

**Village District of Tilton-Northfield Fire & EMS**  
**New Hampshire**  
**2018 District Meeting Minutes**

Polls were opened on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year two thousand and eighteen at the Pines Community Center, Dearborn Road, Northfield at seven o'clock a.m. by Moderator Scott McGuffin. The polls were closed at seven o'clock p.m. with 197 votes cast. Polls were opened on the 13<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year two thousand and eighteen at the Winnisquam Regional High School, Main Street, Tilton at seven o'clock a.m. by Moderator Charles Mitchell. The polls were closed at seven o'clock p.m. with 255 votes cast.

**ARTICLE 01:** To choose a Fire Commissioner for the ensuing three (3) years

Wayne Crowley	197
<i>Eric Pyra</i>	<b>230</b>

**ARTICLE 02:** To choose a Treasurer for the ensuing three (3) years

<i>Timothy F Pearson</i>	<b>370</b>
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**ARTICLE 03:** To choose a Clerk for the ensuing three (3) years

<i>Stephanie Giovannucci</i>	<b>384</b>
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**ARTICLE 04:** To choose a Moderator for the ensuing two (2) years

<i>Kent Finemore</i>	<b>397</b>
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The 2018 Fire District annual meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m. on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of March in the year two thousand and eighteen at the Winnisquam Regional High School, Main Street Tilton, by Moderator Kent Finemore to act upon the following subjects.

Moderator Kent Finemore introduced the members of the Budget Committee, Commissioners, Clerks and Assistant Moderators Charles Mitchell and Bill Wilder. Read the rules of the meeting.

Chief Michael Sitar presented a power point of the 2017 statistics, accomplishments, new equipment, grants received, types of calls and where calls come from and incidents by day and hours.

Moderator Finemore read articles 1 through 4 with the results.

**ARTICLE 05:** To accept the reports of the Treasurer and the Fire Commissioners and pass any vote relating thereto. This article is recommended by the Commissioners.

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Robert Petrin**

Moderator Finemore opens the floor for discussion, hearing no discussion, calls for a voice vote. **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 06:** To see if the District will vote to abolish the Fire District Budget Committee, RSA 32:14, V. Voting shall be by ballot, RSA 32:14, III Voting shall be by ballot, but the question shall not be placed on the official ballot used to elect officers. Polls shall remain open and ballots shall be accepted by the moderator for a period of not less than one hour following the completion of discussion on the question. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning seconded by Robert Petrin**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, stating that the Budget Committee was formed in 2006, and since then has been hard to find volunteers. The Committee was only established because at the time the Fire Chief wanted to purchase two trucks.

Moderator Finemore opens the floor for discussion to the article. After discussion, Moderator Finemore opens the polls for a secret ballot vote. Polls were opened at 7:30pm and closed at 8:30pm. **Yes 22, No 46 Article Failed**

**ARTICLE 07:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the Budget Committee recommended sum of Two Million Eighty-Eight Thousand Six Hundred Eight-Four Dollars (\$2,088,684.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Paul Blaisdell**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article stating that the overall budget was increased by 2.9%. Details were listed in the power point and in the budget pages.

Moderator Finemore opens the floor for discussion.

Kevin Waldron presented an amendment to the Moderator.

**AMENDMENT:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Two Million Seventy-three Thousand Eighty-four dollars (\$2,073,084.00) for general municipal operations. This article does not include appropriations contained in special or individual articles addressed separately.

**Amendment moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Gretchen Wilder**

Kevin Waldron stated that he believes the hiring of new personnel is supposed to be voted on at the Annual District Meeting, this amendment is for the purpose of removing the additional personnel.

Jason Write added that the position being added is a part-time clerk position to work in the office dealing with collection, data entry, answering phones, etc.

Moderator Finemore opens the floor for discussion to the amended article.

Charles Mitchell calls to question, seconded by Kimberly Walker, Moderator Finemore calls for a voice vote, motion to call the questions passes.

Moderator Finemore calls for a voice vote on the amendment to article 7. **Amendment Article Fails.**

Moderator opens the floor for discussion on the original article, no additional discussion. Moderator calls for a voice vote, **Original Article Passes.**

**ARTICLE 08:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Five Hundred Thousand Nine Hundred Eighty-One Dollars (\$500,981.00) for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue, EMS Equipment and 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). This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning seconded by Kim Watson**

Paul Blaisdell spoke to the article, adding that the fund is used to pay for the services through Constar, schooling and to purchase equipment. Paul went over the equipment list to be upgraded and replaced through using these funds.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion to the article.

Kevin Waldron presented an amendment to the Moderator.

**AMENDMENT:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate Two Hundred Thirty-two Thousand Eight Hundred Forty-two dollars (\$232,842.00) for the purpose of purchasing Fire, Rescue, EMS Equipment and 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).

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Dan French**

Kevin Waldron spoke about his amendment, to remove the schooling and computer cost as this is a want not a need.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion on the amendment.

Chief Sitar added that the repeater system is a need for our district because it's going to replace the radio system we have with a better system that can be reached in a wider range of areas throughout Tilton and Northfield. Sitar showed a power point that highlights what the current radio system rang are, and then another slide showing what the updated radio system will be. Sitar also added that this is a safety issue, not just for the employees, but also for the victims.

Additional comments added that it is not an uncommon practice for an employer to send their employees to school, this keeps the employees up to date on the new laws and new practices.

After discussion, Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Amendment Article Fails**

Moderator opens the floor for discussion on the original warrant article.

Discussions included an additional article on the new proposed tower behind the Park St Fire Station, possible rent received from the land used for the tower, in the upcoming articles, as well as the next article to purchase a new truck. The closest tower the Fire District uses now is about 12 ½ miles away in Belmont. The Fire District Policy requires that the purchase of a new vehicle be in a separate article. This article does not affect the tax rate, these are funds already raised.

After discussion, Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Original Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 09:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Fifty-Eight Thousand Three Hundred Twelve Dollars (\$58,312.00) for the purpose of purchasing a 2018 Ford F450 to be used as a Forestry Vehicle with said funds to be withdrawn from the Apparatus and Equipment Special Revenue Fund established under RSA 31:95-C (Adopted March 7, 2005). This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Paul Blaisdell, seconded by Robert Petrin**

Commissioner Paul Blaisdell spoke to the article, stating that this is a replacement of the current forestry vehicle. The current vehicle is overloaded once all of the equipment needed is on it, and two drivers are in the cab. Deputy Joubert has a crew cab that we are going to sell which is rusted rear bed, rocker panel to fix is only temporary, and take the old forestry vehicle and give it to Deputy Joubert. The new vehicle will be able to perform all needed duties as a forestry vehicle and will be purchased through the state bid which will make it the lowest cost we can obtain.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Some questions asked pertain to the low use of the vehicle and possible other options, what happens to the snow plow.

The new will be a small vehicle that can transport equipment to the emergency site, it's an as needed vehicle. If used for other uses it's because other vehicles are out of service. The snow plow will be kept and put on the super cab truck.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 10:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Eight Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Dollars (\$8,260.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Robert Petrin**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, this is the annual request. The amount comes from the revenue received for the fire inspection fees which end up in the operating budget which has to be requested to move into the Fund.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion, no questions .

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 11:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Three Thousand Seven Hundred Sixty-One Dollars (\$3,761.00) for the purpose of purchasing materials, tools and equipment related to public education, code enforcement, training, etc. with said funds to be withdrawn from the Fire Prevention Expendable Trust Fund. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required.)

Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Jane Allden

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, stating that this is just monies moved to the Fund and to be used for education and training.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion, no questions .

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 12:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) for the purpose of adding to the existing health insurance deductible expendable trust fund with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Robert Petrin, seconded by Charles Mitchell**

Commissioner Paul Auger spoke to the article, stating the request is to put money back into the fund to bring the fund back to \$5,000.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion, no questions .

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 13:** To see if the District will vote to adopt the provisions of RSA 31:95-c to restrict communication tower lease income revenues to expenditures for the purpose of repairs and maintenance of fire stations and radio infrastructure. Such revenues and expenditures shall be accounted for in a special revenue fund to be known as the Communications Tower Special Revenue Fund, separate from the general fund. Any surplus in said fund shall not be deemed part of the general fund accumulated surplus and shall be expended only after a vote by the legislative body to appropriate a specific amount from said fund for a

specific purpose related to the purpose of the fund or source of revenue. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority ballot vote)

Moderator recognizes that the notation Majority ballot vote is a typo, and should read Majority vote required.

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Robert Petrin**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, stating that this fund is to be set up for revenues received by tower rental fees. This fund is just for maintenance and radios. Chief Sitar added a description of adding a tower to the Park Street Station, and under the negotiation the tower company called Wireless Edge is willing to put a \$400,000 communications tower at the site, and put an antenna on the tower with no cost to the Fire District. This service will also be available to the Police Department and the Public Works Department. In addition they will build a communications shelter at the bottom of the tower to store radio equipment that is attached to the tower, and in addition they will also supply an emergency generator for the tower so communications are not interrupted. Wireless Edge will pay the Fire District a minimum rent of \$18,000 a year, in addition if there are any additional antennas attached to the tower the Fire District will also collect an additional 40% of the rent that the tower owners are collecting. Any cell carrier that attaches to the tower the Fire District gets a \$5,000 signing bonus. The lease is for ten years, each year the rent goes up 2.5%, additionally the District will not have to pay any rent. This will help out the Fire Department's communication throughout Northfield. Chief Sitar showed a power point showing where the tower would be located, which shows behind the Park Street Station near the building, total area is 75' x 75', and to be 195' tall.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Discussion about the approval process in Northfield, this would go through the Planning Board, and the appropriate applications would need to be submitted and approved before this is built, if there is nothing approved to be built then the whole thing is extinguished. The Tower is taxable because it is owned by the Tower Company not the Fire District.

At the end of the lease, the tower can be turned over to the district for ownership or the district can ask that the property be removed and the land be brought back to its original state.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, he is in doubt. Asks for a voter card tally vote **yes 25, no 32 Article Fails**

**ARTICLE 14:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of One Hundred Thirty Thousand Dollars (\$130,000.00) for the purpose of design services and permit fees for a new fire station with said funds to be withdrawn from the Land & Building Capital Reserve Fund. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Paul Blaisdell, seconded by Dennis Manning**

Commissioner Paul Blaisdell spoke to the article, stated that this is for the intention to get new station proposals and additional options. The direction that is being looked at is a two station solution, one in the center of the district in Tilton and a renovation of Park Street. Leaving the foot print of the Park Street station the same, and adding living quarters to the station in the rear. In addition building a station in Tilton which would resemble the Northfield station, with the addition of administrative offices. The stations would be staffed in both stations possibly alternating both stations. This money is just to get architectural plans to be able to go out to bid, and continue to look for a site, and we can come back to the District with more precise numbers.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Point of Order from Robert Petrin, the way this is being presented today was not recommended by the Budget Committee. When this was discussed it was presented as a single building. Dennis Manning added that at the Budget Committee meeting there was discussion about spending the money, just not on what type of building.

Other discussion included going back to the multimillion dollar requests as proposed in 2017, and in need of more research as far as what is needed and how funding is going to be raised for a new building.

No further discussion, Moderator asks for a voice vote, he is in doubt. Asks for a voter card tally vote, yes 18, when cards were raised in opposed moderator recognized the no's have it. **Article Fails**

**ARTICLE 15:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirteen Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty-One Dollars (\$13,931.00) for the purpose of repairing Center Street Station, with said funds to be raised through taxation. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Jason Wright, seconded by Jane Alden**

Commissioner Paul Auger spoke to the article, went over the list of repairs that need to be done to the station.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Discussion included taking the monies from the building fund, however that fund is only for building a new station. There is no specific fund for building maintenance. Why are the funds not coming from the unassigned fund balance, the reason being that the District Policy states there has to be 16.67% of unassigned fund balance to cover the cost so that we

don't have to borrow money before we receive tax dollars. With the warrant article presented today we'd only have about \$40,000 to spend. The most recent revision of the policy was done on March 6, 2018, the financial auditors recommended the policy be amended to follow GASB, when speaking to the NH Dept of Revenue, they also want us to follow GASB, therefore revision to the policy was made.

Kevin Waldron presented an amendment to the Moderator.

**AMENDMENT:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Thirteen Thousand Nine Hundred Thirty-One Dollars (\$13,931.00) for the purpose of repairing Center Street Station, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Dan French**

Kevin Waldron spoke to his amendment stating that when asking for a recommendation from DRA they will give you one, but it is just a recommendation and the fund balance can be as much as you want. When he sat on the board they asked and DRA stated that since the income is known then you don't really need a surplus.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion on the amendment, no further discussion.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Amendment Article Passed**

Moderator opens the floor to discuss Article 15 as Amended, no discussion.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article as Amended Passed**

**ARTICLE 16:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Five Thousand Sixty-Nine Dollars (\$45,069.00) for the purpose of repairing Park Street Station, with said funds to be raised through taxation. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Paul Blaisdell**

Commissioner Paul Auger spoke to the article, went over the list repairs needed at the Park Street Station.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Kevin Waldron presented an amendment to the Moderator.

**AMENDMENT:** To see if the District will vote to raise and appropriate the sum of Forty-Five Thousand Sixty-Nine Dollars (\$45,069.00) for the purpose of repairing Park Street Station, with said funds to be withdrawn from the Unassigned Fund Balance.

**Moved by Kevin Waldron, seconded by Laurie Hill**

Chief Sitar noted that removing this from the Unassigned Fund Balance is bring us below the GASB standards and is going against our own policy. We need about \$358,000 in the fund, with this amendment it will bring us down to about \$336,000. Going below the recommended amounts can jeopardize the credit scores which will affect the interest rate when we need to borrow money, and also when qualifying for grants. If you abide by the policies you have in place, and the GASB standards, then you're in a better place when borrowing and qualifying for grants.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, he is in doubt, Asks for a voter card tally vote **yes 23, no 20 Amendment Passes**

Moderator opens the floor to discuss Article 16 as Amended, no discussion.

Moderator asks for a voice vote on the amended article, **Article as Amended Passed**

**Lee French moved to protect the vote, seconded by Gretchen Wilder**

**ARTICLE 17:** To see if the District will vote to change the Clerk's duties in the By-Laws to read The Clerk shall perform all duties of the District's meetings and business affairs pursuant to RSA 52:8; RSA 41:16. The Clerk shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with the office. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Robert Petrin, seconded by Dennis Manning**

Commissioner Paul Blaisdell spoke to the article, stating this is just a bi-law clean up article. The bi-law is in contradiction to the RSA.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 18:** To see if the District will vote to change the election of Officers in the By-laws to read: Section 1: Officers Elections the officers of the Fire District shall consist of three Commissioners, one Clerk, one Moderator, and one Treasurer. The Commissioners, Clerk, Moderator, and Treasurer shall severally qualify and possess the same powers and perform the same duties in respect to the District's Meetings and business affairs that the Clerk, Moderator, Treasurer and Selectmen of towns respectively possess and perform in respect to like matters in towns. The positions of Commissioner shall have 3-year terms.

The Clerk and Treasurer shall be a 3-year term beginning with the term to be elected at the 2012 regular District Meeting. The three Commissioner positions shall be staggered so that only one new Commissioner is elected each year. The Commissioners shall have representation from both towns; one Commissioner who is a resident of Tilton, one Commissioner who is a resident of Northfield and one Commissioner will be at-large. The Moderator shall have a 2-year term and be elected in even numbered years<sup>1</sup>. All Fire District officers shall assume office upon his/her election and qualification for office, and shall serve until the election and qualification of his/her successor. All employees of the Fire District are discouraged from running for elected office in the Fire District so as not to create a perceived conflict of interest. Full-time employees of the Fire District are prohibited from serving as a Commissioner in the Fire District. By petition. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Paul Blaisdell**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, stated the purpose was to make one commissioner at least from each town. The article was sent to the NH Department of Revenue, they asked us to consult the NH Municipal Association who in turn said the article is illegal to do, but it is on the warrant because it is a petition article. You can still vote on it, but it is illegal. His intent was to have representation from both towns and one at large.

Moderator opened the floor for discussion.

Gretchen Wilder stated that we need to get away from looking at the district as an, us and them, and look at it as, a we. Dennis added that the Budget Committee in the bi-laws was created to represent both towns.

**Motion to Table by Kevin LaChapell and seconded by Helen Hanks**

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Motion to Table Passes**

**ARTICLE 19:** To see if the District will vote to establish a contingency fund and vote to appoint the Board of Commissioners as agents to expend from the contingency fund for the current year for unanticipated expenses that may arise and further to raise and appropriate Nineteen Thousand Dollars (\$19,000.00) to put in the fund. This sum to come from the Unassigned Fund Balance. Any appropriation left in the fund at the end of the year will lapse to the general fund. This article is recommended by the Board of Commissioners and Budget Committee. (Majority vote required)

**Moved by Dennis Manning, seconded by Robert Petrin**

Commissioner Dennis Manning spoke to the article, stating that this is an annual thing we do.

Moderator opens the floor for discussion.

Moderator asks for a voice vote, **Article Passes**

**ARTICLE 20:** To transact any other business that may legally come before the meeting.

**Kevin Waldron** asked for a commitment that to add more personnel it be a warrant article.

**Paul Blaisdell** stated the Fire District has a long history, and in some cases a very checkered history. He would like to see the district look forward and be a forward looking group instead of dwelling on the past. Technology is changing, we are changing, the towns are changing and we need to start looking forward.

**Gretchen Wilder**, said thank you to the Budget Committee, the Commissioners and all of the staff for all of the work you do, and for being better prepared this year.

**Helen Hanks**, said thank you to Kathy Tobine for all the work she carried and that we are finally getting her some extra help.

**Robert Petrin** motioned to adjourn, seconded by **Dennis Manning**

**Meeting Adjourned at 10:28 p.m.**

Respectfully submitted,



**Stephanie Giovannucci, District Clerk**