

TOWN MEETING March 11, 1997

The meeting was called to order by Moderator Catherine Schwenk. The reading of the Warrant through Article 3 was waived.

Polls were declared open at 12:04 pm. Checklist total was 729. Polls were closed at 7:09 p.m., after 108 had voted. There was one absentee ballot.

Results of the elections were as follows:

Selectman for 3 years:	Kenneth Greene	101
Auditor for 1 year:		
Library Trustee for 3 years:	Lynn Costello	98
Trustee of Cemeteries for 3 years:	Robert B. Larochelle	95
Trustee of Trust Funds for 3 years:	George G. Schwenk	104

Article 2. To see if the Town will vote to amend the Town of Mason Ordinance, Appendix A, paragraph 2 by replacing "and any revisions thereafter" with " as reissued with an effective date of December 1, 1992, and any revisions there after", or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 2. This was voted at the polls. 90 yes, 10 no.

Article 3. To see if the Town will vote to replace the current Article IV, section O of the Town of Mason Planning Ordinance:

O. Property owners of enterprises in Mason shall be allowed two advertising signs on the premises, such signs not to total over fifteen square feet in area, one or more signs pertaining to the lease, sale or use of a lot or building on which placed; and directional signs, provided that said signs (1) do not exceed two square feet in areas, and (2) do not exceed one sign in any two mile length of road, not including those to indicate changes in direction. No sign shall be neon, animated or flashing.

with the following:

O. Advertising signs in Mason, with the exceptions of directional signs described in paragraph O.1.b. below, must be on the property on which the enterprises being advertised is located. Such signs shall conform to the following provisions:

1. Signs in the GRAF district (as defined in Article V) in Mason are subject to these stipulations:
 - a. Signs in Mason must conform to the following classes:
 1. Class 1: A single free standing sign is allowed. The total are of the sign board shall not exceed fifteen square feet in area; both sides of the sign may be used. The top of the sign board shall not exceed twelve feet in height.
 2. Class 2: Signs affixed to the building housing the enterprise are allowed. The total area of the sign or signs shall not exceed fifteen square feet in aggregate area. None of these signs shall be attached to or protrude above the roof.
 3. Class 3: In addition, a single temporary sign is allowed, only for purposes of indicating that the premises is for sale or lease. This sign may be either free standing in which case it must conform to the provisions in paragraph O.1.a.1; or affixed to the building, in which case it must conform to the provisions in paragraph O.1.a.2.

- b. In addition, directional signs may be placed on property other than that on which the enterprise is located but only with the consent of the owner of the property. These signs shall not be in the town or state right-of-way. Each sign is restricted to no more than one and one half square feet in area. For a given enterprise, no more than one sign shall be placed within any two mile section of road; with the exception that if directional signs are required at more than one corner within a two mile section of road, such additional signs shall be allowed. No enterprise shall have more than twelve directional signs within the Town of Mason.
- c. No sign shall be neon, animated or flashing.
- d. No sign or lighting for a business shall be positioned in such a manner that it impedes the vision or line of sight of drives in or on public ways, nor cause glare or direct lighting on any adjacent property.

- 2. Signs in the VR district (as defined in Article V) in Mason shall comply with the requirements listed in O.1. and further shall be limited to fifteen square feet in aggregate area, not including a temporary sign as defined in paragraph o.1.b.
- 3. Signs in the Historic District (as defined in Article V in Mason shall comply with the requirements listed in O.1., shall be limited to fifteen square feet in aggregate area, not including a temporary sign as defined in paragraph o.1.b., and must be approved by the Historic District Commission.
- 4. Existing signs on enterprises in Mason at the time of this amendment are exempt from the amended provisions. However, if an existing sign is changed or removed, any replacement must conform to the amended provisions.

or take any other action relative thereto.

Article 3. This was voted on at the polls. 81 yes, 24 no.

The meeting was re-opened at 8:00 pm. Mrs. Schwenk reviewed the procedure we would follow. Note was made of the fire and emergency exits. Mrs. Schwenk introduced those sitting at the head table. She expressed thanks to all involved with the election process.

The colors were presented by Scouts Nathan Archambault and Jesse Knisley from Troop # 264. They led us in the Pledge of Allegiance. State Representative Jeffrey C. MacGillivray brought greetings from the Legislature.

Reference was made to the fact that the Town Reports were not available as required by RSA 40:4. A motion was made, seconded and passed to continue with the meeting. A motion was made, seconded and passed to waive the reading of the Warrant.

Article 4. To see if the Town will vote to modify the elderly exemptions from property tax based on an assessed value, for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$10,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$15,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$20,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years, own 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 five years. In addition the taxpayer must have a net income of not more than \$18,400 or, if married, a combined net income of not more than \$26,400 and own net assets not in excess of \$35,000.

A motion was made by John Lewicke and seconded by Bette Lewicke to insert after "\$26,400" and own net assets not including domicile". This motion passed.

Article 4. The Town voted to modify the elderly exemptions from the property tax in the Town of Mason based on an assessed value; for qualified taxpayers, to be as follows: for a person 65 years of age up to 75 years, \$10,000; for a person 75 years of age up to 80 years, \$15,000; for a person 80 years of age or older, \$20,000. To qualify, the person must have been a New Hampshire resident for at least five years, own 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 five years. In addition the tax payer must have a net income of not more than \$18,400, or if married a combined net income of not more than \$26,400; and own net assets not including domicile in excess of \$35,000.

Article 5. The Town voted to raise and appropriate by taxation or borrowing, or otherwise the sum of Seven Hundred Seventeen Thousand Seven Hundred one Dollars (\$717,701) for the operation and expenses of the Town for the year ensuing.

The vote was unanimous.

Mrs. Schwenk had reviewed the line items. Questions were raised about the copier leased by the Library. It seemed to have been inoperable most of the time. The copier is to be returned. The telephone expenses were noted. The increase is due to the Internet now available to residents. Concern was shown about the almost \$10,000 increase in the recycling center. The Police budget was questioned about the gradual increases over the years. The Town has grown of course, thus more police activity. Also, the need of a third full time Police Officer was discussed.

Article 6. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$14,352 for the third payment of the lease for the Highway Department's dump truck as voted for at Town Meeting, March 1995.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 7. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifteen Thousand Dollars (\$15,000) to be added to the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 8. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of Ten Thousand Dollars (\$10,000) to be added to the Highway Equipment Capital Reserve Fund.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 9. To see if the Town will vote to change the purpose of an existing Cemetery Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund to the Cemetery Land Improvement Trust Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

Mrs. Schwenk mentioned that it would need a 2/3's vote. A motion was made by James Losee and seconded by George Schwenk to strike "Trust Fund" after Cemetery Land Improvement and substitute "Capital Reserve Fund". The motion passed.

Article 9. The Town voted to change the purpose of an existing Cemetery Land Purchase Capital Reserve Fund to the Cemetery Land Improvement Capital Reserve Fund.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 10. To see if the Town will authorize the Selectmen to withdraw Three Thousand Dollars (\$3000) from the Cemetery Land Improvement Trust Fund for the purpose of installing lot markers and continuing work in the new cemetery, or take any other action relative thereto.

A motion was made by James Losee and seconded by George Schwenk to change the words "Trust Fund" to Capital Reserve Fund" after the words Cemetery Land Improvement and add the words " or lesser amount available" after the words "Three Thousand Dollars (\$3000)". This motion passed.

Article 10. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to withdraw Three Thousand Dollars (\$3000) or lesser amounts available from the Cemetery Land Improvement Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of installing lot markers and continuing work in the new cemetery. The vote was unanimous.

Article 11. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2000) for the purchase of portable radios for the Police Department.

Article 12. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Thousand Dollars (\$2000) to replace the highway radar for the Police Department.

Article 13. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$1700) from surplus. These amounts received in 1996 from the sale of surplus Fire Department equipment to be added to the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund. The vote was unanimous.

Article 14. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen to withdraw One Thousand Seven Hundred Dollars (\$1700) from the Fire Equipment Capital Reserve Fund for the purpose of purchasing fire equipment.

Article 15. To see if the Town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Seventy-Five Dollars (\$75) from surplus, these amounts received in 1996 from the sale of cemetery lots, to be added to the Cemetery Land Improvement Fund, or take any other action relative thereto.

A motion was made by George Schwenk and seconded by James Losee to change "Land Improvement Fund" to "Land Improvement Trust Fund". This motion carried.

Article 15. The Town voted to raise and appropriate the sum of \$75.00 from surplus. These amounts received in 1996 from the sale of cemetery lots, to be added to the Cemetery Land Improvement Trust Fund.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 16. The Town voted to adopt the provisions of RSA 202-A:4-d to authorize the Library Trustees to accept gifts of personal property, other than money, which may be offered to the library for any public purpose, provided, however, that no acceptance of personal property by the library trustees shall be deemed to bind the town or library trustees to raise, appropriate or expend any public funds for the operation, maintenance, repair, or replacement of such personal property. Such authorization shall remain in effect until rescinded by vote of town meeting.

The vote was unanimous.

Article 17. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen and the Road Agent to sell or dispose of surplus equipment from the Highway Department.

Article 18. The Town voted to authorize the Selectmen and the Fire Chief to sell or dispose of surplus equipment and vehicles from the Fire Department.

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 9:56 p.m.

We adjourned at 9:56 p.m. Sine Dai
Charlotte N. Hastings, Town clerk

REPORT OF TOWN FOREST FIRE WARDEN AND STATE FOREST RANGE

To aid your Forest Fire Warden, Fire Department and State Forest Ranger, contact your local Warden or Fire department to find out if a permit is required before doing any open burning. Violations of RSA 227-L:17, the fire permit law and the other burning laws of the State of New Hampshire are misdemeanors punishable by fines of up to \$2000 and/or a year in jail. Violators are liable for all fire suppression costs.

There are ten Forest Rangers who work for the NH Division of Forests and Lands, Forest Protection Bureau. State Forest Rangers are available to assist communities with forest fire suppression, prevention and training programs as well as the enforcement of forest fire and timber harvest laws. If you have any questions regarding forest fire or timber harvest laws, please call our office at 271-2217.

There are 2400 Forest fire Wardens and Deputy Forest Fire Wardens throughout the state. Each town has a Forest Fire Warden and several Deputy Wardens who assist with forest fire suppression, prevention, and law enforcement. The 1997 fire season was a safe period for wildland firefighters with no major injuries reported. The drought conditions experienced during the early summer months was a significant factor resulting in the total number of fires reported during the season.

The State of New Hampshire operates 15 fire towers, 2 mobile patrols and 3 contract aircraft patrols. This early detection and reports from citizens aid the quick response from the local Fire Department.

1997 FIRE STATISTICS

Forest Ranger Reported Fires
Number of Fires Statewide 726
Number of Fires Hillsborough County 145

Respectfully submitted,
Bryan Nowak, Forest Ranger
David P. Cook, Forest fire Warden