

**2020 Town Vote
Board of Selectmen and
Water and Sewer Commissioners'
Majority and Minority Reports**

In preparation for Town Voting Day on March 10th the Board of Selectmen, Water & Sewer Commissioners, and the Warrant Article Petitioner would like to present to you the following information for your consideration prior to placing your votes on this year's ballot.

The premise of the information given is that each elected official was able to cast their vote to be in favor or against each warrant article as presented (excluding non-appropriation petition warrant articles in which only the petitioner's views are listed – as per state statute requirements, and Water/Sewer non-bonding articles which are voted on by the Water & Sewer Commissioners as their governing body). Once their votes were cast, they then were given the opportunity to write a brief piece to explain their thoughts on why they chose the position they did.

We thank you for your participation in the democratic process and look forward to seeing you on March 10th!

WARRANT ARTICLE 3 - WADLEIGH LIBRARY RENOVATION AND EXPANSION PROJECT – \$3,450,000 (\$2,763,000 BOND and \$600,000 DONATIONS)

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

Although there are many strong arguments for this proposed project, the majority does not feel it can support a multi-million dollar capital project at the same time we are requesting \$2,400,000 to resolve our emergency communication dispatch problems, believing that the passage of both articles (dispatch and library) would place too much of a tax burden on the electorate in a single year. In terms of priority, the health and safety benefits associated with resolving the communication problems with our emergency services (Ambulance, Fire, Police, Public Works) far outweigh the library article. While acknowledging that repairs are needed at the library, it's important to understand that communication dispatch also plays a critical role in emergencies that occur at the library (i.e. active shooter), and therefore it is crucial that we have an emergency service communication system that is operable, stable and reliable. This project would remain in the Capital Improvement Plan and would be reevaluated next year.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

This article was proposed by the Wadleigh Library Trustees in order to obtain the funds to complete necessary renovations to the existing building and for a small expansion. The library has not been renovated since 1986 despite the increase in population. The renovations will provide more space for programming, parking, bathrooms and upgraded utilities. The Trustees have raised approximately \$687,000 for this project.

WARRANT ARTICLE 4 – MILFORD EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCH CENTER, INFRASTRUCTURE AND EQUIPMENT PROJECT - \$2,400,000 BOND

Board of Selectmen’s Majority Report – Selectmen Daniels, Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

At the 2019 Annual Meeting voters approved \$85,000 to hire a consultant to (a) study probable solutions, (b) make recommendations to the Board that would result in Milford’s emergency services (Ambulance, Fire, Police, Public Works) being able to have at least 95% communication coverage throughout town, including being able to communicate into buildings, and (c) assist in preparing a Request For Proposal (RFP) to accept bids for the equipment needed to achieve the approved solution. Because the study was to include not only a Milford-only option, but also a regional possibility, multiple meetings were held with the Select Boards of Mont Vernon and Wilton, with whom we currently share a MACC Base partnership through an Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA).

In September 2019, CTA Consultants, LLC (CTA), a Lynchburg, Virginia company which has specialized in mission critical 911 Communications Center and Radio System evaluation/assessments and design, RFP development, vendor selection/negotiations activities and implementation oversight for over 35 years, was approved by the Board to conduct the study. On December 16, 2019, CTA presented its 241-page findings to the Board, the Boards of Mont Vernon and Wilton, as well as to interested residents in a public meeting at Town Hall. The CTA Assessment Report is accessible on the Town website.

After numerous subsequent discussions, a majority of the Board recommends to voters, the top-rated proposal recommended by CTA, believing that this solution offers Milford residents the most benefit in a complete solution. If Warrant Article 4 is approved, CTA will assist Selectmen in developing an RFP to acquire the needed equipment to implement the recommended solution and finally fix and modernize our emergency communication systems, bringing stability and reliability of Milford’s emergency communications to a level of service expected by residents, while leaving open the possibility of a regional solution with neighboring towns.

Board of Selectmen’s Minority Report – Selectmen Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority feels that the current regional dispatch service (MACC BASE) is the most advantageous for Milford. Warrant article 4 requires a \$400,000 addition to the police station and a 175’ tower to be placed in the downtown. Member towns to MACC BASE have voiced they are not interested in becoming a customer of Milford. Approving warrant article 4 would mean the Milford taxpayers would have to pay the full cost of the \$2.4 million plus interest bond and 100% of the operating cost. The minority feels there are too many unknown variables, the sustainability fund and the possible addition of union costs related to the new employees.

WARRANT ARTICLE 5 – EXISTING EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS DISPATCH CENTER, UPGRADES - \$3,521,048 BOND BY PETITION

Board of Selectmen’s Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie and Dudziak **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

There are numerous problems with this petition article:

(1) The Inter-Municipal Agreement (IMA) states "The operating budget, including any proposed capital expenditures, shall be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Governing Board provided, however, that any capital expenditure requiring the expenditure of more than TEN THOUSAND (\$10,000.00) DOLLARS for any single item shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the Governing Board for approval.....". The

Governing Board took no action on a capital expenditure of this nature before approving the 2020 budget prior to their December 1st deadline.

(2) This article only covers Milford's share (71.2938%). Wilton and Mont Vernon would have to pass similar articles to be valid and cover 100% of the \$1,660,000. To our knowledge, Wilton and Mont Vernon do not have warrants of this nature.

(3) We know that \$1,660,000 is not a total system solution.

(4) This article is asking Milford taxpayers to raise and appropriate funds and Milford Selectmen to negotiate bond terms for a MACC Base Emergency Dispatch Center. Legally, Milford Selectmen are not given this authority simply because a petition warrant passes. This authority could only be given by the MACC Base Board of Governors.

(5) If both Warrant Article 4 and Warrant Article 5 pass, then this would have a negative effect on the town's ability to bond, and taxpayers would be responsible for conflicting bonds.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Putnam and Labonte **SUPPORT** this article.

MACC Base has been providing professional and affordable regional dispatch services for the town of Milford and surrounding communities for over 30 years. By supporting this warrant article, Milford would continue to be regional and pay only a portion (approx. 71%) of operating and upgrade costs, not all the whole cost. MACC base has existing tower sites, so it would not need an additional 175 foot tower in the downtown. MACC Base has a budget that is thoroughly reviewed by member towns. Over many years MACC Base has proposed upgrades to the system in which member towns have supported. Regional dispatch services have been known to be beneficial to the communities they serve.

At the deliberative session an amendment was made to change the totals of this article. It was then explained that all radios would be replaced. The amendment was approved with 55 in favor and 27 against, with the majority of the emergency personnel present in favor of the change.

WARRANT ARTICLE 6 - COLLECTION SYSTEM CAPACITY MANAGEMENT, OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT - \$218,305 BOND

Board of Commissioners Majority Report - Commissioners Courage, Putnam and White **SUPPORT** this article.

The Automation improvements will replace aging and outdated controls to ensure uninterrupted essential operations at the WWTF. The CMOM program development will create the sewer collection system management plan as required by regulatory agencies.

WARRANT ARTICLE 7 - TOWN OPERATING BUDGET - \$15,261,695

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

The 2020 Operating Budget is \$10,054 less than the Default Budget, with an increase of \$497,522 or 3.4% from the 2019 budget. The primary drivers of the increase in the 2020 budget are:

- Health Insurance - \$187,108 (18%)
- Wage Increases - \$106,181
- AFSCME Contact - \$ 47,251 (4%)
- Teamsters Contact - \$ 12,266 (2.5%)
- Other Town Employees - \$ 46,664 (2%)
- Workers Compensation - \$ 70,583
- MS4 (Stormwater) Compliance - \$44,000
- Voter Registration/Elections (four elections in 2020) - \$43,425

The majority is very mindful of cost impacts to the taxpayers and thanks the Town Administrator and Department Heads for working closely and making the necessary adjustments to present to the Board a budget that is reasonable, yet addresses the needs of the town.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Labonte **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority does not support the 2020 proposed town operating budget. The minority is not in support of the additional positions and additional expenditures proposed in this budget as some reflect only a partial year cost. The minority would like to see line items that are typically not spent, either taken out or explained where they were used. The minority feels that the town budget could be more carefully reviewed and analyzed to be certain we are being fiscally responsible with taxpayer money.

WARRANT ARTICLE 8 - WATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$1,548,984

Board of Commissioners Majority Report - Commissioners Courage, Putnam and White **SUPPORT** this article

The proposed Water Department Operating Budget reflects an increase of 1.4% to the 2019 Operating Budget, or an increase of \$80,756. The Water Department oversees the town wells, 57 miles of water pipe, over 3,500 customers, 503 hydrants as well as numerous service calls.

WARRANT ARTICLE 9 - WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT OPERATING BUDGET - \$1,999,901

Board of Commissioners Majority Report - Commissioners Courage, Putnam and White **SUPPORT** this article

The proposed Sewer Department Operating Budget reflects a decrease of 7.5% to the 2019 Operating Budget, or a decrease of \$13,372. The Sewer Department maintains approximately 40 miles of sewer main, 1,200 manholes, and oversees 5.5 miles of sewer interceptor between the Wilton town line and the wastewater treatment facility in east Milford.

WARRANT ARTICLE 10 - RECONSTRUCTION OF TOWN ROADS - \$400,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **SUPPORT** this article.

For many years the town has funded road repairs at roughly \$300,000 per year, which is about what we receive from the state. This level of funding is nowhere near what is needed to properly maintain the roads in town, and the condition of our roads had continued to decline each year due to this low level of spending. Recognizing this fact, three years ago we borrowed \$2,000,000 on a bond to increase our road repair activity to try to get ahead somewhat on our average road condition level. This money was spent at about \$650,000 per year for the last three years to supplement the normal funding, resulting in average road spending of almost \$1,000,000 per year for the past three years. This increased spending has resulted in a significant improvement in our road conditions, at the penalty of paying interest on the money that was borrowed. The majority of the Board of Selectmen believes that we need to keep our road repair and reconstruction spending at a higher level than we were previously spending to avoid falling behind again on our overall level of repairs, but that we should do it without borrowing and paying interest for what should be a normal annual expense. The \$400,000 on this article when added to the over \$300,000 in the regular budget will allow for over \$700,000 of road repairs in this budget cycle, which is less than what we have spent on average over the past three years, but it is closer to what is needed to maintain our roads on an ongoing basis.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Daniels **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this article.

While not denying that roads need to continue to be repaired, the minority feels that this additional \$400,000 would place too much of a tax burden on residents in the same year that the Board is asking for \$2,400,000 to fix our emergency communication dispatch problems, identified by the Board as its highest priority. There is \$300,000 in the operating budget to continue to repair the worst roads, as identified by DPW's Cartograph software. This year, concentration should be on fixing our emergency communications, with reconstruction of town roads secondary to that initiative.

WARRANT ARTICLE 11 - BRIDGE REPAIR AND/OR REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$75,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

Roads, Bridges and infrastructure present a constant repair and maintenance task for the town. Although we have made significant progress repairing our culverts and bridges, we still have several that need repair or replacement. This article will continue to fund the capital reserve to keep making progress on these bridge projects. The Selectmen feel that it is imperative to continue making the necessary repairs to these bridges by funding the capital reserve. This Capital Reserve account has a balance of \$608,240.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Labonte **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority feels that the board is asking voters to support too many high priority items this year. DPW has stated that there is enough money in the current capital reserve fund for the necessary repairs for the next few years as the Mason Road Bridge got delayed from 2024 until 2028. Therefore, the minority feels the other items take higher priority and this will help reduce the impact on the taxpayers.

**WARRANT ARTICLE 12 - AMBULANCE AND EQUIPMENT LEASE-PURCHASE - \$45,180
(Annual Lease Payment \$45,180: \$75,000 Paid From Capital Reserves; Total Purchase Price \$296,400)**

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

Approval of this article would allow the replacement of the 2001 ambulance used to provide advanced life support to Milford residents and visitors. The current ambulance is 19 years old and does not support the expanded medical capabilities that can be provided by the department. Replacing this ambulance will address equipment capability shortcomings while supporting the ambulance use rotation to maximize ambulance life cycle.

WARRANT ARTICLE 13 - DPW VEHICLES AND HEAVY EQUIPMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$40,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

Continuing to build on a capital reserve account for DPW vehicles and Heavy Equipment is necessary and will lower the impact to the tax rate when a new vehicle or piece of heavy equipment is purchased. The funds will continue to accrue until a replacement is needed and can only be used for the replacement of a DPW vehicle or piece of heavy equipment. This will save the town money in interest charges. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$80,289.26.

WARRANT ARTICLE 14 - SOCIAL SERVICES - \$40,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

Presently there are twelve (12) agencies that provide assistance to Milford residents. The services offered by these organizations provide an invaluable benefit to Milford residents in need, thus reducing the amount the Town of Milford spends on welfare to qualifying residents.

WARRANT ARTICLE 15 - NON-EMERGENCY COMMUNITY TRANSPORTATION BUS SERVICES – \$32,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The Board unanimously supports Article 24. Souhegan Valley Transportation Collaborative continues to provide affordable, wheelchair-accessible transportation for non-emergency healthcare appointments and other essential activities. This is an invaluable service to the Town of Milford as well as surrounding communities which greatly benefits the town's elderly and disabled population giving them a sense of independence.

WARRANT ARTICLE 16 - FIRE APPARATUS REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$25,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The intent of this reserve fund is to offset the cost of a new piece of apparatus when it is needed. Continuing to fund this capital reserve will save us interest cost on a future lease or bond. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$75,347.11.

WARRANT ARTICLE 17 - TOWN FACILITIES RENOVATION AND MAJOR REPAIR REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$25,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The Board of Selectmen unanimously support Article 17. By voting annually to fund this account, the costs incurred to conduct necessary repairs and replacements are spread out over time. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$75,347.11

WARRANT ARTICLE 18 - AMBULANCE VEHICLE REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$25,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

This article continues the funding of a capital reserve account dedicated for the purchase of an ambulance. This account can be used to lower the impact on taxes when a replacement ambulance is purchased. Ambulances can cost up to \$300,000, so this account might be used as a down payment for our next purchase. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$75,347.11

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Labonte **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority feels that the board is asking voters to support too many high priority items this year and this capital reserve could be held off for a year.

WARRANT ARTICLE 19 - KEYES PARK EXPANSION COMMITTEE PROJECT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$25,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Dargie, Putnam, and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

This article continues the funding of a capital reserve account dedicated to improvements at Keyes Park. The Keyes Park Expansion Committee developed a master plan for the site a few years ago after the former Permatatch facility was purchased and added to the site. The committee continues to meet, and they are working to refine the plans to match the long-term needs of the community. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$0

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Daniels and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

While the Board of Selectmen has adopted a policy of using capital reserve accounts to deter spikes in future financial requests for some capital items, the Board is asking voters to fund over \$200,000 in capital reserve requests this year for future items it considers critical. The minority of the Board opposes this article for the following reasons: (1) it is not a critical item, and (2) because of the amount of funding the Board has requested for critical, higher priority items, such as Emergency Communications Dispatch (\$2,400,000).

WARRANT ARTICLE 20 - PUBLIC WORKS WHEEL BUCKET LOADER LEASE-PURCHASE - \$22,980 (Annual Lease Payment \$22,980; \$80,000 Paid From Capital Reserves; Total Purchase Price (\$145,000))

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectman Daniels, Dargie, Putnam and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

Approval of this article will allow for the lease-purchase of a bucket loader. This will eliminate the need for a winter rental, which took the place of a 1996 Kobleco loader, and reduce annual operating costs by \$15,000. The cost savings to the town over a 15-year period would be \$102,635.00.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Labonte **DOES NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority feels that with all the other items the board is asking the voters to support this year the loader is not a priority. We have a 2018 Backhoe that can complete necessary jobs, as well as approximately \$18,000 in the budget for loader rental. In recent years we have done substantial repairs to our current loader and it is very good working condition. The minority feels other items take higher priority and this will help minimize the increase on the taxpayers.

WARRANT ARTICLE 21 - POLICE AND FIRE DEPARTMENT PORTABLE RADIO REPLACEMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$22,800

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

There are several portable radios amongst emergency services that have reached their end of life and are unable to be repaired. Approval of this warrant article will allow emergency services to have fully functioning portable radios for all shifts. Radios can be bought with the Public Safety Communication Equipment Replacement Capital Reserve funds. Use of this fund requires voters' approval. This warrant article does not have any affiliation with MACC Base or the CTA Study.

WARRANT ARTICLE 22 - PUBLIC SAFETY COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT CAPITAL RESERVE - \$20,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The intent of this capital reserve is to fund the cost of future purchases of critical safety communication equipment. Purchases would include replacement of pagers and radios, both portable and vehicular, for Ambulance, DPW, Emergency Management, Fire, and Police. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$80,409.58.

WARRANT ARTICLE 23 - CONSERVATION FUND - \$20,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Dargie, Dudziak and Labonte **SUPPORT** this article.

This article was proposed by the Conservation Commission in order to increase the funds in the Conservation Land Fund. These funds continue to build a base and enable the Conservation Commission to work with other organizations in the event prime properties become available and assist landowners with easements. By voting to support this article, you are helping to protect the town's natural resources.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Daniels and Putnam **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The minority of the Board are opposed to this funding request this year. When the request was made, the Board was told that there was about \$120,000 in the Conservation Land Fund and that the Commission wanted to raise that balance closer to \$150,000. As of 12/31/19, the Conservation Commission had \$200,323 in the Conservation Land Fund (including \$76,900 in Rail Trail funds), \$18,253 in the Town Forest Fund, \$2,587 in the Nees Bequest Fund and \$3,819 in the Accumulative Fund, for a total Conservation Fund balance of \$224,982. For this reason, the minority does not support this article this year.

WARRANT ARTICLE 24 - ASSESSING REVALUATION CAPITAL RESERVE - \$15,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This article continues the funding of a capital reserve dedicated to assessing revaluation expenses. We are required by law to do a formal reappraisal for all property every five years. This funding approximates the average annual cost of reappraisal, so this is an attempt to have level annual payments towards reassessment rather than having a large individual payment every five years and to avoid the spike in taxes when that would occur. This Capital Reserve account currently has a balance of \$45,208.27.

WARRANT ARTICLE 25 - ANNUAL LABOR DAY PARADE SUPPORT - \$10,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This warrant article partially funds the cost of the annual Labor Day parade, including the cost of bands and other costs. This high visibility parade is the largest Labor Day parade in the state and has been held in Milford for 72 years. This signature event brings revenues to local businesses and showcases the best of Milford to the attendees. The ending balance in this account for 2019 is \$12,992.50.

WARRANT ARTICLE 26 - SUMMER BAND CONCERTS SUPPORT - \$9,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

These band concerts are an example of why Milford is such a great place to live. The concerts are held in Emerson Park next to the post office or in Town Hall when there is bad weather. Listening to the various types of music on the banks of the Souhegan River is a wonderful experience that is suitable for people of all ages, including the many seniors that live nearby.

WARRANT ARTICLE 27 - INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATION FIREWORKS - \$8,500

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Dargie, Dudziak and Labonte **SUPPORT** this article.

By voting to support this article, voters will ensure that they are able to continue to enjoy the fireworks display on the Fourth of July. Fireworks have become a staple of the Fourth of July celebration in Milford. Families gather at both Keyes Field and MCAA fields to enjoy the festivities and to also have the opportunity to support youth athletics in town by purchasing from the concession stands.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Daniels and Putnam **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The budget is up 3.4% (though it is below the default budget) and numerous critical warrant articles seek your hard-earned dollars, but this is not a critical warrant article. This year we have some unusually high requests, critical to the health and safety of Milford residents, and this activity, if desired, could be funded in a different manner. The minority did not view this as a high priority and felt the money could be better used in support of one of the core functions of government.

WARRANT ARTICLE 28 - PUMPKIN FESTIVAL SUPPORT - \$8,000

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The Granite Town Festivities Committee did a wonderful job organizing our 30th Annual Pumpkin Festival. Hundreds of volunteer hours go into making this a spectacular 3-day community event with music and activities for all ages. An estimated 35,000 visitors attended the 2019 Pumpkin Festival. The huge success of the festival was due to the collaboration of several Milford volunteer committees, The Granite Town Festivities Committee, The Milford Rotary Club, and the Milford Lions Club along with several town departments, over 23 local businesses, and hundreds of volunteers. The Pumpkin Festival lowered the cost of the previous warrant article by \$15,000. The \$8,000 will cover the cost of the extra man hours for the Department of Public Works, Police, Ambulance and Fire Department. The Granite Town Festivities Committee hopes to be self-sustaining after this year. The remaining balance in The Granite Town Festivities Committee's account for 2019 is \$41,435.21.

WARRANT ARTICLE 29 - MEMORIAL, VETERANS & LABOR DAY PARADES AND RECOGNITION SUPPORT - \$6,500

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

These funds cover the cost of town department expenses needed to properly support the Memorial Day, Labor Day, and Veterans Day parades that are held each year. These funds also cover the cost of flags for veterans in our cemeteries on Memorial Day. The three parades allow us to honor those who have served and/or made sacrifices to make our country better. They promote community involvement and allow our current groups and organizations to be recognized.

WARRANT ARTICLE 30 - VETERAN'S TAX CREDIT AND ALL VETERAN'S TAX CREDIT

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **SUPPORT** this article.

This warrant article recognizes the commitment and contribution of our Veterans by providing a small increase in tax relief. It has been more than 10 years since there was any increase applied and it is felt that this increase shows our appreciation for our Veterans who have given so much for us.

Board of Selectmen's Abstention Report - Selectman Daniels

As a veteran, Selectman Daniels declared a conflict of interest and abstained from voting on this article.

WARRANT ARTICLE 31 - TAX CREDIT FOR SURVIVING SPOUSE OF VETERAN

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This warrant article recognizes the commitment and contribution of our Veterans by providing a small increase in tax relief for their surviving spouse. This credit applies to the spouse of a service member killed while on duty. It has been more than 10 years since there was any increase applied and it is felt that this increase shows our appreciation to the families of those who gave the ultimate sacrifice defending our country.

WARRANT ARTICLE 32 - TAX CREDIT FOR SERVICE CONNECTED TOTAL DISABILITY

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This warrant article recognizes the commitment and contribution of our Veterans by providing a small increase in tax relief for the veteran who has been wounded while on duty. It has been more than 10 years since there was any increase applied and it is felt that this increase shows our appreciation for their service.

WARRANT ARTICLE 33 - INCREASE THE PROPERTY TAX EXEMPTION FOR ELDERLY - \$0

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

The elderly exemption amounts are reviewed whenever there has been a re-valuation or broad property valuation update to help maintain a consistent level of property tax assistance for those on limited incomes. This exemption applies a 20% increase in the exemption amount to be applied to the value of the primary residence of the recipient. A 20% increase is recommended as it represents the average increase in value that occurred in the valuation update of 2019, even though some property values have increased by more than that amount. The intent of the increased exemption amount is a simple parity, in line with the previous year's exemption amount.

This Warrant Article also recommends a slight increase for total asset limits from \$85,000 to \$100,000. The \$85,000 limit has not increased in over 10 years, while incidental expenses i.e.: medical, home repair, utilities have continued to increase for our elderly who are on extremely limited incomes. This helps the recipient to have a small reserve for unanticipated expenses that may occur.

WARRANT ARTICLE 34 - WEST MILFORD TAX INCREMENT FINANCING DISTRICT REVOCATION - \$0

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This Article seeks to revoke the West Milford Tax Increment Financing District. Milford Voters approved the creation of the West Milford Tax Increment Financing (TIF) District in 2006 to provide financing for public improvements (sewer, water, roads, sidewalks, etc.) within the Brox Industrial Properties and abutting privately owned industrial properties. The intent of West Milford TIF District was to attract industrial and commercial development within the area and encourage viable economic development. Unfortunately, the TIF District has languished due to the lack of interest in the industrial properties within the District and has not resulted in the anticipated development/redevelopment opportunities for the Town since its creation. As such, the Board of Selectmen believes that the West Milford Tax Increment Financing District is no longer warranted at this time and should be revoked.

WARRANT ARTICLE 35 - BROX PROPERTIES PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENT FUND REVOCATION - \$0

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

This Article seeks to revoke the Brox Properties Public Infrastructure Improvement Fund. Milford voters approved the creation of the Fund in 2012 to create an expendable trust fund to provide funding for the construction for municipal infrastructure improvements for the industrial properties within the West Milford Tax Increment Financing District. The Fund has been inactive and unfunded since its inception. The Brox Properties Public Infrastructure Improvement Fund is directly associated with the West Milford Tax Increment Financing District. With the proposed revocation of the TIF District, the Fund is no longer warranted and as such, should be revoked.

WARRANT ARTICLE 36 - SPORTS BETTING - \$0

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Dargie, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **UNANIMOUSLY SUPPORT** this article.

In the 2019 session of the New Hampshire General Court, a bill was passed and signed by the Governor that allowed sports betting to occur in New Hampshire. The bill authorized online betting, which is now in place and is being offered by Draftkings.com sportsbook. The bill also authorized the creation of up to 10 retail sports book betting locations at various sites around the state. The individual municipalities that will be awarded these establishments have to first authorize the location of a sports book in their municipality by a vote like this warrant article. This is the same process that was used to allow for Keno to be offered, and which is now available at multiple locations in town. While it is unlikely that a retail sports book will be set up in Milford since we are not an ideal location like some other municipalities (i.e. larger cities, right on the border near highways, or geographically diverse), there is a chance that we would be awarded one if there are only a few municipalities that authorize their use. It is expected that a sports book retail operation would be a vibrant business that would improve the economy of the town. There are no costs to the town for this warrant article as the cost to set up a sports book (if one is awarded) would be paid for entirely by the business offering the sports book operation.

WARRANT ARTICLE 37 – NASHUA STREET PEDESTRIAN SAFETY and SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT PROJECT - \$750,500 (State pays \$600,400; Town pays \$150,100) BY PETITION

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

Cities and towns are responsible by law for ensuring that public sidewalks are passable. This means that the town would take on the liability of ensuring that the sidewalk is free of snow in the winter and would need to appropriate necessary funds yearly to maintain the sidewalk to keep it safe (free from cracks and breaks) for pedestrians. This article uses a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program grant to fund 80% of the project, but the town would need to fund the other 20% (\$150,000). This is just the initial cost to build the sidewalk. Going forward, Milford residents would be responsible for funding the on-going maintenance of this sidewalk (plowing and repairs) to keep the town free of liability. Between Article 38 and Article 39, there is an additional 7500' (1.42 miles) of sidewalk that would need to be plowed each snowstorm and repaired as needed. This will have an impact on DPW time and resources, including accelerated wear and tear on sidewalk plows (we just purchased another one last year for \$155,000). Should this article pass, residents should expect an increase in future DPW budgets to cover this additional work. Furthermore, CMAQ grants have traditionally provided continual funding for these types of projects. For these reasons, the majority does not support this article this year.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

This article provides the 20% matching funds (\$150,100) that are needed to build about 3,500 linear feet of sidewalks on Nashua Street on the east side of town in various sections between Cahill Place and Lorden Plaza. This project is one of the main components of the Milford Pedestrian, Bicycle, Trail & Recreation Connectivity Plan. This project has been in the Capital Improvements Plan for over a decade pending the awarding of the 80% funding. We were recently awarded the funding, and it will expire if this project is not approved this year. The state funding is highly competitive, and it is unlikely that we would get it again if we do not agree to it this year.

**WARRANT ARTICLE 38 - OSGOOD ROAD, MELENDY ROAD, AND ARMORY ROAD
PEDESTRIAN SAFETY SIDEWALK AND BICYCLE LANE PROJECT - \$763,000 (State pays
\$610,400; Town pays \$152,600) BY PETITION**

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

Cities and towns are responsible by law for ensuring that public sidewalks are passable. This means that the town would take on the liability of ensuring that the sidewalk is free of snow in the winter and would need to appropriate necessary funds yearly to maintain the sidewalk to keep it safe (free from cracks and breaks) for pedestrians. This article uses a Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Improvement Program grant to fund 80% of the project, but the town would need to fund the other 20% (\$152,600). This is just the initial cost to build the sidewalk. Going forward, Milford residents would be responsible for funding the on-going maintenance of this sidewalk (plowing and repairs) to keep the town free of liability. Between Article 38 and Article 39, there is an additional 7500' (1.42 miles) of sidewalk that would need to be plowed each snowstorm and repaired as needed. This will have an impact on DPW time and resources, including accelerated wear and tear on sidewalk plows (we just purchased another one last year for \$155,000). In addition, passage of this article would negatively impact the roadside parking area now used for events at Adams Field, further contributing to Milford's parking shortage. Should this article pass, residents should expect an increase in future DPW budgets to cover this additional work. Furthermore, CMAQ grants have traditionally provided continual funding for these types of projects. For these reasons, the majority does not support this article this year.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectmen Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article.

This article provides the 20% matching funds (\$152,600) that are needed to build about 4,000 linear feet of sidewalks and related improvements along Osgood Road, Mason Road, Melendy Road, and Armory Road in the area near Adams Field and Osgood Pond which are heavily used by students. This project is one of the main components of the Milford Pedestrian, Bicycle, Trail & Recreation Connectivity Plan. This project has been in the Capital Improvements Plan for over a decade pending the awarding of the 80% funding. We were recently awarded the funding, and it will expire if this project is not approved this year. The state funding is highly competitive, and it is unlikely that we would get it again if we do not agree to it this year.

**WARRANT ARTICLE 39 - NEW MUNICIPAL AND TRANSPORTATION CAPITAL RESERVE
FUND PAID BY AN ADDITIONAL AUTO REGISTRATION FEE BY PETITION- \$0**

Board of Selectmen's Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam, Dudziak and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

This is a new \$5 tax placed upon automobile owners to pay for, what are in some instances, transportation-associated initiatives currently funded by all. While the claim is made that this may lower property taxes, the important word is "many", as it ultimately depends on how many vehicles one has to register and more importantly, how the Board of Selectmen decide to spend the money. The Board, in fact, could use the money not as a replacement for expenses already being incurred, but to fund some other transportation-associated initiative that does not now exist that would ultimately require more DPW time and resources, necessitating an increase in your property taxes. Voters should reject this unfair tax, which targets only automobile owners.

Board of Selectmen's Minority Report - Selectman Dargie **SUPPORTS** this article.

This article implements a new \$5 per vehicle registration fee that will be deposited into a capital reserve fund that is managed by the board of selectmen. This reserve fund can only be used for certain

transportation-related costs such as roads, bridges, public transportation, sidewalks, parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and electric vehicle charging stations. The funds can also be used for matching funds for transportation improvements. This fee will generate a total of roughly \$90,000 per year. If the funds are used to pay for items that are currently being paid for by property taxes, then this will result in a decrease in property taxes of about \$5 per \$100,000 valuation. If the funds are not used to pay for items that are not currently being paid for by property taxes, then there will be no change to property taxes. There are roughly 35 municipalities around the state that have implemented this fee to improve transportation projects.

WARRANT ARTICLE 40 – NEW HAMPSHIRE RESOLUTION TO TAKE ACTION ON CLIMATE POLLUTION BY PETITION- \$0

Board of Selectmen’s Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

The legislature is already addressing climate change and has the ability to continue that effort without implementing policies that would significantly result in increased gas prices. Governor Sununu reauthorized New Hampshire’s participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative to lower carbon emissions. He vetoed expensive subsidies for biomass plants that emit significant amounts of carbon emissions. The wood products industry might be popular, but it is not a source of clean energy. In fact, these are the very CO2 emissions that contribute to climate change. The Governor refused to have New Hampshire join a state version of the Paris Climate Accord because it contained environmental standards on climate change that were less stringent than New Hampshire’s current laws. He has been a leader in developing offshore wind as a green energy source in New Hampshire. On solar energy, he was successful in passing a program last year that harnessed solar energy to help seniors and low-income residents to lower their electric bills. This year he is proposing a net metering program that promotes solar energy but does not stick electric ratepayers with the tab for a massive subsidy to big corporate solar developers. We would do well to let the legislature do its research and debate the merits of climate change solutions with supporting a petition that does not even identify the price of the initiative that petitioners are asking us to support.

Board of Selectmen’s Minority Report - Selectmen Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article

Carbon-pricing is the most effective and fair method to deliver rapid reductions in harmful carbon emissions. A majority vote in favor of this article will result in a message being sent to our state and federal elected representatives encouraging them to support a carbon cash-back pricing system to take positive action on reducing the effects of climate change.

WARRANT ARTICLE 41 – NEW HAMPSHIRE RESOLUTION FOR FAIR REDISTRICTING BY PETITION- \$0

Board of Selectmen’s Majority Report - Selectmen Daniels, Putnam and Labonte **DO NOT SUPPORT** this article.

This petition comes as a result of House Bill 706, vetoed by Governor Sununu in the 2019 session. In his veto message, the Governor states, “The New Hampshire Constitution directs the legislature to determine legislative and Executive Council districts. The drafters of our Constitution were wise to vest such authority in the people’s elected representatives who are accountable to the voters every two years. The members of the commission proposed by House Bill 706 would be unelected and unaccountable to the voters. Legislators should not abrogate their responsibility to the voters and delegate authority to an unelected and unaccountable commission selected by political party bosses. We should all be proud that issues of gerrymandering are extremely rare in New Hampshire. Our current redistricting process is fair and representative of the people of our State. While I do not question the sincerity of the legislators who support House Bill 706, one of the partisan out-of-state organizations pushing for this legislation states that its

mission is to “favorably position Democrats for the redistricting process.” This is very concerning and undermines House Bill 706’s stated goal of creating “fair” electoral districts. For the reasons stated above, I have vetoed House Bill 706.”

Regardless of the worries of the leaders of NH’s political parties as to which political party will control the legislature at the time that the next census is taken and when redistricting must subsequently be undertaken, it’s important to not lose faith with what our founders had in mind for self-governance. Those who wrote, and those who approved our constitution way back in 1783, put their faith in the people, through their exclusive choice of representatives to the General Court, to determine how the state ought to be managed in their interest. Neither the Judiciary, nor the Governor, nor anything like an “Independent Redistricting Commission,” ought to ever be permitted to limit, in any way, shape, or form, the people’s right to govern themselves.

Board of Selectmen’s Minority Report - Selectmen Dargie and Dudziak **SUPPORT** this article

New Hampshire will be redistricted in 2021 after the results of the 2020 census are known. Under current law, the political parties in the majority in 2021 will generate the new electoral districts in the state. Based on the redistricting that occurred after the previous censuses, it is likely that unless the law is changed that this time it will again be highly partisan with extreme gerrymandering. A majority vote in favor of this article will result in a message being sent to our elected representatives in the General Court that they should appoint an independent non-partisan commission to create the new districts instead of using the current process. This non-partisan method should result in districts that do not favor one party over the others and will ensure that the voters choose their politicians instead of the politicians choosing their voters.