

2020 ANNUAL TOWN MEETING DELIBERATIVE SESSION MINUTES

TOWN OF PITTSFIELD FEBRUARY 1, 2020

Town Moderator Cedric Dustin III called the First Session of the 2020 Town Meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, February 1, 2020 in the Pittsfield Elementary School Gymnasium. Moderator Dustin welcomed those in attendance and led the *Pledge of Allegiance*. He asked for a moment of silence in honor of Fran Marston, who served the town as a Supervisor of the Checklist for over 40 years.

After introducing the people on the stage and explaining the rules of procedure, Moderator Dustin read the introduction to warrant:

To the inhabitants of the Town of Pittsfield in the County of Merrimack, in said State, qualified to vote in Town affairs:

You are hereby notified to meet for the first session of the annual meeting, to be held in the Pittsfield Elementary School Gymnasium at 34 Bow Street in said Pittsfield on Saturday, February 1, 2020 at 10:00 a.m. This first (deliberative) session, for the transaction of all business other than voting by official ballot, shall consist of explanation, discussion, and debate of each warrant article as allowed by law. In the event of inclement weather, the snow date for the first session will be Monday, February 3, 2020 at 7:00 p.m. at the same location.

You are also notified to meet for the second session of the annual meeting, to be held in the Town Hall Meeting Room at 85 Main Street in said Pittsfield on Tuesday, March 10, 2020, to vote on all of the 2020 annual town meeting warrant articles by official ballot. The polls will open at 7:00 a.m. and will close at 7:00 p.m.

Article 1:

To choose by ballot the following officers:

- one Cemetery Trustee for a three (3) year term
- one Library Trustee for a three (3) year term
- one Moderator for a two (2) year term
- one Planning Board member for a three (3) year term
- one Board of Selectmen member for a three (3) year term
- one Supervisor of the Checklist for a six (6) year term
- one Treasurer for a three (3) year term
- one Trustee of the Trust Funds for a three (3) year term
- two Zoning Board of Adjustment members for a three (3) year term

Article 01 was read by Moderator Dustin.

No Discussion.

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Article 2 - proposed Pittsfield Zoning Ordinance amendment #1

Are you in favor of the adoption of Amendment Number 1 as proposed by the Board of Selectmen for the town zoning ordinance as follows:

Remove all citations to court cases located throughout the ordinance?

(Recommended by the Planning Board 4-1-0)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

Article 02 was read by Moderator Dustin.

No Discussion.

Article 3 - proposed Pittsfield Zoning Ordinance amendment #2 (inserted by voters' petition)

Are you in favor of an amendment to the town zoning ordinance to exempt storage containers in the Suburban District or the Rural District from the current requirements that all storage containers in any zoning district must be on a lot only temporarily and must have a permit from the zoning ordinance administrator?

The proposed amendment removes these requirements by adding to article 14, section 3, paragraphs (e) and (f), the words shown below in underlining, and by deleting the words shown in strikethrough. Paragraphs (e) and (f) below use underlining and strikethrough only to show what is added or deleted; the underlining and strikethrough are not included in the text of the revised paragraphs.

(e) The sum of time during which one or more STORAGE CONTAINERS are on any one LOT in the Urban District, the Commercial District, or the Light Industrial/Commercial District during any 15-month period shall be no more than 12 months.

(f) If the LOT where the STORAGE CONTAINER will be put is the Urban District, the Commercial District, or the Light Industrial/Commercial District, then the ~~The owner of the LOT where the STORAGE CONTAINER will be put~~ shall tell the zoning ordinance administrator the date when the STORAGE CONTAINER is proposed to be put on the LOT. The zoning ordinance administrator shall issue a permit for the STORAGE CONTAINER, and the permit shall state the date when the STORAGE CONTAINER is proposed to be put on the LOT.

(Not Recommended by the Planning Board 4-1-0)

(Not Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

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Article 03 was read by Moderator Dustin.

No Discussion.

Article 4 – Municipal Operating Budget

Shall the town raise and appropriate as an operating budget, not including the appropriations by special warrant articles and other appropriations voted separately, the amounts set forth on the budget posted with the warrant or as amended by vote of the first session, for the purposes set forth therein, totaling **\$4,772,053**?

Should this article be defeated, the default budget shall be **\$4,560,159** which is the same as last year, with certain adjustments required by previous action of the town or by law; or the governing body may hold one special meeting, in accordance with RSA 40:13, X and XVI, to take up the issue of a revised operating budget only.

Estimated tax impact is \$10.58 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

Article 04 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 04 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 04 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 5 – cost items for patrolmen & admin. assistants in the Teamsters bargaining unit

To see if the town will vote to approve the cost items included in the collective bargaining agreement reached between the Board of Selectmen and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local Union #633, which calls for the following increases in salaries and benefits at the current staffing levels:

Fiscal Year	Estimated Increase
2020	\$ 7,106
2021	\$ 7,731
2022	\$ 13,938
2023	\$ 13,943

and further, to raise and appropriate **\$7,106** for the current fiscal year, such sum representing the additional costs attributable to the increase in salaries and benefits required by the new agreement over those that would be paid at current staffing levels.

Estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.03 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

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(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 05 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 05 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 05 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 6 – ability to call special meeting for cost items

Shall the town of Pittsfield, if article 5 is defeated, authorize the governing body to call one special meeting, at its option, to address article 5's cost items only?

(majority vote required)

Article 06 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 06 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 06 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 7 - Municipal Sidewalks improvement

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$20,000 for the purpose of improvements to our municipal sidewalks and to authorize the withdrawal of \$20,000 to come from the Municipal Sidewalks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund created for that purpose. The balance collected in 2019 was \$27,550, which will be transferred to the Municipal Sidewalks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund in fiscal year 2020. The balance of the Municipal Sidewalks Improvement Capital Reserve Fund was \$2,427.29 on December 31, 2019.

There is no estimated tax impact.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 07 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 07 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 07 shall appear on the ballot as written.

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Article 8 – funding to complete Shaw Road Bridge over Kelly Brook project

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$614,979** for the replacement of NHDOT Bridge #089/135 as NHDOT project #14972, which carries Shaw Road over Kelly Brook, to authorize the receipt of NH State Bridge Aid in the amount of \$491,983, and also to authorize the withdrawal of \$65,000 from the Shaw Road Bridge Capital Reserve Fund for this purpose. **The balance of \$57,996 is to come from general taxation.** This appropriation will be non-lapsing per RSA 32:7, IV, and will not lapse until the earlier of project completion or as long as the money remains available under the rules or practice of the granting entity.

This article is intended to augment the 2016 annual town meeting warrant article 10 to incorporate the entire project budget in one warrant article as the NHDOT project #14972 estimates and timelines have changed.

Estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.22 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 08 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 08 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 08 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 9 – increase annual deposit into the Ambulance Replacement & Equipment Fund

To see if the town will vote, in accordance with RSA 31:95-d, V, to change the fractional portion of revenues to deposit into the existing Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund, an RSA 31:95-c special revenue fund created in 1998 and last amended in 2016, the change being to restrict **\$35,000** in revenues from the annual amount of ambulance billings recorded in the General Fund to be deposited into the existing Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund for continued purpose of funding the replacements of the town's ambulances along with the ambulance equipment necessary to be licensed by the State of New Hampshire.

This proposed change is an increase of five thousand dollars to the annual deposit into the fund from the current amount of thirty thousand dollars as voted at the 2016 town meeting's warrant article #14.

The revenues and expenditures accounted for in the Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund are separate from the General Fund. Any surplus in the Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund is not deemed to be a part of the General Fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate an amount from the Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund for a specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund and source of revenue.

(2/3 vote required)

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(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 09 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 09 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 09 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 10 – ambulance replacement

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$250,000** for the purchase of an ambulance and the ambulance equipment necessary to be licensed by the State of New Hampshire, and to authorize the withdrawal of **\$250,000** to come from the Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund created for this purpose.

The balance of the Ambulance Replacement and Equipment Fund was \$424,583 on December 31, 2019.

There is no estimated tax impact.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 10 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 10 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 10 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 11 – raising matching funds for a Fire Department grant

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of \$263,280 for the purchase of self-contained breathing apparatus, with a grant revenue offset of \$236,952 to come from an Assistance to Firefighters Grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, leaving \$26,328 required as matching funds and to authorize the withdrawal of \$5,000 from the Fire Department Small Equipment Capital Reserve Fund to put towards the matching funds amount.

The balance of \$21,328 is to come from general taxation. The matching funds amount will be spent only if the grant is received.

This article is required to be written to show the entire appropriation and offsetting grant revenue, not just the net obligation, per the gross budgeting concept for transparency.

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The balance of the Fire Department Small Equipment Capital Reserve Fund was \$7,041.05 on December 31, 2019.

(majority vote required)

Estimated tax impact is \$0.08 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 11 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 11 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 11 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 12 - establish a Police Cruiser Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to establish a Capital Reserve Fund under the provisions of RSA 35:1 for the purpose of purchasing Police Cruisers and to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000** to be placed in this fund.

(majority vote required)

Estimated tax impact is \$0.11 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 12 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 12 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 12 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 13 – add to the Fire Department Small Equipment Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$1,000** to be added to the Fire Department Small Equipment Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Fire Department Small Equipment Capital Reserve Fund was \$7,041.05 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is less than \$0.01 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 4-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

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Article 13 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 13 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 13 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 14 – add to the Fire Department Pumper Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$50,000** to be added to the Fire Department Pumper Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Fire Department Pumper Capital Reserve Fund was \$150,617.27 on December 31, 2019. Estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.19 per thousand dollars of assessed value. (majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 14 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 14 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 14 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 15 – add to the Fire Department Tanker Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$24,000** to be added to the Fire Department Tanker Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Fire Department Tanker Capital Reserve Fund was \$60,246.91 on December 31, 2019. Estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.09 per thousand dollars of assessed value. (majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 15 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 15 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 15 shall appear on the ballot as written.

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Article 16 – add to the Fire Department Forestry Truck Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$5,000** to be added to the Fire Department Forestry Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Fire Department Forestry Truck Capital Reserve Fund was \$11,034.03 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is approximately \$0.02 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 16 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 16 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 16 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 17 – add to the Dump Truck Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$65,000** to be added to the Dump Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established. There are currently **three dump trucks** in the Public Works Department that this Capital Reserve Fund supports. The balance of the Public Works Dump Truck Capital Reserve Fund was \$142,785.60 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$0.25 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 17 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 17 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 17 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 18 – add to the Loader Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,500** to be added to the Loader Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Public Works Loader Capital Reserve Fund was \$43,176.65 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$0.05 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

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(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 18 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 18 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 18 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 19 – add to the Backhoe Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$17,000** to be added to the Backhoe Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Public Works Backhoe Capital Reserve Fund was \$101,979.20 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$0.06 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 19 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 19 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 19 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 20 – add to the Sidewalk Tractor Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$12,000** to be added to the Sidewalk Tractor Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Public Works Sidewalk Tractor Capital Reserve Fund was \$12,628.47 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$0.05 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 20 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 20 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

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There being no further discussion, Article 20 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 21 – add to the Grader Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$30,000** to be added to the Grader Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Public Works Grader Capital Reserve Fund was \$103,714.02 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$0.11 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 21 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 21 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 21 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 22 – add to the Small Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$25,000** to be added to the Small Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund previously established. The balance of the Public Works Small Highway Truck Capital Reserve Fund was \$80,755.66 on December 31, 2019.

Estimated tax impact is \$.09 per thousand dollars of assessed value.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 22 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 22 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 22 shall appear on the ballot as written.

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Article 23 – add to the Floral Park Cemetery Fence Expendable Trust Fund

To see if the town will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of **\$500** to be added to the Floral Park Cemetery Fence Expendable Trust Fund previously established. This sum is the amount of a Select Board Member stipend that was designated to be donated to this Trust Fund which is in the general fund's unassigned fund balance as an unspent appropriation and no amount is to be raised by taxation. The balance of the Floral Park Cemetery Fence Expendable Trust Fund was \$3,439.49 on December 31, 2019.

There is no estimated tax impact for this warrant article.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

(Recommended by the Budget Committee 12-0-0)

Article 23 was read by Moderator Dustin

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 23 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

There being no further discussion, Article 23 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Article 24 – proposed multi-year lease for solar array

To see if the town will vote, pursuant to RSA 41:11-a, to authorize the Board of Selectmen to rent or lease public property for a term of more than one year to New England Solar Garden Corp. for the installation and operation of a solar array. The properties under consideration are located at tax map R41 lot 8, tax map R41 lot 10-1, and tax map R50 lot 8. The length and terms of the lease agreement to be in the best interest of the Town as determined by the Board of Selectmen.

(majority vote required)

(Recommended by the Board of Selectmen 5-0-0)

Article 24 was read by Moderator Dustin.

A motion was made by Selectman Gerard LeDuc to approve Article 24 as read, seconded by Select Board Chairman James Allard.

Matthew White stated his property abuts the proposed town property. He asked for more information about the project.

Select Board Chairman Jim Allard stated the initial contact was made through the Community Development Committee. The proposal is for construction of a 4 – 4 ½ megawatts solar array on the town property, which is also used as the town gravel pit. Approximately \$880,000.00 in rental income could be collected over the course of a 20 year lease for the land, as well as possible tax

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income from the solar equipment. The estimated revenue over the course of the lease could exceed \$1,000,000.00.

Matt White asked if the company would use local contractors to do the work.

Chairman Allard stated it would be at the discretion of New England Solar Garden Corp. as to who they used for the site work and installation, but they may use local contractors. The company would be conscious of creating visibility barriers for abutters, and mindful of the existing wildlife habitation. He stated they must meet all environmental requirements set by the Department of Environmental Services.

Community Development Committee Chairman Louis Houle explained in more detail the process of constructing the solar arrays.

Adam Gauthier asked if soil studies had been done and asked about the potential loss of any gravel needed by the town.

Chairman Allard confirmed soil studies had been completed. He mentioned the Select Board and Public Works Department discussed the possibility of extracting some of the desirable gravel from the proposed site prior to construction for future town use or potential sale.

Kathy Traynor asked if the lease would include the cost of removing and disposal of obsolete equipment.

Louie Houle confirmed the equipment removal and disposal costs would be included in the lease costs and New England Solar Garden Corp. would restore the land to its original state.

Mike Cabral asked if other sites were considered.

Public Works Superintendent George Bachelder confirmed they had.

Carl Anderson commended the town departments for showing great budgetary restraint and for being very conscious of only asking for absolute needs and not wants. He stated the Capital Improvement Plan Committee has worked hard to plan ahead and level out the tax impact of large purchases to avoid an unexpected financial spike in the tax rate. He thanked the Budget Committee for all their hard work, going through every detail of each department budget. He stated everyone is working together and it shows when comparing our tax rate to other towns' rates, which are moving closer to ours.

Dan Schroth recognized how few people attended today's meeting. He commended all the Boards and Committees for all their work. He stressed the importance of increasing capital and cash reserves.

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There being no further discussion, Article 24 shall appear on the ballot as written.

Moderator Dustin stated the School District deliberative session is scheduled for Wednesday, February 5th at 7:00pm in the Pittsfield Elementary School gymnasium. He thanked everyone for coming and reminded everyone that ballot voting for all the articles will be March 10th. He encouraged anyone interested in volunteering for the Budget Committee to go to the town hall and fill out an application.

Meeting adjourned 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Erica Anthony
Town Clerk