moderator Schotanus declared the 227th Town Meeting adjourned at 2:50 P.M.

A True Copy Attest:

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Rita Eigenbrode".

Rita Eigenbrode, Town Clerk
March 27, 2003