

**State of New Hampshire
Town of Northumberland
2006 Results of Town Meeting**

The Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Northumberland was opened at 9:00 AM Tuesday, March 14, 2006 to act upon the subjects hereinafter mentioned. The polls were declared open for the reception of ballots on Articles 1 & 2. Moderator Carl Ladd announced that the polls would remain open until 5:00 PM. The absentee ballots would be opened at 1:00 PM and the business-meeting portion would be opened at 7:00 PM. The Boy Scouts of America Troop 233 performed a flag presentation with Nathan Fogg leading the crowd with the Pledge of Allegiance. The results of this Town Meeting are:

Ballots cast – 420

***Article 1** To choose by ballot the following Town Officers for the ensuing three years: one Selectmen, one Library Trustee, one Supervisor of the Checklist, and one Trustee of Trust Fund.

Selectmen:	Mario J. Audit	140
	Christopher Canton	106
	John J. Normand	136
	James “Jim” Weagle	33

Recount requested by John Normand. Recount performed on 3/24/06. Outcome as follows:

Selectmen:	Mario J. Audit	140
	John J. Normand	137

Library Trustee:	Barbara Weagle	369
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Trustee of Trust Fund:	Joel Kennett	360
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Supervisors of the Checklist (ensuing six years):		
	Joanne “Jodi” Shannon	400

***Article 2** To choose by ballot the following Town Officers for the ensuing two years: one Moderator.

Moderator:	Carl Ladd	383
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Article 3 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$300,000 to construct

a sidewalk from Perras Storage Units to the big ballfield. This appropriation is contingent upon receiving a \$240,000 contribution from the State of New Hampshire, so that only \$60,000 is to be funded through taxation. (Selectmen Do Not Recommend 3-0)(.55 Tax impact)

Motion by Lorna Aldrich and seconded by Louis Frechette to accept the article as read.

Discussion Brian Schutt said that he did some background & clarification and had gone to the Selectmen and asked if they would be interested. The Selectmen originally supported the idea. The State would fund 80%. He presented it to the Transportation Enhancement Committee in Concord last week and said that if we ranked below a certain percentage that we wouldn't qualify for the funds. Earliest we might be funded would be 2009 or 2011. Brian wanted to make an amendment to appropriate \$5000 or \$10,000 instead of the \$60,000 for right now, but he never turned one in. He also said that he wanted to utilize the existing snowmobile trail for the sidewalk. It would be for walkers and bikers in the summer and then snowmobiles in the winter months.
Edward Bezanson asked who would pay for repairs and would people be willing to give up their land?
Brian Schutt responded that the town would have to take care of it in the summer but the snowmobile clubs would when they used it. The land that they would use is State highway.
Bruce Sloat suggested that we keep trying so that it kept coming up on the State's agenda.
John Normand said that when we could do the project and it's apt to be \$500,000.
Norman McLeod suggested that we put the money back into our own town.
Donald Paquette made a motion to move the question.
No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 3 was defeated.

Article 4 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$27,000 for the purchase and installation of new playground equipment. It is expected that \$7,000 of this will be reimbursed from Game Time as an off setting revenue for the portion of the funds expended on the actual purchase of the equipment (.25 Tax Impact).

Motion by Lorna Aldrich and seconded by Rebecca Craggy to amend article #4 to read:

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$26,000 for the purchase and installation of new playground equipment to replace existing equipment located behind the pool next to the rec center. (.24 Tax Impact)

Discussion Louis Frechette asked if the Town would still be eligible for the rebate?

Rebecca Craggy replied that the Town would not get the rebate because of not having the same incentive program so she had asked Game Time for a new quote and the amended article was for buying the equipment outright for the \$26,000.

Louis Frechette asked if we would have to assemble it ourselves?

Rebecca Craggy replied that yes we would have to assemble it ourselves but we would get supervision from the company. It was in hope that the town crew would be able to be involved as well as volunteers in the construction of the new playground equipment.

Kathy Frechette asked if we would be keeping our old playground equipment?

Rebecca Craggy replied that the Town intention was to replace it all and wasn't sure about keeping the old equipment.

Edward Bezanson asked if we looked into building our own and that perhaps the local woodsmen would be willing to donate logs to build a wooden playground.

Rebecca Craggy replied that we were looking to get away from the wood due to splinters. The equipment proposed is metal.

Michael Cross asked if the old playground equipment had any value? If the Town looked into getting the old equipment assessed? Michael would like the old equipment assessed.

Rebecca Craggy thought that the idea from Mr. Cross was a good one and would look into it. She said that the old equipment had not been assessed yet.

Uldric Bernard asked if the person from Game Time was going to be here and charge 1-8 days?

Rebecca Craggy said the fee was for one 8-hour day.

Samantha Canton said that the metal structure that exists now was one from the old elementary school and used for many years. She feels that it is not safe and should be put in the dump.

Moderator Ladd asked if we were ready to vote on the amendment as read. No further discussion. Voice vote. The amendment to Article 4 passed as read. Article passed as amended.

Article 5 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate up to \$7550, which includes accumulated interest. From the town's general surplus for the purpose of constructing a cook shack and/or storage facility at the big ballfield. This amount was raised and appropriated in 2000, but the construction has not yet occurred. (No Tax Impact).

Motion made by John Normand and seconded by Brian Schutt to accept the article as read.

Discussion Michael Cross asked why this hasn't been done yet?
Moderator Ladd asked the board if anyone would like to answer that?

Lorna Aldrich responded to Mr. Cross that she thought it was because of a septic issue and redirected to Richard Marshall.

Richard Marshall said that he believed that everything had been squared away as far as he knew.

Brian Schutt added that the soil test had been done and that it was good. The water table was very high. He tried to get the money last year for a storage shed and that was turned down. He wants it because of having to haul the equipment back and forth all of the time. He would like to get the storage building down now and perhaps a snack shack down the road.

Uldric Bernard asked if there would extra costs incurred for a water and septic line?

Brian Schutt replied that there would absolutely would have to pay those extra costs.

Moderator Ladd asked if the residents were ready for the question. He read Article 5 again. Voice vote. Article 5 passed as read.

Article 6 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,100 as a contribution for the support and services of Upper Connecticut Valley Mental Health Service and the Vershire Center. (.03 Tax Impact).

Motion made by John Normand and seconded by Richard Paradis to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 6 passed as read.

Article 7 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,755 for the purpose of supporting Weeks Medical Center – Home Health Services in the delivery of services to town residents. (.10 Tax Impact).

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Richard Paradis to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 7 passes as read.

Article 8 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$93,000 for the purchase of a new ambulance and to authorize the withdrawal of \$85,135 from the Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. The balance of \$7,865 is to come from the town's undesignated fund balance (surplus). That amount represents the 2005 surplus revenues for services provided by Northumberland EMS. (Selectmen Recommend 3-0) (No Tax Impact).

Motion made by Richard Paradis and seconded by John Normand to accept the article as read.

Discussion Uldric Bernard asked how many ambulances do we need?

Allan Bryant replied that we would be replacing the 3rd ambulance and not having a 4th one.

Uldric Bernard said in the past we had two then we added a third for convenience of the race track and asked if we were having 2, 3, or 4?

Allan Bryant replied that we were not trying to have a 4th ambulance that we were replacing the 1989. He suggested maybe giving to the Water Department to have for cold weather water breaks to have as a van for their inventory and to keep warm.

Edward Bezanson asked how much area does the Fire Department and Ambulance cover?

Allan Bryant said that they cover Stratford, Stark, Guildhall, and Northumberland. Stark has their own Fire Department but no ambulance service.

Edward Bezanson asked Allan Bryant if he was full time?

Allan Bryant replied that he was.

Edward Bezanson asked if other towns were paying us?

Allan Bryant replied that other towns pay \$10.50 per capita and that Stratford pays just under \$10,000.

William Osgoode asked why we had 3 ambulances?

Allan Bryant said that when A1 and A2 were on separate calls then A3 covers the 911-service area and that all 3 ambulances have been out at the same time on several occasions.

Lorenzo Cloutier asked if we had enough personnel for all 3 and if all were EMT's?

Allan Bryant responded that we did have enough personnel. We have 50 members, which 35 were active and 10 were drivers with CPR and First Aide.

Barbara Benoit stated that the Town never had something for the Water Department people to keep warm before and thought we were going too far in wanting to give the old ambulance to them.

Michael Cloutier asked how many ambulance calls do you have?

Sandy Mason answered that in 2005 there were 624 calls.

Moderator Ladd asked the people if they were ready to move the question.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 8 passed as read.

Article 9 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,500 for the Groveton Cal Ripken Baseball Program, to be used to cover accident and liability insurance, tournaments, and registration fees. (Inserted on Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Recommend 3-0)(.01 Tax Impact)

Motion by Christopher Canton and seconded by Lloyd Tippitt to pass the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 9 passed as read.

Article 10 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the purpose of assisting in the continuing work of Friends For a Greener Village, a Groveton volunteer group working to beautify the community year round. (.02 Tax Impact).

Motion by Lloyd Tippitt and seconded by Marcel Platt to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 10 passed as read.

Article 11 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate \$10,000 from the Unreserved Fund Balance to be utilized for engineering on the riverbank stabilization at the Northumberland Cemetery. (No Tax Impact)

Motion by Charles Locke and seconded by Lawrence Benoit to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 11 passed as read.

Article 12 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the Groveton Community Christmas Organization. (.02 Tax Impact)

Motion by Barry Colebank and seconded by Richard Paradis to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 11 passed as read.

Article 13 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,500 for the purpose of supporting the Groveton Chem Free Graduation fund, these funds to be used to promote alcohol and drug-free youth by sponsoring a chemical-free graduation celebration.

Motion by Elaine Gray and seconded by Rebecca Craggy to accept the article as read.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 12 passed as read.

Article 14 To see if the Town will vote and appropriate the sum of \$110,868 for the purchase of a new plow truck. \$60,000 to come from the unreserved fund surplus and \$50,868 to be raised by taxes. (.47 Tax Impact)

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept the article as read.

Discussion Uldric Bernard asked if the Town could get anything for the old one? Brian Sullivan answered that they would try but that they wouldn't get much for it.

Lawrence Gray asked how old it was?

Lorna Aldrich answered that it was a 1991, 15 years old.

Lawrence Gray said that the Town should fix it up and keep it going. He asked how many miles were on it?

Greg Kenison thought that there was about 100,000 miles on it.
Lorna Aldrich said that you could see through the floor and that it was going to cost about \$35,000 to make it safe.
Lawrence Gray asked \$35,000?
Lorna Aldrich replied that it needed new brakes and a new transmission and that we were lucky it held together this winter.
Phillip Pinette asked if the Town had 1 or 2 trucks.
Lorna Aldrich replied that we had 2.
Edward Bezanson asked how many miles the Town had to plow?
Greg Kenison replied that he thought it was about 7-8 miles a piece of plowing a lot of roads and that they had to get to those roads via the State roads.
Kathy Frechette said that she lived on the “hill” and wanted it plowed so let’s go for it.
Gary Normandeau wanted to know how old the second truck was?
Greg Kenison said that the second truck was a 2001.
Louis Frechette commented that the truck was used throughout the year and not just in the winter for plowing.
Bruce Sloat said that he lived the farthest out of town and it takes them a long time to bump across town and that they do a damn fine job.
(Applauded by audience)
Moderator Ladd asked if the people were ready to move the question.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 14 passed as read.

Article 15 To see if the Town will vote and appropriate the sum of \$36,000 from the general town surplus for the purchase of a new water/sewer truck. This amount represents a portion of the income from the water/sewer department in 2005. (No Tax Impact)

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept the article as read.

Discussion Nancy Joy said that she had no problem with a new truck but a large amount of income for both the water and sewer department. If we buy the truck from the amounts that we already have paid are we going to be getting a reduction or every year are we going to spend a surplus?
John Normand said that in the near future we will be needing a new well and the motors are getting tired, so we will be spending more and possibly up to \$100,000 on that.
Nancy Joy asked if the truck was necessary or are we going to have to absorb this for things that are necessary in the future?
John Normand said that he checked himself and the truck is falling apart and needs replacing.
Brian Sullivan also added that it was being held together by a rubber band
Nancy Joy expressed her appreciation for the information.
Edward Bezanson asked if we had a contract with another town?

Brian Sullivan told Mr. Bezanson that he didn't understand what he meant.

Edward Bezanson asked if we could change that?

Brian Sullivan said to Mr. Bezanson that he wasn't following what he was saying.

Edward Bezanson asked if we could raise the money that we charge Guildhall to pay for the new truck and put the extra expense on the other town.

John Normand told Mr. Bezanson that Guildhall pays their fair share and that we do pass some expense over to them.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 15 passed as read.

Article 16 To see if the Town will vote and appropriate the sum of \$23,000 for the purchase of a new police cruiser, equipment and decals. (.21 Tax Impact)

Motion made by Blaine Hall and seconded by Lloyd Tippitt to accept the article as read.

Discussion Charles Locke asked what the mileage was on the existing cruiser?
Lloyd Tippitt replied that the mileage on the newest cruise was 81,000 miles and that the older one had 109,000 miles on it and the suspension was gone. The older one is the one going down the road. The brakes have been replaced.

Edward Bezanson wondered why we didn't get a 4 x 4 or something with better suspension for the North Country roads? Also, he was wondering why we ran a 2-wheel drive vehicle?

Lloyd Tippitt answered that for the price of a new cruiser being \$21,000 and the price of a Tahoe or Expedition being \$36,000 and they don't come with the police package, it was better for him not to have to come to the tax payers to ask for the \$36,000. The Crown Vic has a heavy-duty package and suspension and holds up a lot better. Fish and Game and the Sheriffs Department have the 4 x 4's if he needed to get somewhere.

Moderator Ladd suggested that we move the question.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 16 passed as read.

Article 17 To see if the Town will vote to suspend the use meters for water billing purposes and retain the flat water rate until April 1, 2007. (No Tax Impact).

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Richard Paradis to accept the article as read.

Discussion Louis Frechette said that the project was not finished, why are we only waiting 1 year?

Lorenzo Cloutier asked if half the town would be on meters and half would not be?

Brian Sullivan replied that the meters couldn't be hooked up on the hill yet. Wherever the water project workers were the meters couldn't be hooked up and that there was hoses running to those houses.

Louis Frechette asked if the outside faucets hooked to the meters?

Brian Sullivan answered that those had bypasses.

Carl Coulombe asked why we couldn't have temporary water because other towns do it.

Brian Sullivan answered that we could but to change it we had to get it okayed because voters voted to have meters last year. It has to go to the voters.

Carl Coulombe asked if the temporary flat rate that people were being billed was an estimate?

Brian Sullivan responded that we have to ask the Town because the Town voted to do it.

Richard Marshall said that he was concerned about the water meters because there is still not a good base and that we are still new at this. We haven't figured it all out yet.

Louis Frechette said that we have had the meters 4 or 5 years now and asked what the difference was if we started this year or next?

Brian Sullivan said that the project will be done this year and we wouldn't know until the project is done.

John Normand added that we were only asking to wait until April 1 of next year. It would give us time to get figures together.

David Auger summarized that last year's body voted to go on meters. The cost would be lower for 2/3 of the water users in town. He said that he encourages everyone to move forward with this. Low water users will save \$50-\$75. Water users on the hill would not be affected.

Donald Paquette asked if we could amend it? Maybe decide whether it should be metered or flat rate?

John Normand asked Mr. Paquette is that what you want to amend it to?

Moderator Ladd asked Mr. Paquette if he was going to write an amendment?

Donald Paquette did not want to write the amendment. He said he was willing to go with whatever the Town voted for.

John Normand said that if we went to the meter billing now that the residents across the tracks would be billed a flat rate and the rest would be billed by meters.

Uldric Bernard asked if that flat rate was for non-meters and the rest be metered?

Nancy Marshall said that she felt it would be less of a hassle if we all started being billed by meters at the same time.

Dwight Noyes suggested that if only 1/2 the people on the hill were going to be affected by the water project than only the one's affected should be charged the flat rate.

Brian Sullivan asked Mr. Noyes where would we stop?

Mary Foster asked what percentage was already on meters?

Lorna Aldrich replied that all meters are working but when the project starts we wouldn't know how many would be affected so the best way would be to have the hill on a flat rate and the rest on meters for billing. Donald Paquette made a motion to move the question.

No further discussion. Voice vote. House is divided. Standing vote:

Yes 58
No 49

Article 17 passed by standing votes.

Article 18 To see if the Town of Groveton will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1500 (One Thousand Five hundred Dollars) to support North Country Transportation/Senior Wheels Demand Response Program. (Inserted on Petition of Voters)(Selectmen Recommend)(.01 Tax Impact)

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Blaine Hall to accept the article as read.

No discussion. Voice vote. Article 18 passed as read.

Article 19 To see if the voters will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$1,650 (one thousand six hundred and fifty dollars) to help support The Caleb Interfaith Volunteer Caregiver Program that serves the needs of elderly and disabled people in the community. (Inserted on Petition of Voters) (Selectmen Do Not Recommend 2-1)(.02 Tax Impact)

Motion made by Lloyd Tippitt and seconded by Penelope Noyes to accept the article as read.

Discussion Donald Paquette asked why the Selectmen did not recommend?
John Normand said it was because the petitioners did not tell us enough about what they did. They were paid mileage to get people to places, but not enough information was received from the Caleb Program.
Louis Frechette asked what the difference was between what we had previously voted on and this?
John Normand said it was basically the same thing.
Uldric Bernard asked if it was a religious group and where they were from?
John Normand replied that it was a program out of Whitefield and that it wasn't a religious group.
Lorna Aldrich read a letter from the Caleb Program to explain what they were all about.

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 19 passed as read.

Article 20 To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,594,339, which represents the operating budget of the Town, said sum exclusive of special or individual articles addressed. (Inserted by Selectmen)

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept article as read.

Discussion David Auger asked if there was funding earmarked in the budget for economic development in the town?
John Normand said that there was not. There was no warrant article for it so there isn't. Maybe next year there could be.
Moderator Ladd asked if we were ready to move the question?

No further discussion. Voice vote. Article 20 passed as read.

Article 21 To see if the Town will vote to instruct the Selectmen to appoint all other officers as required by law.

Motion made by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept the article as read.

No discussion. Voice vote. Article 21 passed as read.

Article 22 To hear reports of agents, auditors, committees or other officers heretofore chosen and pass any vote relating thereto.

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept the article as read.

No discussion. Voice vote. Article 22 passed as read.

Article 23 To transact any other business that may be legally brought before said meeting.

Motion by John Normand and seconded by Brian Sullivan to accept the article as read.

No discussion. Voice vote. Article 22 passed as read.

Motion by Gary Normandeau and seconded by Donald Paquette to adjourn.

Motion to adjourn passed unanimously by voice vote. Meeting adjourned at 8:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Melinda Kennett, Town Clerk, Town of Northumberland

