

# 2021 MINUTES

## Town of Northumberland Town Meeting Minutes

The inhabitants of the Town of Northumberland in the County of Coos in the state of New Hampshire qualified to vote in Town affairs are hereby notified that the Annual Town Meeting will be held as follows:

Date: Saturday, March 13, 2021

Time: 10:00 am

Location: 65 State St.-Groveton High School Ryan Auditorium

Details: Ballot Vote on Articles 1-2 held Tuesday, March 9, 2021-11:00 am to 7:00 pm

Northumberland Selectmen's Meeting Room – 10 Station Square

The Annual Town Meeting Election for the Town of Northumberland and Northumberland School District was declared opened at 11:00 AM, Tuesday, March 9, 2021 to act upon the subjects hereinafter mentioned. The polls were declared open for the reception of ballots. Moderator Young announced that the absentee ballots would be processed at 1:00 PM. At 7:00 PM Moderator Young announced that the polls were closed and the counting process began.

**301 Ballots were cast. (41 absentee and 260 election day)**

**School Ballot results:**

**Moderator: Keith Young 286**

**Board of Education: Paul Perras 158 (Glenn Cassady 139)**

**Clerk: Kathy Wiles 282**

**Treasurer: Melody Barney 283**

The business meeting was called to order at 10:00 AM on March 13, 2021 by Moderator Keith Young at Groveton High School gymnasium. Moderator Young led the attendees in honoring our nation's colors with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States of America. Moderator Young went over the common sense guidelines of his meeting. There were 166 registered voters in attendance with approximately 190 citizens in total attendance. James Weagle, Selectman, presented Elaine Gray, Deputy Town Clerk and Tax Collector and the Assessing Clerk, a 20 year employee of the town who is retiring as of June 1, a bouquet of roses and thanked her. The crowd rose to the occasion with a standing ovation.

\*Articles 1-2 were printed on the official ballot.

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## Article 01 Election of Officers

To choose by ballot the following Town Officers for the ensuing three years: one Selectman, one Library Trustee, one Trustee of Trust Funds and one Cemetery Trustee.

**Results::**

Selectman: William "Bill" Caron 167 (Bruce Pelletier 127)

Library Trustee: Donna Hamilton 285

Trustee of Trust Funds: Kathy Wiles 276

Cemetery Trustee: Glenn Cassady (write in) 6

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## Article 02 Election of Selectman

To choose by ballot the following Town Officer for the ensuing two years: one Selectman

**Results:**

Selectman: Keith E. Bronson 147 (Michael Phillips 144 & a recount was done 3/9/2021)

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## Article 03 To set the compensation of Town Elected Officials

To see if the Town will vote to set the annual compensation for the following Town elected officials.

These amounts are included in the Town operating budget in Article 9

Board of Selectmen	3@\$2,400	\$7,200
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Treasurer		\$1,500
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Supervisors of the Check List	3@\$387.34	\$1,162
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Moderator		\$ 300
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(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

Hand held card vote. Article 3 passed as read.

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## Article 04 To set the compensation of Town elected official

To see if the Town will vote to set the annual compensation of the elected Town Clerk/Tax

Collector. This amount is included in the operating budget under Article 9.

Town Clerk/Tax Collector	\$50,000
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This compensation includes all benefits offered to Town of Northumberland full time employees. If this position is filled by a newly elected official, compensation will be adjusted for the ensuing tax year immediately following Town Meeting to an entry level amount commensurate with experience and level of certification. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Second: William Caron**

Hand held card vote. Article 4 passed as read.

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## Article 05 Water/Sewer/Drainage Infrastructure Improvement

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$7,000,000 for the purpose of improvements to the water, sewer and drainage infrastructure, as well as appurtenances on the Eastern Slope of the residential-high section of "The Hill" area of Groveton Village and to install flood mitigation and protection equipment on the Perras Road and Old Village Road pump stations

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and to install a new meter pit in Guildhall, Vermont, and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$7,000,000 of bonds or notes in accordance with provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33); and to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain, and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to authorize the Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; further, without impairing the status of this bond as a general obligation of the Town, it is the intention and expectation of the Selectmen that debt service on this bond will be shared proportionally between water user fees and sewer user fees; and to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0) (3/5 ballot vote required)

**Motion: Selectmen James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Motion to pass over made by Selectman Michael Phillips and seconded by Selectman James Weagle. Hand held card vote. Motion to pass over passed.**

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## **Article 06 Construction of Public Safety Building**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,306,667 for the purpose of the construction of a new Public Safety Building and to authorize the issuance of not more than \$2,306,667 of bonds or notes in accordance with provisions of the Municipal Finance Act (RSA 33) and to authorize the Selectmen to apply for, obtain, and accept federal, state or other aid, if any, which may be available for said project and to comply with all laws applicable to said project; and to authorize the Board of Selectmen to issue and negotiate such bonds or notes and to determine the rate of interest thereon and the maturity and other terms thereof; and to authorize the Selectmen to take any other action or to pass any other vote relative thereto. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 2-1) (3/5 ballot vote required)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman William Caron**

**3/5 ballot vote required. Received ballots for 1 hour.**

**Results: Yes 56 No 106**

**Article 6 failed**

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## **Article 07 Operation and maintenance of the water department**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$444,315 for the purpose of operating and maintaining the water department. Said funds to be raised from the water user fees. Any shortfall in the water user fees will be made up from the accumulated surplus in the "regular water account". No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Hand held card vote. Article 7 passed as read.**

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## **Article 08 Operation and maintenance of the sewer department**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$341,532 for the purpose of operating and maintaining the sewer department. Said funds to be raised from sewer user fees. Any shortfalls in the sewer user fees will be made up from the accumulated surplus in the "regular sewer account". No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman William Caron**

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**Hand held card vote. Article 8 passed as read.**

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## **Article 09 Operating Budget-Town**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$2,607,920 for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately, except for Articles 03 and 04 regarding compensation of town officials. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman William Caron**

**Second: Selectman James Weagle**

**Hand held card vote. Article 9 passed as read.**

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## **Article 10 Appropriate to CRF's, ETF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$135,000 to be placed in the following Capital Reserve Funds at the amounts shown:

Police Cruiser CRF, established 2001	\$10,000
Road Maintenance CRF, established 2009	\$100,000
Municipal Buildings CRF, established 2010	\$10,000
Sludge Removal ETF, established 2011	\$15,000

(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman William Caron**

**Hand held card vote. Article 10 passed as read.**

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## **Article 11 Appropriate to Transfer Station Equipment CRF**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$3,279 to be placed in the Transfer Station Equipment Capital Reserve Fund, with said funds to come from unassigned fund balance (this represents the 2020 scrap metal sales).(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**

**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Hand held card vote. Article 11 passed as read.**

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## **Article 12 Charitable Organization**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$38,997 to fund the following charitable organizations at the amounts shown:

North Country Home Health & Hospice Agency	\$12,759
Northern Human Services	\$ 3,100
Tri-County Community Action Programs	\$ 5,725
American Red Cross NH & VT Region	\$ 2,200
Center for New Beginnings	\$ 500
Northern Gateway Regional Chamber of Commerce	\$ 1,072
Caleb Caregivers	\$3,000
St. Paul's Episcopal Church "Backpack" Program	\$1,141

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Project Homebound	\$1,000
Androscoggin Valley Home Care Services	\$8,000
NH North Country Veterans, Inc.	\$ 500

(Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 12 passed as read.**

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## Article 13 Construction of Salt Shed

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$10,000 for the purpose of finishing construction of the salt shed. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Second: James Weagle.**

**Motion by Michael Phillips and second by James Weagle to amend the article to \$20,000. To see if the Town will raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of finishing construction of the salt shed. This sum to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation.'**

**Hand held card vote to amend. Amendment passed.**

**No further discussion.**

**Hand held card vote. Amended Article 13 passed.**

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## Article 14 Appropriation to Public Works Equipment CRF

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$11,250 to be added to the Public Works Equipment Fund CRF established in 2017. This sum is to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Hand held card vote. Article 14 passed as read.**

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## Article 15 Appropriate to Ambulance Equipment CRF

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$5,000 to be placed in the Ambulance Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. Established in 2020. This sum is to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**

**Hand held card vote. Article 15 passed as read.**

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## Article 16 Appropriate to Ambulance CRF

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$30,000 dollars to be placed in the Ambulance Capital Reserve Fund, established in 1990. This sum is to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

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**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Second: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 16 passed as read.**

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## **Article 17    Establish Health Trust Fund**

To see if the Town will vote to establish a Health Trust Fund under the provisions of RSA 31:19-a for the purpose of maintaining health insurance funds for the benefit of Town employees. This fund is exempt from the provisions of 35:8 or 34:4. The Trustees of Trust Funds shall have custody of the fund. And to raise and appropriate the sum of \$15,000 to be placed in this fund, amount to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to come from taxation. Further, to name the Board of Selectmen as agents to expend from said fund. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Second: Selectman William Caron**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 17 passed as read.**

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## **Article 18    Radio Communication System**

To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$79,200 for the purpose of the purchase of a radio communication system for First Responders. \$30,000 to be raised from an anticipated USDA grant and \$49,200 to come from unassigned fund balance. This appropriation is contingent on receipt of said grant. No amount to come from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 18 passed as read.**

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## **Article 19    New Construction Property Tax Exemption for Industrial/Commercial**

To see if the Town will vote to adopt a new construction property tax exemption for industrial/commercial uses pursuant to RSA 72:76. If adopted by the Town, the percentage rate and duration of the exemption shall be granted uniformly within the Town to all projects for which a proper application is filed. The exemption shall be 50% on an annual basis of the increase in assessed value of industrial/commercial use properties attributable to construction of new structures, and additions, renovations, or improvements to existing structures. The exemption shall run for 3 years following the new construction. The exemption shall apply only for municipal and local school property taxes assessed by the municipality. The exemption shall not apply to the state education property tax nor to the precinct tax nor to the county property tax. The exemption shall take effect in the tax year beginning April 1 following its adoption and shall remain available for 5 tax years. Per RSA 72:77, II, any exemption granted within the 5 tax years will apply for the following 3 tax years notwithstanding the expiration of the 5-year term for applications. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 19 passed as read.**

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## **Article 20    Pay off of Town Office Loan**

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To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$98,647 for the purpose of paying off the USDA loan for the Town Office. This sum is to come from unassigned fund balance. No amount to be raised from taxation. (Recommended by Board of Selectmen 3-0)

**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Second: Selectman William Caron**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 20 passed as read.**

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**Article 21      Selectmen to appoint all other officers**

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

**Motion: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Second: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 21 passed as read.**

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**Article 22      Hear reports**

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

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 22 passed as read.**

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**Article 23      Transact any other business**

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

**Motion: Selectman James Weagle**  
**Second: Selectman Michael Phillips**  
**Hand held card vote. Article 23 passed as read.**

Motion to adjourn: Selectman James Weagle    
Second: Keith Bronson  
Hand held card vote. Motion to adjourn passed.  
The business meeting was adjourned at 12:45 pm by Moderator Keith Young March 13, 2021.

Respectfully Submitted,

Melinda Kennett  
Certified Town Clerk, Town of Northumberland