

Tilton-Northfield Fire District
Annual District Business Meeting
March 5, 2007
Winnisquam Regional High School Cafetorium

District meeting called to order by Moderator Ken Randall at 7:12 pm.
Pledge of allegiance was said.

Ken Randall introduced himself as Moderator and Janine Vary as Clerk.

Moderator announced Jim Lamanuzzi from Northfield and Pat Clark from Tilton are assistant moderators for this meeting and will help in counting of standing votes, custodian of ballot boxes and the counting of the votes.

Tom Gallant, Chairperson for the fire commissioners introduced Steve Carrier, Fire Chief, Commissioner Harold Harbour, Commissioner Bob Watson and Roland Seymour, Treasurer.

Gretchen Wilder: Chairperson of the Budget Committee introduced Michelle Bonsteel, N., Carl Barnard, T., Dennis Allen, N., and Jason Wright, T. Charlie Hall of T. was absent due to being called out of town.

Moderator explained majority of the warrants are yea or nay votes. It is possible for anyone to request standing or ballot votes. With the voter cards which must be signed, you will vote by holding up the cards. On ballot vote, you will take your card and go to the sup. of the checklists, show them the card, they will punch a hole in card and give you a ballot. You mark the ballot, can use a voting booth to mark, deposit the ballot in the ballot box. On some articles we will be able to count ballots once all have voted. We do have a bond article that will need the ballot box to be open for an hour.

Question from the floor asked if we can cut the hour down to half due to number of people who are here. Moderator explained that the bond article must be open an hour due to RSAs, but the other ballot votes will close right after everyone has voted.

Question from the floor asked if there were copies of the warrants available. Moderator explained that both town annual reports were here which did contain the warrant articles.

Moderator asked if voters had any questions on rules of order. Moderator explained the Protection of vote: all you need to do is get permission of moderator to speak and state you wish to protect your vote on article or amendment and then he will give language to the clerk and your vote is protected for the remainder of the evening. No more voting on that warrant this evening. However, there is possibility that one can ask for reconsideration and if that passes, then there must be a minimum of 7 days pass before the assembly will meet and re-discuss the issue and vote again. Should this occur, before you leave we will announce the date of the continuation meeting. Bond issue, if you move to reconsider, then the 7 day period remains. Again, stated if ballot vote wanted, a number of people raise their hand, then it can be a ballot vote. No other questions, waiting for a motion of adoption. Charles Harris, N. moved to adopt the Rules of Order and seconded by Arlow Stanley, N. Discussion, none. Vote taken. Ayes . have it. Rules of Order adopted.

Moderator explained that the first four articles, election of the officers, will be voted upon by official ballot on Tuesday, March 13, 2007 at both towns' respective voting locations.

Moderator will read the article before and after discussion. Once article has been placed on the floor, those wishing to speak on the article, please line up behind the microphones on the floor. As long as you are lined up to speak at the microphone, you will be guaranteed the time to speak to the article. Even if a "call to question" is raised, it will not be recognized until everyone standing has had the chance to address the article. If you are not standing and the call to question is raised, you will not be able to address the body.

Moderator read Article 5: "To see if the district will vote to raise and appropriate Three Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$310,000.00) for purposes of purchasing an E One Custom Built Typhoon Pumper, 1500 GPM top mount pump with a 1000 Gallon water tank and further to authorize the commissioners to borrow One-Hundred Forty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$147,000.00) in accordance with the Municipal Financing Act (RSA-33), and to authorize the commissioners to issue and negotiate such financing and to determine the rate of interest thereon, with the remaining One Hundred Sixty Three Thousand (\$163,000.00) to be withdrawn from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund. It is further the intention of the Commissioners to ask the District to authorize the withdrawal of \$16,760.07, for the first years payments from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund. **(Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Recommended by the Budget Committee) (2/3 ballot required)**

Tom Gallant moved warrant Article 5 as read except that the Moderator didn't say from the "Special Revenue", it was read as "Special Reserve" fund. Moderator corrected and agreed. Harold Harbour seconded. Discussion: Tom Gallant: we've discussed this warrant article numerous times. In this instance we are asking that we withdraw \$163,000 from capital reserve fund and finance \$147,000. The \$163,000 withdrawal will leave \$121.06 in that capital reserve fund. Then we will take the monies to amortize the debt and go forward, withdrawing payments from Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund.

Heber Feener, T. as he understands this article, it is to purchase the pumper in question that has been circulating in the community. Tom responded that was correct, it was approved a year ago. Heber asked if we are paying over a period of time. Tom we will pay \$163,000 in cash and amortize the balance over 8 years. Kevin Waldron, N. asked what is the total cost of truck this time around. what is rate of term. Isn't there a \$16,000 penalty involved. Day we actually own this truck, how much have we paid for it. Comm. Gallant responded we will be borrowing \$147,000 over 8 years at 4.5% fixed. \$1,862.23 monthly payments. Nine payments in 2007 totaling \$16,760.07. Annually at \$22,346.76 per year. \$32,774.08 in interest for 8 years. \$178,774.08 total payback. We have been accruing interest on the truck at rate of \$158 per day. If we take the truck by end of month, will be capped at \$16,052.05. Cost to us \$310,000 plus the 16,052.05. So the total cost would be \$357,826.00 at end of 8 years.

Bob Hallowell, T. This is the truck we signed a year ago that failed a year ago. Left communities open to penalties of \$25,000. Are we bonded and insured against such acts for contracts. Tom responded that we do have insurance, but isn't sure it would it rise to this. The contract was duly authorized. Bob because the vote was invalidated by the state, then the district sold the engine a week before the special meeting to vote on this engine and we have negotiated

to cap liquidated damages at \$25,000, why buy this engine? We have a tanker that can be used in its place.

Scott Davis, T. Made a motion to amend the article. If we take an additional \$47,000 out of the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund, we can reduce loan to 5 years and borrow \$100,000 and pay 2 dollars a month more and will save \$20,915.95. In favor of buying the truck but not the way we are paying for it. He thought we were going to try to pay cash for all purchases. But if we only made small amount of interest in the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund, why not use the money to offset the amount borrowed. Cindy Reinartz, T seconded the motion.

Moderator read amendment to Article 5: "To see if district will vote to raise and appropriate Three Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$310,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing an E One Custom Built Typhoon Pumper, 1500 GPM top mount pump with a 1000 Gallon water tank and further to authorize the commissioners to borrow One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) in accordance with the Municipal Financing Act (RSA – 33), and to authorize the commissioners to issue and negotiate such financing and to determine rate of interest thereon, with the remaining Two Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$210,000.00) to be withdrawn as follows, One Hundred Sixty Three Thousand Dollars (\$163,000.00) from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve fund and Forty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$47,000.00) from Apparatus and Equipment Special Reserve fund. It is further the intention of the commissioners to ask the District to authorize the withdrawal of Sixteen Thousand Seven Hundred Seventy Eight Dollars and Seventy Cents (\$16,778.70) for first years payment." Discussion: Kevin Waldron: wants to speak before this article is voted on. Moderator commented we are discussing the amendment. Someone asked for a division of the house. Moderator explained that the vote would be a standing vote of people in the house. Asked if more discussion. Paula Bonneville, T. asked if payments would be the same even if we aren't borrowing the same amount of money. *[There was much discussion about the amount of the nine month's payment due not knowing the interest rate or having prior information/approval from the financing institution.]* Tom Gallant: the last sentence gives authorization of "x" amount of dollars, and we don't know what that exact amount is going to be because we have to go back to them for the shorter term loan rate. Suggested that the body authorize the withdrawal of the first year's payment without identifying an amount. Scott Davis agreed, so have the amendment to authorize the first 9 months payments, just eliminating the amount in the last sentence. Moderator asked the person who seconded, Cindy Reinartz, if she was agreeable with the withdrawal of the actual dollar amount of the first year's payment. She agreed. Moderator removed the amount, \$16,778.70, from the amendment and corrected the word "Reserve" to "Revenue" in the two references to the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund. Tom Gallant: just a word of caution - DRA hasn't approved this exact wording.

Dawn Bouchard N. question of amending the article after what we went through already. If we don't word this exactly right, could DRA say it is invalid again. Also this wording gives the fire district ability to determine the rate of interest. Feels we should vote on it the way it is written.

Kevin Waldron: there has been no motion to rule on amendment. Rewording is not allowed. Moderator explained that Mr. Davis was asked to change the wording of his amendment. We haven't voted on this amendment yet. Before we vote on the amendment, Moderator will reread

amendment. Steven Randall, N. DRAs problem with last year's warrant article was not being voted as a bond issue. Whether we vote what Scott proposes or leave as originally written, there is no restriction on the interest rate in either version.

Moderator read: "To see if district will vote to raise and appropriate Three Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$310,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing an E One Custom Built Typhoon Pumper, 1500 GPM top mount pump with a 1000 Gallon water tank and further to authorize the commissioners to borrow One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) in accordance with the Municipal Financing Act (RSA – 33), and to authorize the commissioners to issue and negotiate such financing and to determine rate of interest thereon, with the remaining Two Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$210,000.00) to be withdrawn as follows, One Hundred Sixty Three Thousand Dollars (\$163,000.00) from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve fund and Forty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$47,000.00) from Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund. It is further the intention of the commissioners to ask the District to authorize the withdrawal of the first years payment."

Moderator verified with the author that amendment was read correctly. Scott Davis agreed. Vote taken by raised ballots. 190 in affirmative; 8 in negative. Amendment to Article 5 passes.

Marjorie Bonneville: this custom truck ordered and no deposit required to be put down when ordered. How long is its life? Will it be paid for before its life runs out? Chief Carrier responded that 20 years is the expected life. Marjorie: So our district will have it in good use for 20 years. Will you come back in next 5 or 8 years before we order another fire truck? Chief Carrier: As far as capital improvement program, we'll need to replace the ladder truck by 2011 and next engine would be 2014.

Kevin Waldron, N. where is the \$16,000 penalty coming from? Feels we don't need truck, it is a perceived need, not real. The Fire Department does an adequate job with current vehicles and personnel. If we need more than that, we'll be calling from help from other towns. Just makes it more costly to the tax payer. He has spoken against this truck. Buy it when we can pay for it outright. Gretchen Wilder, Budget Committee, said the \$16,000 is in the operating budget for the year 2007. Tom Gallant said it was under Prof. & Tech. Services, Bank Charge and Interest line is built in there.

Pat Clark: Requested to call the Question. Moderator: Question has been called. Vote taken. Ayes have it. Discussion ended on Article 5.

Moderator read Article 5 again in its amended form: "To see if district will vote to raise and appropriate Three Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$310,000.00) for the purpose of purchasing an E One Custom Built Typhoon Pumper, 1500 GPM top mount pump with a 1000 Gallon water tank and further to authorize the commissioners to borrow One Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00) in accordance with the Municipal Financing Act (RSA – 33), and to authorize the commissioners to issue and negotiate such financing and to determine rate of interest thereon, with the remaining Two Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$210,000.00) to be withdrawn as follows, One Hundred Sixty Three Thousand Dollars (\$163,000.00) from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve fund and Forty Seven Thousand Dollars (\$47,000.00) from Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue fund. It is further the intention of the commissioners to ask the District to authorize the withdrawal of the first years payment." Ballot box opened at 8:10pm for one hour.

At 8:30 Moderator asked if everyone has voted for Article 5. Polls must stay open an hour but we can continue the meeting. At 9:15 he will close the ballots and get them counted.

Article 12. a petition warrant article, Moderator read. "To see if the voters at the TNFD Annual Meeting will act upon the following question: 'Shall we rescind the provisions of RSA 31:95C (adopted March 7, 2005) which restricts all the revenues from the Ambulance Billings to expenditures for the purpose of apparatus and equipment replacement'". Joyce Fulweiler, N. moved the article as read. Second by Jerry Davis, T. Joyce: this article had been presented last year along with the election on official ballot and the creation of the budget committee. These two passed but this article did not. Wanted to submit this again in case anyone still had any misunderstandings of this fund. She currently is happy with the way the fund is running and understands it. She will be voting 'no' on article 12. Steve Bluhm, N. Had 5 reasons to rescind this fund. There is no line item veto. The district doesn't have a non-appropriation clause for the leases. 2. The district pickups could not have been purchased. 3. Could be lowering the top end of this budget with these funds. 4. Seems the district is purchasing by financing and not by cash. Interest fees is a waste of money especially if they have money to pay for in cash; such as warrant 6. 5. If not paying in cash, why use the fund? Tom Gallant: had a clarification. All leases have the non-appropriation clause written in them, including the 2 pickups. Kevin Waldron. N. In 2005, he voted for creation of fund. He believed account would be used to buy equipment outright. Feels it was the way it was presented and why he voted yes. But it is not being used that way. He feels it is time to pull the account and go back to capital reserve accounts where we would own it. Jason Wright, T. had mixed feelings of this fund. Should revenue of ambulance go into the general fund and will reduce budget, but then you have to add back in again the capital items being paid from it to the operating account, so it's same thing. The budget committee worked very hard to balance the budget. If you want to put them back into the budget fine, but we worked hard to balance it out. Life expectancies are longer than the leases. Serves the need and far outweighs the length of interest. It is not just vehicles and apparatus but other equipment that has been purchased from fund. Steve Bluhm, N. Should have a CIP budget with all things all laid out. The \$232,000 estimated revenues could pay cash for chief's new truck. Kevin Waldron, N. in capital reserve system, if the vehicles last 15 to 20 years, can buy a vehicle every 6 years. There is no downside to paying cash for anything. Steve Bluhm; N. wanted Moderator to remember that this also has to be done by ballot vote. Moderator thanked Mr. Bluhm. Moderator asked the assistant moderators to put all the ballots in one box.

Tom Cavanaugh, T. If article 12 is voted 'yes', that means we will no longer have the fund for ambulance fees? Will we still be able to buy the fire truck if that was voted in? Seeing the first year's payments are to come out of it, was concerned. Tom Gallant answered that if this article passes, it will only go into effect in 2008. No more discussion. Moderator re-read the article to the body. A ballot vote is necessary to adopt this. Opened ballot box for voting for Article 12 at 8:43. Moderator verified with body that all had voted. Moderator declared the ballot boxes closed for Article 12 at 8:56pm.

Moderator mentioned that information relating to Article 13 is on the yellow paper available up back. Will discuss once we get results from Article 12. However, someone from the floor asked if we could continue on with Article 13.

Article 13. Moderator read. "To see what action the District will take in adopting Ordinance #3, Alarm System Ordinance. Such Ordinance sets out standards for Alarm Systems and associated equipment as well as the enforcement of the same. The Ordinance further sets out a fine fee structure for excessive false alarms. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom Gallant, T. moved the article to the floor and Jerry Davis, T. seconded. Tom turned discussion over to Capt. Brad Ober, Fire Prevention officer. Maintenance of alarm systems has to be kept up and fire district has no mechanism to force property owner to keep up to date and maintained. Kevin Waldron, N. asked if this forces anyone who doesn't have or want an alarm system to have one? Do we have an excessive amount of false alarms now? Is there an appeals process if fined? If so, who and where? Brad: This ordinance doesn't force fire alarm systems, the NFPA fire codes would do that. Brad said in some properties we do go 2 or 3 times and this ordinance will force them to fix the systems. The appeal process would be going before the fire commissioners. Kevin: If it is not written in there, then there is no knowledge of it. Brad assumes it would be up to the commissioners to put that in the ordinance set up. Donna Bouchard, N. the ordinance that you want to adopt isn't complete because it doesn't state what the fee structure is and what the warning process is. Brad: Complete ordinance is on the yellow sheet. It identifies what the warnings are. This is across the board for business and residences. Steve Bluhm, N. In the activity log you had 165 in a year. Are these false alarms. Brad said that was the total alarm activations. Chief Carrier: tried to further explain. If there was a resulting fire from the fire alarm activation it would be counted up above in fires. Alarms of unknown origin are false alarms. Mr. Bluhm: Is the number redundant with the structure fires? Chief explained no. Mr. Bluhm asked if the businesses will be informed, will they be given notice. yes. Mr. Bluhm asked will you charge Wal-Mart if you cannot find out who is pulling the fire alarm? Chief explained that is a legitimate cause for a false alarm. An alarm of unknown origin would be a chargeable offense. Due to lack of care, lack of maintenance to a system. If someone doesn't take care of their system, we want to charge for these type of offenses. Chief said if your smoke detector trips the system because of burned toast, that is not chargeable. It is the lack of maintenance for unknown types of alarms. Bob C. agrees with the ordinance and feels should be a different fee structure for a business and a residential. \$150 fine to pay is big difference between a business and residence. Steve Randall, N.: How does this affect churches in town and fraternal organizations. Question asked about where money from fines would go. Tom answered to the general fund. Heber Feener, T. liked to move to question as written and seconded by Tom Cavanaugh. Voted to end discussion and going to question. Oral vote on Article 13. Moderator announced the ayes have it and **Article 13 passes.**

Moderator: Back to the ballot vote for Article 12, the petitioned warrant article. Yes votes 70 and No votes 95. **Article 12 is defeated.** Jon Powell, N. moved to protect the vote and seconded by Arlow Stanley. Moderator asked if there is discussion. None. Verbal vote taken and Ayes have it. The vote on Article 12 is protected. Someone asked if there should be a 'call to question', people should go up to the microphone to identify themselves and state the question. Moderator appreciated comment and said it will be done so from this point forward.

Article 15. Moderator read article: "To see if the District will vote to authorize the Fire Commissioners to apply for, receive and expend federal and state grants, which may become available during the course of the year, in accordance with RSA 31:95-b and also to accept and expend money, from any other governmental unit or private source, to be used for the purposes

for which the Fire District may legally appropriate money. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom moved article seconded by Jerry Davis. Tom said that it is written in a form to get permission to apply for and receive grants that are available. Through several grants that Chief Carrier has written, we have benefactors of a good amount of grant monies. We want to continue in that course. No more questions. Moderator read article again. Vote taken, all ayes have it. **Article 15 passes.**

Article 16: Moderator read. "To see if the District, in accordance with RSA 33:7, will vote to authorize the Fire Commissioners to borrow money in anticipation of taxes. (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners). Tom Gallant, T. moved Article 16 as written. Arlow Stanley, N. seconded. Tom: We have not borrowed money in anticipation of taxes for many years. This allows us to but it is not our intention. Our rapport with the 2 towns has been very good and they forward the finances on a monthly basis. This just leaves the opportunity open should it be needed. No more discussion. Verbal vote taken and Ayes have it. **Article 16 passes.**

Moderator announced the time being 9:15 he declared the time for voting on Article 5 closed. Moderator asked assistant Moderators to count the ballots. We have dealt with all articles that don't involve any money issues. We will need to wait. Declared a temporary recess while ballots were being counted on Article 5.

Moderator announced vote count for Article 5. 137 Yes votes and 42 No votes. Need 119 to pass. **Article 5 passes.** Arlow Stanley wanted to protect his vote. Moderator explained that was not needed on bond issue. Already protected by RSA.

Article 6. Steve Randall wanted to table Article 6 seeing Article 5 passed. Moderator explained he had to read the article first. Moderator read Article 6 "To see if the district will vote to authorize the Commissioners to enter into a five year lease agreement for Three Hundred Ten Thousand Dollars (\$310,000.00) for the purpose of leasing an E One Custom Built Typhoon Pumper, 1500 GPM top mount pump with a 1000 Gallon water tank. and to raise and appropriate the sum of \$42,718.59 for the first year's payment for that purpose, said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund. Please note that should the lease go to it's full term a balloon payment of \$165,000.00 will be due at that time. It is the intentions of the Commissioners to ask the body to withdraw that amount from the Fire Truck Capital Reserve Fund for the final payment. This Lease agreement contains an escape clause.

(Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Not Recommended by the Budget Committee)" Moderator recognized Steve Randall. Steve Randall motioned that Article 6 be tabled if it needs to be brought on the floor for discussion. Moderator suggested that he could request to "pass over" Article 6 and then everything just passes over, no discussion or motion to be voted on. So motioned by Mr. Randall. Tom Gallant seconded. Moderator declared **Article 6 passed over.**

Article 7. Moderator read article: "To see if the district will authorize the Commissioners to enter into a five year lease agreement for Twenty-Four Thousand Six Hundred Ninety Two Dollars (\$24,692.00) for a 2007 Ford Expedition XLT to replace the existing 2001 Ford Expedition XLT currently used as the Chief's vehicle. And to raise and appropriate \$5,613.37 for the first year's payment for that purpose, said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Funds. This Lease contains an escape clause.

(Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Not Recommended by the Budget Committee)
Comm. Gallant asked to pass over Article 7. Seconded by Tom Cavanaugh, T.: Terry
Hallowell, T. asked why Commissioners are passing over this article. Tom said we are passing
over it because we are glad to win the article to purchase the truck and we know we can wait
another year for this vehicle. **Article 7 passed over.**

Article 8 read by Moderator: “To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate One
Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$100,000.00), to be added to the Land and Building Capital
Reserve Fund. **(Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Not Recommended by the
Budget Committee)**” Harold Harbour motioned to accept Article 8 as written. Seconded by
Jerry Davis, T. Harold addressed: This fund was put aside to remodel the station at Park Street
for future growth. The first year we asked for \$400,000 to do it and the warrant failed. This is
why we are asking for \$100,000 this year to remodel the station to bring in living quarters. Jason
Wright: in an effort as budget committee to send forth a level funded budget we felt that this
was a year that we could skip it. We thought that this was one way to get a level funded budget.
This is a significant portion to keep this a level funded budget. Kevin Waldron N. Normally it is
a good idea to put money away in capital reserve fund but this is not good this year. There is an
article in Tilton warrants to fund a study to split the fire district. Should that pass, then it will not
be needed to put into this account. Tom Cavanaugh applauded budget committee. To keep taxes
in line and he supports their recommendation. No further discussion. Vote taken. Moderator
read article again. Kevin asked for clarification. A yes vote will add \$100,000 to land and
building capital reserve fund. A no vote does not add to capital reserve fund. Voice vote taken
and the Nays have it. **Article 8 fails.**

Article 9: read by moderator. “To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum
of One Hundred Forty Five Thousand Dollars (\$145,000.00) to pay for Pressurized Hydrants.
Hydrant article. **(Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Recommended by the Budget
Committee)**” Bob Watson moved Article 9. Jerry Davis seconded. Discussion: Bob Watson:
we looked into this and got a legal opinion from Charles Chandler. Bob read the letter of
opinion from Atty. Chandler. He recommended that it should be paid like any utility bill. If
district does not budget for and pay bill, we will be sued by them. Need to be prepared for civil
action and have precise not vague information to defend this action. Jim Barnes(?) of Tilton.
Water district been primary source of water. Fire dept has access to other water resources.
There is an adequate river flow year round and areas around the towns where water can be
drawn. Not against paying a legitimate fee by those who benefit because they live close by.
Needs to be a secondary tier for those who do not live in and benefit directly from the hydrant
district. He is 2 miles from nearest hydrant. Should be a difference in what those who don’t
receive the direct benefit. There doesn’t seem to be any interest in the commissioners or budget
committee as to those who live outside the hydrant district. Kevin Waldron, N. is in possession
of a copy of the opinion of counsel that Comm. Watson read. Says we have to have water,
namely the river and dry hydrants in several locations. And “be prepared to pay for it within the
available funds”. Kevin feels we should have asked what that meant. If the taxpayers say there
are no funds available, we would be free to go. It also says if we don’t pay, we’ll be sued and
you’ll lose, so we’ll pay anyway. Can the water district sue another village district? The towns
collected \$107,000 in taxes from the water district when privately owned. The new district
refused a request for payment from Northfield in lieu of payment of taxes. Now the not for
profit took in \$22,481 was from hydrants over what they spent. With lost tax revenue and the

profit they made, it looks like they owe us \$5,000. Kevin feels if it has to go to court then let it be so. It is this continual overcharging that he is much against. Lochmere pays through their town taxes through this article and again to the water district. They are paying twice. Heber Feener, T. a former water comm. And one individual to help acquire the water company into a water district. Over the years the fire dept. has always tried to have this taken out of their budget. The law was very well explained by the attorney's letter. If you don't pay the bill, it is like any individual who doesn't pay, they have their water shut off. I don't think you want this to happen to any hydrant that exists right now. One complains they don't live close to the hydrant. If the fire dept. needs water, they go to the hydrant, they take it. Go back a few years the fire district did not extend from line to line, and now it does. They go out filled up with water. Marjorie Bonneville, T. in Lochmere area. Has fought this for many years. When first started it cost a lot less than this. It doesn't go up a thousand a year, it is outrageous. It benefits a small percent of the district. The fire district can just as easily fill the tankers from the rivers as they can from the hydrants. Other towns pay \$4,000 a year for hydrants. Doesn't know why this water district is so expensive. Why should someone who has a hydrant get better protection than I, who doesn't have one, yet I pay the same price? Hal Beor, N. was understanding that the budget committee did not recommend this article. Gretchen Wilder, Chair: we knew this was a hot topic. The decision to recommend this article is based solely on the legal advise by the fire district's attorney. In her research, she has numbers, their rates have gone up. 5.5% over 1 year and has gone up 8.1% in past 5 years. When went from private to municipality, they found out that there were 7 or 9 additional hydrants that were not billed. According to the tariffs adopted by the municipality, this is how they get to the \$145,000. She personally isn't opposed to paying a hydrant fee. The water district did buy a flow meter to test the flow of hydrants in the spring. Taxpayers have to make up the tax basis of \$110,000 that water company used to pay when private plus this \$145,000. She doesn't mind paying an amount but not \$145,000. She feels a fair and equitable fee would be good but doesn't know what that is. Once the fire district received letter from legal counsel, it was a consensus of the board to recommend this article due to the legal counsel. Discussion ensued mentioning hydrants that don't work, paying for services that we all don't get.

Dick Maher, N. was on fire dept in 70 and had to work with hydrants that didn't work. Have improved considerably in last 15 years. We have a new owner of the whole system we need to give them a chance to get things improved. Regarding alternate sources of water, he will stand corrected but he was always of the belief pumping from dry hydrants was not recognized by insurance companies because it is not a reliable source. If dams are open, river goes down. Having a pressurized hydrant is far superior to ponds/rivers. Would like to see many more dry hydrants. Steve Randall, N.: utmost respect for Charlie Chandler, but it is a legal opinion but it is not fact. It is not happening that they are being kept maintained. The company sent out a letter to all water users in district and did not state that they will sue fire dept if they don't get the funds. Stated if it is voted that the fire district does not pay these charges, rates will have to be increased to make up for lost revenue. Two of his properties are in the fire hydrant district. He believes that those two properties should bear the burden of hydrants where his home should not. Kevin LaChapelle, T. We are exhausting our efforts on an article that goes up every year. Do we enter into a written contract? Tom Gallant stated there is no contract. Kevin asked how money is disbursed. Tom: quarterly. Kevin recommended to look at NFPA codes where it clearly states what the maintenance is expected to be. Any known hydrants that have low flows, lets' do something with the hydrant. If they don't meet expectations, then they don't get the check. Joe DeMello, N. he understands and agrees with the people who don't live in the district.

Perhaps they are new give them a year or two to get things rolling on the proper side but by all means, knock down those hydrant rates. Those who live outside the district you are in this building that are sprinklered. You go to your stores, malls where they have sprinklers which is all from this pressurized system. You are getting it indirectly. Rates are too high and they need to look into that and get realistic costs. Michelle Bonsteel. Has been very vocal about this in the past. Although we are billed as one of the biggest users we have no say in amount of money being billed to the towns and fire district for the hydrant use. The commercial businesses in town pay private fees which are higher than the fire district rate. Biggest problem though is we have no say in amount of bill or how spent. We lost \$107,000 tax revenue that was paid to the towns by the water dept. as private. That money wasn't taken off the hydrant fees. Who was cleaning the hydrants and shoveling them out. It was the fire dept., there is your maintenance. If hydrants not working, the water district needs to be held accountable for the services that they are required to provide. The next thing we have to do is to force them to negotiate with what we are. Dave Fox: asked to call to question. Heber Feener, T if these hydrants weren't there then your insurance rates would be sky high on businesses, churches, buildings, etc. PUC has been to their meetings and has their state statutes. You won't have the say on it unless the structure is changed. It is a water district, which is much different from any town. Kevin Waldron N. PUC rates should no longer apply because they are no longer involved. Water district is no longer a public water utility. How many hydrants did we have. Current bill is for 79 and last year were billed for 71. If we paid \$135,000 last year for 71, how does it work out for each. Is it same rate. Gretchen: the \$145,000 has been rounded up. 79 hydrants at \$456.48 per hydrant per qtr. comes to \$144,247.68 so it was rounded up. We went over the \$135,000 last year the verbiage stated there was a water contract, so, during the course of the year they realized they weren't billing for all hydrants so they corrected their bill and that is why it went over. Kevin Waldron: although the district is new, the people on the street are not new. They are experienced and know the business and have done nothing to fix it. They won't do a thing until we force their hand. They would have to pay \$161 each (those on the water district) less an equitable fee we could pay. He feels it is way past time to make them realize that they are not in charge. Dave Fox, N. called to question. Discussion ended. It is the opinion of the moderator that it is a hot topic, therefore he will call for a ballot vote on this particular article. Declared the polls open at 10:24 for Article 9. All voted ballot box closed at 10:33 for Article 9. Moderator continued meeting while ballots were being counted.

Article 10: Moderator read article. "To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate One Hundred Ten Thousand Seven Hundred Eighteen Dollars (\$110,718.00) for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue and EMS Equipment, paying vehicle leases as well the cost associated with collecting the Ambulance Charges, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). (Recommended by the Fire Commissioners) (Recommended by the Budget Committee) Harold Harbour moved article and Jerry Davis seconded. Harold addressed: The funds are there and we don't buy anything unless we need it. Discussion. Kevin Waldron, N.. What vehicle leases are in this? Chief replied the leases are the rescue truck and the 2 pick up trucks at this point. As well as costs for ambulance charges. Kevin asked if the wording when set up limited only to equipment purchases only. It is Chief's understanding that we could expend any money that is incurred for the collection of the fees. Chief read the article from 2005. Kevin says if it is passed as written we cannot be paying a cost associated with paying for collection services. Jason Wright, Budget Comm.: when the fund is established any related costs has to be approved

by the body. This cost comes as an expense has to come before the voting body. Jason asked about the 2006 minutes where we put it to the body to include the billing service fees. Michelle Bonsteel read from article 11 in 2005 any surplus in said fund will not be deemed as surplus. She suggests that the collection of those revenues would be included in that fund. Dan French N. This \$110,000 we are leasing a rescue truck for \$14,000 and the two pick up trucks what is cost on them. Chief answered \$20,915 per year for both pick up trucks. \$35,668 for vehicle line. \$17,550 is towards billing services, fire equipment is mobile radios, ladders, water rescue equipment, protective clothing, totaling \$40,000. EMS is \$7,500 and rescue equipment is \$10,000 these are in addition to the vehicle line.

Donna Bouchard, N. so this article is previously approved and adopted in 2005 and it was anticipated we are just following through on this. Chief answered. Fund established in 2005 and went into effect in 2006. This is process for you to approve expenditures out of this fund. Dan French. If all our leases have an escape clause, is this the appropriate time to amend this article as to the amount. He also has a few questions of the 2 pickup trucks. How much mileage is on each and how long have we had them? Chief replied that we have had approximately a year, mileage as of January, 1393; 8693 on the other truck. Bob Hallowell, T. how were these trucks acquired. Chief: trucks were purchased as action of commissioners in 2005; there was money available in operating budgets at that time. Not through this account. Chief clarified uses. One is a forestry unit with a skid unit with portable pump and hose for fires. In winter it plows the cisterns, hydrants, etc. The other is used to pull fire prevention trailer and can also carry a crew of 6.

Moderator announced the count for Article 9 required a majority vote. Yes votes 77, no votes 65. **Article 9 passes** as it is written.

Back to article 10. in a working fire a good shuttle vehicle to move men and pick up equipment. Chief: The utility vehicle serves a multitude of purposes. The pickup trucks are put into work at all major incidents to get things back into service.

Emily Spear asked to make a motion to protect her vote on Article 9. Dick Maher seconded the motion to protect the vote. Moderator commented that we will deal with after dealing with the amendment for Article 10.

Moderator had proposed amendment to Article 10. "To see if the district will vote to raise and appropriate \$100,718 for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue and EMS equipment paying vehicle lease as well as the cost associated with collecting the Ambulance charges with said funds o be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005)." This amount is reduced for the purpose of eliminating one of the fire department pick up trucks. Terry Hallowell, what did we have before the two pick up trucks? Chief answered one pick up truck and we had two forestry units. Dan French: he feels it is almost crazy to spend \$500 a month for 100 miles a month. Tom Cavanaugh, T. he thinks that it is a utility vehicle that isn't driven. Just going to and from problems, not being driven every day. The other vehicle is in the ballpark. He feels that we shouldn't amend this article seeing Chief walked away from a truck replacement for his own and feels we should not reduce this warrant article. Kevin Waldron, N. Can we get away with one truck? The plow on the utility truck could go on Captain Ober's truck. Chief: certainly the

plow could be put on the other pick up truck. This was a choice made by the Chief and commissioners. Not to overload one truck. Felt it was in the best interest of the dept. to have them as separate vehicles. Kevin Waldron voted to second the amendment. The question has been called for. Discussion on the amendment does cease. Read amendment again. This will replace the Article 10 in entirety. All those in favor of amendment. Nays have the vote - the amendment fails. Tom Cavanaugh motioned to call to question. Vote taken on call. Ayes have it; Article 10 to be voted on as was originally written. Moderator read original Article 10. Voice vote taken, Ayes have it. **Article 10 passes.**

Moderator addressed vote made and seconded to protect vote on Article 9. Vote protected on Article 9.

Article 11. Moderator read article. "To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of One Million Two Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Seven Dollars (\$1,287,487.00) for General District Operations. The Commissioners recommended sum of One Million Two Hundred Eighty Seven Thousand Four Hundred Eighty Seven Dollars (\$1,287,487.00). This article does not include special or individual articles addressed." Jason Wright, T motion to place on floor, seconded by Tom Gallant. Moderator asked Budget committee to begin discussion on this article. Jason: this was a great project, asked a lot of questions and did a lot of work. Had a lot of questions and answers with Chief. Only highlight here is to add one position. Opened the floor for questions. Leroy French. N asked if this is the final number or are there additions or subtractions because this doesn't include other warrants. Tom Gallant: DRA has cautioned us that we cannot include the special or other warrant articles into this number. This amount is strictly for general operations. Gretchen said that \$1,432,487 dollars will include the \$145,000 for hydrants and Article 10 \$110,718 would be added. Gretchen said the wording had to be specific. The Moderator said DRA will look at the amount in this warrant plus all approved warrants. Tom Gallant stated the MS 37 includes every single warrant article and directly addresses that point of amount to raise by taxation. But yes DRA will also be working with the approved warrant articles. There was a call to vote, but two waiting to speak. Kevin Waldron N. He learned that this figure includes a new full time person and we need this person because we are short one guy on Weds. which has caused fire prevention to work an amount of hours in 2006. This position would also be part time fire prevention to free up Capt. Ober to spend all his time on fire prevention, if Capt. Ober works 40 hours a week for 50 weeks a year. Take away 141 hours for calls, that leaves 1859 hours to do fire prevention. Is that not enough fire prevention? Plus have the other person having 3,200 hours on fire prevention; do we need that many hours? Capt. Ober actually covered shifts 39 times. Don't have actual hours. We are running short on Weds., only 2 persons. It allows for 2 to respond to medical call and leaves one behind to cover a possible second call along with Chief and Capt. Ober. Chief addressed: We see a need in fire prevention to address things that are not being addressed. Apartment building fire codes are needed to be done and haven't been able to get to. There are programs we would like to use this person for. The firefighter/fire prevention position would be an entry level position, someone out of college. Take some of the load off Capt. Ober established plans and procedures, ordinances. We have been behind the 8 ball to make code changes at current staffing levels. We haven't even mentioned fire education in schools - over 600 children reached but still a lot of adult opportunities to reach also. Kevin Waldron - had question on call salary line. Call numbers are down, less than 2005, the district shrunk the size of the call company, so why is the cost number

higher. Chief: if you look at line items overtime increased, career salaries, more vacation time, increases in retirement and health insurance costs. Kevin Waldron - but specific to call members, why does it cost us more to do less? Chief responded - For call company, we base our numbers on projected number of incidents 1600. At fires, 4 firefighters at incident 1.5 hours and come up with a number of hours - 40250. The people recently let go were not meeting our standards. Kevin Waldron mentioned to the Moderator that he will have an amendment to this number. Bob Hallowell, T. wanted to thank the budget committee for their work. Feels that that amount of money is an obscene amount of money to pay for fire protection. As far as call fire fighters, they say that all over NH. He has never once seen any active recruiting for new call firefighters but feels the district wants to build an empire and spend our money. He is sure there are a number of people who would want to be call members. Kevin LaChappelle, T. Moved to question. Moderator. Stated that Kevin Waldron was working on an amendment. Kevin Waldron – had an amendment to reduce to \$1,247,000 the general district operational budget. Remove \$40,487 to not fund the proposed new full time position. Seconded by Ken French, N. Moderator asked for any discussion. Jason Wright, T. encouraged those who remain to kill the amendment and leave the way written. He would expect for people to get involved with the budget committee if they have concerns about items in the budget. The Budget committee was very diligent looking at every line item. Chose not to support the capital reserve building fund. Very pro personnel who have made the serious commitment. This is what we wanted and spoke about even at last year's meeting. Don't want full time positions getting their training experience here and then go elsewhere to get better pay. Real costs for health insurance and vacation and it is what it is and not too much to pick apart. Tom Gallant challenged Moderator rules regarding letting others speak after call to question. Moderator said a time limit of 3 minutes. Kevin Waldron: didn't say Budget Committee didn't do a good job but didn't run numbers on the calls. Was told we didn't do the numbers on the calls we are running per shift. Jason: we ran some of these numbers but do we underestimate and then overspend? Not giving out money to people for not going out to calls. If we aren't out doing the prevention, we could have a serious problem with our downtown area. Michelle Bonsteel, the committee saw the amount of overtime spent to cover that person, so they saw a way they could save the district money and limiting the amount of overtime. We're spending \$10,000 on overtime. You will never eliminate the overtime in the fire dept. by virtue of what they do. Shifts overlap due to floods, etc. overtime is unavoidable. But by same token, if properly cover shifts, then can limit the overtime spent on a weekly basis. Bob Laraway, T. Supports the extra person. He is a call member here. Can use his services as a fully qualified person in this town. Most people who volunteer are struggling to meet hours to keep training levels. There is dedication to maintain a level of expertise and you are paying the full time people to maintain that. The rest of the people don't have that kind of time. The full time people are the backbone of the district.

Moderator: vote on the amendment, call to question by Bob Watson and seconded by Dick Maher. Moderator read the amendment. "To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Million Two Hundred Forty Seven Thousand Dollars (1,247,000.00) for General District operations. The intent of this amendment is to remove \$40,487.00 from the Career Salaries and Wages to not fund the proposed new full time position." Moderator asked for a vote. Nays have it and the amendment fails. Call to question asked. Ayes have it; Article 11 to be voted on. Moderator read Article as originally written. Voice vote taken, ayes have it.

Article 11 passes.

Article 14: Moderator read warrant: “To accept the report of the Treasurer and the Fire Commissioners and pass any vote relating thereto.” Tom Gallant, T. moved to accept the reports as presented in the town annual reports of both Tilton and Northfield. Harold Harbour seconded. No discussion. Called to question Jon Powell. Vote taken. **Article 14 passes.**

Article 17: Moderator read warrant: “To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.” Tom Gallant motioned to adjourn. David Fox, N. asked fire commissioners to aggressively pursue for an adjustment of the water district’s billing for the hydrants. Tom Gallant mentioned that our relationship with the water district has been positive and we will continue to move in that direction. Meeting adjourned at 11:35PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Janine L. Vary, Clerk
March 30, 2007