

**TOWN OF HOLDERNESS
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING WARRANT-MINUTES
MARCH 9 & 10, 2004**

At the annual Town Meeting of the Town of Holderness held on March 9 and 10, 2004 the following business was transacted.

At 8:00 a.m. on Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at the Holderness Town Hall, Moderator Ross Deachman convened the meeting and began reading the warrant. After reading Articles 1 and 2, the Moderator declared the polls open. At 7:00 p.m. the polls were closed and the ballots counted. Results were announced and the Moderator declared the winners.

At 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, March 10, 2004 at Holderness Central School the Meeting resumed. Moderator Ross Deachman recognized Chairman Steven Huss to make an announcement to those assembled.

“If you don’t mind I would like to read this. The town of Holderness has lost a wonderful and dedicated man. Art Bartholomew, father, active citizen and friend passed away suddenly last night. The loss was a shock to us all. Art always lived life to the fullest whether following his children in their endeavors, his business activities with Hingham Mutual, his love of golf and skiing, his commitment to his community or with his tremendous ability to bring a smile to your face and laughter to your heart. I know I speak for all of you and the Board of Selectmen when I express our deepest sorrow for Art’s passing. I want to convey our most sincere sympathy to Art’s family, his wife Priscilla, his daughter Maggie, and his son Zach. Please join me for a moment of silence. Thank you”

Moderator Ross Deachman announced the results of Articles 1 and declared the winners. The Moderator declared the Article 2 (the Zoning Amendments) had all passed. The Moderator asked for a motion that we dispense with the reading of the remainder of the Warrant and take up the articles one at a time. Moved by Malcolm “Tink” Taylor and seconded by Earl Hansen. A voice vote was taken and the motion carried.

Article 1: To choose all Town Officers by official ballot:

Selectman for 3 Years: (Vote for Two)

Barbara Currier	250
Peter Webster	247

Town Treasurer for 1 Year:

Michael O’Leary	258
-----------------	-----

Trustee of Trust Funds for 3 Years:

Supervisor of the Checklist for 6 Years:

Frances L.H. Taylor 82
Margaret R. Winton 189

Library Trustee for 1 Year Term:

Sandy Ray 258

Library Trustees for 3 Years: (Vote for Two)

Susan Beeson 236
Amanda Loud 214

Fire Ward for 3 Years:

Earl Hansen 255

Article 2: To vote by official ballot on the amendments to the existing Zoning Ordinance as proposed by the Planning Board and posted with this warrant.

1. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 1 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

In order to better administer the National Flood Insurance Program the entire Floodplain Ordinance, as amended, shall be included and considered as part of the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance.

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 247 No 32

2. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 2 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

Revise Definitions

Family - Change the number from 4 to 2 individuals not related by blood marriage or adoption living together as a single housekeeping unit.

Dwelling Unit – Include "adequate room for" sleeping facilities and "rental cottages" in the definition of Dwelling unit.

Recreation Facility – Commercial Low Impact – Include meeting facilities, arts, crafts, and theater activities as additional uses in this zone

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 214 No 66

3. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 3 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

Art. IV, V MORE THAN ONE DWELLING ON A LOT

For clarification purposes add the underlined wording.

If approved by the Planning Board a lot may have [more than one dwelling] up to two single family dwellings on it.

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 217 No 65

4. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 4 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

To the Expansion of nonconforming structures section add the following underlined wording.

Expansion of existing structures either on a nonconforming lot or in the case where there are two or more dwellings on a lot may be approved by the Board of Selectmen on a case by case basis providing other requirements in this section are met and the spirit of this Ordinance is maintained. This authority may not be passed on to an assignee.

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 225 No 46

5. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 5 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

To the following section concerning multiple dwellings on one lot add the underlined wording Article III, 6. Lot Area, #2

There must be at least 10,000 square feet of green space not including roads septic areas, and parking areas for every dwelling unit over two.

(This recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 230 No 50

6. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 6 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

To the following section concerning the River Corridor add the protective wording as proposed by the Planning Board similar to the shoreland protection wording.

Article II, D, 4 RIVER CORRIDOR

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 239 No 35

7. “Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment No. 7 as proposed by the Planning Board for the Town of Holderness Zoning Ordinance as follows:”

To Article VII ZBA Authority, add the following underlined wording;

E. The ZBA shall have the same authorities as granted to the Planning Board under RSA 673:16 and RSA 676:4, I (g) to collect fees from an applicant to cover expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

(This is recommended by the Planning Board)

Yes 230 No 43

Article 3: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$190,468. for renovations and improvements to the Town Hall, and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the Selectmen to borrow by note up to the sum of \$142,851., to negotiate the rate of interest and other terms thereof, and to take such other action as is necessary, and to further authorize the transfer of \$7,778. from the Town Hall Reserve Fund, and to raise \$39,839. by 2004 general tax revenue for this project.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee

(Note: This article must be acted upon by written ballot, the voting must be open for one hour, and to pass the article must receive a two-thirds majority of those voting).

Moved by Steve Huss and seconded by Peg Winton. A request was made to hear the presentation prepared by the members of the Town Hall Committee. Chairman Paul Montour recognized and thanked the committee members for all their efforts. Mr. Montour summarized the work of the committee over the past seven years. He outlined the proposed expenditures of the renovations.

The projected costs:	
Electrical & Fire-	\$ 32,640.00
Bathrooms-	27,793.00
Interior-	24, 324.00
Exterior-	88,396.00
Contingency-	<u>17,315.00</u>
	190,468.00

Bob Bergeron questioned the need for an elevator or ramp. The Selectmen responded neither was required because there is already handicap access to both first and second floors. Joanna Tuveson questioned the cost of the exterior renovations and asked if there are cost efficient means of landscaping. Peg Winton answered for the committee that there are certain items such as lamp posts and benches for which funds could be solicited, and she hoped that the committee would only spend what it had to spend. Paul Montour added, "The agreement was to raise the money and then go to the program and if there other ways to raise money for such things as posts and benches then the cost would be deducted from the bill... and to date the committee has sold three benches."

The Moderator instructed the voters that this article must be acted upon by secret ballot and that the polls must remain open for one hour. The meeting will continue to address other articles excluding the budget Article 16. At 7:23 p.m. the Moderator declared polls opened and that they would remain open until 8:23 p.m. Balloting commenced.

The Moderator asked if there was any objection to proceed with the remaining articles excluding Article 16. No objection was made.

Moderator Deachman proceeded with the Pledge of Allegiance and a moment of silence for those residents that passed away during 2003.

The results of Article 3 are located on Page 11.

Article 4: To see if the Town will vote to accept the reports of all Town Officers and Committees.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Fran Taylor. There was no discussion on this article. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 5: To see if the Town will vote to rescind the vote taken at the March 12, 2003, Town Meeting, Article 3, which authorized the Board of Selectmen to borrow up to \$600,000. for the design and construction of the capping of the landfill and a new transfer station.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee

Moved by Peg Winton and seconded by Fran Taylor. There was no discussion on this article. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 6: Shall we modify the elderly exemptions from the property tax, per RSA 72:39-b, to allow the elderly taxpayer who qualifies for the exemption to have an income of not more than \$20,000. (presently the limit is \$13,400) or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$25,000. (presently the limit is \$20,400.); and own assets of not more than \$50,000. (presently the limit is \$35,000.).

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Peg Winton. Malcolm “Tink” Taylor asked for clarification of the exemptions. Selectmen Huss responded that for ages 65-75 the exemption is \$ 10,000.00; for ages 75-80 the exemption is \$ 15,000.00; for age 80 and older the exemption is \$ 20,000.00. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 7: To see if the Town will adopt the provisions of RSA 41:14a which authorizes the Board of Selectmen to acquire or sell land, buildings, or both, provided that the Selectmen first submit the proposed acquisition or sale to the Planning Board and Conservation Commission for review and recommendation, and further provided that they first hold two public hearings on the proposal. Then Selectmen may proceed, provided that if 50 or more registered voters petition the Selectmen, the acquisition or sale shall not proceed until it is approved by the voters at town meeting.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Fran Taylor. Earl Hansen asked whether the word “they” referred to the Selectmen. The Moderator responded yes. Janet Cocchiari asked how the Selectmen would use the power. Selectmen Huss explained it would allow the Board to take advantage of opportunities that might arise during the year.

A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 8: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 149-I, vesting in the Board of Selectmen the powers of a board of sewer commissioners under that chapter. Such powers shall extend to the area of Holderness served by the sewer system formerly operated by the Upper Holderness Sewer District, which has since been dissolved, and any additions thereto within the Town as authorized by the selectmen; and further to authorize the selectmen to accept a deed/bill of sale to any and all assets of the former sewer district.

Moved by Harold Maybeck and seconded by Fran Taylor. Peg Winton questioned if the sewer system belonged to Plymouth. Moderator responded that the system in question is located in Holderness.

Rollin Reynolds asked if there are costs. Selectman Sam Laverack responded that it is an “in and out” accounting function. The Plymouth Water and Sewer District bills the Town of Holderness which then bills the residents on North and South River Street. Earl Hansen spoke in opposition to the article. A voice vote was taken and the results were questioned. The Moderator was in doubt a division vote was requested. The article was **DEFEATED**.

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to allow the Selectmen to convey an easement with conditions to Jacob Dunnell, to permit his property to continue to draw water from a drilled well installed on the Holderness Free Public Library property.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Peg Winton. Malcolm “Tink” Taylor asked if the easement would lapse should the property be sold. The Selectmen answered yes. Eleanor Spencer questioned why the well is located on the Library property. Selectmen Peter Francesco responded that Mr. Dunnell had a well drilled and at a later date a survey was conducted for the Library which found that the well was located on the Library property. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$28,400. for updating the Master Plan, and to authorize the withdrawal of up to \$19,200. from the Master Plan Reserve Fund for this purpose, with the balance of \$9,200. to be raised by taxation.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Fran Taylor. Harry Decker asked how the money would be used. Earl Hansen responded that it would be used for mapping and updating. Elizabeth Whitmore questioned when the master plan would be adopted. Earl Hansen responded at next year’s Town meeting. Alden Van Sickle asked if this was required to be done. Moderator answered yes. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 11: To see if the Town will vote to rename the Safety Building Reserve Fund the Municipal Buildings Reserve Fund, said Fund to be used for future improvements to those properties, and to further raise and appropriate \$7,500. for deposit into the Reserve Fund.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee.

(Requires two-thirds majority vote to pass).

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Lyle Thompson. Stephen Currier asked if the Town Hall was a municipal building. Moderator answered yes. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 12: To see if the Town will vote to establish a Grant Applications Expendable Reserve Fund to be used to match Federal or State grants which may be received, and to designate the Selectmen as agents to expend moneys from this fund, and to raise and appropriate \$5,000. for deposit into said fund.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Richard Mardin. Priscilla Farrell asked who would write the grant applications. Selectmen Huss answered it would depend on the grants. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 13: To see if the Town will vote to authorize the Selectmen to enter into a two year lease/purchase agreement for a new Police cruiser for the price of \$22,514. and to raise and appropriate \$11,500. for the first year payment on this lease/purchase. This lease/purchase contains an escape clause.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee

Moved by Alden Van Sickle and seconded by Harold Maybeck. Rollin Reynolds questioned the increase in price of leasing over the past few years. Selectmen Huss responded that the Selectmen have established a level budget for leasing police vehicles. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 14: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$266,000. to be placed in the following Capital Reserve Funds:

Public Works Vehicles	\$35,000.
Police Vehicles	1,000.
Fire Trucks	30,000.
Road Reconstruction	150,000.
Library	17,000.
Transfer Station	10,000.
Revaluation/assessing	15,000.
Fire Equipment	2,000.
White Oak Pond Dam	1,000.
Conservation Commission	<u>5,000.</u>
	\$266,000.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Fran Taylor. Harry Maybeck asked if \$1,000.00 was enough for the White Oak Dam. Selectman Huss responded that \$1,000.00 would be sufficient and town is working to build up this fund over a period of time. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 15: To see if the Town will vote to appropriate the sum of \$247,800. for the following capital projects and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the Selectmen to withdraw the sums indicated from the following designated Capital Reserve Funds for these purposes:

Road Reconstruction	150,000.
Public Works Vehicles	32,500.
Fire Equipment	4,300.
Library	36,000.
Revaluation/assessing	15,000.
Transfer Station	<u>10,000.</u>
	\$247,800.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee.

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Alden Van Sickle. There was no discussion on this article. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Malcolm “Tink” Taylor made a motion to pass over Article 16 until the results of the vote on Article 3 are known, seconded by Earl Hansen. A voice vote was taken and motion passed.

Article 16: To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million, seven hundred forty two thousand, five hundred fifteen dollars (\$1,742,515.) which represents the operating budget for the Town. Said sum does not include special or individual articles elsewhere within this warrant.

Recommended by the Selectmen and Budget Committee.

The results of Article 16 are located on page 11.

Article 17: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:28 II & IV, “The OPTIONAL Veterans Tax Credit on residential property and to raise the exempted figure to the maximum amount per state law \$500.

(Note: the above article was received by petition).

Moved by Harry Maybeck and seconded by Ed Swanson. Harry Maybeck presented a history of the Veteran's exemption since the 1860s and spoke in favor of this Article. Earl Hansen spoke in agreement with Mr. Maybeck on the need to increase the amount of the Veterans exemption but that the \$500.00 amount was too much. Mr. Hansen moved to amend the article to by changing the words "...to the maximum amount per state law \$500" to read "\$200.00". The amendment was seconded by Steve Huss. Mr. Huss added that this article as written would mean a \$65,000.00 increase to the tax payers. The amendment would phase this in over a period of years so that the tax payers can absorb this increase. A voice vote was taken and the amendment **PASSED**. A voice vote was taken on Article 17 and the article **PASSED, as amended**.

Article 18: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:35 I-a, "The OPTIONAL Veterans Tax Credit for Service-Connected Total Disability" and to raise the exempted figure to the maximum amount per state law \$2,000.
(Note: the above article was received by petition).

Moved by Edward Ford and seconded by Alden Van Sickle. There was no discussion on this article. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 19: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 72:29a, II, "The OPTIONAL Veterans Tax Credit on the real and personal property of the surviving spouse of any person who was killed or died while on active duty in the armed forces of the United States or any of the armed forces of any of the governments associated with the United States in the wars, conflicts or armed combat or combat zones set forth in RSA 72:28 and to raise the exempted figure to the maximum amount per state law \$2,000.

(Note: the above article was received by petition).

Moved by Edward Ford and seconded by Earl Hansen. Anne Hunnewell questioned the meaning of the tax credit. The Moderator answered that it was a dollar for dollar credit against your tax bill. Paul Buck asked what the current exemption was. Steve Huss responded that it is currently \$1,400.00. The Town Administrator added that currently there are 2 taxpayers who qualify under Article 18 and 0 taxpayers qualifying under Article 19. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 20: To see if the Town will vote to require the Selectmen to seek prior approval from a town meeting prior to the removal or sale of the historic woodstove that is in the meeting room of the town hall.

(Note: the above article was received by petition).

Moved by Fran Taylor and seconded by Alden Van Sickle. Gordon Loud asked whether there were plans to move the woodstove. The Selectmen answered that there are no plans to move or remove the woodstove but there is a plan to turn the stove to gain access to the proposed bathroom. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

At 8:23 p.m. the Moderator declared the polls closed on Article 3: *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$190,468. for renovations and improvements to the Town Hall, and to fund this appropriation by authorizing the Selectmen to borrow by note up to the sum of \$142,851., to negotiate the rate of interest and other terms thereof, and to take such other action as is necessary, and to further authorize the transfer of \$7,778. from the Town Hall Reserve Fund, and to raise \$39,839. by 2004 general tax revenue for this project.*

The Moderator asked Malcolm “Tink” Taylor and Earl Hansen to remove the ballot box and count the ballots. Following a five minute recess the results of the vote on Article 3 were 114 yes, 33 no. With more than the necessary a 2/3 majority, the Article 3 **PASSED**.

The Moderator then took up Article 16: *To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of one million, seven hundred forty two thousand, five hundred fifteen dollars (\$1,742,515.) which represents the operating budget for the Town. Said sum does not include special or individual articles elsewhere within this warrant.*

Moved by Earl Hansen and seconded by Fran Taylor. There was no discussion on this article. A voice vote was taken and the article **PASSED**.

Article 21: To transact any other business that can legally come before the meeting.

The Moderator recognized Sam Laverack.

Mr. Laverack thanked Georgene Fabian for her five years of service as Welfare Officer and recognized her compassion and accounting accuracy in the fulfillment of those duties.

Mr. Laverack recognized and thanked Roger Gage who has served the Town of Holderness in numerous positions for 25 years.

Mr. Laverack recognized Steve Huss, retiring Chairman of the Board of Selectmen. Steve served as Selectman for nine years, the last six years as Chairman. Mr. Laverack credited Mr. Huss for bringing Holderness into compliance on most every accounting standard.

The Moderator recognized Laurance Beeson. Mr. Beeson asked whether the authority to look into the Town's contract to the Pemi-Baker School District is a matter for discussion at Town Meeting. The Moderator responded that it was his opinion that there is no authority at this meeting to do anything in respect to the agreement on the Plymouth Regional High School. The Selectmen do have the authority to investigate anything that affects the well-being of this community. He indicated that this issue might be a discussion that would be appropriate at the School District Meeting on Wednesday, March 17th, which has the responsibility of educating our students grade K-12. He ruled that any discussion on this subject was "inappropriate" at town meeting. There was no challenge to the ruling.

Earl Hansen moved to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by Lyle Thompson. The meeting was adjourned at 8:38 p.m.

Respectively submitted,
Ellen King
Town Clerk